

THE
parent
pack

Tools for the teenage years

Brought to you by Hibiscus Homecare Charitable Trust and Rodney District Council

Introduction

About six years ago when I was elected mayor for my first term, I came to the role with little allusions about what the job would entail. I had worked in an advisory capacity for local authorities before, I knew the challenges they faced, and the responsibilities that would be placed on me as an elected representative.

But, interestingly, my best training came not from the local authorities at all. Rather, it came from being a parent.

It soon became apparent my life as a parent was very pertinent to my role as mayor.

What does it take to be a parent? Patience, tolerance, flexibility, and the ability to listen, to guide, to direct and to learn. In short, all of the characteristics I hope I have brought to my mayoralty.

Another common factor - whether for the mayor or as a parent - is acceptance that much of the learning I referred to earlier is done on the job, and the more help we can get the better.

Which is why I warmly endorse this booklet you are now reading. As a guide for the parent trying to cope with the myriad of challenges that face today's families it is excellent. It contains a wealth of well thought out ideas, suggestions and solutions for just about every situation, event and personality we are likely to come across.

Given that, I am particularly pleased the Rodney District Council has had a role in putting the invaluable booklet together.



John Law
Mayor
Rodney District



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Help in completing this 'Parent Pack' is acknowledged and appreciated.

To the parents and caregivers

This 'Parent Pack' has been designed to provide valid information, an up to date resource and a tool box of tools to assist you in your parenting journey. I encourage all parents to add value to their teenager / caregivers relationship by reading this document and listening to what our Youth have to say. They are our future leaders, love, nurture and care for them always.

Arohanui, **John Kirikiri**, Chairman, Hibiscus Homecare Charitable Trust.

Went to a party

I went to a party, and remembered what you said,
You told me not to drink, Mum,
So I had a sprite instead,

I felt proud of myself, The way you said I would,
That I didn't drink and drive,
Though some friends said I should,

I made a healthy choice, And your advice to me was right,
The party finally ended,
And the kids drove out of sight,

I got into my car, Sure to get home in one piece,
I never knew what was coming, Mum
Something I expected least,

Now I'm lying on the pavement, And I hear the policeman say,
"The kid that caused this wreck was drunk",
Mum, his voice seems far away,

My own blood's all around me, As I try hard not to cry,
I can hear the paramedic say,
"This girl is going to die".

I'm sure the guy had no idea, While he was flying high,
Because he chose to drink and drive,
Now I would have to die,

So why do people do it, Mum knowing that it ruins lives?
And now the pain is cutting me,
Like a hundred stabbing knives,

Someone should have taught him,
That it's wrong to drink and drive,
Maybe if his parents had,
I'd still be alive,

My breath is getting shorter,
Mum I'm getting really scared,
These are my final moments,
And I'm so unprepared.

I wish that you could hold me Mum,
As I lie here and die,
I wish that I could say, "I love you, Mum!"
So I love you good-bye.

Source: Mothers against drink driving

Raising Teenagers...

Source: Gerald Maclaurin 2004

We face a huge task in parenting.

That task has become much more challenging in today's world. Frequently, our teenagers implicitly challenge us to get our act together, stand for our principles, and make sure we stay lively and fun in the process. Easy uh?

Teenagers need much more kindness and firmness, than they did in earlier childhood. Just as they need more calories, more music, more relationships, more money and more time than they seemed to before, they also need these two responses from us much more than before.

It is critical that we look to the sense of warmth and connectedness with our children as a pre-requisite for setting firm limits and consequences. Key areas in creating connections are listening to, and understanding them. One-on-one time with your teenager where you are both enjoying what you are doing is vital. A key area in setting limits well is to set up ahead of time upon consequences that will be followed through.

Here are some practical points that may help

1. Teenagers often need strategies for life. If you gain their trust, particularly by listening and understanding their experiences they may give you the priceless gift of being open to your wisdom and advice.
2. Teenagers will much more willingly spend time with you if you listen to them, (rather than talk at them) about the things they are interested in.
3. Notice potential sibling rivalry - it can be very potent and its effects very nasty. Its antidote is one-on-one exclusive time, and having the teenager be regarded as special and unique in the family. Comparing siblings with one another is guaranteed to set up sibling rivalry.
4. Remember your child is a 'work in progress' and don't assess the final outcome yet.
5. Use a buddy for support, preferably one with teenagers too, and don't use this time to only complain - use it to think through strategies. It is important to remember that we are surrounded by experts who are doing the same job we are.
6. Negotiate consequences for breaking limits before the event, when the teenager needs your support or permission.
7. Give warning if you want them to stop what they are doing to help you. Having 5-10 minutes to finish the phone call or the song sets up less resentment. But make sure they come then, and that you are not repeatedly asking. Set a consequence for failing to 'turn up'.
8. Make sure that they, separately and together, are having fun sometimes. Nothing will work without this.
9. If nothing is working, get help where ever you can, as soon as you can.

One body of research found that teenagers who grew up to be socially successful adults, had one person in their lives who believed in them, and in their minds this made all the difference.

And finally, the following point taken from Teenage Years, Guhl (1989)

Certain situations (or teens) are far too tricky or complex for any moral parent to handle. These call for a specialist. Seeking professional counselling or advice is not a sign of parental inadequacy. Rather, it's a sign of caring, commitment and sound mental health.

Cars get tune-ups. Why not families?

Local Parenting Courses

Parenting is arguably the hardest job in the world. If you would like to learn more and meet other parents/caregivers facing the same challenges as you, the following programmes are available:

- 'Parenting Skills' and 'Step-parenting': with Raeburn House, 138 Shakespeare Road, Milford. Contact Lisa & Kylie. Ph: 441 8989.
- Parenting and communication courses with Anger Change Trust. Venues throughout Auckland. Contact Jill. Ph. 476 6947.
- 'Toughlove' parenting courses. Contact ph: 624 4363. Venues in Takapuna, Orewa, Massey and New Lynn.
- 'Parentline' with Barnardos. Contact ph: 0800 472 7368. They run various courses including some for new migrants.
- 'Toolbox' Parenting courses with Parents Inc. View the website: www.parentsinc.org.nz or contact Toolbox: 524 0025 or 8186834.

