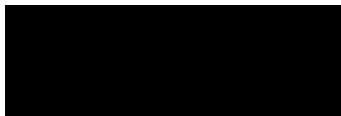


PARENT INFORMATION PACK

A Guide to the Teenage Years



This booklet was created by Wai4LYF with assistance from



CONTENTS

- 4. What parents & teenagers expect from each other
- 5. Legal ages
- 6. Safe partying
- 10. Facts about alcohol
- 11. Facts about drugs
- 15. What to look for if you think your child may be using alcohol & drugs
- 16. When things go wrong
- 18. Relationships & dating
- 21. Bullying, abuse & violence
- 25. Stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions & expulsion
- 28. Important contacts for parents and young people

WAI4LYF are a group of parents in the Wairarapa who are committed to making positive changes in the community. *If you are interested in more information on who we are and what we are doing; or if you would like additional copies of this parent information pack, please, please contact Nancy at 378 8234 or nsutthoff@gmail.com.*

In the Wairarapa we have many resources for youth and families yet many in the community are completely unaware that they exist or how to access those resources. We at Wai4LYF have been there with our own children and families, directly and indirectly. This is the motivation behind the creation of this parent info pack.

Looking through this booklet, you will find it provides a wealth of information for parents/families/whānau on navigating the teenage years, including information on local and national resources to get more information on any of the issues that are addressed in this booklet. Whilst your child(ren) may not be directly affected by the issues contained herein, chances are high that they will be exposed to people who are: peers, classmates and friends. This information can be used to support not only yourself and your child, but the affected individual(s) in seeking the assistance they need.

WHAT PARENTS & TEENAGERS EXPECT FROM EACH OTHER

WHAT PARENTS WANT FROM THEIR TEENAGERS

- To know you're safe and OK and not in danger.
- To have some idea of what's going on in your life.
- To have you know that you can talk to me and trust me.
- To know who your friends are.
- To not be judged by you.
- To know you understand my values.
- To know you have heard my opinions and thought about what I have to say.
- To know that I am here for you, always.

WHAT TEENAGERS WANT FROM THEIR PARENTS

- If we have done something wrong tell us, but don't go on about it for hours.
- Remember the good things about us and not just the bad.
- If you want us 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.
- If you make a mistake, admit it. If you do something wrong, apologise then we will too.
- 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 answer.
- Trust us, don't always expect the worse.
- Say what you mean, mean what you say, and be honest about yourself.
- This is MY life, not YOURS, don't try to live it for me.

WHEN CAN YOUNG PEOPLE

At 10

A child can be charged with murder or manslaughter.

At 14

A child becomes a young person.

A young person can:

- ✓ be left alone.
- ✓ be charged with committing a crime & brought before Youth Court.
- ✓ be dealt with in an Adult Court for a serious offence.
- ✓ buy fireworks.
- ✓ babysit.

At 16

- ✓ sit their Driver Licence.
- ✓ leave home.
- ✓ get married/civil union with their parents' consent.
- ✓ leave school or be expelled.

Until 16

Parents/guardians must provide children with the necessities of life.

- A child/young person can live with somebody else if the parent agrees or if the court says so.

- A child/young person can be excluded from school but must enrol in another school or do correspondence lessons or alternative education.
- Parents can be responsible for paying for loss or damage to property caused by the child/young person.

At 17

A young person is dealt with in the Adult Court.

At 18

- ✓ buy alcohol.
- ✓ take out a bank loan or hire purchase agreement, open a cheque account and have a credit card.
- ✓ get an Unemployment Benefit.
- ✓ marry against their parent's wishes.

OTHER STUFF

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

DRIVING

At 16 they can sit their Learner's Licence and must have a supervisor (current full NZ licence held for 2 years) with them at all times. After six months they can sit their Restricted Licence. A Restricted Licence forbids carrying passengers or driving between 10pm and 5am without a supervisor. If you are under 20 your allowable blood alcohol level is ZERO!

SAFE PARTYING

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?
- How will guests get home?
- Will guests stay over? (under 20s now have zero blood alcohol allowed)
- How will gatecrashers be handled?
- Adult supervision - how will it be done and by whom?

Proposed legislation will make it an offence to supply minors (currently means under 18) unless:

- You are their parent or guardian and supply in a responsible manner,
or
- You have the consent of their parent or guardian and supply in a responsible manner.

