

# Mates & Dates Secondary School programme



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“Local school children  
will directly benefit  
early from being  
involved in ACC’s  
Mates and Dates pilot  
programme against  
sexual violence.”

Media – press release (July 2014)  
Comments from National MP  
Claudette Hauti

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# What is Mates & Dates?

Mates & Dates is a best practice, multi-year programme designed for NZ secondary school students across years 9-13 to promote safe, healthy and respectful relationships.

The programme is aligned with the Health and Physical Education learning area and key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum* including learning objectives and assessment options. The programme is taught using varied learning strategies intended to build strengths-based skills year on year.

**Each module has five key themes:**

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



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.
- The Mates & Dates programme aims to prevent sexual and dating violence by raising awareness and building on your students' personal skills in ways that will be immediately useful both inside and outside of school.
- It will build your students' ability to treat others with respect and to negotiate consent. The programme is also designed to build young people's expectation that they will be treated with respect.
- Mates & Dates focuses on the social and emotional aspects of being in relationships as well as relating with others. It teaches young people how to have relationships based on respect, negotiation and consent. 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. 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 teaches students how to get help if they're in an unhealthy relationship, and safe bystander intervention if they see others in potentially unsafe situations.

### Who delivers the programme?

Mates & Dates is taught by external facilitators (two per class – one male and one female) with teachers present. All facilitators are trained and assessed by ACC in a Mates & Dates training programme.

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**“Facilitators did well.  
They were patient  
and thorough. They  
explained things well.”**

Evaluation – school staff comments

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# Why run a sexual and dating violence prevention programme in schools?

Studies show that teaching effective violence prevention methods to young people makes them better equipped to engage in respectful relationships and build pro-social behaviours and skills.<sup>1</sup>

Mates & Dates can benefit schools by:

- promoting healthy, respectful relationships among students
- reducing sexual and dating violence in the school environment
- enabling school staff to respond effectively to sexual and dating violence in the lives of students.

But perhaps the most compelling reason for running violence prevention programmes in schools is that, if done in line with best practice, **school-based prevention works**.<sup>2</sup> International research shows this approach is more likely to change violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours than other primary prevention activities.<sup>3</sup>

Effective school-based violence prevention also generates benefits for schools and young people's education and development by improving young people's ability to relate without conflict. This has positive impacts on attendance, academic success and disruptive behaviour in and around school.<sup>4</sup>

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1 **Ministry of Justice New Zealand (2009)**. *Te Toiora Mata Tauheranga: Report of the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence*; and **Gibbons, R. (2013)**. *The Evaluation of Campus-Based Gender Violence Prevention Programming: What We Know about Program Effectiveness and Implications for Practitioners* National Online Resource Centre on Violence Against Women.

2 **Flood, M. (2005-06)**. *Changing Men: Best Practice in Sexual Violence Education*, *Women Against Violence*, 18: 26-36.

3 **Ministry of Justice New Zealand (2009)**. *Te Toiora Mata Tauheranga: Report of the Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence*; **Flood, M., Fergus, L. and Heenan, M. (2009)**. *Respectful Relationships Education*, Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation; and **Flood, M. (2007)**. *Preventing Violence Before it Occurs: A Framework and Background Paper to Guide the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women in Victoria*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

4 **Flood, M., Fergus, L., and Heenan, M., (2009)**, *Respectful Relationships Education*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

# How the programme will work within your school

## Mates & Dates supports the National Education Goals (NEG):

- NEG 1 – It helps all students to realise their full potential and develops their values
- NEG 2 – It provides equality of opportunity for all and removes barriers to achievement
- NEG 3 – It develops the knowledge, understanding and skills that will enable students to be successful
- NEG 4 – It gives students a sound foundation for their future development
- NEG 5 – It gives a broad education that covers essential learning areas
- NEG 6 – It has clear learning objectives
- NEG 7 – It supports individual needs
- NEG 8 – It will allow students to participate more effectively in school learning environments
- NEG 9 – It is culturally appropriate for all and supports success by Māori
- NEG 10 – It actively promotes respect for diversity.<sup>5</sup>



Education folder.

<sup>5</sup> Adapted from Ministry of Education, Education Legislation, The National Education Goals.