For other advice contact your local Police Youth Aid Officer:

Helensville	(09) 420 8967
Henderson	(09) 839 0600
Orewa	(09) 426 4555
Takapuna	(09) 488 6200
Warkworth	(09) 425 8109

What parents & teenagers expect from each other



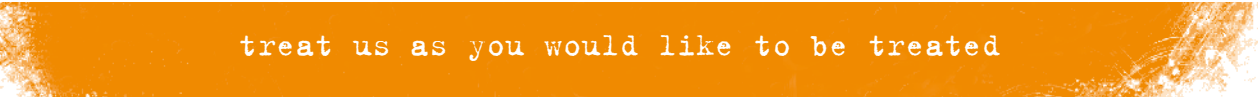
MEMOS FROM THE KIDS...

- Testing you is part of my job description; don't be afraid to say no if I'm unreasonable.
- Help me to communicate clearly with you. I'm only learning and your role modelling and patience is important to my development.
- If we have done something wrong tell us off, but don't go on about it for hours.
- Remember the good things about us and not just the bad. Help us to do the same.
- If you want us to do something or not to do something, tell us the reason, not just because 'you said so'.
- Tell us when you are pleased with us about something - it encourages us to go on behaving like that.
- Teach me to apologise when I'm wrong by doing so yourself.
- Remember what it's like to be a teenager.
- Be interested in our lives but please respect our privacy.
- Friendships are important to us, please don't judge our friends by the way they dress.
- Don't ask us questions when you don't want to know the answers.
- Trust us, don't always expect the worst.
- I'm more than just my mistakes, but don't protect me from the consequences. I need to learn. Show me how to do better next time.



MEMOS FROM THE PARENTS...

- Let us know where you are and how to contact you. We need to know that you're safe and OK. We need to know that you won't be abusing drugs or alcohol and getting in the car with a drunk driver. If you need a ride home, just call.
- Remember that we like you to think we're cool parents. This is a two-way street involving mutual respect and clear communication, so if it isn't working, lets talk about it.
- Let us know that you understand our values. It's important to know where we are coming from when we put boundaries in place. Everything we do is because we care about you. Think about it.



- Don't judge us too harshly. You may not agree fully with what we do, so let's talk about it some more before you judge us.
- Let me know that you have heard our opinions, and had a think about what we have said. If we can validate each others perspective, we will be able communicate more freely.
- Let us know what is happening in your life. Tell us about your friends, school, what's cool, what's not. We need to understand what life as a teenager is like today as it's a bit different from how it was in our day. Let's talk about the differences.
- Let us know that you know about the dangers of abusing drugs and alcohol and sex. We know you may experiment and take risks - this is part of growing up - what we need to know is that you understand the consequences and how to protect yourself.
- If it isn't working, let's talk about it and come up with some ideas for improvement on both sides.
- Talk to us if you are feeling down. This is a normal part of growing up and we want to be there for you when the going gets rough.
- Never forget that we love you. ””



treat us as you would like to be treated

Checklist for the signs of depression in young people

Rey (1995) outlines the following checklist to help parents of adolescents become aware of possible signs of depression in their adolescent children.

Your adolescent child probably suffers from Depression if he or she:

Has shown a marked change in character, a decline in school work and a changed relationship to family and friends.

And

Appears unhappy, tearful, down in the dumps or complains of sadness or emptiness.

Or

Has lost interest or enjoyment in most activities and pastimes previously enjoyed and at the same time has shown four or more of the following symptoms:

1. Appetite or weight has changed considerably (has lost or gained a substantial amount of weight).
2. A change in sleeping pattern: can't sleep at night or sleeps too much.
3. Is restless, agitated (pacing, wringing hands) or has slowed down (e.g. spends hours staring in front, finds it hard to move).
4. Has lost a lot of energy, complains or feeling tired all the time.
5. Feels worthless or complains of feeling inappropriately guilty ('everything is my fault', 'I am bad').
6. Believes that life is not worth living, there is no future and will be better off dead.

Steps in helping - Useful guidelines

Here are a few simple guidelines contributed by people who have known severe depression.

(Coping with your Teenager's Depression - Youth Specialty Service, Healthlink South, 1996)

DON'T'S

- Don't tell me to pull myself together - I would if I could.
- Don't tell me to count my blessings. I know they are there but I can't feel them as real.
- Don't give me lots of advice I haven't the energy to follow - I already feel hopelessly inadequate.
- Don't preach - I am already overwhelmed by guilt.
- Don't give up on me - I am so near to giving up on myself.
- Don't judge me - you are not in my skin.

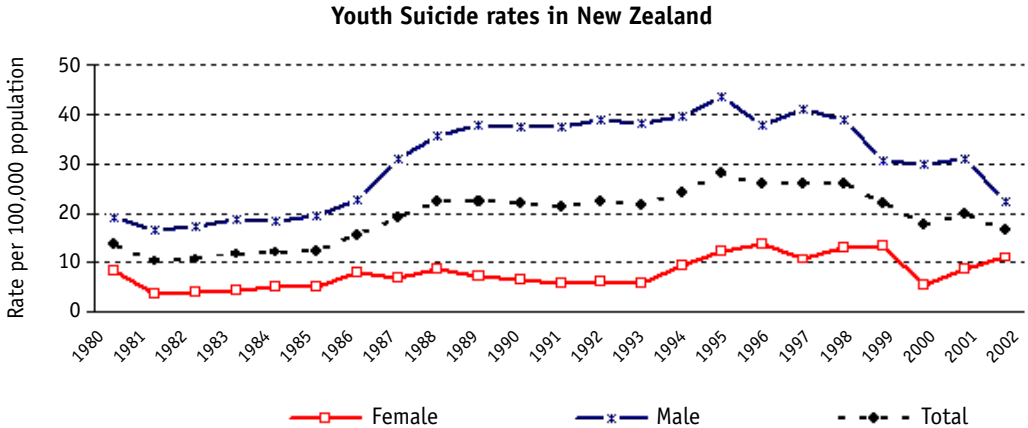
DO's

- Do listen to me and patiently encourage me to talk or cry.
- Do accept my feelings as I experience them, not as you imagine they are.
- Do show me that you love me - not with too many words, but by warmth and companionship.

- Do work with me as I make little changes.
- Do help me to separate feelings from facts and to check them out.
- Without becoming entangled in my negativity or mocking me with too much cheerfulness, do maintain your own hope, optimism and calm.
- Do reassure me that this darkness will pass in time. I need to know that.
- Although I am so hard to convince, do try to affirm my strengths and the qualities you value in me. I may find it hard to believe in the things you say, but they keep hope alive.
- Do reassure me that I'm not going mad because that fear is sometimes with me.

