

ShowCase

It's not OK

Topic:

Domestic violence

Organisation:

Ministry of Social Development; Families Commission; Senate Communications

Location:

New Zealand

Dates:

2007 - 2011

Budget:

NZ\$14 million over 4 years

Website:

www.areyouok.org.nz

Contact:

Tracey Bridges (Partner, Senate Communications)

Email:

tracey@senatecommunications.co.nz

Telephone:

+64 4 471 5372



Overview

The It's not OK campaign is a community-driven effort to reduce family violence in New Zealand. It is about challenging attitudes and behaviour that tolerate any kind of family violence.

Initiated by the Taskforce for Action on Violence Within Families, the campaign is led by the Ministry of Social Development and the Families Commission, in association with communities. It has three core interrelated elements: community action, communications /mass media and research and evaluation. This involves a range of national and local activities.

Results:

- One in five people reported taking some action (such as talking with others or seeking help)
- Partner statistics show more people are seeking help for family violence
- Perpetrators are seeking help through the campaign's telephone helpline and website
- Communities are launching their own programmes adopting the 'it's not OK' message
- Improved media reporting of family violence – the message that family violence is 'not OK' is infiltrating news media and popular culture



Family violence is one of New Zealand's most significant social issues in terms of number of people affected, long-term life effects and cost to the country. Family violence causes death, injury and fear. It causes families to break up and jeopardises children's health, education and social outcomes.

Between 2000 and 2005 police statistics showed that half of all murders in New Zealand were committed by a family member. In 2006/07 there were 28 recorded family violence murders. While police deal with more than 70,000 calls about family violence each year, they estimate that only 18 per cent of incidents are reported.

In 2005, amid growing concerns about the level of family violence, the New Zealand Government established the Taskforce for Action on Violence Within Families to advise on how to address the issue. This high-powered, multi-agency Taskforce is made up of 17 government and non-government organisations (NGOs) involved in family violence issues. These include representatives from the:

- Ministry of Social Development
- Families Commission
- Ministry of Women's Affairs
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Health, Police, Accident Compensation Corporation
- Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and Te Puni Kokiri (Ministry of Maori Affairs)
- The Children's Commissioner
- The Chief District Court Judge
- The Principal Family Court Judge
- Women's Refuges
- Relationship Services

- **Jigsaw**

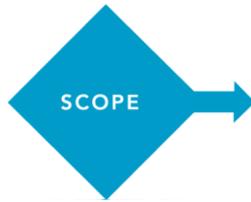
The Campaign for Action on Family Violence is a major initiative of the Taskforce for Action on Violence Within Families. As part of this initiative, the 'It's not OK' campaign was developed and is jointly managed by the Ministry of Social Development and Families Commission. The four-year campaign aims to mobilise New Zealanders to change the way they think and act about family violence. As such, it forms part of a broader programme of policies and initiatives aimed at reducing the incidence of family violence in New Zealand.

The long-term goals for the programme are to:

- Reduce the incidence of family violence in New Zealand
- Increase the number of New Zealanders prepared to talk about family violence
- Increase the number of New Zealanders prepared to offer help in family violence situations
- Increase the number of New Zealanders prepared to seek help
- Reduce the media reporting of family violence myths

The It's not OK campaign uses a social marketing framework to ensure it can be sustainable. It:

- Uses a carefully planned, audience-driven approach to changing behaviour
- Creates environments that support desired behaviour, rather than just targeting individuals
- Is grounded in good research and continually evaluated



It's Not OK is heavily driven by a focus on audiences. Understanding the reality of their lives and circumstances and those of the people around them guided the focus for the campaign, the development of the strategy and the campaign execution.



