**Briefing Note:** Bullying-Free NZ Week 2021

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<th>Hon Jan Tinetti, Associate Minister of Education</th>
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<td>Hon Chris Hipkins, Minister of Education</td>
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<td>Date:</td>
<td>11 May 2021</td>
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<td>Messaging seen by Communications team:</td>
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<td>Round Robin:</td>
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**Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of this year’s Bullying Free NZ Week activities and provide opportunities for your participation in the Week. Brief speaking points (Annex 1) and a draft media release (Annex 2) are also attached for your consideration.

**Summary**

- Bullying-Free NZ Week runs from Monday 17 May to Friday 21 May. Part of the cross-sector Bullying Prevention Advisory Group’s work programme, and organised by the Ministry of Education, the nationwide initiative is in its fifth year. This year, our aim is to encourage student-led action on bullying that has impact, and to ground bullying-prevention as part of a whole-school approach to wellbeing.

- The theme of the week is He kōtuinga mahi iti, he hua pai-ā rau: Small ripples create big waves. Please refer [Home | Bullying Free NZ](#).

- Schools around the country will be participating in Bullying-Free NZ Week with classroom and community activities. Schools are also invited to take part in the annual Bullying-Free NZ Competition.

- One option for your participation is to visit Konini School in Wainuiomata to see what bullying prevention strategies the school is using, as part of a wider approach to supporting wellbeing. You may also wish to participate in Pink Shirt day.
Agree that this Briefing will be proactively released.

Dr David Wales  
**National Director Learning Support Delivery Sector Enablement and Support**  
11/05/2021

Hon Jan Tinetti  
**Associate Minister of Education**  
16/05/2021
Opportunities to participate in Bullying-Free NZ Week

1. The aim of Bullying-Free NZ Week (the Week) is to raise awareness of how to prevent and respond to bullying, with this year’s focus on student-led action. The Week provides students, schools, whānau and communities the opportunity to raise awareness of bullying and what can be done about it. The Week is an opportunity for schools and kura, with students and their communities, to discuss and review their ongoing actions to prevent bullying and promote wellbeing. Students are encouraged to take student-led action that has impact.

2. Options for your participation in Bullying-Free NZ Week include:
   i. Recommended: A school visit to Konini School, Wainuiomata. The school has a positive trajectory of Wellbeing@School survey results, is taking part in Bullying-Free NZ Week, and has integrated bullying prevention strategies within a whole-school approach to wellbeing. The school is a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) School-Wide school.

   Principal Andrea Scanlan would be happy to host you and media, preferably on Wednesday 19 May or Thursday 20 May, to discuss wellbeing strategies at Konini School and their involvement in Bullying-Free NZ Week.

   ii. Participating in Pink Shirt Day. This would involve wearing a Pink Shirt Day t-shirt and sharing a photo on social media, along with a message about working together to prevent bullying and support wellbeing.

Background

3. Bullying is a serious issue in homes, schools and communities. It is a learned behaviour.

4. There is strong evidence of the immediate and ongoing harm that bullying causes individuals, families, whānau and communities. In a 50-year longitudinal study, it was reported that the effects of bullying were still visible nearly four decades later, with health, social and economic consequences lasting well into adulthood.¹

5. Bullying is less likely to thrive in positive environments where students have a sense of belonging. Prioritising student wellbeing by building safe, caring and inclusive environments is central to preventing bullying. When schools do this well, they can also reduce racism and discrimination, and support attendance and engagement.

6. Celebrating and affirming students’ languages, identities and cultures increases their sense of belonging, and helps to reduce bullying behaviours.

7. The evidence suggests that when the whole school community, students, staff and whānau work together to address bullying, positive, ongoing change happens.

Bullying-Free NZ Week, 17-21 May 2021

8. Bullying-Free NZ Week is an initiative of the cross-sector Bullying Prevention Advisory Group. Their vision is to improve student wellbeing and achievement by supporting schools to create safe and positive environments that reduce bullying. The Week is organised by the Ministry of Education.

9. In previous years, the focus has been on raising awareness of bullying. In 2021, we have reframed the aim to encourage student-led action that has impact.

10. In 2021, we are emphasising the important role that bullying-prevention approaches play, as part of wider wellbeing initiatives within a school and community. We’re encouraging schools and students to think about providing an inclusive, caring school environment, where everyone feels welcome, and that can deter bullying.

11. Schools around the country will be participating in Bullying-Free NZ Week with classroom and community activities. Schools are also invited to take part in the annual Bullying-Free NZ Competition.

12. The theme of the week is He kōtuinga mahi iti, he hua pai-ā rau: Small ripples create big waves. The theme is about how the small actions we take to prevent bullying will together create a wave of change.

13. The annual nationwide Week provides schools, students and their communities opportunities to highlight their everyday work to prevent bullying and support wellbeing. Schools have the opportunity to review school policies and procedures, and to raise the importance of bullying-prevention and supporting wellbeing with parents, whānau and the wider community. Schools are also encouraged to contact their local media and use social media to highlight their participation in the week.

14. The Week culminates with the Mental Health Foundation’s Pink Shirt Day, Friday 21 May, which aims to create schools, workplaces and communities where all people feel safe, valued and respected.

Activity packs and competition

15. Schools and students are able to download student action packs, for both high school and primary school. The packs contain ideas and activities that have been tested by students. They were produced in partnership with Sticks ’n Stones, a student-led bullying prevention organisation.

16. Schools are able to download or request a teacher pack, containing bullying prevention ideas, guidance and class activities.

17. Additional resources for the week include posters for schools and communities and a media guide to support schools to promote their activities.

18. Students can also participate in the Bullying-Free NZ Week competition. Students are invited to work together to figure out what they can do to prevent bullying, come up with new ideas, and share their innovations. Students can win Prezzy cards for their efforts.

Next steps

19. Should you decide to visit Konini School, we will provide you with a separate briefing for the school visit.
Annexes

Annex 1: List of key messages / talking points
Annex 2: Draft media release