**Mates & Dates is also consistent with a range of relevant education initiatives:**

- It reflects the principles, strategies and the whole school approach outlined in the Ministry of Education’s Bullying Prevention and Response: A Guide for Schools.<sup>6</sup>
- It supports the principles of Positive Behaviour for Learning.<sup>7</sup>
- It aligns with the goals and guiding principles for ERO’s indicators for student wellbeing.<sup>8</sup>
- It aligns with the vision, mission and values of the New Zealand Health Promoting Schools National Strategic Framework.<sup>9</sup>
- It gives an opportunity to work effectively with a local sexual violence support service. This supports the recommendations of ERO’s report on Improving Guidance and Counselling for Students in Secondary Schools.<sup>10</sup>
- It fits well with PPTA’s School Anti-violence Toolkit, which also identifies the legislation that determines that schools must respond to bullying and violence (including sexual violence).<sup>11</sup> It also aligns with the goals of PPTA’s work of affirming diversity<sup>12</sup> and their Safer Schools for All workshops and resources.<sup>13</sup>
- It complements the goals of the NZ Police’s Keeping Ourselves Safe and Kia Kaha bullying prevention school programmes.<sup>14</sup>

***By participating in the programme, your school is connected to other government and community initiatives to prevent all forms of violence.***

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6 *Bullying Prevention and Response: A Guide for Schools* from <http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/Deter-bullying>

7 <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/EducationInitiatives/PositiveBehaviourForLearning.aspx>

8 *Wellbeing for Success: Draft Evaluation Indicators for Student Wellbeing*, (draft) 2013, [www.ero.govt.nz](http://www.ero.govt.nz)

9 See New Zealand Health Promoting Schools National Strategic Framework from <https://hps.tki.org.nz>

10 See <http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Improving-Guidance-and-Counselling-for-Students-in-Secondary-Schools-December-2013>

11 See <http://www.ppta.org.nz/component/search/?searchword=School%20Anti-violence&searchphrase=all&Itemid=555>

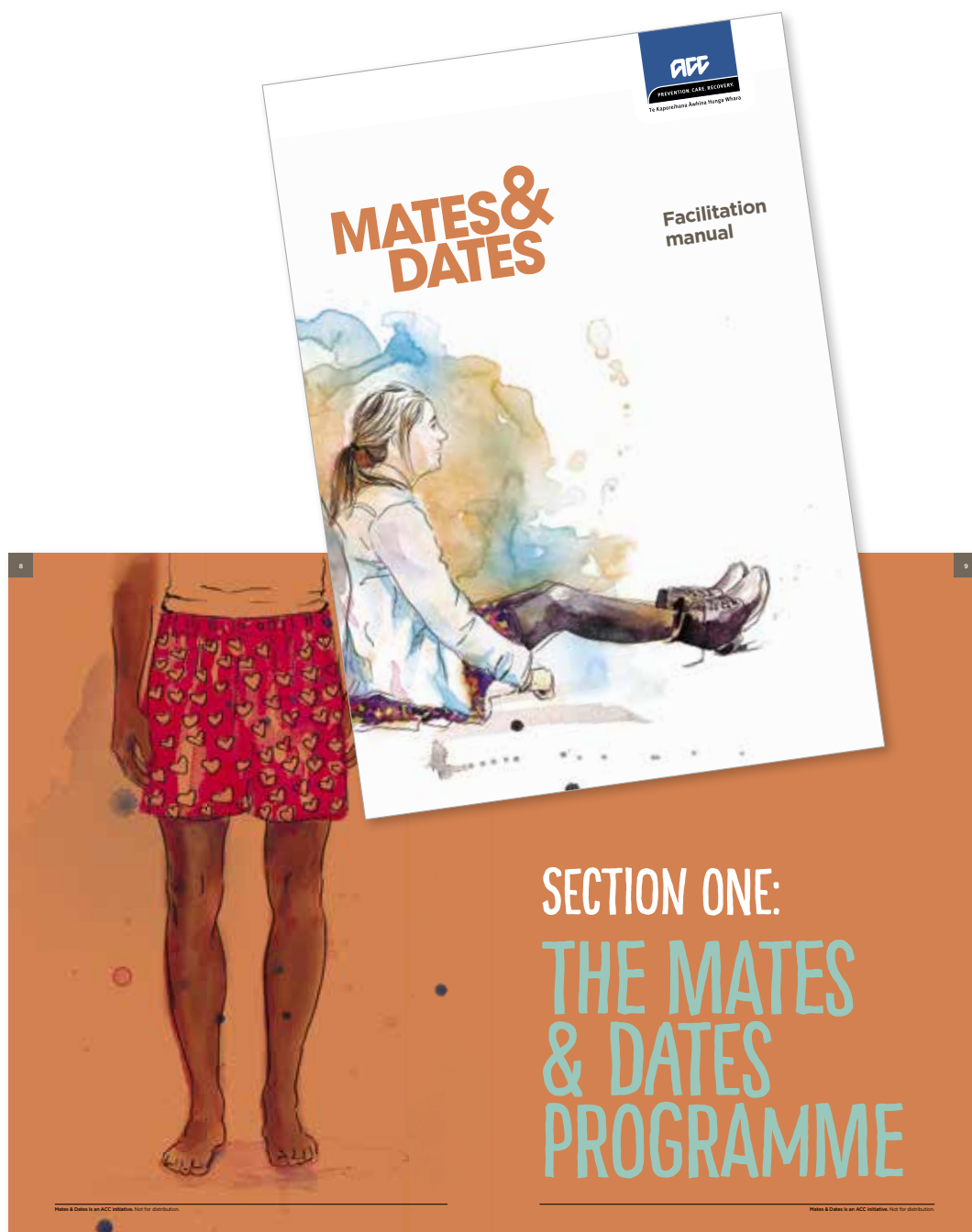
12 See <http://www.ppta.org.nz/resources/publication-list/2113-affirming-diversity>