It is important for you to:

- Recognise the symptoms.
- Support the person to get / receive help.
- Assure them of your support / love / caring.
- Recommend helping resources.
- If necessary, accompany them to appointments, and act as 'go betweens' for appointments.
- If the young person refuses help, seek advice from friends, family, school, church, Marae, - other trusted adults.



New Zealand had the third worst male youth suicide rate, after Finland and Ireland, and the worst female youth suicide rate.

remember - don't be afraid to ask for help...
the earlier the better

When can they...The legal age limits

- At 10**
- A child can be prosecuted with murder or manslaughter. A child can be charged with any offence if "...the number, nature, or magnitude ... is such as to give serious concern to the wellbeing of the child."
- At 14**
- A child becomes a young person.
  - A young person can be left alone.
  - Be charged with committing a crime and brought before a youth court.
  - Be dealt with in an adult court for a serious offence.
  - Buy fireworks.
  - Baby-sit.
- At 15**
- At 15, a young person can sit for a Learner's Licence and must have a supervisor with them at all times. After 6 months s/he can sit for a Restricted Licence. A Restricted Licence forbids driving between 10pm and 5am without a fully-licensed supervisor.
- Until 16**
- A child/young person can: live with somebody else if the parent agrees.
  - Be excluded from school but must enrol in another school or do correspondence lessons.
  - Parents/guardians must provide children with the necessities of life.
  - Parents can be held responsible for paying for loss or damage to property by the child/young person.
- At 17**
- A young person is dealt with in an adult court and can go to prison.
- At 18**
- A young person can: buy alcohol.
  - Take out a bank loan or hire purchase agreement, open a cheque account or have a credit card.
  - Get an unemployment benefit.
- At 20**
- A young person becomes an adult and parents' guardianship rights cease.
  - Can marry against parents' wishes.
  - Gamble.

OTHER STUFF

Everyone has the right to a free education until January 1st after their 19th birthday. It is the parents' responsibility to ensure their child attends school between the ages of 6 and 16, unless an exemption has been received.

Parenting Parties

If you are hosting a teenage party, agree to some rules with your teenager first:

- Who is coming and how many?
- What time will the party finish?
- What food will be available?
- How will you deal with alcohol brought by guests?
  - eg - You may want to limit the amount of alcohol per guest
  - You may want to control the alcohol consumed by providing a controlled distribution point
- How will guests get home?
- How will gatecrashers be handled?
- Will guests stay over?
- Adult supervision - how will it be done and by whom?
- Will alcohol be provided, what kind? Remember you have the choice to supply. If you choose to supply, keep in mind that it is preferable to serve lower strength and light alcohol drinks.
- Remember if you supply alcohol to minors YOU are responsible for the consequences.
- Don't forget to organise transport.

HANDY HINTS FOR PARTIES

- Keep the number invited as small and as closely associated as possible. Word gets around very quickly (usually by texting) that there's a party at your place. By limiting it to close friends, you're more likely to know who is coming.
- Never go out and leave party-goers alone at your place. Visible but non-intrusive adult supervision is critical. Drop in occasionally with snacks.
- Have guests come through the non-party area of the place. This lets you know who's there and you can also see and check out what they bring in.
- Let the neighbours know or invite them over.
- Invite other parents over - they could help serve food and assist with security if necessary.
- Register your party at the nearest police station.
- Have plenty of good filling foods, such as pizzas and bread.
- Provide entertainment with fun activities, space to dance - this helps to keep alcohol consumption down.

only a parent or legal guardian can supply alcohol
to minors (Sale of Liquor Act 1989)

Teenagers attending Parties

- **Agree the rules first**
When your teenagers want to go to a party, sit down and agree to some conditions. It may be a good idea to discuss this with them before they reach the partying age because they will already have an idea as to what your standards are, which may help reduce any arguments.
- **Be in touch with other parents**
Contact the host's parents and check on details such as supervision, time and location, plus arrangements regarding alcohol and transport. Your son or daughter may give you a rough time about this but it is worth persisting.
- **It's not about trust it's about SAFETY**
If your teenager accuses you of not trusting them, explain that trust is not the issue. Explain that you are concerned about their safety. Most teenagers will recognise that you are concerned because you care. Be open about what you are doing. Going behind their back will just make matters worse.
- **Always be a transport option**
Tell your teenager that if things get out of control at the party, **you will always arrange to get them home safely.** Talk about the kinds of things that might happen. They need to be prepared if:
  - the person who was to drive them home is drunk or on drugs;
  - there is violence or drug use at the party;
  - they are feeling threatened or frightened.

It's important that your teenager has a plan to get out of the situation - without losing face if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

- Tell them they can phone you and you will pick them up.
- Either give them or have at home some emergency money in case they need a taxi home. Prepaid taxi chits are available from most taxi companies.
- As a back up or if their friends need assistance, ask your teens to have the numbers of their friends parent(s) programmed into their cell phones.
- Parents could form a 'support group'. (Example, a parent of a 15 year-old boy who has three mates he's known since primary school. The mums all know each other and they collaborate when the boys are going to a party. They call each other, check on who is throwing the party, one contacts' the parent in question and they share drop off & pick up. Sometimes the pick up parent hosts the boys overnight).

It's not about trust... it's about SAFETY

DANCE PARTIES & SAFETY

The term dance party has been used to include a wide variety of parties, including ‘rave’ parties and events designed for people under 18 years of age. Dance parties are legitimate forms of entertainment, but must be run professionally and safely.

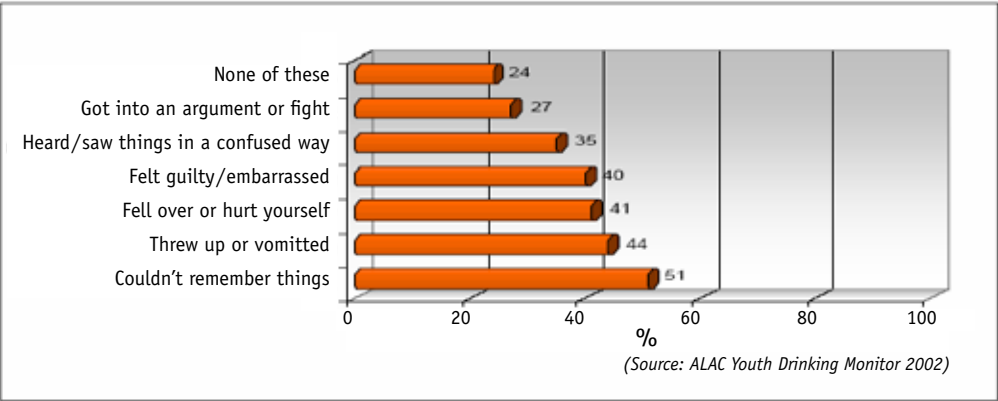
Dance parties usually involve:

- An indoor or outdoor venue with an open space suitable for dancing.
- The performance of electronic music, usually with a disc jockey.
- Relatively large numbers of mostly young patrons
- A charge for admission.

