New Zealand’s Efforts to Address Violence Against Women and Children

Forum on Global Violence Prevention: Workshop on Preventing Violence Against Women and Children
Institute of Medicine of the National Academies
Washington DC
27-28 January 2011

Dr Denise Wilson
Associate Professor – Māori Health
School of Public Health & Psychosocial Studies
Director Taupua Waiora Centre for Māori Health Research
Aotearoa
New Zealand
Washington DC
Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi

Māori Language Version:
• Article I – ceded governorship
• Article II - guaranteed self-determination
• Article III – equal & protection
• Article IV - protection of beliefs and customs
Family Violence in New Zealand

- 33-39% women experienced lifetime physical or sexual abuse
- 19-23% women experience severe physical abuse in lifetime (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004)
- 35% men reported being physically violent toward partner in lifetime, 20% in last year (Leibrich, Paulin & Ranson, 1995)

- Women using Women’s Refuge
  - 47% Māori women
  - 53% children in refuges are Māori
  - 63% of all children in refuges <10 years (Women’s Refuge statistics)
Māori women and children

Koziol-McLain et al. (2004)
- 34% (cf. 21%) Screened positive in previous 12 months
- 57% (cf.34%) Screened positive for lifetime
  - 60% Had children @ home

Koziol-McLain et al. (2007)
- 27% Screened positive in previous 12 months
- 80% Screened positive for lifetime
  - 96% Had children @ home
‘Imposter Tikanga’

“I saw no quarrelling while I was there. They were kind to their women and children. I never observed either a mark of violence upon them, nor did I see a child struck.”

(Samuel Marsden in Elder, J. R. (Ed.), The letters and journals of Samuel Marsden)
Impact of Colonisation

PATRIARCHY

– Altered the foundations and structure of Maori society & whānau

– Victorian gender roles with male dominance and ownership of women and children

– The traditional status of Maori women and children was lost

Image by Robyn Kahukiwa
Legislation

• Domestic Violence Act 1995
  – Protection Orders – available ex parte
  – Removed the need for women to lay charges of assault
  – Police Safety Orders (PSO)
Legislation cont..

• Child Youth and their Families Act
  – Statutory protection and safety of children

• Care of Children Act 2004
  – Shifts the focus from parental rights to parental responsibilities
  – Primacy of the welfare and best interests of the child in any dispute about them
  – Child MUST be kept safe and free from all forms of violence
Repeal of section 59 Crimes Act 1966

Removed the defence for parents/guardians who use force in the disciplining of children.

Section 59. Every parent or person in place of a parent of a child is justified in using force by way of correction towards a child if that force is reasonable in the circumstances.
A Whole-Government Approach

Te Rito New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy

The Taskforce for Action on Violence within Families (2005)

Government

Family Violence Ministerial Team (2005) then Group (2009)
Initiatives

FAMILY VIOLENCE

IT'S NOT OK
"IT'S NOT OK TO TEACH YOUR KIDS THAT VIOLENCE IS THE WAY TO GET WHAT YOU WANT."

IT IS OK TO ASK FOR HELP

0800 456 450
www.areyouok.org.nz

Family Violence 'It's not OK!' First TV ad 2007.mp4
Government Policy: Health

VIP
violence intervention programme
Median VIP Programme & Cultural Responsiveness Scores

Partner Abuse
- Culture Score: 17 Baseline, 20 12 Month FU, 33 30 Month FU, 49 48 Month FU, 30 60 Month FU
- Programme Score: 30 Baseline, 28 12 Month FU, 49 30 Month FU, 74 48 Month FU, 80 60 Month FU

Child Abuse and Neglect
- Culture Score: 37 Baseline, 29 12 Month FU, 33 30 Month FU, 53 48 Month FU, 75 60 Month FU
- Programme Score: 51 Baseline, 59 12 Month FU, 53 30 Month FU, 81 48 Month FU, 75 60 Month FU
Whānau Ora
Reframing Indigenous Family Violence

• Pre-colonisation indigenous women and children were held in high-esteem.

• Family violence among indigenous peoples is more than a power and control issue – it is an outcome of colonisation, which persists today in some form or other.

• Ongoing discrimination and racism affects accessing health and social services proactively.

• Solutions lie within communities and must be embedded in indigenous worldviews and cultural values and practices.
All wāhine (women) & tamariki (children) have the right to a violence free home

Ko te tapu
o te whare tangata
me te ahu atua
o ngā tama ariki

Let us hold to the sacredness of our bearers of life,
let us make it safe for the future leaders, and
let us assist them to aspire to their individual greatness.

(Maori Advisory Committee, Ministry of Health Family Violence Project, 2002)