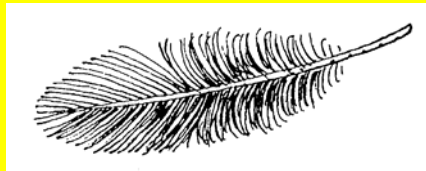


# Violence Free Begins With Me Programme

Bruce McLaren Intermediate

January 2008 – May 2008



This is the final report of the process and outcomes of year two of the Violence Free Begins With Me Programme at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School.

Wednesday 2nd April 2008

To Violence Free Co-ordinators

Dear Violence Free Co-ordinators,  
Some children live in a violence area. I mean like they get hit or beaten up. I used to get hit by my sister really hard and I cried. I even used to get threatened like I am going to smash you. Until I heard about violence free begins with me. At Bruce McLaren I really enjoyed listening to violence free. I watched Tulip and it was interesting. By that I mean V.F.B.W.M can help adults to and children, so that is why you should take it to other schools. Because it could help adults and children especially.

Thank-you!!

Yours Sincerely: Marica ~~Deane~~

To the violence free Co-ordinators  
Wednesday 2nd April 2008

Dear violence free Co-ordinators

I think that v.f.b.w.m should go to every school in the world because people could get help and not be afraid of their parents. Fighting in front of you it is very bad and if your parents hit you, you will turn out to be a bully at school. You will steal things off other people.

Joseph

J. Siniaka

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Bruce McLaren Intermediate School and staff for their ongoing willingness to be part of the Violence Free Begins With Me Pilot programme. This is a commitment they have maintained since November 2006.

All the wonderful students at Bruce McLaren Intermediate school.

'Jay' and his wife for allowing Violence Free Waitakere to use his story for the programme. "Jay's" courage to visit with the school and talk to the students face to face.

Everyday Theatre for coming into the school to reinforce our messages about violence prevention.

Waitakere City Council for their ongoing endorsement of the programme. We also acknowledge them for the printing of certificates and reports.

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Everyone else who has shown their support for the Violence Free Begins With Me programme.

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# INTRODUCTION

This report is not a full evaluation of the Bruce McLaren Intermediate experience with the VFBWM programme, but more a selection of responses and feedback after year two of the roll out of the programme in the school. Because hoped for funding did not eventuate, Violence Free Waitakere chose to continue to be in a reduced support role to the school as they voluntarily worked with the programme for a second year, but also decided to concentrate on finding more opportunities for development and support for the programme and to investigate a full evaluation for the project.

What follows therefore, is not in the nature of an evaluation, but background and process notes and learnings from the experiences of the school teachers, staff and students to the material.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The origins of the Violence Free Begins With Me programme began in 2002/3 with the main aim to decrease the incidence of violence in Waitakere City.

Between 2002 and 2006 the programme developed into a teacher facilitated programme for intermediate age students

There were many questions about how successful a teacher facilitated programme around reducing violence would work. Would it be too challenging for teachers on top of their already extensive work demands? There were also concerns about subject matter and student reaction to this type of programme. Would this type of programme have any impact on behaviour?

In 2006 Bruce McLaren Intermediate School offered to pilot this new teacher facilitated programme. The VFBWM programme has run as a pilot programme at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School from November 2006 until May 2008.

In the first year of the pilot programme (2007) at Bruce McLaren Intermediate six classes participated in the programme. Violence Free Waitakere provided full support to the school, this involved teacher training and four teacher support meetings throughout the time that the programme was running.

In the second year (2008) of the programme all year 7 students participated in the programme and some year 8 teachers ran the programme alongside 'Keeping ourselves Safe' No teacher training was given, but two teacher support meetings were conducted.

Consistent throughout both years was feedback that the VFBWM programme is a very powerful and valuable programme

- Students enjoy and benefit from this programme. They are highly motivated and involved
- Teachers value the programme and report VFBWM changes class culture, setting foundation for working together
- The programme is valuable because it builds self esteem, empathy and cooperative behaviour

- The programme develops respectful listening of others and language for students to express themselves
- Provides a tool box of ways to deal with violence/bullying
- The VFBWM programme helped students see a different way, giving them knowledge and skills to choose non violent options
- Increase knowledge on how to protect themselves
- Compliments and creates a powerful package when run alongside Everyday Theatre

As the pilot progressed into the second year the following new insights began to emerge

- This is an excellent programme for relationship building between teacher and student and also student to student. It builds an environment of personal respect
- Children come to school and can express how they feel, it sets them up to then be in an emotionally quiet state and ready to focus on learning
- Provides opportunity for students to be fully self expressive in their classroom, around their peers. They learn "It's OK to be me and feel the way I do"
- In year two there was an increase in disclosures. Clear message that it is OK to tell

All those involved felt the pilot programme had been a great success. There were however some interesting findings that shows that there are some critical implementation procedures that need to be implemented to ensure the successful running of this programme.

These include the importance of preparing and training teachers before the programme is introduced into the classroom.

This preparation is necessary to explain the history and philosophy of the programme, provide clear understanding for the reasons for the content and progression of the programmes units, to establish clear messages around the importance of doing all the units. Most importantly to establish teacher confidence about the impact of the programme, expectations and disclosures

This programme is not 'just another' unit to work into the timetable. This programme impacts on the culture of the classroom and school. It affects the relationships between teacher and students and between students. As a result teachers may experience more disclosures than usual. Schools need to be prepared for this and additional support needs to be in place before the school starts the programme.

This support then needs to be provided throughout the programme and to include teacher meetings. These meetings give the teachers an opportunity to share reflective feedback and plan forward with each other. They are valuable for reflecting on what's showing up in response to the programme. Brings into awareness issues that are arising within the school and for individual teachers.

As we look to the future the recommendations are for funding to be sourced so that Violence Free Waitakere can introduce the VFBWM programme into other intermediate schools in Waitakere City in a controlled manner, ensuring that a full and independent evaluation is carried out about the programme.

The need for implementation procedures so that schools who decide to partake in the VFBWM programme will work closely with Violence Free Waitakere.

It is recommended that Violence Free Waitakere introduce the VFBWM programme to teachers through a full teacher training day. This training will cover the philosophy of the programme, teaching of the programme and also extensive information and support on dealing with the disclosures. Ideally this would be at the end of the school year, so that the programme can be introduced at the beginning of the following year.

It is essential to structure into the support plan three or four teacher meetings of at least one hour duration. These will be designed for teachers to feed back and project forward, gain insight from each other, and get support from the Violence Free Waitakere team and other community agencies.

An independent evaluation is important to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. Such an evaluation is currently being negotiated between Violence Free Waitakere and Alex Woodley of Point Research.

A proposal to the Violence Free Waitakere Team was made for 'Jay' to be contracted to visit every school participating in the VFBWM programme. It was suggested this visit would occur once the course has finished as a reinforcement of the messages.

