

# Respect All People

# RAP

Whakamana Tangata



## How youth organisations can effectively promote respectful behaviour

- This information is to help youth organisations *reduce* and *replace* violence in the environment they provide to young people.
- This information has been developed by the RAP Project.
- The goal of the RAP Project is to change the 'settings' youth organisations provide for young people so they promote respectful behaviour.
- The project had identified that youth organisations can promote non-violence by actively reducing the incidence of violence [or its likelihood] and actively encouraging respectful behaviour that will replace violence.



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... reduce and  
replace violence ...  
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# What are we talking about?

## What is violence?

**Violence** is the abusive or unjust exercise of power to:

- Stop someone doing something.
- Make someone do something.
- Punish someone for doing something.

Violence is not just physical. It includes threats, intimidation, put-downs, humiliation, sexual abuse, twisting of words or playing mind games.

It can include indirect communication through texts and the internet.

Violence is a behavioural choice that individuals make.

Violence is frequently blamed on poverty, upbringing, anger, alcohol, drugs, lack of communication, jealousy, mental illness, stress, illness, lack of education.

But many people experience these without using violence.

Most people who use violence in one situation are able to be calm and patient in other situations. They know using violence is not the acceptable social norm and can moderate their behaviour.

## What is non-violence?

Non-violence is the choice to avoid violence. **We call this respect.** This choice is made to avoid the unhealthy effect of violence on individuals and relationships, and to use more effective ways to resolve conflict.

Respectful behaviour avoids abusive or unjust behaviour. It demonstrates respect for the autonomy and rights of others by taking a cooperative and problem-solving approach.

### **This is done by:**

- Encouraging individuals to make their own choices over things that affect them.
- Encouraging the fair participation of everyone.
- Accepting differences.
- Solving problems by sharing information, gathering different views, finding common goals, sticking within the agreed rules, being creative and where possible, reaching consensus.
- Being clear about who has what power to do what.

### **Being respectful is a more effective way to relate to others as:**

- It maintains everyone's esteem, mana, wairua and health.
- It encourages everyone's participation, leading to greater creativity and enjoyment.
- It provides a positive experience that individuals can use to develop and apply non-violent skills in other aspects of their lives.

**Most people are respectful all of the time. It is the social norm in most settings. The social norm is the accepted behaviour for any given social situation.**

# Organisations can reduce and replace violence

To promote respect an organisation needs to deliberately reduce and replace violence.

## Reduce violence

This involves taking actions that will reduce the likelihood of violence occurring.

### This includes:

- Identifying the violence that does occur in the environment.
- Managing all aspects of their environment to ensure it is as safe as possible for young people.
- Consistently giving the message that violence is unacceptable.
- Having real consequences when it happens.
- Learning from any violent incidents that occur.
- Have a social norm that does not tolerate any form of violence.

## Replace violence

This involves taking actions that will replace violence with respectful behaviour.

### This includes:

- Identifying the respectful behaviour that is desired instead of violence.
- Managing all aspects of the environment to ensure it promotes the desired behaviour.
- Consistently giving the message about what is desirable behaviour.
- Having real consequences when it happens, especially positive reinforcement.
- Learning from incidents of desirable behaviour.
- Having a social norm of desirable behaviour.

# Where youth organisations can start

The RAP Respect All People Whakamana Tangata project has developed an assessment tool youth organisations can use to determine how it currently responds to violence and to identify what are realistic steps it can take to better reduce and replace violence.

## This assessment looks at:

- How the organisation defines violence.
- What the organisation's staff expect about young people being violent.
- How staff respond when there is violence.
- How staff prevent violence.
- How the organisation supports staff to manage violence.

This assessment tool will help organisations determine where they are on a continuum from:



The assessment tool gives basic information on how an organisation can better reduce and replace violence by redefining violence, changing staff expectations, reducing the likelihood of violent behaviour, preventing violent behaviour and supporting staff.

This resource gives more details of specific actions organisations can take to ensure they reduce and replace violence.

This assessment tool is available from [www.respect.org.nz](http://www.respect.org.nz)

## How an organisation can use key factors to promote non-violence for young people

To effectively promote non-violence in their environment, an organisation will need to focus on both **reducing** the incidence of violence and **replacing** it with respectful behaviour.

They will need to do this in all key factors of their management.