“Responsible” can take many things into account: supervision, amount and type of alcohol, age of young people, provision of food or transport...

HANDY HINTS FOR PARTIES

- Keep the number invited small and as closely associated as possible. Word gets around very quickly 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 them alone. Visible but non-intrusive adult supervision is critical. Drop in occasionally with snacks.
- Have guests come through the area you are in to get to the party, so you know who's there and you can see what they are bringing in.
- Let the neighbours know or invite them over.
- Invite other parents over - they could help serve food and also assist with security if necessary.
- Have plenty of good filling food like pizzas and bread and lots of non-alcoholic drinks.
- Provide entertainment - fun activities, space to dance (this helps keep the alcohol consumption down).
- Fix a finish time and stick to it. Parents need to pick their teenager up at the time set.
- Clearing away empty and full cans etc. will help finish up the drinking.

ATTENDING PARTIES

When your teenager wants 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 as they will already have an idea on what your standards will be and this may help reduce any arguments.

Contact the host's parents and check on details such as supervision, time and location, plus arrangements regarding alcohol and transport. Ensure they know your position on supplying alcohol to your child. Your son or daughter may give you a rough time about this but it is worth persisting.

[When the legislation passes it is likely to be **ILLEGAL** for others to supply your minor child unless they have your consent and supply responsibly.]

If your teenager accuses you of not trusting them, explain that trust is not the issue - 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.

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.
- There is violence or drugs 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. (eg. a family code word for "please come and get me").

DANCE PARTIES

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.
- Going with friends who are trustworthy and looking out for each other.
- Staying safe from heatstroke, eg: drinking the right amount of water (600mls per hour is recommended - H2GO bottled water is 650mls).

SOME SUGGESTIONS

- Tell them they can phone you and you will pick them up.
- Have some emergency money at home in case they need a taxi to get home. Prepaid taxi chits are available from most taxi companies.

FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL

Alcohol is a common 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, toxic and dangerous. The earlier a young person starts heavy drinking, the greater the chance of problems later.

Teenagers are still maturing physically, mentally and emotionally and 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 e.g. whether consumed with food or other drugs.

And while some young people may drink sensibly, it is a trial and error process for many, and drinking to get drunk is common at increasingly younger ages.

While most respect the “don’t drink and drive” rule, studies have shown young people are disproportionately represented in prosecutions for Drink Driving and the numbers have been rising since the legal purchase age was lowered in 1999.

NB: The law now says there is a ZERO alcohol limit for drivers under 20 years.

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.

- Intoxicated people's impaired judgement, perceptions and co-ordination leads to a greatly increased risk of injury - particularly from falls - and young people are especially at risk.
- Young people's hospitalisations related to alcohol use have greatly increased over recent years with the increase in young females being particularly significant.
- Alcohol abuse is one of the factors that pre-dispose young people to suicide.

If you choose to supply your under 18s with alcohol please remember you must do it responsibly and you're responsible for the consequences.

FACTS ABOUT DRUGS :

CANNABIS

Professionals who work with young people are unanimous in their opposition to any legislation which might make Cannabis more available to young people.

- Cannabis comes in 3 forms: *marijuana*, *hashish* and *hash oil*. Generally smoked as a hand-rolled cigarette or using various types of paraphernalia or heating implements. eg. bong, glass pipes, heated knives. Cannabis can be eaten in cookies etc.
- THC is the chemical in cannabis that makes you feel 'high'. It can build up in the body's fatty tissues, including the brain, and use can be detected weeks afterwards.
- Short term effects include: red eyes, increased appetite, relaxation, and effects on short-term memory, co-ordination and perception. Effects can vary depending on person, mood and environment.
- Long term use can decrease concentration, memory, learning abilities and judgement. Regular users may begin to lose energy and interest in other activities. The risk of respiratory illness is also increased.

- Recent studies found that those who use cannabis at age 15, were four and a half times more at risk of developing mental health problems by the age of 26.

AMPHETAMINES

Commonly known as Speed in NZ. They 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.

Effects of amphetamines include increased heart rate, dry mouth and enlarged pupils. Users may experience greater energy/alertness; insomnia, reduced appetite and may become very talkative and restless. Some become anxious, paranoid or aggressive. Frequent heavy use may increase these behaviours.