To work in collaboration with other programmes, such as Everyday Theatre and Alternatives To Violence Project and offer 'Creating Peaceful Pathways' workshops to the parents and wider community during the term that the VFBWM programme is running.

We need to be really clear with future schools about the need for them to have training in Family Violence issues, disclosure policies and very good links into the community around ways of supporting the more serious cases which will emerge the intermediate years are significant years in a child development. This programme plays a valuable role in supporting the child's experiences during this time. The most valuable aspects are building self esteem, building trusting and safe relationships, talking about how you feel and hearing how others feel.

*Jane Holley, Coordinator, Violence Free Waitakere.*

# VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME - FINAL REPORT

BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

JANUARY – JUNE 2008

THIS REPORT OUTLINES THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES OF THE VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME PROGRAMME FROM JANUARY 2008 UNTIL JUNE 2008. THIS PERIOD COVERS YEAR TWO OF THE PILOT PROGRAMME AT BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL.

## HISTORY

In 2002-3 Violence Free Waitakere (VFW) contracted Elaine Dyer to work in Ranui on a general violence prevention programme, which was conducted alongside RAP (Ranui Action Project) this work was targeted mostly at adults and feedback suggested that there was a need to take the messages and skills into the schools.

Elaine combined her extensive background around fostering non violence together with other professionals working in violence prevention, to create a programme that could be taken into schools.

In 2004 the developed programme was piloted in Birdwood Primary and Sunnyvale School.

The two schools had different responses to the programme. Sunnyvale School was delighted with the way the programme complimented the other programmes they were involved in. Birdwood staff were concerned the programme was stepping beyond the scope of the school curricular. Violence Free Waitakere also noted how difficult it was to come into an unknown classroom and facilitate the programme.

Programme evaluation showed there had been some valuable gains made from the work. So in 2005 a manual revision was completed to adapt the material to become a teacher led programme.

In mid 2006 a new contract between CYF's Everyday Communities and Violence Free Waitakere created the opportunity for a teacher facilitated programme to be piloted.

It was during this time that Carol Brooks from Bruce McLaren Intermediate School expressed interest in piloting the VFBWM programme in her school.

In October 2006 Jane Holley was contracted to coordinate the programme. This began the establishment of the initial pilot programme at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School.

Teacher training and preparation began in November 2006. Six teachers and 192 pupils from Bruce McLaren Intermediate School began the programme in Week 2, Term 1 of 2007.

The programme ran through into the early weeks of term 2.

The final report of this stage was written in June 2008 and concluded the 2006/07 pilot programme at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School.

However, due to the success of the programme in 2007 it was decided by all parties involved to continue the pilot at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School for a second year. What follows is a report of year two at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR YEAR TWO OF THE PILOT PROGRAMME

The proposed plan was for the 2008 pilot to be managed with a similar format to the year before. Violence Free Waitakere would provide support to the school in the form of resources, teacher training and support.

Difficulty in accessing funding was to change the plan of events. With minimal funding, Violence Free Waitakere was unable to provide the support they had hoped to. As a result there was no preparation training with the teachers, as had been delivered in 2007. There were also insufficient funds or opportunity to conduct a formal evaluation.

Bruce McLaren Intermediate School was prepared to run the programme without support from Violence Free Waitakere. This decision reflected Bruce McLaren Intermediate's commitment to the VFBWM programme.

After discussion with Violence Free Waitakere, Bruce McLaren Intermediate School decided to continue with the VFBWM programme in 2008. Teachers who had done the programme in 2007 would support those teachers who were new to the programme.

In hindsight this turn of events has helped to highlight important procedures that we now know as essential to be place when introducing VFBWM programme into a school. (Refer to insights and recommendations in this report)

In January we were able to contract Jane Holley to work in a support role alongside the school from February 1st to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Our later than anticipated return to Bruce McLaren Intermediate meant that the school was already underway with the programme when VFW rejoined them, so teacher training which normally would be conducted in the latter part of the previous year was not run.

Funding enabled Violence Free Waitakere to provide the following support to Bruce McLaren Intermediate School:

- Programme Resources: Pens, Family Charters, STOP book marks. These resources are essential for unit 1 of the programme
- Facilitating of two teacher meetings and writing of reports

- Organising “Jay’s” visit to the school

Funding also enabled:

- Contract with Jane Holley to coordinate the programme for six months
- A final report to be written
- To present a workshop at the ‘Keeping Kids Safe’ conference on the VFBWM programme

In 2007 we had supported the teachers with teacher training before and during the programme. We had also involved the community by speaking to parents at the ‘Meet the Teacher’ evening and with the Alternative to Violence Project offering ‘Creating Peaceful Pathways’ workshops to parents.

2008 our main connection with the teachers was at two teacher meetings. (See Appendix 1 & 2 for Reports on these meetings). It was hoped that all teachers would attend these meetings along with Carol Brooks unfortunately this did not eventuate. There was also no contact with parents in year two.

This report then has been reliant mainly on oral feedback from the teachers, some Pacific youth workers and letters of recommendation from the students. As a result we do not have a formal evaluation on the impact of year two.

However the report does reveal some new insights and highlights. For this reason year two at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School has been of great benefit. It should also be noted that the programme together with Everyday Theatre has made a difference to hundreds of students.

# WHO WAS INVOLVED IN YEAR TWO?

The Violence Free Waitakere Team: Elaine Dyer, Jane Holley, Cathie Peters and Andrea O'Hagan

Seven year7 teachers from Bruce McLaren Intermediate School:

## **New to the VFBWM Programme**

Michelle Siaoloa

Dave Wileman

Christine Earnshaw

Hayley Groves

## **Participating for the second year**

Elizabeth McLachlan

Alana Dawes

Trudy Ingoe

Year 8 Teachers were also involved in a less committed way. Year 8 teachers from the 2007 pilot programme created a plan so that Year 8 students would also participate running a modified VFBWM and 'Keeping Ourselves Safe' programme.

Teachers who were involved in the 2007 pilot would support teachers who were new to the programme.

The school also organised for Everyday Theatre to run their programme to coincide with the running of the VFBWM programme.

The completion of the programme was a visit from 'Jay'. This was a highlight for students, staff and the VFW team.

# AIMS OF THE VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME PROGRAMME

To provide a teacher facilitated programme that decreases the incidence of violence in intermediate schools.

To increase awareness in schools and communities of possible personal choices, which may help reduce violence.

To promote a variety of transferable skills and options for non – violent behaviour and attitudes.

To provide support to students by providing knowledge and resources on how to keep themselves safe.

To promote the phrase and concept “Violence Free Begins With Me.”