Intended audiences

The campaign set itself an ambitious task of connecting with all New Zealanders:

- Perpetrators – those who need to stop violent behaviour
- Victims – the direct and indirect recipients of violence
- Influencers – those who help create an environment of intolerance for violence and support for violence-free lives (including social, work and cultural networks and media commentators)
- The 'system' – those involved in the process of education and enforcement around family violence
- Activists – those working for change nationally or locally

Research

Work on the campaign began with 37 in-depth interviews with ethnically diverse male perpetrators of intimate partner violence. All interviewers and participants were matched by gender and ethnicity (Pakeha, Māori, Pacific Island and Chinese). The aim of the interviews was to:

- Determine the appropriate target audience for the campaign
- Understand the needs, wants, values and perceptions of male perpetrators, their partners and influencers
- Understand how best to cause positive behaviour change in male perpetrators
- Take into account men's interpretations of their violence and motivations to change

A wide range of perspectives was also sought through:

- Academic and sector research
- Input from people working in the field of family violence
- Reviewing previous international and local social marketing campaigns

Key insights

There was a hypothesis that since most harm from family violence is caused by male-perpetrated intimate-partner violence, that was where the campaign should start. However, the qualitative research showed that:

- New Zealanders had no clear understanding of the nature and scope of family violence
- There was a strongly held belief that it equates to physical violence only
- There was widespread disassociation ('that's not who I am'), justification ('I was provoked') and minimisation ('I never hit her')

Other findings

The formative research also revealed that:

- Male perpetrators and those around them did not understand the full range of behaviours constituting family violence. The campaign therefore needed establish a broader definition of family violence
- The media was seen to perpetuate the belief that family violence is a specifically Māori or Pacific problem
- Perpetrators considered violence to be normal. Many men described childhoods marked by beatings and observing their own fathers as perpetrators of intimate partner violence
- Some reported shame or stigma in seeking assistance for their violence (such as being described as a 'wife beater' or 'having an anger problem')
- Views of masculinity informed beliefs in adhering to gender roles and the right of men to assert their authority over their families
- Many men viewed alcohol abuse as a factor in their use of violence
- Many perpetrators described experiencing confusion and uncertainty about their role as men and what society expects and accepts from them. This led them to feel blamed and unfairly targeted 'by the system'
- Children (younger children in particular) can be a powerful influence on men who are fathers and on their desire to change

Perpetrators reported the following triggers for intimate partner violence:

- Loss of authority or control
- Need to administer gender rules and maintain expectations
- Frustration or anger (loss of control)
- Inadequacy, insecurity or jealousy
- Closure, distance and control
- Lack of insight, care, empathy and responsibility
- Loss of face

- Escalation of tensions and argument
- Lack of alternative skills
- Stress (for example related to finances, employment, family and health)
- Tiredness
- Social isolation, lack of social or family support
- Alcohol and drugs
- Immigration related issues

The following justifications were often given for using violence:

- An anger management problem
- Failure by a partner to fulfil her role or expectations
- Disrespect or lack of appreciation
- Partner provocation
- The partner was the problem
- It was required or necessary
- Acceptance (by partner)
- Denial or 'there won't be a next time'
- There was an injustice
- Violence was limited or controlled

Approach

The research highlighted a need to take a step back before addressing intimate partner violence. It was important to begin with a phase of work that established a context for later communications. It was important first to create a common view that family violence is a serious social issue for all New Zealanders and to begin to mobilise social change.

The qualitative research showed that violence was a way of life for many people. When they were under pressure or did not manage to get what they wanted, violence was the only response they knew. So to remove this option, the campaign would have to offer them an alternative.

That alternative was hope for a better life, the means to talk about it, the ability to ask for help, and the opportunity to change through positive representations of manhood and parenthood.

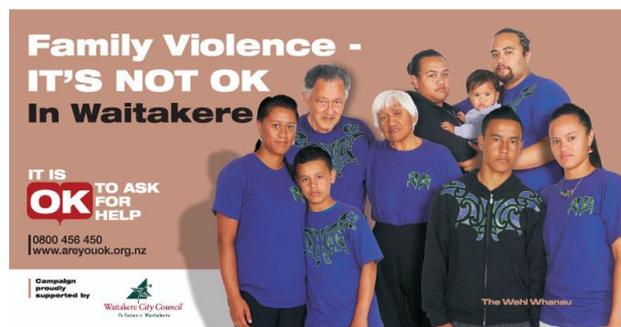


A core principle for the campaign team was that the campaign needed to be presented in a way that could lead to positive change for people living with violence – not just blaming and exclusion.