13 See <http://www.ppta.org.nz/resources/publication-list/2283-glbti-resources-ppta>

14 See <http://www.police.govt.nz/advice/personal-and-community-advice/school-portal/resources/successful-relationships/keeping>

## Ministry of Education Relationship Education Programme Guide for Schools

The Ministry of Education has also published guidelines which include introductory information for schools about relationship education programmes. They have noted that sexual violence and violence education programmes are an important part of young people's education.



Facilitation manual  
outlines the programme  
for the teacher.



# How does Mates & Dates fit with the curriculum?

The Mates & Dates programme is aligned to the learning area of Health and Physical Education and is targeted at levels 4-8 of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Possible achievement objectives within the learning area have been identified for each session.

## Key areas of learning

The key areas of learning that support this resource are:

### Mental health

Students require a range of learning opportunities in mental health to develop:

- knowledge, understandings and skills to examine discrimination and stereotyping, and to evaluate their impacts on people's mental health – for example, when recognising instances of discrimination and stereotyping, acknowledging individual differences, respecting the rights of other people, and responding constructively to discriminatory practices and behaviours
- knowledge, understandings and skills to recognise and respond to situations of abuse and harassment – for example, through learning about causes and effects, learning about their own rights and responsibilities and those of other people, using communication skills effectively, identifying and using strategies and safety procedures, and becoming aware of policies and laws
- values and attitudes that support the enhancement of mental health for the students themselves, other people and society, such as a positive and responsible attitude to their own wellbeing, respect for the rights of other people, care and concern for other people, and a sense of social justice.<sup>15</sup>

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**“The programme is really valuable. I hope it goes to all schools.”**

Evaluation – facilitator comments

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<sup>15</sup> The Ministry of Education. (1999). *Health and Physical Education in The New Zealand Curriculum*, p.37.

## Sexuality education

Students require a range of developmentally appropriate learning opportunities to develop:

- knowledge, understandings and skills relating to sexual development – physical, emotional, and social
- personal and interpersonal skills and related attitudes, including attitudes of respect for themselves and other people
- understandings and skills to enhance relationships – for example, in relation to friendship, love, families and parenting.<sup>16</sup>

## Key competencies

The New Zealand Curriculum identifies five key competencies:

- Thinking.
- Using language, symbols, and texts.
- Managing self.
- Relating to others.
- Participating and contributing.<sup>17</sup>

There are multiple opportunities for students to use a combination of key competencies in the learning activities in this programme.

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“Mates & Dates  
was a really good  
experience for me.”