# OBJECTIVES OF THE VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME PROGRAMME

- Reduce interpersonal violence
- Provide a foundation for peaceful and positive classroom and school culture
- Build relationships between teacher and student
- Build relationships between student and student
- Foster the building of a trusting community within the classroom, which is reflected in the playground and beyond
- Build self esteem and empathy
- Reduce bullying
- Identify children at risk
- Work collaboratively with other programmes
- Integrate into the national curricular

# VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME TIMELINE

BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL      FEBRUARY – MAY 2008

TERM 1 2008 WEEK 1	ALL YEAR 7 STUDENTS AT BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE BEGIN THE VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME PROGRAMME
1 FEBRUARY 2008	JANE HOLLEY CONTRACTED BY VIOLENCE FREE WAITAKERE TO COORDINATE THE VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME PROGRAMME
1 FEBRUARY	JANE CONFIRMS WITH BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE THAT VIOLENCE FREE WAITAKERE CAN OFFER THE SCHOOL SUPPORT
8 FEBRUARY	VFBWM RESOURCES ARE DELIVERED TO THE SCHOOL
11 MARCH	PLANNED TEACHER MEETING MOVED 18 MARCH
18 MARCH	FIRST TEACHER MEETING BETWEEN BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE AND JANE HOLLEY AND ELAINE DYER (APPENDIX 1)
MARCH	EVERYDAY THEATRE AT BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
9 APRIL	SECOND TEACHER MEETING BETWEEN BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE AND JANE HOLLEY AND ELAINE DYER (APPENDIX 2)
18 APRIL	ELAINE DYER, ANDREA O'HAGAN AND JANE HOLLEY PRESENT A WORKSHOP ABOUT VIOLENCE FREE BEGINS WITH ME AT THE "KEEPING KIDS SAFE" CONFERENCE
12 MAY	"JAY" VISITS BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE AND TALKS TO TWO YEAR 7 SYNDICATES AND THEN THE WHOLE SCHOOL AT ASSEMBLY
20 JUNE 2008	FINAL REPORT COMPLETED

# THE TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE, YEAR TWO

## OBSERVATIONS FROM THE TEACHERS

- We are closer as a class
- Brings class out and communicating
- Kids are more confident in coming forward
- They are comfortable with me and with each other
- It's built an environment of personal respect
- We can discuss real issues with each other/ they are not backward in coming forward
- Sensitive issues (e.g. gangs, sexuality) are been talked about in very open and honest ways
- Embarrassment levels seem much lower
- The level of discussion is deeper
- A deeper level of trust with me as the teacher and between the students has developed
- Kids are really honest with each other; really tell it how it is!
- Disclosures have increased
- Students do seem to be settled
- Dealing with a community/society with violence - playground behaviour reflects the influence of this
- Some bullying still happening, but not as full on as last year
- Kids come in the door in the morning and just open up about everything
- It's a very powerful programme – It is making a difference with our kids

## TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE OF FACILITATING PROGRAMME

### COMMENTS FROM TEACHERS NEW TO THE PROGRAMME

- I did not have VFBWM teacher training prior to starting the VFBWM programme, so was teaching into unknown territory. I didn't feel confident at first. Was unsure at first about how the students would respond to the content/programme
- I Skipped earlier units (Troll or Tulip Doesn't Feel Safe) I didn't realize how significant these units were
- Doing a mix of WISH and VFBWM
- Expressed doubt that any programme could make a difference to students who were so exposed to violence everyday on the media and in their community.

This was responded to by three teachers who strongly felt that the programme was making a difference and encouraged teachers to keep moving through the programme. Expressing the value of the programme, how it builds in steps and the real impact of the programme will be evident to at the completion of the whole programme

## COMMENTS FROM TEACHERS REPEATING THE PROGRAMME FOR THE SECOND YEAR

- The students this year generally are a less intense group. It is hard to compare results with last year
- I've focused on different aspects this year
- Having done the programme two years running I now feel confident that I can adapt the programme to match the needs of my class. This group of kids have got different things from the programme than last year, but it has still been very powerful
- I have felt more relaxed and enjoy teaching VFBWM even more this time around
- It's easier to see the progression the second time around and also make the links across other teaching areas to reinforce the programme
- I was the troll this year and also went into another class in the role as 'Troll'. Students followed the visit up with wonderful letters and gifts to help the troll. Amazing stuff and very rewarding
- When an incidence of violence occurs in the community (especially ones that involved students in the school) I see these as teaching opportunities. An opportunity to draw on the VFBWM programme to help the students look at what other choices they could make

## THE VALUE OF THE VFBWM PROGRAMME

- This is an excellent programme for relationship building
- The programme provides time to set up class culture and to spend time in relationship building. Relationship building; between teacher and student and also student to student
- School becomes a safe place to talk and express
- The programme develops respectful listening of others
- Students are feeling heard and respected
- Builds constructive classroom culture, sets foundation for working together
- Provides language for students to express themselves
- Provides tool box of ways to deal with violence/bullying
- Build empathy for others
- Children come to school and can express how they feel, it sets them up to then be in an emotionally quiet state and ready to focus on learning
- The programme is valuable because it builds self esteem in children
- The VFBWM programme helped students see a different way, given them knowledge and skills to choose non violent options
- Additional benefits:
  - Programme is very Skill based
  - Helps build vocabulary extension for accelerant classes
  - Beneficial for ESOL students as builds their vocabulary
  - Provides excellent language opportunities

In summary the strength of the VFBWM programme is that it provides a platform for relationship building. For a connection between teacher and child to occur, students get a clear message that teachers care about what is happening in their lives. They know we will listen to them, respect their feelings and provide a safe place to share.

The VFBWM programme also provides opportunity for students to be fully self expressive in their classroom, around their peers. They learn "It's OK to be me and feel the way I do."

# THE STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE

Those teachers involved in the 2007 VFBWM pilot agreed that the writing of letters of recommendation by the students at the end of the programme was a very beneficial exercise. It revealed the impact the VFBWM programme had had on the students.

While no formal evaluation has been done on the students to date; information emerging suggests that the programme does have a powerful impact on students

Below are samples of what students shared in their letters of recommendation:

- If I didn't participate in this programme I wouldn't know what to do when someone bullies me
- I liked that you could ask for help and feel better
- I liked this programme very much because it showed me how to get help, stop bullies from bullying
- Tulips story was sad, because the dad was hitting the mum. It taught me that it is not my fault if our parents fight
- It makes you think about ways you could use when then there is something bad that is happening
- I used to get hit at home until Violence Free came to my school
- It helped me a lot because I never knew I could help, but it helped, and now there are no bullies after me or my friends
- We got to do a violence poster. It was really good because it makes you think about all the ways violence starts
- VFBWM taught me that I can feel good about myself even if I have made mistakes. It showed me I can manage my physical side and my anger. That there are more ways to communicate than fists. It taught me about not being violent
- A way to calm my anger
- Taught me it's important to always feel good about myself
- Taught me how it feels for someone else to like you for being you. To think about the way we are all special. To like who we are
- The anger management was cool
- Taught me how to deal with being teased
- The DVD of Tulip was so good because it helped me help my Dad control his anger
- VFBWM taught me not to be a bully and pick on younger people than me

- VFBWM taught me that not all families are the same
- If a bully stops, everyone feels happier even the bully

***A child who had seen the “it’s not OK” ads on TV and asked his teacher***

***“Are we doing VFBWM so we can change the community?”***

## “JAY’S” VISIT

On the 12 May ‘Jay’ visited the school to talk with the students. “Jay’s story” is considered a highlight of the programme. In the VFWBM programme students hear a recording of “Jay’s story” which forms the foundation for work around learning to make choices and how to respond to the challenges in life.