If your teenager wants to attend dance parties, there are a few issues that they will need to think about:

- The risk of taking illegal drugs such as Ecstasy, Speed, LSD, P or Fantasy and herbal party pills.
- Going with friends who are trustworthy and looking out for each other especially in relation to drink spiking and getting home safely.
- Staying safe from heatstroke, e.g., drinking the right amount of water. Drinking too much water can also be dangerous. Recommendation is 600mls maximum per hour if exercising / dancing.
- The safety of the venue - Venues that have not been licensed by the authorities (particularly for large numbers of people) may present serious risks in the event of a fire.
- Be aware of drink spiking, advise them to;
  - never leave a drink unattended
  - buy their own drinks
  - do not accept drinks from strangers
  - keep an eye on their drinks when going to toilet or for a dance
  - If their drink looks cloudy, changes colour or tastes strange, don’t drink it

Experiences as a result of drinking - Top 6 outcomes



Things you should know about alcohol

Alcohol is an easily accessed, legally available, socially acceptable product and it is easy to forget it is a depressant drug that can have serious side effects. Small amounts of alcohol can be social and fun. Large amounts can be toxic and deadly. The earlier a young person starts heavy drinking, the greater the chance of problems later and studies show that young people are increasingly setting out to get drunk and at a younger age.

Teenagers are still maturing physically, mentally and emotionally. They are more susceptible to harm when socialising with alcohol. The levels of intoxication and effects depend on things like body size, metabolism, personal experience, mood and circumstances - for example, whether they are drinking alongside use of other drugs or have eaten food recently.

THE FACTS

- The earlier heavy drinking begins, the greater the chance of problems later on.
- Permanent alcohol-related liver and brain damage in young people is increasing.
- A third of teenage girls were drunk when they had unsafe and unwanted sex.
- 10% of young girls report that alcohol was the main reason for first-time sex.
- Young New Zealanders abusing alcohol are three times more likely to violently offend. The proportion physically assaulted by a drinker is increasing.
- Alcohol abuse is one of the factors that predispose young people to suicide.
- How much alcohol you can safely drink, and still be able to drive depends on your weight, how much you’ve eaten, and other factors. *(For adult women, that is about 1 standard drink per hour. For adult men, that is about two standard drinks per hour).*
- People drinking under the age of 20 will be prosecuted if their breath alcohol exceeds 150 micrograms per litre, or over 30 milligrams of blood.
- People drinking over the age of 20 will be prosecuted if their breath alcohol exceeds 400 micrograms per litre, or over 80 milligrams of alcohol per litre of blood.
- 50-70% of all police responses are alcohol related.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION AND ALAC GUIDELINES FOR CONSUMPTION

- Adult males should consume no more than 23 standard drinks per week and no more than 6 per drinking occasion.
- Adult females should consume no more than 14 standard drinks per week and no more than 4 per drinking occasion.

When things go wrong

Most teenagers will experiment with alcohol. Getting it wrong is pretty common

- Teenagers don't come with a 'How to' manual.

“

Even with the best parents in the world, young people can still get into trouble!

”

Many young people go through a period of heavy drinking but most get through it OK.

WHAT IF YOUR TEENAGER...

- Goes to a party when you have said they can't?
- Steals alcohol from your drinks cupboard?
- Comes home drunk, vomiting?
- Or worse, you have to collect a very drunk teenager from somewhere?
- Starts experimenting with drugs?

(Have an ACTIONPLAN..Use the tips in this book to assist you in developing a plan that works for your family)