Evaluation – student comments

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These areas of personal development in young people will result in a significant reduction in their risk of experiencing or perpetrating sexual or dating violence. This in turn, will have a positive effect on attendance and academic success, as well as reducing concerning and/or harmful behaviour in and around the school.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> The Ministry of Education. (1999). *Health and Physical Education in The New Zealand Curriculum*, p.38.

<sup>17</sup> The Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum*, p.12.

<sup>18</sup> Flood, M., Fergus, L., and Heenan, M., (2009), *Respectful Relationships Education*, Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

# Why did ACC create the programme?

Sexual violence is a serious issue in New Zealand. In the Youth 2000 survey (of 8,500 students in 2012), 20% of female and 9% of male secondary students reported unwanted sexual contact or being made to do unwanted sexual acts. 57% of those who experienced this had told no-one. Research also shows that 15- to 24-year-olds are the group most at risk from physical, psychological and sexual victimisation.

Sexual and dating violence experiences can have a profound impact on young people's health, wellbeing and ability to engage in a learning environment. So for us to provide effective sexual and dating violence prevention strategies, we need to address existing patterns of violence and acknowledge the impacts these may already be having on young people. School based efforts to prevent dating violence has been identified as a suitable and effective setting for delivery by the World Health Organisation.<sup>19</sup>

To develop the Mates & Dates programme we have:

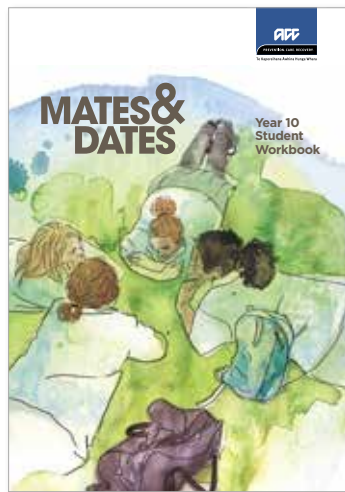
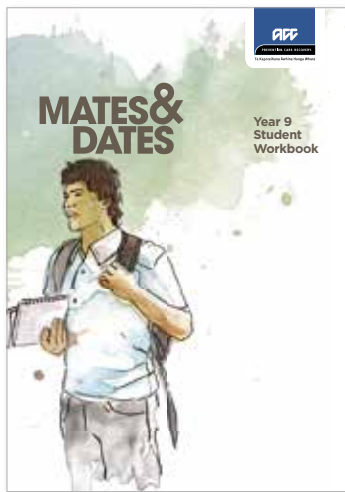
- reviewed content from well-evaluated programmes in schools both nationally and internationally
- integrated content from current New Zealand programmes
- aligned the programme with the learning area of Health and Physical Education, targeted at levels 4-8 of *The New Zealand Curriculum*, including suggested assessment activities
- aligned the programme with other activities relating to healthy relationships, such as anti-bullying initiatives
- aligned the programme with Ministry of Education guidelines around engaging with external providers<sup>20</sup>
- created age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate content for each school year

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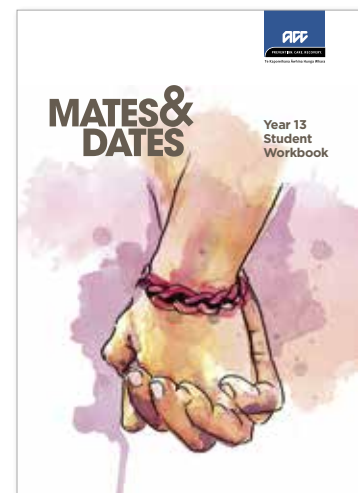
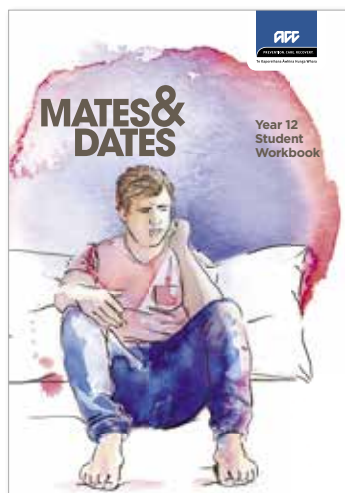
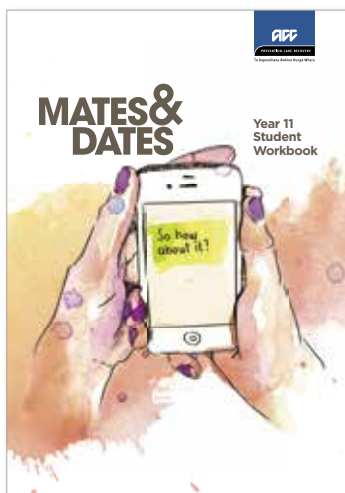
<sup>19</sup> World Health Organization/London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. (2010). Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: taking action and generating evidence. Geneva, World Health Organization.