### The key factors are:

- The role-modelling and relationships within the environment.
- The communication within the environment.
- Having staff operating non-violently.
- Managing the behaviour of everyone in the environment.
- The organisation's policies.
- The physical spaces of the environment.

These are detailed below, along with specific actions that organisations can take to become a respectful environment.

# The specific actions for each key factor that will contribute to a non-violent environment

## Role-modelling & relationships

Staff members are the embodiment of the organisation's values and have a crucial role in setting a respectful social norm

### KEY FACTORS

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

#### Role-modelling

- Staff [including volunteers] model the social norm of the organisation and young people learn what behaviour is expected from how staff act.
- By using, and being seen to use, respectful communication and conflict management skills staff will make a significant contribution to establishing a respecting culture.
- Staff induction, ongoing training and supervision, coaching and mentoring, and performance management all need to support staff to reduce the incidence of violence and to replace it with respectful behaviour.

#### Relationships

- The relationships between staff demonstrates to young people what staff's actual commitment is to being respectful.
- Staff relationships give a powerful opportunity to demonstrate respectful ways of communicating and resolving conflict.

## Communication

Violence is typically explained as a break down or a dysfunctional form of communication. Alternatives to violence usually involve using different communication approaches. All of the organisation's communication [staff-young people; staff-staff; governance-management-staff; organisation-community] give opportunities to reduce the likelihood of violence and to replace it with respectful behaviour. The communication norm within an organisation is a powerful means for an organisation to demonstrate what it believes and how it enacts this.

### KEY FACTORS

### SPECIFIC ACTIONS

#### Conflict resolution

- Research shows young people confuse conflict with violence. If an organisation consistently resolves conflict and solves problems without violence it will significantly reduce violence and will demonstrate the behaviour to replace it.
- Respectful conflict resolution would address the problem not the person, find common goals, comply with agreed rules, use flexibility and be creative. These skills can be developed by training.
- Early and informal problem solving, with an emphasis on the benefits for everyone, will reduce the likelihood of violence.

#### Interpersonal communications

- All people involved in the organisation need to communicate in a manner that is obviously respectful. Body language and tone needs to be congruent, listening effective, responses appropriate, humour apt, and behaviour inclusive and defusing of tension. These skills can be developed by training.
- The desired communication behaviour can be identified in an organisation's values statement or code of conduct.

## Staff

An organisation's staff are the best means of reducing and replacing violence.

### Job descriptions

- The **job descriptions** of all staff [including volunteers] need to incorporate what respectful skills are required and what they are expected to do to reduce and replace violence.

### Recruitment and selection

- Working in a respectful environment is attractive to staff. If this is **promoted** in job advertisements or the information sent to prospective applicants [job description, mission statement and values statements] it is more likely suitable individuals will apply to work at the organisation.
- Staff need to **demonstrate** they are committed to respectful behaviour, and have the required communication skills. Asking them to describe a situation which demonstrates their values and communication skills at the job interview is an effective way of gathering comparative information.

### Induction, ongoing training and supervision

- The values and mission of the organisation need to be covered at the **induction** of new staff, along with their role in reducing and replacing violence. This needs to be explicit and it can't be assumed staff will know what is required of them.
- **Ongoing training** of staff needs to reiterate how staff can promote respect. The debriefing of events, [involving both violent and positive behaviour] gives real learning opportunities for staff.

### Support

- Staff **supervision** needs to address how staff are effectively managing potentially violent situations and what they're doing to actively promote respect. The positive actions of staff need to be reinforced as conspicuously as negative behaviour is discouraged. Staff may appreciate ongoing **coaching or mentoring** from senior staff.
- Staff need to feel a valued part of the organisation, with genuine **support** from colleagues, a collective approach and a team commitment to respectful values.
- Staff may appreciate having readily accessible and up-to-date information on local **social services** young people could use to deal with violence and other issues.

### Performance management

- How staff enact the organisation's values and the communication style they use need to be genuine factors in their **performance appraisal / management**. An effective way to do this is for the staff member and their manager to give specific examples that demonstrate how they have met the requirements of the job description.
- Staff reduction and replacement of violence needs to be actively rewarded.
- When staff are promoted into more supervisory or management roles, their job description needs to ensure they have an active role on **mentoring** younger staff in the organisation's values and preferred communication style.

## Managing behaviour

The organisation needs to be clear what specific actions would demonstrate the respectful social norm and have specific, effective strategies to both discourage undesirable behaviour and to actively promoting the desirable behaviour.