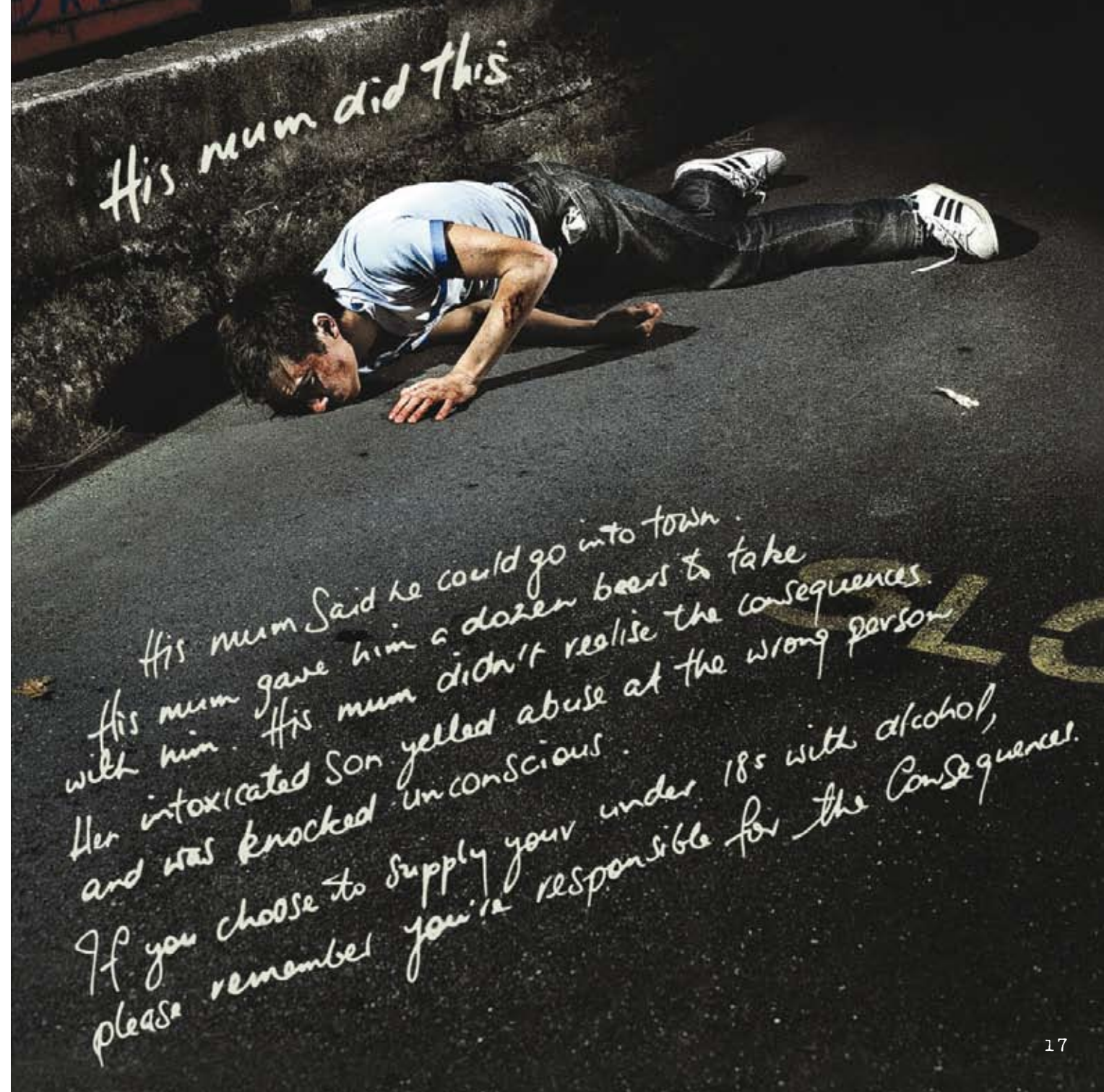
DO NOT TRY TO REASON WITH A DRUNK AND/OR STONED TEENAGER

Wait until the morning when they are sober/straight and you are less angry. If they are drunk, unconscious or vomiting continuously, don't leave them alone. Put them on their side in the recovery position. Make sure they are breathing and their mouths are empty. Keep them warm. If you are unable to wake them, dial 111 - ask for an ambulance.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Go back to any agreements you made.
- If consequences were agreed to, they MUST BE carried out.
- Explain to them why their behaviour is unacceptable to you and how you feel about it.

If you are concerned that they do have a drinking/drug problem, refer to the list of specialist agencies at the back of this book



Facts about drugs

CANNABIS (Marijuana, Dak, weed, smoke, ganja, bud)

- Cannabis contains approximately 421 chemicals. One of those chemicals is Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) which is the ingredient that causes intoxication (High feeling). With regular use it can build up in the body's cells / fatty tissues including the brain.
- Some cannabis products nowadays have a vastly higher concentration of THC as a result of modern growing and grafting techniques.
- Cannabis decreases concentration, memory, learning abilities and judgement.
- Regular users may begin to lose energy motivation and interest in other activities.
- Cannabis can be detected in urine for a number of weeks after use.
- Recent studies found that those who use cannabis at 15 were four and a half times more at risk of developing psychosis by the age of 26 (www.fade.org.nz)



INHALANTS (Glue, Kick, Bang, Sniff, Huff, Poppers, Whippets, Texas Shoeshine)

- Inhalants are substances or fumes from products such as glue or paint thinner that are sniffed or 'huffed' to cause an immediate high.
- Inhalants affect your brain with much greater speed than many other substances, and they can cause irreversible physical and mental damage.
- Inhalants affect your heart. Inhalants starve the body of oxygen and force the heart to beat irregularly and more rapidly - that can be dangerous for your body.
- Inhalants damage other parts of your body. People who use inhalants can experience nausea and nosebleeds; develop liver, lung, and kidney problems; and lose their sense of hearing or smell. Chronic use can lead to muscle wasting and reduced muscle tone and strength.
- Inhalants can cause sudden death.
- Inhalant users can die by suffocation, choking on their vomit, or having a heart attack.



ECSTASY MDMA (E, XTC, Ecgy, and the Love Drug)

- Ecstasy is similar in structure and effect to amphetamines and hallucinogens.
- Amphetamines are stimulants that speed up activity in the nervous system.
- Hallucinogens, such as LSD, typically affect perception and can cause things to be seen or heard that don't really exist, or are distorted.
- After using Ecstasy some or all of the following symptoms may occur: insomnia, depression, anxiety, paranoia, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, dehydration or water retention problems.



GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate, easy lay, fantasy, liquid E, date rape drug)

- Is a depressant drug with both sedative and anaesthetic properties.
- The immediate effects, occurring approximately 15 minutes after use, include increased sense of touch, drowsiness, feeling of well being and headaches.
- Higher doses lead to rapid drowsiness, unconsciousness, muscle tension, convulsions, respiratory distress and possibly death.
- There appears to be little margin between the correct dose and an overdose.
- Also commonly used in the dance and clubs cultures.
- GHB can cause amnesia and has been implicated in drink spiking offences, due to its colourless and odourless liquid form.



Extract - NZ Herald 10 April 2006

... retrial finds guilty on drug and sex charges -

Former Auckland restaurant owner ..... was last night convicted on six charges of drugging and sexually violating men in a retrial of a case first heard in 2003.

PARTY PILLS (Charge, ESP, Euphoria, Frenzy, Jump, Rapture, The Good Stuff)

- They are a drug and legally available.
- The main active constituents in these pills are benzylpiperazine and/or trifluoromethylpiperazine, which produces a similar effect to Ecstasy and amphetamines.
- These substances can be derived from the pepper plant, hence the prefix 'herbal', however almost all of the herbal party pills on the market are manufactured synthetically.
- Since 2005, there has been a change in legislation and the pills now may be sold only to adults over the age of 18 years.
- People are at risk for toxicity from the pills because there is a tendency for them not to read the instructions before ingestion, to take more pills than recommended and to drink alcohol at the same time (Dr Tonia Nicholson, emergency physician in the Department of Emergency Medicine at Waikato Hospital, New Zealand).
- Currently unscheduled.



AMPHETAMINES (*Speed or Go-eey*)

- Belong to a group of drugs called ‘psycho stimulants’ - these stimulate the central nervous system. They speed up the messages going to and from the brain to the body.
- People use amphetamines for different reasons. Some use the drugs to get ‘high’ and dance all night. Others use the drugs to stay awake for long periods of time, to improve performance in sport or at work, or to boost their self-esteem.
- As the effects of amphetamines begin to wear off, a person may experience a range of symptoms including uncontrolled violence, tension, radical mood swings, depression and total exhaustion.
- Can cause anxiety, agitation and a lost sense of reality. (Do bizarre / unusual things).