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.

METHAMPHETAMINE (“P”)

- Also known as ‘Pure’, ‘Burn’, ‘Crystal/Meth’, ‘Ice’, ‘Tweak’ or ‘Crank’.
- Closely related to amphetamines but has more pronounced effects on the central nervous system with similar, but greater, effects.
- Chronic use can lead to psychosis with extreme paranoia and aggressive, violent or irrational behaviour. Its cost and highly addictive nature adds to the problems it can cause users and their families.
- Sold as crystals (like rock salt) in a small plastic bag. It is commonly smoked through a glass pipe or light bulb, although it can be injected, snorted or swallowed.

ECSTASY MDMA

- 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.
- Ecstasy is also known as 'E', 'XTC', 'Eccy' and 'The Love Drug'.
- After using Ecstasy some or all of the following symptoms may occur: insomnia, depression, anxiety, paranoia, fatigue, difficulty concentrating.

GHB (Gamma-hydroxybutyrate)

- Also known as '*Fantasy*', '*Grievous Bodily Harm*', '*Liquid E*' and the '*Date Rape Drug*', the effects are similar to ecstasy.
- GHB is an anaesthetic drug with sedative properties and can cause deep unconsciousness.
- A colourless odourless liquid usually sold in small bottles; it can be psychologically and physically addictive.

“LEGAL HIGHS”/PARTY PILLS/SYNTHETIC CANNABIS

- These are drugs designed to sit outside legal restrictions and are sold in “Party Pill” shops, dairies, liquor stores and elsewhere. Some have restrictions on their sale (not to under 18s, not in some premises, limited advertising, health warnings etc) and most are “recommended” not to be sold to those under 18. A recommendation is not binding and some communities have needed to reinforce this locally as well as ensure the restricted products are not sold to minors. (Herbal Smoking products are already prohibited from sale to under 18s by the Smokefree Environments Act 1990.)

- There are pills, powders and various smoking substances. Laws at the time of writing do not require them to list their ingredients or be proven safe and some have been found to contain pharmaceuticals and other restricted substances. If sufficient concerns arise about them they may be restricted or banned but new products may well fill the legal gaps. It is likely there will be changes in the rules around what is legal and around ingredients and safety.
- Many are called “Herbal Highs” but are often synthetically combined products like DMAA - which has taken over from BZP “Party Pills”. Synthetic Cannabis is vegetable matter infused with a chemical mimicking the effects of cannabis and is at least as potent as real cannabis. Others are plants – eg Salvia or “Tripping Weed”.
- Some are Central Nervous System stimulants which can cause euphoria and wakefulness and others may be mood-altering, sometimes to the extent of being frightening and disassociative. Like all drugs they change the natural balance of chemicals in the brain and other reported negative effects (some times prompting seeking medical attention) include: nausea, insomnia, agitation and anxiety. High doses may cause convulsions and hallucinations and little is known about long term effects or effects on susceptible individuals.
- Effects may be unpredictable but dosage and instructions, (e.g. don’t mix with alcohol), should certainly be followed although this is no guarantee of safety.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD MAY BE USING ALCOHOL & DRUGS

Here is a list of symptoms that may indicate the use of alcohol or different drugs. It is 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 coordination, loss of involvement or enthusiasm, overreaction to criticism, lack of pride in appearance, insomnia, agitation and paranoia.

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 comes from, unable to explain new purchases or acquisitions.

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, enlarged pupils, alcohol smell, incoherent.

WHEN THINGS GO WRONG

Most teenagers will experiment with alcohol. Getting it wrong is pretty common (they 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, most get through it OK!

WHAT IF YOUR TEENAGER...

- Goes to a party when you have forbidden it ?
- Steals alcohol from your drinks cupboard?
- Comes home drunk, vomiting?
- Or worse, you have to collect a very drunk teenager from a party?
- Starts experimenting with drugs?

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 for an ambulance.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Give your teenager a chance to explain their behaviour. This is not only fair but may alter your attitude to what happened.

