

The Jade Speaks Up Trust:

Putting child wellbeing at the heart of learning

The logo for 'Jade Speaks Up!' is a blue circle with a white border, containing the text 'Jade Speaks Up!' in white, bold, sans-serif font.

OVERVIEW: JADE SPEAKS UP

Personal development of wellbeing and safety resource for Years 5 – 8. Levels Two, Three and Four of NZ Health and P.E Curriculum. This programme was piloted and researched for three years from 2017 – 2019. The results can be found on our website: <https://jadespeaksup.co.nz/reports/>

Jade Speaks Up is a teacher-led programme for safe classroom exploration of staying safe in scary situations. The programme explicitly names family harm as one of the scary situations in which children may need to keep themselves and others safe. The programme provides structured lessons for students to learn about emotional literacy, trust, self-calming strategies, planning how to stay safe as well as exploring how to be an upstander rather than a bystander.

The following explanation of the impacts of family harm on children is sourced from the Brainwave website: <https://brainwave.org.nz/article/family-violence-children-get-hurt/>

Family Violence: Children get hurt

Written by Keryn O'Neill MA, PGCertEdPsych, Knowledge Manager

Children's development is affected by their experiences. Some experiences will set them up well to reach their potential, and others will cause stumbling blocks along the way.

Children, including babies, can be harmed by growing up with family violence; children do not have to be hit, to be hurt.

Childhood exposure to family violence is associated with poor outcomes in many areas of development, and creates significant costs, both socially and economically.

Definitions of childhood exposure to family violence vary, but usually include seeing, hearing, intervening in, or experiencing the results of physical or sexual assaults between their caregivers, sometimes called intimate partner violence.

Importantly, children do not have to actually see the violence occurring in order to be harmed by it; awareness of violence, or potential violence, can also contribute to harm.

NZ family violence figures are available from a variety of sources. These figures should be read and used with caution; different definitions, timeframes and research methods produce different results. However, there is widespread agreement in the literature that the rate of family violence is under-reported.

- NZ has the highest prevalence of partner physical or sexual assault among OECD countries.
- 70% of family violence in NZ occurs in households that include children.
- When those in the Dunedin study were interviewed at the age of 26 years, almost a quarter (24%) reported threats or actual violence from one parent to another while they were growing up.



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Exposure to family violence can have adverse effects on child development.

Some of these effects are described on the next page.

Children's IQ and ability to think and learn can be affected. Several studies found links between domestic violence and lower IQs among affected children during their primary school years.

Social skills can also be affected, making friendships and other relationships more difficult. These social difficulties can affect many types of relationship, including with siblings, parent-child relationships, peers at school, as well as later romantic relationships. The risk of bullying is increased.



Children don't always show the effects of family violence immediately. In one [longitudinal] study it showed that children exposed to family violence before four years of age initially had similar levels of aggressive behaviour to children who were never exposed.

However, by the time the children were eight years old, the levels of aggressive behaviour were significantly higher among those exposed to frequent family violence. This is supported by many other studies which found that as time passed the effects of family violence become stronger. Please refer to the website for the full article and supporting references and bibliography.

Whilst the majority of children may not have been exposed to family harm, Jade Speaks Up seeks to lessen risks to all children who may encounter bullying resultant from family harm and also to develop empathy for any child who may experience aggressive behaviour and not have had a safe trusted person to turn to.

This cross-curricular programme has been created for Years 5-8 students which fits with the age stated in the article above when aggressive behaviours may begin to surface in some children.

The training for Jade Speaks Up is separated into two training days. Modules 1-3 are a standalone programme (1 day) and Modules 4-6 are an optional programme (1 day). Please note that Modules 1-3 are a prerequisite for Modules 4-6 i.e Modules 4-6 can not be undertaken without having completed Modules 1-3 first.

OVERVIEW: JADE SPEAKS UP

The concepts and learning intentions of Jade Speaks Up are:

MODULE 1: Feelings and friendship

- Class agreements, emotional literacy
- I am learning to keep my classmates safe by considering agreement in the ways we work together
- I am learning to classify different kinds of feelings/emotions that people can have

MODULE 2: Unpacking trust

- I am learning to increase my understanding of the qualities of trust by participating in activities exploring behaviours and actions linked to trust

MODULE 3: Breathing and self-calming

- I am learning that there are strategies I can learn and use to calm myself down when I feel unsafe or scared

MODULE 4: Keeping ourselves and others safe

- Discussing everyday situations which can become unsafe or scary
- Viewing and analysing the 'Jade Speaks Up' film considering: what makes some people violent - an animated film developed in NZ with a character 'Jade' who learns about emotions, self-calming and strategies to keep herself safe around angry adults whose behaviour becomes scary
- I am learning that the way people feel can lead to helpful or unhelpful behaviours
- I can identify what led up to the unsafe interactions in Jade's family

MODULE 5: Personal strength plan

- I am learning how to tell where is a safe place and where is not a safe place
- I am learning how to know when I don't feel safe and how to make sure I stay safe

MODULE 6: Choices to keep ourselves and others safe

- I am learning to demonstrate my ability to make choices to keep someone else safe
- I am learning to identify the pressures that can influence interactions with others and ways to act responsibly and respectfully to support myself and others
- I am learning to consider what I've learnt from this programme and how to apply it to my everyday life