CRYSTAL METHAMPHETAMINE (*P, Pure, Burn, Crystal or Ice*)

- Because of its purity, the drug has more pronounced effects on the central nervous system and is highly addictive.
- People who use methamphetamine may become irrational, aggressive and violent.
- Commonly smoked through a glass pipe or light bulb.
- Use has increased in recent times.



These include memory loss, inability to concentrate for any length of time and ongoing permanent headaches. Long-term users are showing symptoms of early stages of diseases such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s.

Faces of Methamphetamine



3.5 years



2.5 years



3 months

If you suspect your child may be using alcohol or drugs

The following symptoms **may** indicate alcohol or drug use. It’s important to remember that adolescence is a time for changes, so look for a **SERIES OF SYMPTOMS**, not just an isolated or single behaviour. Most of these symptoms could, in fact, be classified as ‘normal’ teenage behaviour.

BEHAVIOUR	Nasty, moody, irritable, unreasonable, angry, lying, occasional memory loss, slurred or slow speech, lack of energy, apathy, poor co-ordination, loss of involvement or enthusiasm, overreaction to criticism, lack of pride in appearance.
ILLNESS	Frequently ill in the morning, miraculously well in the evening, chronic coughing.
CHANGES FRIENDS	Drops old friends, has new friends you don’t know, makes private phone calls and has private meetings away from home.
MONEY	Unable to explain how money is spent, or where money has come from. Unable to explain new purchases or items.
SCHOOL PROBLEMS	Unusual lateness, truancy, teachers notice a change in behaviour and performance.
OTHER CHANGES	No interaction with family, hides in room, sleeping habits change, hangs out in parks, malls, withdraws from sports or hobbies.
OBVIOUS USE	Red eyed, glassy eyed, alcohol smell, incoherent.

Methamphetamine destroys lives

School stuff - stand downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsion

Only the principal of a school or a person with the delegated authority of the Board of Trustees (BOT) can stand-down or suspend a student.

A **suspension** is the formal removal of a student from school until the BOT decides the outcome at a suspension meeting.

A **stand-down** is the formal removal of a student from a school for a specified period.

Stand-downs can total no more than five school days in a term, or 10 school days in a year.

A student can be stood-down or suspended ONLY if:

- The student’s behaviour or disobedience is very bad and is a harmful or dangerous example to other students at the school and or;
- Because of the student’s behaviour, it is likely that the student, or other students at the school, will be seriously harmed if the student is not stood-down or suspended.

A principal can’t stand-down or suspend a student automatically just because he or she has broken a school rule or has behaved badly. The circumstances of each situation must be taken into consideration. Two students may appear to have committed the same offence but when everything is taken into consideration, it may be fair to treat each student differently.

If the principal recommends that you take your child to another school, or just tells you to take your child home for a period of time, these are not legal stand-downs or suspensions.

You do not have to remove your child from school in these circumstances. A principal must advise you that your child has been stood-down or suspended.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN SUSPENDED...

- The BOT (or a committee of the board) must meet to decide the outcome of the suspension. The meeting must be held within seven school days of the date of the suspension - or within 10 calendar days if the suspension took place within seven school days of the end of the term. You, your child and your representatives may attend the meeting and any of you may speak at it.
- Your child cannot attend school again until the BOT has made its decision - except for guidance and counselling if required, or if you ask the principal and he or she considers your request reasonable.
- You may ask about making arrangements for your child to meet a particular requirement for a course of study or to sit an examination.
- If, following the BOT meeting, the suspension is lifted without conditions - or with reasonable conditions - your child may return to school. If your child is excluded or expelled, your child may not return to that school.

- The suspension may be extended with conditions for a period. During this time your child cannot attend the school except at your request and at the principal’s discretion for particular purposes.
- Your child will be provided with an appropriate educational programme by the school.
- If your child does not meet the conditions set by the BOT, the principal can ask the BOT to hold another meeting to reconsider its decision. This reconsideration meeting will follow the same procedures as the first meeting.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN STOOD-DOWN

- Your child will be able to return to school on the date in the principal’s letter.
- You and/or your child may ask to meet the principal (*or the principal may ask to meet you*) to discuss the stand-down.
- Your child may be required to go to the school for guidance and counselling during the stand-down period.
- Your child may be able to go to school during the stand-down period, if you ask the principal and the principal considers your request is reasonable.
- There is no need for your child to change schools because of the stand-down.

IF YOUR CHILD IS EXCLUDED (A STUDENT UNDER 16)

- Your child may not attend the school from which he/she was excluded.
- The principal has 10 school days to arrange for your child to attend another school.
- You may try to enrol your child in another school. The principal must inform the Ministry of Education (MOE) if your child is not enrolled at another school and the Ministry will help find a school for your child to attend.

IF YOUR CHILD IS EXPELLED (A STUDENT OVER 16)

- Your child may not attend the school from which he or she was expelled.
- The principal does not have to try and find another school for your child to attend, but will tell the MOE if your child wants to continue schooling.
- The MOE may help to find another school for your child to attend if you have not been able to do this.

Facts about bullying

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is where a child or group of children keep taking advantage of the power they have to hurt or reject someone else. Some of the ways children bully another child include: calling them names, or saying or writing nasty comments about them, leaving them out of activities or not talking to them, threatening them, or making them feel uncomfortable or scared, stealing or damaging their things, hitting or kicking them, or making them do things they don't want to do.

When dealing with bullying it is very important that parents appreciate that often there is nothing their child can do. It's possible that the child has been caught up in a peer group, or class, that's being dominated by an aggressive child/ children. These children have skilfully learnt to dominate and lead the others. Bullied children may be just unlucky that the aggressor is using them to demonstrate the perceived powerful position they hold within the group or school.

WHY IS BULLYING HARMFUL?

Some people think bullying is just part of growing up and a way for children to learn to stick up for themselves.

But bullying can make children feel lonely, unhappy, frightened, and unsafe and think that there must be something wrong with them.

Signs that might indicate your child is being bullied include tummy aches, nightmares, reluctance to go to school and loss of confidence. They may lose contact with friends and seem isolated.

WHY DO SOME CHILDREN BULLY?

There are a lot of reasons why children bully. They may see it as a way of being popular, showing off, or making themselves look tough. Some children bully to get attention, and some just like making other people feel afraid of them. Others might be jealous of the person they are bullying, or might have been being bullied themselves. They may not even realise that what they are doing is wrong and how it makes their victims feel.

