

# HIA of the Makoura College Responsibility Model:

## Bringing HIA into the School Community



# The Journey Begins...



# Acknowledgements

- Partners in the HIA: Catherine Straman (Wairarapa Public Health) and Tom Hullena (Principal, Makoura College).
- Key expert: Barrie Gordon (Senior Lecturer, Health and Physical Education, Victoria University).
- Peer reviewers: Christine Stewart (Ministry of Health) and Robert Quigley (Quigley and Watts Ltd).
- Quigley and Watts Ltd staff: Robert Quigley, Louise Thornley and Kate Marsh.
- Funder: Ministry of Health HIA Support Unit.

# Context

- Secondary school in East Masterton which nearly closed in 2008 due to a number of factors, particularly a falling roll.
- Around 250 pupils and over 50 teaching and support staff - proportion of Māori students enrolled in the main school increasing (48% 2008, 51% 2009, 58% 2010).
- Many students with complex needs and low literacy levels, and, up until the end of 2008, high suspension levels.
- The Minister of Education decided to keep the College open and appointed a new principal.

# Context

Tom Hullena started as principal in Term One 2009, and was interested in improving students' connectedness and wellbeing particularly in relation to:

- student-staff relationships
- students and teachers sense of wellbeing and belonging within the College
- students behaviour
- students academic achievements.

His philosophy was strongly underpinned by restorative approaches where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their behaviour and look at the impact their behaviour has on others. Hence the introduction of the Responsibility Model.

# The HIA Aimed to...

- inform further development and implementation of the Makoura Model by providing recommendations to enhance potential positive impacts on wellbeing and mitigate potential negative impacts
- enhance relationships between students and College staff, particularly teachers

# Central Questions for the HIA

- What are the potential positive and negative impacts of the continued implementation of the Makoura Model?
- What should be changed in the development and implementation of the Makoura Model to enhance positive implications and reduce negative implications for the health and wellbeing of students and staff?

# Evidence Sources & Analysis

- Community profile
- Literature scan
- Separate appraisal workshops with affected populations:
  - Makoura staff
  - students
  - whānau / the community
- Analysis of themes and causal pathways
- Write up of report



# Recommendations Accepted and Implemented

*'Its not one thing that's changed its lots of little things'*

- Use Waka Huia to teach about wellbeing and responsibility
- Continue to develop the Homeroom system for junior students
- Support the continued use of Round Tables
- Utilise existing community networks
- Member of the senior management team should be delegated with responsibility of implementing model across the College
- Consult with students about their needs and views of the College

# Success factors for the HIA

- Catherine Straman's experience as a teacher grounded the suggestions/recs.
- Evidence base in literature scan.
- Sought an expert in the area.
- Having a committed leader who would drive the recommendations.

‘As a leader I was on board with the HIA. Yes it aligned with my own thinking but the evidence indicated the approach I was taking could be successful. I was passionate about making a difference with this community.’

- Tom Hullena, Makoura Principal

‘At the time of the HIA I was a first time principal in a school with major issues. I was trying to learn the role of being a principal and all the responsibilities that come with that. The HIA was crucial because it supported my vision for the school and my vision on how to fix the school. In many ways it gave me confidence I was on the right track’.

- Tom Hullena, Makoura Principal

‘I was dealing with a whole lot of other issues the school wasn’t meeting the mark on so my energies were divided in a thousand different directions. If behaviour was the only issue I was dealing with I would’ve gone with all of the recommendations wholeheartedly. I still think what you guys came up with was absolutely the right way to go’.

- Tom Hullena, Makoura Principal

# What Has Happened Since?

- Student behaviour has improved.
- Truancy has decreased – 2009 Year 13 less than 50% attendance now it's around 70%.
- Huge increase in Year 9 role – Ministry predicted 40% and they got 75%.
- There has been a shift in the attitudes of many staff and increased staff buy-in to the philosophy.
- Student achievement has increased - 78% pass rate for NCA Level 1 – other state school in town had 58% pass rate. Maori students had 80% pass rate.
- Only one teacher left despite several saying they wanted to leave.
- The changes in the school and students have happened a lot quicker than the Principal had anticipated.

# Another Interesting Outcome

While its hard to gauge the degree of influence the HIA has had on outcomes at the College (as the College was already heading in that direction), it is interesting that the HIAs predictions on potential outcomes are being realised at the College in relation to:

- Social connectedness
- Student/staff relationships
- Increased learning outcomes

# The Literature Clearly Showed...

- Positive outcomes for young people are achieved when supportive social environments are created through a combination of quality relationships, effective youth participation, good information and a consistent strengths-based approach.
- Schools have an important part to play in improving the wellbeing of both students and staff. Research indicates that when students have good relationships with their teachers, are well connected to their school and have a strong sense of belonging, they are likely to stay at school for longer, have higher educational achievements and have greater health outcomes.
- The Responsibility Model, Restorative Justice Model and Health Promoting Schools are three whole school models that highlight the importance of student-teacher relationships, a holistic approach, and linkages with the community. When implemented successfully, these models are essentially about increasing connectedness to improve wellbeing for young people, staff and the community.



Thank You 😊

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# New Initiatives to improve behaviour and increase connectedness

- student management system for collecting behavioural data
- restorative justice practices
- changed school day to three one and half hour periods rather than five periods
- PD for staff around building relationships
- changed parent teacher interviews system

# Challenges

- Getting staff on board - It took a year of doubt and stress for staff to get on board with it. most of them are on board with the approach – maybe a 20% that don't see the value in it.
- support from parents
- further work around teachers doing lessons on what it means to be responsible eg, being responsible around the drinking fountain, lining up in cafeteria, being respectful in the classroom; establishing some common agreements around what it means to be responsible in our school, community and environment and then reinforcing that. Over time they start to become embedded and taken as normal especially when people start to see the positive effects. Being explicit about what responsibility means and teaching that like you'd teach someone how to swim.