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Education, (2013), *Promoting Student Health and Wellbeing: Relationship Education: Guidance for schools addressing relational violence and the promotion of positive gender relations.*

- ensured that we meet best practice criteria and included skills development in respectful and healthy relating and safe bystander intervention approaches
- incorporated critical media literacy skills relevant to today's world, including social media and the internet
- evaluated the pilot programme's implementation and impact and made revisions to the programme based on evaluation findings.



Suite of student workbooks, from year 9-13.



# Has the programme been tested?

Mates & Dates has been piloted and fully evaluated by an independent research company. The Mates & Dates pilot programme ran in selected schools around the country, reaching approximately 1800 students in the third term of 2014.

Schools selected to pilot the programme represented a broad range of communities, ethnicities and socio-economic indicators.

The objectives of the pilot programme were to provide young people with:

- the tools (both knowledge and skills) to establish and maintain healthy relationships
- safe bystander and intervening skills where there is a risk of violence
- help-seeking skills for themselves and their friends if they are experiencing or causing sexual or dating violence
- support for existing social norms relating to respect, negotiation and consent in relationships.

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**“The programme is great. It empowers them to make choices.”**

*Evaluation – school staff comments*

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The programme also aims to encourage schools to confirm the components that support a whole- school approach, and/or adopt a holistic approach to preventing sexual and dating violence amongst young people, including:

- policies that support school boards, staff and school leadership teams to promote student safety from sexual violence
- processes in place to deal with disclosures of dating and sexual violence.

## **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.

### **Will our school have access to the survey results?**

Yes. An electronic summary of the results for your school will be available for you to access approximately one month after all of your students have completed the survey. Your school will be notified when your results are available for viewing and told how to access those results.

### **What is the cost?**

There is no cost to schools. All resources and training are funded by ACC.

### **How do I get involved?**

You can go to [www.matesanddates.co.nz](http://www.matesanddates.co.nz) to register for the Mates & Dates programme. If you need more information you can email [matesanddates@acc.co.nz](mailto:matesanddates@acc.co.nz).

## Key Terms

**Bystander:** Someone who sees or experiences inappropriate behaviour, harassment, abuse or violence and chooses either to intervene in some way or not to.

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**Dating violence:** Controlling, abusive, and aggressive behaviour in a romantic relationship. This includes verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual abuse or a combination of those including stalking. It can happen in person, online and via text, and can occur in straight and gay relationships. It is a term that is often used for unhealthy relationships between young people.

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**Harmful sexual behaviour:** Sexual behaviour becomes harmful if it involves someone much younger or with less power. Harmful sexual behaviour usually involves some form of coercion or manipulation and may involve force, threats or bribery. A young person showing a child or non-consenting person pornography or sexually explicit material is also harmful.

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**Sexual violence:** Anything sexual that happens to someone without their consent. It includes rape, the threat of rape, attempted rape, sexual harassment, sexual coercion and sexual contact with force. Sexual violence involves victims who do not consent, or who are unable to consent or refuse to allow the act. It can be carried out by anyone, regardless of their relationship with the victim, and in any social setting.

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**Healthy relationships:** Relationships involving communication, negotiation and consent. They are respectful and positive relationships – from whānau relationships and friendships to dating relationships.

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**Unhealthy relationships:** Relationships that involve controlling, harmful or abusive behaviours. Unhealthy relationships are disrespectful and negative and can leave someone feeling sad or afraid.

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## 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](http://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](http://www.findsupport.co.nz)
- For more information about Mates & Dates please visit [www.matesanddates.co.nz](http://www.matesanddates.co.nz)



Mates & Dates. An ACC initiative.