WHY ARE SOME CHILDREN BULLIED?

Some young people are bullied for no particular reason, but usually it's because they are different in some way - perhaps it's the colour of their skin, the way they talk, their size or their name.

WHAT CAN I DO IF MY CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

- If your child is being bullied, listen to what they are saying and be supportive.
- It is important to make it clear it isn't their fault. Ask your child how they have been dealing with the bullying, talk about what else can be done and what action you can both take to solve the problem. Reassure them you will consult them before taking any action.
- Remember that it is very hard for a victim to do something to stop the problem. **They need your support.**
- Discuss the bullying with other parents, or support groups, who may be able to suggest ways they have helped their own children.

- Raise the issue with your child's school and ask them what they will do to stop the bullying - suggest that the school contact the bully's parents, or appoint an adult minder for the bully.

The Police teach the 'Kia Kaha' programme in schools, and part of that programme is to work with the school management to implement a no bullying policy.

- Encourage the school to develop a 'no bullying' policy if they don't already have one, and keep working with the school until the bullying stops.
- You could help your child develop a plan to deal with bullying, including how to get help. For example, help your child list all the adults they trust, who they could phone or go to for help. Write the names and phone numbers on a card that they can carry with them.
- Children should first try ignoring the bullying child, telling them to stop, and walking away whenever the bullying starts.
- If the bullying is physical it is **assault**. Contact the school or police immediately.
- Encourage your child to always tell an adult they can trust. Explain to them this isn't telling tales. They have a right to be safe.
- There are a number of ways that you can encourage confidence in your child. You could try pairing them with a more robust child for protection and as a role model, or have your child learn self-defence skills. Encourage them to spend time with their friends and provide them with opportunities for making new friends - bullies hardly ever pick on people if they're with others in a group.
- If your child is different in some way, help them to be proud of it. A confident child is less likely to be bullied and will also be better able to deal with any bullying which occurs.

WHAT CAN I DO IF MY CHILD BULLIES OTHERS?

- Stay calm.
- Try to find out how and why they have been behaving in this way.
- Explain to your child that bullying is wrong, and try to get your child to understand what it's like for their victim.
- Ask how they would feel if someone was bullying them.
- Talk about what they think might help them to stop bullying and show them how to join in with other children without bullying them.
- Praise them when they play co-operatively with other children without resorting to bullying.
- Talk to your child's school, and find out if they have appropriate programmes to help children who bully, or seek help from school counsellors.
- In some cases, parents can help by controlling their own behaviour and by making it clear that bullying is unacceptable.

- If you feel it's appropriate, you may like to consider an anger management programme for yourself and your child.
- Tell your children that they should never join in when someone else is being bullied and that they should always try to help another child being bullied, for example by reporting it.
- Tell them that doing nothing to stop bullying means that they're saying it's okay.

Bullies will never stop being bullies unless they are made aware of the impacts of their behaviour. Once they recognise and own the problem their unhealthy patterns can be transformed into healthy patterns. Amazing but true!

TEXT BULLYING

Text bullying is increasing. If your child becomes a victim of this, there are two things you can do:

- If someone is picking on your child via their mobile, call Netsafe on 0508 638 723 (0508 NETSAFE) and they'll help you out. If the author of the text is unknown, the Police can request a trace from Telecom NZ or Vodafone. If the author is known, it may be a case of getting your number changed. Telecom NZ or Vodafone can be contacted directly for this.
- If you have any concerns don't hesitate to contact the Police.

PEOPLE TO TELL IF BULLYING IS WORRYING YOU

Parents, friends, teachers, strong classmates, senior students, school counsellor, principal, dean or level manager, Board of Trustees, The Office of the Commissioner for Children 0800 224-433, The Human Rights Commission 0800 496-877 www.hrc.co.nz

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.nobully.org.nz   www.police.govt.nz   www.HowToStopBullies.com

When parents discover their child is being bullied, it is critical that they act thoughtfully and carefully. Some children can become locked into a cycle of victimisation because of the way an experience of bullying is dealt with. Work from a position of knowledge.

SEX and your teenagers

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) - The FACTS

- STI's, especially chlamydia and gonorrhoea, are increasing among young people.
- Rates of these infections in New Zealand are many times higher than rates reported in Australia and the UK.
- STI's can lead to infertility (being unable to have children) or cause complications during and after pregnancy.
- They can be painful, cause a discharge, itching and bleeding. They can also have no symptoms and be unnoticed.
- The risk of getting an STI, including HIV is greatly reduced by using a condom during sex.

How can you help your teenager - PROTECT THEMSELVES

Discuss the wider issues

Teenagers need to know the facts about STI's and the need for safer sex. Understanding that sexual relationships also involve caring, and responsibility is important as well. Discussing the emotional aspects of a sexual relationship will enable teenagers to make better decisions in their relationships.

Consider the world your teenager lives in

Young people are constantly receiving messages about how to behave sexually from the media, youth culture, friends, family, music and religion. These messages can be exciting and persuasive; misleading, conflicting and confusing. Ensure your voice is the voice of reason and includes many positive messages.

It is helpful for young people to think themselves about their own values about sex and sexuality, and decide what they feel comfortable with before getting into a sexual situation. It's OK to say 'no' to sex. They need the skills to say 'no' if that's what they choose. They also need to know how to protect themselves if they do have sex.

Give clear and simple messages

Using condoms during sex can give protection from pregnancy and infections such as chlamydia, gonorrhoea and HIV. An untreated infection can lead to complications during pregnancy and may result in infertility.

Condoms must be used correctly and used every time a person has sex to be effective.

Provide further information

There are a number of resources on sex and sexuality developed for young people. These include information about STI's and safer sex. Have these available to reinforce your messages.

Contact your Family Planning Association or Sexual Health Service. The Family Planning Association has several useful resources for young people and parents including;

Parents - talking with your kids about sex - a booklet for families on how to communicate with 8 to 14 year olds about sex and sexuality.

The Word - a booklet written for young people containing information and answers to questions young people ask about sex, feelings and relationships.

Your Choice - a booklet for young people making decisions about sex, relationships, drugs and alcohol.

(Source: Ministry of Health)

If they are having sex, they should use a condom - everytime

Internet Safety - How can I protect my family from electronic crime?