“Jay’s story” highlights what happens when someone makes poor choices throughout their life, even if it is the result of abuse and neglect, and then how dramatically a life can be changed by making different choices.

### SAMPLE OF QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE STUDENTS

How has your life been in the past?

Do you ever forget what happened in your past?

How does it feel to have lived with this your whole life?

How did it feel to be in prison and how does it feel to be out of it?

How long were you in prison?

What do you do in prison?

How did it feel getting blamed when your cousin died?

Why did you put up with all the pain from when you were a child and into your future?

Are you happy with your life now or do you want to make it better?

If you could, would you go back in time and what would you change about your life and why?

Do you feel better about yourself now?

How old are you and what do you do now?

‘Jay’ spent time with the year 7 students answering their questions. After morning tea he spoke to the whole school.

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS TO 'JAY'

- Some of your statements made me realize what I have done wrong to the people around me! I also learned to tell people, like my friends, family members, teachers about what is happening in my life. It was really great having you here; now I'm not scared to tell people how I feel.
- Meeting 'Jay' has changed my life and my feelings. It helped me, how to talk to other people if you feel angry and I can see you changed your life around differently. Knowing this is a really good thing when you grow up. Talking with other people and sharing what things you don't want to tell.
- See Appendices for letters written by the students to 'Jay'

# NEW INSIGHTS

THE SECOND YEAR AT BRUCE McLAREN INTERMEDIATE HIGHLIGHTED THE FOLLOWING NEW INSIGHTS

## 1: IMPORTANCE OF PREPARING SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS

YEAR TWO HAS REVEALED THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARING AND TRAINING TEACHERS BEFORE THE PROGRAMME IS INTRODUCED INTO THE CLASSROOM. THIS PREPARATION IS NECESSARY TO:

### A: PREPARE THE TEACHERS FOR THE FACILITATION OF THE PROGRAMME

- To explain the history and philosophy of the programme
- To provide clear understanding for the reasons for the content and progression of the programmes units
- To establish clear messages around the importance of doing all the units, to ensure building a strong foundation for the programme
- To provide information on the facilitation of the programme
- To explain how the programme runs alongside the national curricular
- To establish teacher confidence about the purpose of the programme, expectations and disclosures
- To establish teacher confidence around facilitating the programme
- Explain the reasons for introducing the programme at the beginning of the school year

### B: PREPARE TEACHERS FOR THE IMPACT VFBWM PROGRAMME

This programme is not 'just another' unit to work into the timetable. This programme impacts on the culture of the classroom and school. It affects the relationships between teacher and students and between students. As a result teachers may experience more disclosures than usual.

Schools need to be prepared for this and additional support needs to be in place before the school starts the programme.

This support includes

- Informing the school counselor that the programme is taking place in the school
- Training the teachers on the school's disclosure policies

- Providing additional support resources. We found it useful to take the Family Violence Community Action pack to the school, as well as the SKIP material and the Safe Waitakere Parent Pack on the teenage years. The 'Its Not Ok' material was also welcomed by the staff
- Setting up contact people with local support agencies. Ideally for relationships to be established between the agency and the teachers/school before the programme starts
- Ensuring that the staff have connections with culturally appropriate agencies when needed

## 2: IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

SPENDING TIME WITH THE SCHOOL TO BUILD A NETWORK OF SUPPORT FOR WHEN DISCLOSURES OCCUR.

This could include:

- Forming relationships with outside community agencies
- Meeting the contact people within these agencies
- Gaining commitment from agencies to provide support
- Establishing an agreement around support stating what is being offered and what support teachers can expect
- Talk to police to ensure that if they respond to a situation around a pupil, that they come out of uniform so that the child isn't further traumatised or stigmatised
- Spending time with the school to build a network of support for when disclosures occur

### 3: THE VALUE OF TEACHER MEETINGS

TEACHER MEETINGS HAVE BEEN AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE PROGRAMME.

- These meeting give the teachers an opportunity to share reflective feedback and plan forward with each other. They are valuable for reflecting on what's showing up in response to the programme
- Teachers who are passionate about the programme share their inspiration, this is infectious
- Brings into awareness issues that are arising within the school and for individual teachers
- Teacher meetings also give Violence Free Waitakere the opportunity to gather valuable feedback on how the programme is going. From this feedback appropriate support can be offered. Also as the programme develops adjustments can be made
- Value of talking to teachers. To date the best method of assessing how the programme is going is from the teachers' feedback
- Provides an opportunity for teachers to hear positive experiences and ideas other teachers are having

### 4: THE VALUE OF THE VFBWM PROGRAMME

THE INTERMEDIATE YEARS ARE SIGNIFICANT YEARS IN A CHILD DEVELOPMENT. THIS PROGRAMME PLAYS A VALUABLE ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE CHILDS EXPERIENCES DURING THIS TIME.

The most valuable aspects are

- Building Self esteem
- Discovering you have choices
- Building trusting and safe relationships
- Talking about how you feel
- Hearing about how others feel

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## FUNDING

For funding to be sourced so that Violence Free Waitakere can introduce the VFBWM programme into other intermediate schools in Waitakere City in a controlled manner, ensuring that a full and independent evaluation is carried out about the programme.

## NEED FOR PREPARATION TO ROLL OUT INTO OTHER SCHOOLS

The need for implementation procedures so that schools who decide to partake in the VFBWM programme will work closely with Violence Free Waitakere.

It is recommended that Violence Free Waitakere introduce the VFBWM programme to teachers through a full teacher training day. This training will cover the philosophy of the programme, teaching of the programme and also extensive information and support on dealing with the disclosures. Ideally this would be at the end of the school year, so that the programme can be introduced at the beginning of the following year.

## TEACHER SUPERVISION/SUPPORT MEETINGS

It is essential to structure into the support plan three or four teacher meetings of at least one hour duration. These will be designed for teachers to feed back and project forward, gain insight from each other, and get support from the Violence Free Waitakere team and other community agencies.

## A FORMAL EVALUATION

An independent evaluation is important to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. Such an evaluation is currently being negotiated between Violence Free Waitakere and Alex Woodley of Point Research.

Without a formal evaluation there are still some unanswered questions.

What is the impact of the VFBWM programme when a whole school/year level participates?

Is there any evidence that students retain what they have learnt from the VFBWM programme?

Are there any “themes” of behaviour that can be identified?

How has the VFBWM programme impacted on school statistics on disclosures and incidents of violence?

How does this compare with other schools?

## EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

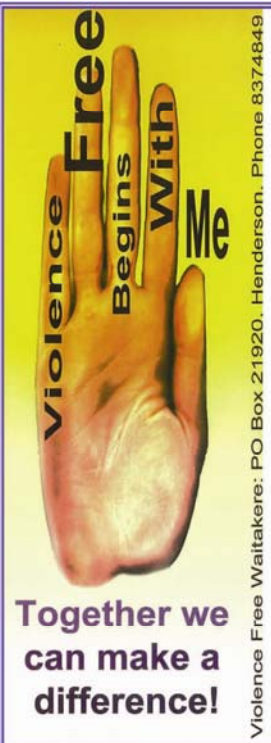
A proposal to the Violence Free Waitakere Team was made for ‘Jay’ to be contracted to visit every school participating in the VFBWM programme. It was suggested this visit would occur once the course has finished as a reinforcement of the messages.

To work in collaboration with Everyday Theatre. I.e. Everyday Theatre is in the school during the term that VFBWM is running.

To work in collaboration with the Alternatives To Violence Project and offer 'Creating Peaceful Pathways' workshops to the parents and wider community during the term that the VFBWM programme is running.

To work collaboratively with other community organisations and the police.

*We need to be really clear with future schools  
about the need for them to have training  
in Family Violence issues, disclosure policies and  
very good links into the community around ways of supporting  
the more serious cases which will emerge*



**Certificate of Course Completion**  
**'Violence Free Begins with Me'**

This is to congratulate

.....

who recognises that to create peace  
and non-violence in Waitakere city,  
we begin with ourselves

*Thank you for being a peace-maker*

Signed..... Date.....

# APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 VFBWM Progress Report (18<sup>th</sup> March 2008)
- Appendix 2 VFBWM Progress Report (9<sup>th</sup> April 2008)
- Appendix 2 Update on Violence Begins With Me Schools Programme
- Appendix 4 Extracts from student letters
- Appendix 5 Letter from Carol Brooks (26 October 2007)
- Appendix 6 Letter from Carol Brooks, (27 June 2008)
- Appendix 7 Letters from students to Violence Free Co-ordinators

# APPENDIX 1

## VFBWM Progress Report

18th March 2008

### Bruce McLaren Intermediate

#### Feedback from the teachers

Year 7: Michelle

- No issues to raise all going well
- Doing a mix of WISH and VFBWM
- Skill base
- Skipped some units
- Some deeper issues are coming up with the class... drama and EDT pushed some buttons but has been able to talk with Sher (guidance counsellor) about them
- Likes the practical activities, good interactions from kids for these
- Too early to tell re any changes she would suggest

Year 7: Hayley

- Did not have VFBWM teacher training prior to starting the VFBWM programme, so was teaching into unknown territory. She expressed she didn't feel confident at first. Was unsure at first about how the students would respond to the content/programme
- Skipped earlier units (didn't do Troll or Tulip Doesn't Feel Safe)
- She has finished
- Liked Jay's story and Michael Jones bullying video
- Has had disclosures regarding gangs etc as a result of Jay's story
- Feels the class has bonded, safe to talk about what is real

Feels students have information about different choices they can make

Year 7: Christine ESOL class

- Taking her time, thoroughly going through the programme
- Students loved Tulip doesn't feel safe and the volcano exercise (what gets you to boiling point)
- Helping to build vocabulary for her students
- No disclosures

Year 7: Alana (second year teaching VFBWM) Accelerant class

- Feeling confident about teaching the programme again this year
- Expanding the units she enjoyed last year
- Has bulked out units and is using VFBWM as a way of building language
- Really taking her time and expanding exercises e.g. Feelings - When you are angry what's it smell, taste, and sound like? This took three sessions and was very powerful
- Affirmation exercise – developed it further, which students loved
- No disclosures
- Students have a good understanding around bullying
- Students enjoyed Tulip, found the STOP idea useful

Year 7/8: Lisa

- Those that did VFBWM last year are more comfortable with themselves and sharing, more self expressed
- With the volcano they identified that even minor things can make us angry
- Is working with a combination of Keeping Ourselves Safe and VFBWM which Judith and Carol created last year. The two programmes are working well together

- Jay's story, Tree , Tulip and volcano all popular
- The year 8 students that are repeating units from last year thought at first it was going to be the same, but this has not been the case because of the excellent planning Judith has done

## The Impact

*Peter O'Connor from Everyday Theatre*  
*"out of all the schools that we have worked in anywhere,*  
*Bruce McLaren Intermediate is the real jewel"*

### The impact in the playground?

- Students do seem to be settled
- Dealing with a community/society with violence- playground behaviour reflects the influence of this
- Some bullying still happening, but not as full on as last year

### The impact in the classroom

- We are closer as a class
- Brings class out and communicating
- Kids are more confident in coming forward
- They are comfortable with me and with each other
- It's built an environment of personal respect
- We can discuss real issues with each other/ they are not backward in coming forward
- Sensitive issues (e.g. gangs, sexuality) are been talked about in very open and honest ways
- Embarrassment levels seem much lower
- The level of discussion is deeper
- Deeper level of trust with me as the teacher and between the students
- Kids are really honest with each other; really tell it how it is!
- Disclosures

*Child who had seen the "it's Not OK" ads on TV and asked his teacher*  
*"Are we doing VFBWM so we can change the community?"*

## What has emerged?

### The importance of funding

Funding is needed to provide initial teacher training, follow up training and support. Together with establishing a support system for the school.

### Meeting with the teachers is very important

- Value of talking to teachers
- Value of the teachers sharing with each other – feed forward/ reflect back
- Brings into awareness issues that are arising

### Our meeting with the teachers highlighted the following:

#### Importance of teacher training

- To establish clear messages around the importance of doing the all the units
  - Importance of building the foundation of the programme
  - Providing clear understanding around the intention behind the units
- Establishing teacher confidence about the purpose of VFBWM, expectations, disclosures
- To build our relationship with the school/teachers
- Preparing the school and teachers for disclosures
- One year 8 syndicate has done discrimination this term will do VFBWM later in year. Message around the advantages of beginning the year with VFBWM may not have been communicated to this syndicate. (Builds classroom culture, sets foundation for working together, provides language for

students to express themselves, provides tool box of ways to deal with violence/bullying. Builds self esteem and empathy for others)

### **Spending time with the school to build a network of support for when disclosures occur.**

This is to include:

- Forming of relationships with agencies
- Meeting the contact people within the professional agencies
- Commitment to provide support from specific agencies/people
- Establishing an agreement around support stating what is being offered and what support teachers can expect
- Talk to police to ensure that if they respond to a situation around a pupil, that they come out of uniform so that the child isn't further traumatised or stigmatised

### **Follow up Information for school.**

Elaine

- Follow up with Tony. Some serious cases of violence in families being made clear with pupils (more last year)
- Julie Adams contact details for the school
- Information on cutting/ self harm for teachers and students
- Information on SKIP, contact agencies and support people
- Non Violence Packs and SKIP packs / 6 principles
- 'It's Not OK' information
- Additional copy of resources for Jane's reference
- Request for police –Plain clothes, on time  
TYLA Programme – "Turn Your Life Around" suggestion from the some staff to have it in Bruce McLaren
- Request for Social workers- teachers find it is confusing as many social workers, would be great to deal with just one

Jane

- Follow up Staff for Creating Peaceful Pathways workshops - can we offer scholarships to staff?
- To talk to Sher the School counsellor – What support does she need? Her insight?
- Jane to follow up with Trudy and Liz to get their feedback

## VFBWM PROGRESS REPORT

### 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2008

### BRUCE MCLAREN INTERMEDIATE

#### **Present**

Five, year 7 teachers, Hayley, Michelle, Dave, Alana and Liz  
Jane Holley, Elaine Dyer from VFW and Sue Lytollis from CYF National Office

The meeting began with an opening round introducing ourselves and the teachers sharing where they are up to in the programme.