The campaign team believed that campaigns that depicted extreme family violence allow people to distance themselves from the issue ('that's about other people').

The campaign does not, however, deny the dark side of family violence, and is unambiguous in its message against family violence. It balances the light and dark sides in key messaging around the simple theme 'It's not OK – but it is OK to ask for help'.

"We were firm in our belief that positive change is possible – but that people first need to accept our messages, not reject them because they felt blamed or alienated by them. We didn't want anyone to respond to our messages by switching off or thinking, 'that's about bad, violent, people – other people', we wanted people to think, 'Is that me? Do I know someone like that?' And to open people's mind to the possibility that they may need to make a change." (Tracey Bridges, Senate Communications Partner)



The fundamental element of the campaign is the key message and brand, which was designed to sit at the heart of campaign materials and activities, and to be shared widely, and used by any person or community with an interest in the topic.

In addition to this core branding, It's Not OK incorporates a number of other elements to provide moral and practical support to change the behaviours and attitudes of the media and the perpetrators and victims of family violence.

Community Action Fund

The establishment of the Community Action Fund recognises the value of communities knowing what works for them and how to tap into their own assets and strengths to create change. The fund builds sustainability by embedding the campaign into the community. Accounting for one-third of the entire campaign budget, funding is provided to a range of community change projects throughout New Zealand that address and prevent family violence and support campaign messages that family violence is unacceptable.

Mass media campaign

A mass media campaign was developed, based on the theme 'It's Not OK', to support and galvanise community action. The first advertisements featured local celebrities and ordinary New Zealanders, men and women, voicing short messages about what is not OK, such as 'It's not OK to blame the drink' or 'It's not OK to look the other way'. The ads concluded with a positive message: 'Family

Violence – It’s not OK...but it is OK to ask for help.’

Once this context was established, the second phase of the campaign sought to give stories of positive change. The mass media campaign included four real stories from real men about how they changed or encouraged those close to them to change, thus highlighting the positive and possible alternative to family violence.

Media channels included television and radio advertisements, billboards and print advertising.

Media advocacy

Prior to the campaign, coverage of family violence was negative, contained myths and offered no details of how find help or support. The campaign provides:

- Workshops with journalists and journalism schools on family violence
- Media training with spokespeople and community groups to enable them to get their messages into local media
- Toolkit for journalists on how best to represent family violence in the media, to help increase balanced coverage of family violence and provide accurate information on family violence in New Zealand



Resources

- A Community Action Toolkit: To support communities to reduce and prevent family violence, providing strategies and ideas for community projects, ideas for engaging different sectors in the community, facts and figures, case studies and success stories, and guidance on project planning, testing and evaluation. The core message and visual identity ('It's Not OK' / 'It is OK to ask for help') can be used in any situation by anyone supporting the campaign message
- Printed resources: Booklets and fact sheets providing information for perpetrators, victims and community members about ways of addressing family violence and where to go for help; booklets about parenting and children; and information about the campaign and reasons for a comprehensive response to family violence
- A book of stories about New Zealanders' experiences of child abuse and the impacts on their lives, including in some instances their own offending
- Merchandise and collateral, including car bumper stickers, balloons, pens and stationery, banners and signage
- A DVD describing what people and organisations are doing in their communities to promote the message that family violence is not OK
- A free telephone helpline provides self-help information and connects callers to services in their areas, where appropriate. The service is available 7 days a week, from 9am to 11pm, with an after-hours message re-directing callers in the case of an emergency
- A campaign website provides information on personal change for people who are violent, the people who influence them, victims of violence or people worried about them, as well as information for students, the media, and people wanting to make a difference

Partnerships

The development of relationships to expand the influence of the campaign is pivotal to its effectiveness. Successful partnerships include:

- Local authorities localising the campaign – billboards, resources
- Rotary International – NZ family violence campaign to support It's not OK
- Business/workplace support – toolkit for employers and employees
- NZ Police – campaign team providing media training for police family violence coordinators
- Kapa haka teams – 12 of the 14 winning regional teams wore supporting messages at Te Matatini 2009
- Super Maori Fullas – sharing their kaupapa to encourage others to live violence-free lives



The campaign implementation began by focusing on creating a social norm by defining what family violence is and that 'it's not OK'.