Go back to any agreement you made. If consequences were agreed upon, they must be carried out unless the facts are different. Explain to them why their behaviour is unacceptable to you and how you feel about it.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE:

- CareNZ (Masterton) 377 3156
- Te Hauora o Wairarapa 378 0140
<http://www.tehauora.org.nz>
- Alcoholics Anonymous Service Centre 0800 229 6757
- Alcohol and Drug Helpline 0800 787 797
- Al Anon Family Groups 0508 425 266

RELATIONSHIPS & DATING

Talking to your child about healthy relationships can have a huge impact on how he or she approaches his dating relationships later on. But your child will also take cues from you and the relationships you model in day-to-day life. Recognizing that your behaviour needs to support what you teach your child about respect is a huge step in raising children who know how to have healthy relationships.

WHAT TEENAGERS WANT FROM THEIR PARENTS:

Foster Independence

Showing your child that you respect their opinions and independence, even in these small ways, is an important part of their healthy relationship development.

Practise discipline, not punishment

When your child misbehaves, think about what your goal is in disciplining him or her. Are you trying to control his or her behaviour, or are you trying to influence your child to make better decisions for him or herself in the future?

Demonstrate respect with everyone

A crucial part of building healthy communities is showing respect for everyone, and part of that requires removing discrimination from our attitudes and language. Your kids are watching you, and inconsistencies in behaviour—like respecting some people and not others—are obvious to them.

Teaching your teen about relationships:

What you teen learns most about relationships is what they have seen modelled to them in the relationships of the adults in their lives as well as in the media. While these can give a mixed message to young adults, emphasise the following core qualities of good relationships.

- **Respect**
It's important to value the other person's opinions and feelings.
- **Trust**
Being reliable is important in relationships, if you can't trust someone this leaves you feeling unhappy and worried.

- **Good Communication**

This is the key to all good relationships. If you don't talk often and honestly then it is easy to misunderstand each other. It can be hard to be honest and sometimes you might not want to talk about your relationship, but in the long run it's better to get it out in the open.

- **Support**

Good relationships aren't just about having a laugh when everything is going great. Life can throw up some real challenges- good relationships are ones that help you through the hard times.

- **Fairness**

Relationships are all about give and take. It's important to learn to compromise because if someone gets their way all the time there could be trouble.

What about Sex?

Talking about sex can sometimes be uncomfortable, especially when it comes to talking about it with your child. It might be awkward, but you may be able to give great advice and information about sex and sexual health, and can offer you support for the decisions your teen makes.

Free sexual health and contraception services for 19 years and under at GPs.

If you believe, or have been told, that your child is gay:

Thinking sexually about both the same sex and the opposite sex is quite common as teens sort through their emerging sexual feelings. This type of imagining about people of the same or opposite sex doesn't necessarily mean that a person fits into a particular type of sexual orientation.

Some teens may also experiment with sexual experiences, including those with members of the same sex, during the years they are exploring their own sexuality. These experiences, by themselves, do not necessarily mean that a teen is gay or straight.

For teens who **are** gay or lesbian, it can feel like everyone is expected to be straight. Because of this, some gay and lesbian teens may feel different from their friends when the heterosexual people around them start talking about romantic feelings, dating, and sex. They may feel like they have to pretend to feel things that they don't in, order to fit.

Though it may come as a shock to you if your teen comes to you and says that they are gay, lesbian or transgendered be glad that they feel safe and comfortable in your unconditional love to let you into their world. The last thing your teen needs is to deny who they are or that they have to hide an important part of themselves for fear of retribution from the people who they love, and love them.

Fears of prejudice, can lead teens who aren't straight to keep their sexual orientation secret, even from friends and family who might be supportive. Kids and teens who are gay are likely to face people who express stereotypes, prejudices, and even hate about homosexuality.

Parents can help by becoming more knowledgeable about issues of sexuality — and learning to be more comfortable discussing them. Parents also can help their teen gain access to a doctor or health professional who will provide reliable health advice.

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE:

- Youthline
www.youthline.co.nz 0800 376 633
txt 234
- Family Planning Association
www.familyplanning.org.nz 0800 4636 5463
- Healthline 0800 611 116
- Outline 0800 OUTLINE
<http://www.outline.org.nz> 0800 688 5463
- Parentline (24hr) 0800 432 6459
- Relationships Aotearoa (Masterton) 377 0920

BULLYING, ABUSE & VIOLENCE

When dealing with bullying it is very important that parents appreciate that their child may feel powerless and think that there is nothing they can do. It is possible that the child has been caught up in a peer group, or class, that is being dominated by an aggressive child who has skillfully learnt to dominate and lead the others. The bullied children may be just unlucky that the aggressor is using them so that he or she can demonstrate the powerful position they hold within the group.