### Rules

- The organisation's **rules** need to explicitly identify what behaviour is violent and is unacceptable. They need to also identify the real consequences of violent behaviour would be. The rules need to apply to everyone involved in the organisation. This may require some induction process for people coming into the organisation.
- The rules need to be seen as consistently and decisively enforced with real consequences.
- Rules will reduce the likelihood of violence.

### Behaviour code

- Alongside rules, the organisation needs to continually promote a behaviour code that clearly identifies the respectful behaviour.
- The behaviour code needs to be publicly enforced and actioned as much as the rules, with positive behaviour conspicuously reinforced with real positive consequences.
- The behaviour code need to apply to everyone involved in the organisation. This may require some induction process for people coming into the organisation.
- The behaviour code will help replace violence.

### Organisational culture

- The **organisational culture** is made up of the shared behavioural norms, which are typically based on what people perceive really happens in the organisation. How official policies are seen to be actually enacted will set the culture.
- What happens, or is seen to happen, needs to be congruent with any statements. Walk the talk. Young people are very aware of any discrepancies in adult behaviour. If young people believe the organisation has **integrity**, they will support its respectful values.
- There will be **leaders** within the organisation [both staff and young people] that set the organisational culture with their attitudes and perceptions.
- Draw on the cultural heritage of the young people for **heroes** that exemplify the respectful behaviour, and legends, the stories of how challenges were met without violence.
- Build the desired culture with the organisation's own heroes and legends.
- If the organisational culture is relaxed and stress-free, young people will **respond** to this atmosphere with less anxiety and by acting in more respectful ways.

## Organisational Policies

All written policies need to explicitly state the organisation's position on violence. Policies need to focus on both the negative [by seeking to reduce violence] and the positive [by identifying the respectful behaviour to replace violence.]

The organisation's policies are likely to come out of the organisation considering what they want their [social] environment to be like and what is the acceptable social norm they want.

### Documentation

- An organisation's **mission statement or goal [or an explanation of these]** needs to explicitly recognise that violence will detract from the organisation's effectiveness and will impede the organisation achieving its purpose.
- Any organisational statement of **values** needs to explicitly state that violence is unacceptable and identify what respectful values are important to the organisation. It would be most effective if the values are explained in terms of specific behaviours that demonstrate the values in action.
- **A Code of Ethics or Conduct** identifies that violence is completely unacceptable and identifies what specific respectful behaviour [especially when communicating or resolving conflict] is expected at all times. This needs to apply to everyone involved in the organisation.
- All **Job descriptions** for staff [including volunteers] need to identify their commitment to abide by the code of ethics or conduct.

### Conflict resolution

- Everyone within the organisation needs to know how **conflict is resolved respectfully** within the organisation. This is from the governance / management level to differences between young people. The preferred way of resolving conflict needs to be commonly known, regularly promoted to all, accessible, effective and easy to instigate. It needs to be the actual way conflict is respectfully resolved and be seen to work.

### Safety plans and contact people

- The organisation needs to have a proven management **safety plan** that all staff are aware of, in case violence [including bullying] happens at the organisation, on official outings, in the immediate vicinity, or in the young people's wider community [where they could be affected by it]. This plan needs to deal with the immediate consequences of violence while also sending a clear message that violence is unacceptable. This can incorporate time out and strategies to manage anger.
- The safety plan needs to identify **contact people** within the organisation that young people can contact if they feel bullied or are subjected to violence.
- The safety plan needs to identify how the organisation will learn from any violent incidents and re-establish a norm of respect.

## Physical environments

An organisation's physical setting will include spaces where young people feel unsafe and violence is more likely to occur. The young people, especially those on the edge of the group, will be able to easily identify these. They're typically hidden areas that feel outside the organisation's influence. They may be where the staff do not usually go. *Having young people map their feelings of safety in the organisation's area will give useful information.*

### Physical spaces

- The organisation needs to provide **comfortable**, well lit areas, appropriate for the atmosphere they want and the activity occurring.
- A well-cared for environment will show an organisation's caring attitude and attention to detail.
- Public space needs to be genuinely **available** for everyone to use while private spaces need to offer security.
- The organisation needs to identify areas with an increased likelihood of violence and effectively reduce the risks. This may involve restricting access, improving lighting, renovating the décor, establishing more of a staff presence, using cameras or mirrors to check them regularly, or reconfiguring the space.