"A man called the 0800 number and asked for help, soon after the first phase began. He said that the night before he had seen the ad on TV. He turned to his wife, who was sitting with him, and said, 'well that's not me is it?' and – he said – she laughed nervously. That's what made him think he needed help." (Tracey Bridges, Senate Communications Partner)



A key success of the campaign has been the combination of the national mass media and the local community action projects funded by the Community Action Fund. By providing local communities with the financial resources and the materials from the national campaign, local initiatives have been able to deliver targeted interventions that use the high profile and awareness of the It's Not OK brand to reach as many New Zealanders as possible.

"We have learnt that one of the most powerful things about this programme is the combination of national level, high profile communications, with a very wide range of disparate community owned initiatives, which the campaign team supports but does not try to control. Each element has worked, because of the combination." (Tracey Bridges, Senate Communications Partner)

Between 2007 and 2010 the Community Action Fund supported 147 community projects. These included projects such as:

- Pacific campaign with a street march in Auckland
- Masterton Pak'n Save declared itself the first violence free supermarket in New Zealand
- Campaign posters on buses in Christchurch
- A 'DIY' campaign in Tauranga to encourage help-seeking
- 'Whakamoe Patu' – a rangatahi (youth) led project using Māori performing arts to

engage the community of Wairarapa in preventing violence

One initiative that was planned but not implemented in the way it was originally envisaged was a 'popular culture' workstream. The project team initially planned a targeted programme of making personal contact with as many celebrities and artists as possible, to ask them to lend their support to the project.



“The idea was that we would go out like a little army tapping people on the shoulder and saying ‘I really need you to pay attention to this - ‘What can you do? How can you be a part of this?’ And we didn’t. It would have taken a lot of time and a lot of work, and I think we were over-reaching. And actually looking back, a lot of linkages were made anyway, and a lot of people came to the project and it was more powerful for that.” (Tracey Bridges, Senate Communications Partner)

Some of those natural alliances included partnering with the New Zealand Breakers basketball team. Having seen the campaign, the Breakers approached the project team offering support. It's Not OK was featured on their playing strip and on-court signage during the 2008 to 2009 season, which was seen on Māori TV every week and on network news sports. The Breakers also supported the campaign on their website and in their school visits and sponsorship activity.

And the programme team members found other opportunities to engage popular culture, working with TV scriptwriters and producers to

get campaign messages included in storylines of popular programmes. Programmes also featured campaign resources – posters on walls and actors wearing campaign T-shirts.



Following the second phase of the campaign, research was conducted in 2009 to evaluate progress so far and to inform the future direction. This involved 75 qualitative interviews, 27 stakeholder surveys and 150 online 'helper' surveys, totalling over 250 responses. In particular this research investigated the barriers people faced asking for or offering help in regards to family violence. Based on the findings, the focus of phase three of the campaign was on what friends and whanau (Māori word for extended family) can do to help people living in violent situations, whether they are the violent person or the victim, and not just in a crisis but in everyday situations.

Attitudes, beliefs and awareness survey

A face-to-face survey of 2,444 people was carried out by Research International in 2008 to test overall attitudes and beliefs relating to

family violence, and awareness of the campaign. It found that:

- People agree that violence against intimate partners is not acceptable, but people still find justifications for some situation where violence is used
- People are ready to take action to intervene, but are unsure of who to contact or what to do
- People are aware of the campaign and report that it either reinforces or changes their attitudes to family violence

Community study

A study was undertaken in 2008 to find out the impact of the campaign in four communities. It found that It's Not OK:

- Gives people permission to intervene, increases preparedness to offer help and support and provides awareness of ways to get help
- Gives people a language for discussing the issue (there is widespread use of 'It's Not OK') and normalises the discussion of family violence
- Legitimises the networks and local initiatives in the family violence area and gives local groups confidence to carry out their own local campaigns

Mass media tracking

Tracking surveys measuring mass media reach and retention were carried out in December 2001, April 2008 and September 2008. It found that 95 per cent of respondents recalled seeing at least one of the campaign advertisements.