At the last meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> March we asked the teachers to get the students to write a letter of recommendation. In 2007 those involved in the programme agreed that this was a very beneficial exercise because it revealed the impact the VFBWM programme had had on the students. Teachers agreed that it was also an excellent language activity.

#### **Hayley:** Completed

- She had letters of recommendation from her class
- She was impressed with what had come through in the letters
- She is going to write a letter of recommendation about the programme
- This is an excellent programme for relationship building

#### **Michelle:** Completed

- Had not intended on doing the letters but on hearing the other teachers praise for the letter writing exercise she has decided to do it next week even though she has moved onto other work

#### **Dave:** Up to the affirmation exercise

- Expressed that he felt the students would just write what they thought we wanted to hear
- Had concerns that the violence happening out in the community, (that the students were witnessing and a part of) was a powerful influence on the students. He expressed doubt over whether the VFBWM programme could really impact on the students

Hayley, Alana and Liz responded to this with

- They disagreed, they felt that the VFBWM programme helped students see a different way, gave them knowledge and skills to choose non violent options
- It's a very powerful programme – It is making a difference with our kids
- That when an incidence of violence occurs in the community (especially ones that involved students in the school) to see these as teaching opportunities. An opportunity to draw on the VFBWM programme to help the students look at what other choices they could make
- The three teachers strongly felt that the programme was making a difference and encouraged Dave to keep moving through the programme. Expressing to him that the value of the programme, how it builds in steps and the real impact of the programme will be evident to him when he completes the whole programme

#### **Alana:** Near completion

#### **Liz:** Completed but letters still to be done

- The programme is valuable because it builds self esteem in children
- The students this year are a less intense group. It is hard to compare results with last year

- I've focused on different aspects this year
- Having done the programme two years running I now feel confident that I can adapt the programme to match the needs of my class. This group of kids have got different things from the programme than last year, but it has still been very powerful
- Requested whole school do the unit on Jays story in preparation for Jay's visit in term 2

**School has a zero tolerance to violence.  
Very clear message from the school that Violence is NOT OK**

**Quotes from two students letters**

*"When I was at Primary I always got bullied but now I haven't been bullied yet and now I can rely on Bruce McLaren School to be my friends...  
Thank you very much; you really made a difference in my life"*

*"Well I've never been bullied this year, since me and the class learnt and studied the VFBWM programme. It really gives me the answer to all my bad problems"*

## **The Impact**

- It is now clear how beneficial it is to do the VFBWM programme at the beginning of the year
- The programme provides time to set up class culture and to spend time in relationship building. Relationship building; between teacher and student and also student to student
- School becomes a safe place to talk and express
- The programme develops respective listening of others
- Students are feeling heard and respected
- Children come to school and can express how they feel, it sets them up to then be in an emotionally quiet state and ready to focus on learning

***VFBWM provides a platform for relationship building.***

***For connection between teacher and child to occur  
They get a clear message  
that we care about what is happening in their lives.***

***They know we will listen to them, respect their feelings  
and provide a safe place to share.***

***VFBWM provides opportunity for students to be  
Fully self expressive in their classroom, around their peers.  
They learn "It's OK to be me and feel the way I do"***

## What has emerged?

**It was evident again, that meeting with the teachers is very important and a necessary part of the programmes structure.**

### **Value of talking to teachers:**

- Further resources were brought in and shared with the teachers. These were enthusiastically received. Information included SKIP, Non Violence Packs , 'It's Not OK' information
- Talking to the teachers revealed the importance of teachers understanding the history and philosophy behind the VFBWM programme. Teachers need to understand this is not just another topic to cover during school time but a powerful programme that potentially changes the culture of the classroom and school
- Build the teachers understanding that the programme opens students up to communicating in very candid ways with teachers and each other. The need to establish support for students and teachers when this happens
- To build our relationship with the school/teachers
- It has become evident that some of the teachers were unaware that they were the only school in New Zealand doing VFBWM. Some teachers appeared to resent our presence and I feel this is because they have been unaware that this is a pilot programme and that their feedback is vitally important
- Has brought to our awareness that the impact of having VFBWM in the school may not have reached its full impact yet because not all teachers (year 8 in particular) have fully embraced the programme as was initially thought they would

### **Value of the teachers sharing with each other – feed forward/ reflect back**

- Teachers who are passionate about the programme share their inspiration, this is infectious
- Brings into awareness issues that are arising within the school and for individual teachers

### **Planned activities**

- Teachers to ask the students "If you could ask Jay a question what would you like to ask him?" Questions for Jay to be emailed to Jane
- Letters from the students to be completed and left at the office for Jane to collect
- Parent Interview question: Has your child talked about the VFBWM?

### **Follow up Information for school**

Elaine

- Follow up with Tony
- Julie Adams contact details for the school
- Information on cutting/ self harm for teachers and students
- Request for police –Plain clothes, on time  
Tyler Programme – "Turn your life around" Request from the school to have it in Bruce McLaren
- Request for Social workers- teachers find it is confusing as many social workers, would be great to deal with just one

Jane

- Follow up Staff for Creating Peaceful Pathways workshops - can we offer scholarships to staff?
- To talk to Sher the School counsellor – What support does she need? Her insight?
- Evaluation forms from teachers - to be collected

# APPENDIX 3



VIOLENCE FREE WAITAKERE INC  
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Henderson  
Waitakere 0650  
Ph 8374849  
Email: [vfw@xtra.co.nz](mailto:vfw@xtra.co.nz)  
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## **Update on Violence Free Begins With Me Schools programme**

**April 2008**

### **General update:**

The programme piloted last year at Bruce McLaren has been rolling out for its second year. All year sevens have gone through the programme and will complete by the end of Term One.

The school staff and teachers have noticed some significant differences in the classes this year, and some of this may be attributable to the programme. The teachers who were part of last year's pilot were sure that it has made a difference. Some of the new teachers to the module have also been very impressed with the ways that the programme has opened up more meaningful dialogue in the classrooms. A sample of some sections of the letters pupils wrote are attached, showing the value of transferring the learnings from school to home as well as generalising them out into the wider school environment.

