



PREVENTION. CARE. RECOVERY.

Te Kaporeihana Awhina Hunga Whara

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Mates & Dates – an overview

**MATES &
DATES**

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ACC has developed and is implementing a secondary school-based healthy relationships programme.

Called Mates & Dates, the programme is being delivered in secondary schools around the country.

Its aim is to teach young people healthy relationship skills and behaviours to help prevent sexual and dating violence.



The programme

Mates & Dates is a best practice, multi-year programme designed for all secondary school students across years 9-13. It uses a model and mix of interactive activities intended to build strengths-based skills year on year.

The programme is taught by specialist facilitators (two per class – one male and one female) with teachers present. It is taught in 50 minute sessions each week over five weeks – which is considered best practice intensity and length dosage.

Mates & Dates is designed to not only increase knowledge and awareness of sexual and dating violence but to help to change attitudes and behaviours.

It will be relevant to all students, whether or not they are dating, because the skills taught can be used in all relationships from friendships to family/whānau to dating.

Mates & Dates focuses on the social and emotional aspects of having relationships. It teaches young people how to have relationships based on respect, negotiation and consent.

It teaches students how to seek and give consent – focus groups that were part of the programme's development showed many young people don't know what 'consent' is. It also supports students with information on how to get help if they're in an unhealthy relationship, and how and when to safely intervene if they see others in potentially unsafe situations.

Each module has five key themes:

- healthy relationships
- skills and consent
- identity, gender and sexuality
- when things go wrong
- keeping safe together.

Mates & Dates aligns with the Health and Physical Education learning area and key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. It includes learning objectives and assessment options.

How Mates & Dates was developed

The programme was developed by a specialist contractor, with input from an expert advisory group made up of researchers, academics, government agencies (including the Ministry of Education), community groups and people involved in school-based sexual violence prevention programmes.

The programme was also informed by focus groups held with students, parents, teachers, guidance counsellors and other professionals that work with young people.

Elements of Mates & Dates have been drawn from existing programmes here and overseas that have been proven to change behaviours. Content has been developed based on best practice research.

Evaluating the programme

Pilot and pilot evaluation

Mates & Dates was piloted and independently evaluated in 2014. Evaluation activities included pre- and post-programme surveys, observation of facilitator training and programme delivery and interviews with programme participants, facilitators and school staff.

Through the evaluation ACC learnt that:

- performance of programme facilitators is a critical factor for programme success
- content of the programme has positive impacts on the knowledge and attitudes of participants
- strong engagement between school staff and providers supports the implementation of the programme in schools.

Findings from this evaluation were used by ACC to inform improvements to the programme.

On-going programme evaluation

The Mates & Dates programme continues to be evaluated and monitored, through an online student survey. The survey is provided by a teacher to students who participate in Mates & Dates, after students have finished the programme. Students access an online link to complete the survey and survey results are analysed by an independent research company. ACC uses survey information for continuous improvement of the programme.

Further information about the evaluation can be found at acc.co.nz/matesanddates

How schools can support the programme

The Mates & Dates programme includes a school handbook for encouraging a 'holistic approach' to preventing sexual and dating violence.

Schools taking part in the Mates & Dates programme will be given tools to support them in creating a safe environment at their school, and to ensure their staff are prepared to effectively handle any incidents of sexual abuse or violence.

Want to know more?

Contact the ACC sexual violence prevention team at svprevention@acc.co.nz
Visit acc.co.nz/matesanddates



Where to go for help



- For more information on where to seek help about **sexual violence**, including local specialist services, go to the TOAH-NNEST website www.toah-nnest.org.nz
- For more information about where to seek help about **dating violence**, including local specialist services, go to It's not OK at <http://www.areyouok.org.nz/home.php>
- Following **sexual assault or abuse**, you can contact ACC's Sensitive Claims Unit confidentially on 0800 735 566 or go to www.findsupport.co.nz
- For more information about Mates & Dates please visit www.acc.co.nz/matesanddates



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