Of those:

- 68 per cent agreed the campaign helped them understand more about behaviours that should not be tolerated
- 88 per cent agreed the campaign made them see that change is possible

- 57 per cent agreed the advertisements made them feel they could help to influence someone to change their violent behaviour
- 68 per cent had discussed the campaign with someone else
- 22 per cent reported taking at least one action as a result of seeing the campaign, such as: talking to friends and family about violence they were worried about (14 per cent), obtaining information about family violence (8 per cent) and contacting an organisation or professional to talk about violence they were worried about (5 per cent)

The campaign is having a strong impact with Maori and Pacific peoples. The highest total recall of the campaign was by Maori females and males (99 per cent and 98 per cent respectively). Reported action was also significantly higher for Pacific peoples – 55 per cent of Pacific males and 58 per cent of Pacific females reported taking some action

**IF YOU KNOW
SOMEONE LIVING
WITH FAMILY
VIOLENCE, THE
SOONER YOU
REACH OUT, THE
SOONER THEY
CAN GET HELP.**

www.areyouok.org.nz
or call 0800 456 450

**FAMILY
VIOLENCE
IT'S NOT OK**

Media audits

Each year, media audits have found that the campaign's media advocacy programme has brought about a measurable change in the way the news media covers stories about family violence in New Zealand. It found that stories about family violence now contain:

- Fewer myths about violence than before the campaign began
- Comment from more experts
- Information about where help and information can be found

"We had great evaluation in place as we progressed, but in terms of an evaluation plan, we built that as we went. In terms of what we could have done better, setting up your evaluation plan at the same time as your scope would have been good." (Tracey Bridges, Senate Communications Partner)



The Community Action Fund has been built in to the campaign to ensure sustainability.

Insight and learning from the campaign is widely disseminated amongst partners and stakeholders across New Zealand and internationally. A case study of the campaign was presented at the World Social Marketing Conference in Brighton in 2008.

The successes of the It's not OK Campaign were recognised when it won the category for Public Sector Communications and the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Service from the Institute of Public Administration New Zealand (IPANZ) Gen-i Public Sector Excellence Awards 2010.

Lessons learned

Thoroughly research your topic and target audience, and be prepared to change any assumptions you may have had, and build the campaign based on the research findings.

Flexibility and adaptability is important to the continued success and improvement of this campaign. Beliefs and views around family violence sit in a very complex social context, which takes into account the value and status of children, gender roles and relationships, general attitudes to violence, crime and punishment, and the social climate around the degree of intervention by the state. The campaign acknowledges that it must be prepared to change any strategies that no longer resonate with the audience.

"The projects that I see which cut corners on research, or don't think properly about the research, are the ones that don't have the same kind of impact. Do great research and be prepared to change. One of the smart things that the It's not OK team did early on was say, 'hang on, what we thought we were going to do isn't right' – we need to change tack." (Tracey Bridges, Senate Communications Partner)

An integrated approach must be employed. This campaign finds its strength in the sum of all parts and actively works with other programmes aiming to stop violence in New Zealand communities both nationally and regionally.

Stakeholder engagement is critical to the success of this campaign. Campaign designers use a model of 'listening leadership', in which all stakeholders have a voice and are able to contribute to the campaign dialogue, without losing focus on the campaign's ultimate audiences.

"Put in the hard yards with stakeholders. Collaborate - and collaborate properly. So not that model where from the centre you say,

'here's what we're doing, you must do it too'. Really collaborate and learn and listen and share." (Tracey Bridges, Senate Communications Partner)

One of the most important aspects of the campaign has been **balancing the 'light side'** (it is OK to ask for help) **with the 'dark side'** ('family violence is not OK'). The team have learnt the critical value of presenting the gravity of the issue alongside a more positive vision of healthy happy families, and offering hope for offenders without diminishing empathy for victims of offending.