Risks children and young people may face

- They may meet people in cyberspace (online) who want to frighten, bully or harm them; there is no way of knowing who these new 'friends' are.
- They may agree to a face to face meeting with someone they have been talking to in a chat room or via e-mail / text. This person might be someone who wishes to harm them.
- They may see images that upset or disturb them, such as extreme violence or illegal pornography.
- They may be encouraged to participate in illegal activities such as trading in illegal pornography, manufacturing explosives or drugs, harassment, defrauding or hacking.
- They may not question the truth of what they see in cyberspace. (Anyone can post information on the Internet including anti-social groups looking for new members).
- They may treat others badly when chatting in cyberspace.
- They may become 'addicted' to activities in cyberspace and neglect healthy social activities, family and homework.

Things parents can do

- Explore cyberspace yourself. If you are a beginner, there will be courses in your community. Ask your local school.
- Keep the home computer(s) in a family living area rather than a private area such as the child's bedroom. This will help you monitor what your child is doing online.
- Talk to your children about their use of mobile phones and the Internet and the risks associated with this, and negotiate a 'use agreement' with them which applies anywhere.
- Even if you feel extremely worried when children tell you about things that upset them in cyberspace, respond calmly; if you react too strongly your child may hesitate to confide in you again.
- Talk with other parents and ask your school to host a Parent Information Evening.
- Find out about software and services that can help you keep your home computer safe, such as filtering and security options.
- Explore the Internet with your children; let them show you their favourite sites.
- Check out the features on mobile phones and talk to your children about how they can be used safely, mobile phones are difficult to monitor.
- Talk with the parents of your children's friends about the rules they have in their homes regarding use of cyberspace.
- Watch your credit card - it's easy to buy things on the net with this and use it as proof of age at certain sites.

If you need some help and support, you can call 0508 Netsafe (0508 638 723) or check their website on: www.netsafe.org.nz

Violence

Violent behaviour is learnt behaviour.

Children can learn safe, respectful behaviour if they are helped to:

- understand and express their feelings appropriately;
- learn to control and take responsibility for their actions;
- co-operate with others;
- know how to trust and feel safe with other people.

Children who are violent may think there is nothing wrong with it, when others know that there is. Violence of any kind is wrong and should never be tolerated. If you suspect your child is being violent there are things you can do. Explain to them, gently, that violence is not okay. Find out what is going on for them. Check out also what may be influencing them. Share with your child that feeling angry is okay but being violent is wrong. Talk about issues they may be having at home or school.

Non-violent education starts in the home. If you, as a parent or caregiver, need help in knowing how to be a non-violent, positive role model, there are organisations that will help.

Violence and abuse happen in many ways...

- **Physical** - slaps, punches, kicks, and weapons
- **Emotional** - making you think you are crazy
- **Verbal** - put downs, harassment
- **Threats** - to your safety and the safety of others
- **Isolation** - keeping you away from your friends, family and support
- **Sexual** - molestation, rape, coercion
- **Financial** - controlling, dependency
- **Intimidation** - living in fear
- **Neglect** - left alone, being cold, not being fed properly, adequate needs not met

Remember one of Life's Laws - everyone, especially children, has the right to safety and respect.

REMEMBER - you are NOT alone. There is always someone in our community ready and willing to help

Family violence and abuse is generational, leading to:

- Destructive behaviours and attitudes
- Depression, aggression and low self-esteem
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Thinking that ‘living in fear’ is normal
- Controlling others with violence

If you ever find yourself in immediate danger, dial 111 and ask for POLICE

- Tell them you are in danger
- Ask for urgent help
- Give your address clearly

Tagging

Tagging is one of the most common offences committed by young people. Police classify this offence as ‘Wilful damage’ and the maximum penalty is 3 months imprisonment or a \$2,000 fine. Young people who are caught tagging are often made to clean it up.

When no offender is caught, council or property owners have to pay to have the damage repaired. This is often expensive and Parents can be held responsible for paying for damage to property by the child/young person up to 16yrs.



Help keep our community beautiful and say ‘No’ to tagging

Important contacts for parents and young people

Alcoholics Anonymous Service Centre	0800 229 6757
Alcohol and Drug Helpline	0800 787 797
Al Anon	09 3794871
Altered High	09 8451893
Burnett centre -Information regarding sexuality issues	09 3095560
Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	09 4265338
Community Alcohol and Drug services	09 4882701 (CADS North)
Child Youth and Family service (CYFS)	0508 326459 (0508 Family)
Domestic Violence Centre	09 303 3939 (0508 DV Help)
Family Planning Association	0800 FPA LINE (0800 372 5463)
Foundation for Alcohol & Drug Education (FADE)	09 4891719
HBC Grandparents Parenting Grandchildren	09 4269136
Hibiscus Coast Youth Centre	09 4265005
Helensville Women’s Centre (Te Awaroa)	09 4207992
Hibiscus Coast Parent Aid	09 4244014
Home Builders	09 4257048
Life Education Trust	0800 454 333 (0800 4LifeEd)
Marinoto (North Teenage Division)	09 4890555
Men Alive	09 8350509
Narcotics anonymous (NA)	0800 62863293
NZ Drug Foundation	0800 787797
Odyssey House Youth Services	09 3744556
Rosa Counselling Trust	09 42781111
Relationship Services	0800 735 283
Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour (RTLb)	09 4268921
Rodney Stopping Violence	09 4258130
Salvation Army Bridge Programme (West Auckland)	09 8354069
Strengthening Families Hibiscus Coast	09 4275014
Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD)	09 9668913
Te Korowai Aroha O Ngati Whatua	09 4239481
Te Wa O Te Oranga	09 4238538
Teen Adders	09 4242880
Victim Support	09 4246515
Youth Law	09 3096967
Women’s Refuge	09 4250452
Women’s Resource Centre	09 4257261

YOUTH

What’s up help line	0800 942 8787
Lifeline	0800 838 0719
Youth Line	0800 376 633
Kidsline	0800 543 754

POLICE

Orewa Police	09 4264555
Orewa Community Constable	09 4261118
Whangaparaoa Community Constable	09 4246504
Helensville Community Constable	09 4208967
Kumeu Community Constable	09 4125194
Wellsford Police	09 4238228
Warkworth Police	09 4258109
Rodney Police Youth Aid	09 4260936

WEBSITES

www.adanz.org.nz	www.alac.org.nz
www.everybody.co.nz	www.fade.org.nz
www.parentsinc.org.nz	www.rodney.govt.nz
www.sadd.org.nz	www.strengtheningfamilies.govt.nz
www.youthline.co.nz	

THE parent pack

Tools for the teenage years