Bullies will tend to target children who may appear less assertive or confident, or those who seem different. It is important that we recognise that in certain situations everyone is vulnerable to the destructive hurtful attentions of others, and unless we have solid coping skills it is very difficult not to be affected.

BULLYING IS...

- Being pushed around
- Laughed at
- Ignored
- Hassled
- Losing your friends
- Being publicly humiliated
- Suffering in silence
- Intimidated

ABUSE IS...

As a young person you can be more vulnerable than older people. Unfortunately some people may take advantage of that. You may find yourself in the position where others constantly undermine what you say or do, verbally abuse you, and make you feel unworthy. Perhaps they do things to you which don't make you feel good about yourself. Any kind of physical, or emotional attack (happening once or all the time) is wrong. If you have been hit or struck violently, or touched in a sexual way when you didn't want to be, this is physical abuse.

Somebody exercising that kind of power over you is not acceptable, whether it's a parent/guardian, your partner, stranger or anyone at all who does this. It's not your fault, and under no circumstances does anyone deserve it or 'ask for it'.

The best way to stop bullying and/or abuse it is to encourage your child to tell someone what's happening. The first step, telling, is the hardest..... but it's the only way to end the abuse.

PEOPLE TO TELL:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Senior students
- Principal or Dean
- The Office of the Children's Commissioner (0800 224453)
- Friends
- Classmates who aren't being bullied
- School Counsellor
- Board of Trustees

It is vital that when parents find out that their child is being bullied that they act thoughtfully and carefully. Go to the school and talk about it but be calm, positive and constructive. Some children can become locked into a cycle of victimisation because of the way a bullying experience is dealt with. Work from a position of knowledge.

BULLYING

- Although a common experience, bullying should not be accepted. It's **NOT OK** to Bully!
- Signs of bullying might be unhappiness or fear about attending school.
- Most children will not tell a teacher and are reluctant to tell a parent
- Standing up to the bully can be a very risky strategy
- Bullied children have already tried the strategies they know

- The most important thing is to stop the bullying - not necessarily by punishing the bully
- Work on friends, peers and classmates actions
- Support children who have been bullied. Assure them it is not their fault

TEXT OR INTERNET BULLYING

Text bullying or bullying through the internet (e.g. social networking sites like Facebook) is an increasing concern. If your child experiences this, there are things you can do:

1. Call Netsafe on 0508 638723 (0508 NETSAFE) and they'll help you out. Or check their website – www.netsafe.org.nz.

Particularly the section on cyber-bullying which discusses strategies and procedures for dealing with the problems.

For Txt bullying:

2. Contact the network (Telecom, Vodafone etc) - they can take steps to help you or change your number.
3. Contact the Police. They can request a trace and act if threats are made or other laws are broken. If it's serious, messages should be saved for evidence.
4. If you have any concerns, or if threats are made, please don't hesitate to contact the Police.
5. Advise your child not to reply to abusive text messages

VIOLENCE

Children can learn safe, respectful behaviour by helping them to understand and express their feelings appropriately; learn to control and take responsibility for their own actions; co-operate with others; and know how to trust and feel safe with other people.

Violence of any kind is wrong and should never be tolerated. Children who are violent may think that there is nothing wrong with it when there is.

If you suspect your child is being violent there are some things you can do:

- Explain to them, gently, that violence is not okay and 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.
- Support your child. Talk about any issues they may be having at home or school. Non-violent education starts in the home. If you, as a parent, need help in knowing how to be a non-violent, positive role model, there are support agencies that can help.

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION OR GET ASSISTANCE:

Parentline (24hr)	0800 432 6459
Relationships Aotearoa (Masterton)	377 0920
Stopping Violence Services (Masterton) http://www.svsw.org.nz	377 0933
Wairarapa Women's Refuge http://www.womensrefuge.org.nz/	378 2241/0800 733 843 0800 REFUGE
Domestic Violence Helpline – SHINE	0508 744 633
Child Adolescent Mental Health Svc 946 9808	0508 432 432(24hrs)
Healthline	0800 611 116 (24hrs)

STAND-DOWNS, SUSPENSIONS, EXCLUSIONS & EXPULSION

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

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 ten school days in a year. A suspension is the formal removal of a student from school until the BOT decides the outcome at a suspension meeting.