We have also had feedback from the Pacific youth workers who are involved with the school, that they are noticing the shift in culture of many of the kids they engage with, and that they have heard it is because of this work.

Everyday Theatre, who came in and ran their programme again this year, acknowledge the school as being one of the best that they have ever worked with, and attribute the openness of the pupils and the emotional intelligence displayed as being enhanced by the programme's work. The combination of these two initiatives is one that we intend to continue nurturing.

Jane Holley has been on minimal hours as coordinator of the project in the school and is supporting the teachers if requested. She and I (as Project Manager) have attended the teacher debrief session in both March and April.

We have arranged with 'Jay' to come to the assembly of the school in May, and the staff are excited about the chance for the children to meet the real man behind the story, which is acknowledged as one of the high points of the programme.

We have had some discussions with the Police youth education officers about the possible links between our programme. They see that the strong point of our work is the fact that we train and support teachers with delivery of the work. Further discussion about collaboration has been put on hold until funding for our work is secured.

At the Keeping Kids Safe Conference on 14-15 April in Manukau, we gave a workshop about the programme. It was fully subscribed, and responses were enthusiastic. There is little doubt that a need for a generic programme of this nature exists.

## **Funding**

Despite major commitment to submitting applications to both the Ministry of Youth Development and the PBMA funding stream of Waitemata District Health Board, ultimately we were unsuccessful in gaining funds to proceed with a fully evaluated programme.

However we have heard of an ASB initiative to ensure that Maori and Pacific students engage in school to a greater extent. After discussing the programme with the managers of the fund, we submitted an expression of interest. We will be notified in June as to the outcome of this, if approved, we will be assisted in making up a business plan and if successful at that stage, could expect to hear in November 2008.

Although we made a very last minute EOI, we have informed the network of Maori and Pacific educators we have worked with and have committed to further consultation if we are approached to proceed with the funding from ASB

Other small possibilities have been seen, e.g. a September round of a UNICEF small grants fund up to \$10,000. Another suggestion has been made to link with the Graffiti Vandalism Contestable fund. This is being explored in Whakatane.

At the Keeping Kids Safe conference 14-15 April we presented the programme and were encouraged by the interest and enthusiasm for the work. One suggestion then was to talk with OSCAR (an after schools programme) as it was felt that it could be a good fit.

We have also informed the Waitakere City Council about the current state of funding challenge, and asked for their ongoing endorsement and support in kind (for example they have printed the certificates for the programme graduates, and have written letters of endorsement to both PBMA and Ministry of Youth Development)

## **Next steps**

### **Manual update**

Already we have seen some areas that we would like to modify in the manual, even though teachers tell us how easy it is to follow. These areas include updating the content of suggested role plays, adding in some of the extension activities developed by the teachers, and offering further extension activities in areas such as graffiti vandalism.

We have also seen that the teachers need more support and learning opportunities in terms of the material about family violence, child abuse prevention and other related topics. We understand that there is a little used protocol available through Ministry of Education which we are investigating.

We also realise the need to extend the check list for schools once we offer the programme, to ensure that all affected parties are informed about the programme and adequately resourced. We also have seen the value in training the teachers before hand about the whole design of the programme and the philosophy and method of application.

We are in the process of altering the language slightly to make the alignment with the new curriculum more obvious for teachers also.

We have been asked about our theoretical base for the programme, and would like to talk with those who know more about this aspect to help us identify the links.

Some of the teachers at Bruce McLaren also created a hybrid Keeping Ourselves Safe and VFBWM for year 8 students and we would like to look at this further.

### **Further Consultation with Maori and Pacific educators**

If successful with the ASB expression of interest, we are committed to making certain that the material is appropriate for these cultural groups. Feedback from teachers and pupils suggests that this is so, but we want to make sure that we are making the most of the opportunity with the programme for all pupils involved. Email contact has already been made with the key people in our existing networks, and we are exploring further expansion of this.

### **Evaluation:**

What we are applying for is to be able to work closely with an organisation or advisor to design and conduct a full evaluation of the programme.

An offer has been made to have a senior student at Unitec do some gathering of responses, observations and general reactions to the programme at Bruce McLaren, to talk with parents and others. This needs follow through.

On advice from the schools, the best time to run the programme is at the beginning of term one, so that right from the start it shapes and influences the culture of both classroom and school.

We therefore are aiming to get funding to begin this process of design and pre-testing (hard to do when the group we work with are year sevens) under way by the end of 2008. In the process of applying to MYD we were requested to name some of the possible measures we could use to do this, and were advised of the use of a standardised test e.g. Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventories.

Ideally we would like to begin talking with several of our advisory group about appropriate measures to evaluate the programme.

### **Linking with other initiatives**

Teachers report the awareness of children about the Its Not OK Campaign, and that they have been asking if this is part of the same programme. The timing of both is opportune. The teachers have appreciated the material from the campaign for their own information and to share as appropriate with students.

However we have also realised that some of the teachers are needing more confidence in local contacts who can help with issues that arise. We have been building bridges with them and the child advocates, and are making sure that they have up to date material with local contacts available.

The Alternatives to Violence Project (Creating Peaceful Pathways) are still offering community workshops for parents, teachers and other interested community members. They incorporate a children's care programme into the weekend course. This is important as a whole community approach in terms of shifting the attitudes and behaviour of the whole area. Any help with networking these workshops is appreciated.

### **Roll out**

While we have had a number of different people from different areas around New Zealand approach us in relation to the programme, we want to focus our energies in Waitakere and Whakatane. Whakatane is the home of one of the programme designers, Andrea O'Hagan, who is also a regional trainer for the Peace Foundations Cool Schools.

We would like to identify a local school willing to be part of the next round of piloting, but feel that it is premature to approach any school until we have an indication of funds available.

We are thinking that WEST would be a good body to work more closely with in terms of roll out.

### **Meeting with Advisory Group**

We gather that we will hear from ASB in early June. We therefore would like to meet with this group between 12:30-3pm on 26<sup>th</sup> June at the Community Waitakere rooms.

Please RSVP for catering purposes... we will give you afternoon tea!

Thank you for your ongoing interest and support of this work.

Elaine Dyer

Project Manager, Violence Free Waitakere.

