

Planning and Implementing a Peer Support Programme

Te Whakarite, te Whakatutuki i Te Aka Tautoko Akonga

2.1 Laying the foundations

Before introducing a Peer Support programme in a school,

1 Staff meet to discuss the following questions

- what are the needs of the students and school? (perhaps indicated in the school's planning and reporting framework)
- what might Peer Support have to offer?
- what might be the aims for introducing the programme?
- is there a staff member or group able to champion the introduction of Peer Support?

Once there is agreement about the answers to these questions,

2 Meet with the Board of Trustees and senior management in order to:

- ensure that they are familiar with the Peer Support programme;
- present the rationale for introducing Peer Support;
- establish shared vision for and commitment of time and resources to the programme.

It may be possible to involve staff and students from another local school, a member of the Rotary district committee or Peer Support Tutor to convey the success and benefits of Peer Support in schools.

Ensure that the following features are clearly understood:

- the school will continually share information about the programme with students, whanau and parents, staff and the Board of Trustees;
- students will receive sound training – an initial two-day programme, followed by ongoing briefing and de-briefing after sessions with their Teacher Leader;
- there can be a ratio of one-two student leaders to each group of 6-10 year 9 students;
- as many staff as possible will be involved in the programme.

Refer to presentation suggestions p26

When the school's Board and policy support the programme,

3 Meet with school staff to –

- revisit the school's needs and aims;
- outline the benefits of introducing a Peer Support programme (for teachers and students);
- confirm links to the curriculum;
- explain and run a sample session with staff;
- involve students or staff from another school who can share their experience of Peer Support.

Refer to presentation suggestions p26