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.
- 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.

The Principal cannot 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 the school in these circumstances. The 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 has to be held within 7 school days of the date of the suspension (or within 10 days of the

end of the term). You and 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 Board has made its decision, except for guidance and counselling if required, or if you ask the Principal and the Principal considers your request is reasonable.
- You may ask about making arrangements for your child to meet a particular requirement for a course of study, or sit an examination.
- If, following the Board meeting, the suspension is lifted without conditions, or with reasonable conditions, your child can return to school. If your child is excluded or expelled, your child cannot return to that school.
- The suspension may be extended with conditions for a period, during which time your child cannot attend the school except at your request and at the Principal's discretion for particular purposes.
- If your child does not meet the conditions set by the Board, the Principal can ask the Board 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 (i.e. A STUDENT UNDER 16)

- Your child cannot attend the school from which he or she was excluded.
- The Principal has 10 school days to try 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 if your child is not enrolled at another school and the Ministry will help to find a school for your child to attend.

IF YOUR CHILD IS EXPELLED (i.e. A STUDENT OVER 16)

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

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

There are very good reasons for your child to attend school and in fact it is the law. In New Zealand your child must attend school between the ages of 6 and 16 years. You can be taken to court if your child doesn't attend school.

DID YOU KNOW

- That the longer your child attends school the easier it will be for them to earn a living.
- If your child wags school (becomes truant) there is more chance they will be involved in crime or risky activities.

IMPORTANT CONTACTS FOR PARENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

ONLINE WAIRARAPA SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORY:

<http://www.wairarapasocialservices.org.nz>

ALCOHOL/DRUGS :

- CareNZ (Masterton) 377 3156
- Te Hauora o Wairarapa 378 0140
www.tehauora.org.nz
- Alcoholics Anonymous Service Centre 0800 229 6757
- Alcohol and Drug Helpline 0800 787 797
www.alac.org.nz
- Al Anon Family Groups 0508 425 266

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/ABUSE:

- Stopping Violence Services (Masterton) 377 0933
www.svsw.org.nz
- Wairarapa Women's Refuge 378 2241/0800 733 843
www.womensrefuge.org.nz/ 0800 REFUGE
- Domestic Violence Helpline – SHINE 0508 744 633
www.2shine.org.nz

YOUTH SEXUAL HEALTH:

- Youthline 0800 376 633
www.youthline.co.nz
- Family Planning Association 0800 4636 5463
www.familyplanning.org.nz
- Healthline 0800 611 116
- Free sexual health and contraception services for 19 years and under at GPs.

RELATIONSHIPS/PARENTING RESOURCES :

- Parentline (24hr) 0800 432 6459
- Relationships Aotearoa (Masterton) 377 0920
www.relate.org.nz
- Strengthening Families (Masterton) 378 8900
- Lifeline 0800 543 354

MENTAL HEALTH :

- Child Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) 946 9808
- Pathways 377 3156
- Supporting Families Wairarapa 377 3081
- Te Hauora Runanga o Wairarapa 378 0140/ 0800 666 744
- Lifeline's Suicide helpline 0508 TAUTOKO (noon – midnight)
www.lifeline.org.nz
- The Lowdown (Youth Depression) txt 5626
www.thelowdown.org.nz
- Lifeline 0800 543 354

www.lifeline.org.nz

- Depression helpline (8am - midnight) 0800 111 757
www.depression.org.nz
- Mental health helpline 0508 432 432 (24hrs)
- Healthline 0800 611 116 (24hrs)

OTHER CONTACTS :

- NetSafe
<http://www.netsafe.org.nz/>
- Road safety
<http://www.roadsafety.co.nz/>
- <http://theparentingplace.com>

Thank you to the following organisations who have provided assistance and information in the development of this information pack:

Wairarapa District Health Board

Safer Wairarapa

Masterton Safe and Healthy Community Council

Southern Wairarapa Safer Community Council

Life to the Max – Horowhenua

Vibe Youth Services – Lower Hutt

New Zealand Police

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Social Development

Ministry of Health

Alcohol Advisory Council of New Zealand (ALAC)

Accident Compensation Corporation