## **Recent Resources available:**

### **World Report on Violence and Health**

World Health Organisation, Geneva 2002

### **Preventing Violence**

A guide to implementing the recommendations of the World Report on violence and Health  
WHO, Geneva 2004

### **School based Violence Prevention Programmes: A literature review**

Ian Hassall and Kirsten Hanna 2007

(Available electronically if requested from Violence Free Waitakere)

### **"Less Law, More Order: The Truth About Reducing Crime"**

Professor Irvin Waller, Director of the new Institute for the Prevention of Crime, University of Ottawa

# APPENDIX 4

## **Violence Free Begins With Me Programme**

*Extracts from student letters we received*

*from Bruce McLaren Intermediate School, April 08*

“When I was at Primary I always got bullied but now I haven’t been bullied yet and now I can rely on Bruce McLaren School to be my friends... Thank you very much; you really made a difference in my life”

“Well I’ve never been bullied this year ever, since me and the class learnt and studied the VFBWM programme. It really gives me the answer to all my bad problems. I think that all schools should participate in the VFBWM programme because it gives the schools answers of what they should do when someone bullies them. If I didn’t participate in the programme, I wouldn’t know what to do when someone bullies me”

“I learnt how to consider other peoples feelings. I learnt how to get out of bad situations like if someone wants a fight.”

“It has really helped Room 7 figure out how to sort out my problems and my classes; it has helped us sort out why we are angry, and how we got angry and what we can do about it”

“I learnt how to deal with anger problems calmly... My parents were also impressed with your helpful booklets we stored some emergency numbers”

“Step by step I learnt how to protect myself and my family with helping hands”

“Before I tried the course I was getting into heaps of fights and I was getting into heaps of trouble, but after the course I learnt not to hurt people and to walk away from fights and bad situations”

“I have stopped fighting with my brothers and sisters when I am at home. I have learnt that there are others ways to stop violence than using your fists; also you could help other people when they get into a fight you could help them settle it without anyone getting hurt”

“My house is now all peace and quiet thanks to this course”

“We now have greater thoughts for each other and we have learnt friendship skills. We learnt to look inside a person and don’t judge someone, get to know them first”

# APPENDIX 5

Bruce McLaren Intermediate School

Bruce McLaren Rd

Henderson

26<sup>th</sup> October 2007

Dear Sir/Madam,

Two syndicates at Bruce McLaren Intermediate School piloted the 'Violence Free Begins With Me' programme in Terms 1 and 2 of 2007.

The programme teaches young people different, more peaceful and appropriate, ways of dealing with potentially explosive situations.

Our data shows that those students who were exposed to the programme were less likely to become involved in inappropriate behaviours as were the student population not exposed to the programme. These results have continued to be demonstrated as the year has progressed.

The programme provides a common language, making it easier and more successful to deal with recalcitrant behaviour of students. In addition resolutions were made more quickly and with more lasting beneficial effects.

We have been so impressed with the programme and its results that all Year 7 classes will undertake it in 2008 in Terms 1&2. The Year 8 classes will incorporate the relevant sections of this programme alongside studying 'Keeping Ourselves Safe', a programme developed by the police in conjunction with the education department.

As part of the study in 2007 the Everyday Theatre were involved initially in those classes undergoing the 'Violence Free Begins With Me' Programme. So successful was this, that I asked that they provide the sessions for all the classes in the school. They agreed.

At the conclusion of their time with us I spoke to the organiser of the Everyday Theatre Group. He informed me that those classes who had had the VFBWM Programme were more open, more able to seek peaceful solutions to the dilemmas portrayed and were easier to work with. This, to me, spoke volumes. It was another indicator that the VFBWM Programme was having positive outcomes for those two syndicates who had undergone the programme.

I believe that these students have learned and practised strategies that will help them throughout their lives.

We were well supported in our delivery of the programme with initial Professional Development provided at the end of 2006 for those teachers who were teaching the programme Term 1, 2007.

Throughout the duration of the pilot several feedback / ongoing training meetings were held, supported by the Violence Free Waitakere team. During these meetings the teachers had the opportunity, in a safe forum, to express what was happening in their classes, talk about any modifications they were making to the programme to more suit their classes needs and generally to discuss how things were going. The teachers report that this was beneficial for the sharing of ideas and enhanced their programmes.

We feel that we are now able, with Violence Free Waitakere alongside us, to run our own Professional Development to introduce the VFBWM Programme and hold meetings throughout the course of the unit to ensure that everyone is comfortable with what is happening and to discuss and find solutions to any problems /difficulties that have arisen along with celebrating the successes that we will have.

We feel that while the programme is being introduced for the first time in a school that there does need to be quite intensive input from the programme developers to ensure that the teachers are supported in their teaching and that milestones are recorded and successes celebrated.

Everyday Theatre added a real dimension to the programme and put into context the concepts that were being introduced so theory was able to be put into practice.

I am really pleased that Everyday Theatre are again going to support the VFBWM Programme in 2008 at our school and thank CYF for their on-going support of this initiative.

Yours faithfully,

Carol Brooks (Associate Principal, Support).

# APPENDIX 6

Bruce McLaren Intermediate School  
Bruce McLaren Road  
Henderson

27 June 2008

Dear Sir/Madam,

In 2008, because of the success of the programme in 2007, all of the Year 7 students undertook the Violence Free Begins with Me programme in Term 1 of the year.

The Year 8 students, half of which had done the programme as Year 7 students the year before, re-examined the parts of the programme that integrated well with the Keeping Ourselves Safe Programme. This programme has been extremely successful in NZ and was developed by the NZ Police in association with the Ministry of Education.

Again we have found that because there is now a common language across the school, anyone behaving inappropriately is much more successfully dealt with and, in most cases, the behaviour is not repeated. Of course there will always be exceptions to this for a range of reasons.

This year again Everyday Theatre were involved with all the classes doing the VFBWM programme. This dramatic display both reinforces the messages of the programme and really brings the need for peaceful resolution home to the students and provides them with alternative ways of dealing with problem situations. These alternatives are built on as the year progresses and situations in the students' lives, their friends lives or simply from the newspapers and current events provide a need for this.

We were extremely lucky this year to have Jim, a man whose own story as 'Jay' formed part of the VFBWM programme, visit the school and work with all the Year 7 classes answering their questions. He did the same in some of the Year 8 classes and then spoke to the school as a whole at a school assembly.

Jim's presence was very powerful and the answers that he gave to the questions that were asked provided the students with food for thought.

The support to the teachers for the delivery of the programme, though less than in 2007 when we first piloted the programme, was invaluable. Several feedback sessions were held, supported by the Violence Free Waitakere team. A few of these sessions were with the Year 7 teachers only but later as the programme progressed in the Year 8 classes, those teachers were included. These sessions provided a safe forum where concerns could be expressed and discussions around modifications that had been implemented or could be trialled were aired.

After the two years we now feel that we, as a staff, are able to provide the Professional Development to introduce the programme and hold the meetings throughout the course of the unit, with maybe a final meeting with the

Violence Free Waitakere team to celebrate successes and go over any challenges that may have occurred and how they were dealt with.

This programme will run again for all our year 7 students in 2009 as it compliments perfectly what we are trying to achieve with our WISH Programme.

We hope that Every Day Theatre and Violence Free Waitakere can be involved. It would be the icing on the cake if Jim felt that he could again be part of this in 2009.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Brooks  
(Associate Principal, Support)

## APPENDIX 7

### LETTERS FROM STUDENTS TO VIOLENCE FREE CO-ORDINATORS