



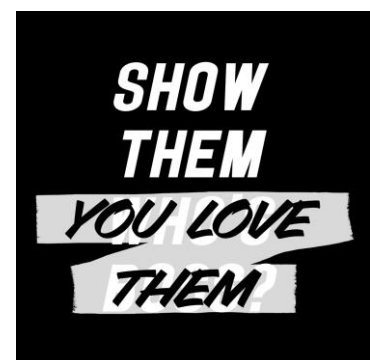
The recent cases of [misogynistic behaviour by year 12 students](#) and allegations of [rape and harassment against a group of men in the Wellington music scene](#) suggest that even in light of the #MeToo era, men continue to hold outdated views about sexuality, gender, and gendered violence. In New Zealand, Police data for the year to August show that women make up 90% of those violently assaulted by a partner or ex, and 98.6% of those sexually assaulted by a partner or ex. And yet, recent findings from an Australian White Ribbon study indicates that four out of ten young men do not see punching and hitting as constituting domestic violence ([42 per cent of men aged 18 to 34 did not consider "hitting, punching or restraining" another person to be "a type of domestic violence"](#)). What is it about men that can prevent us from recognizing and confronting this incontrovertible pattern of gendered violence and victimisation? Why do we stay quiet?

Today boys and young men are still being taught unhelpful messages about what it is to be 'Real Men™': "[Man up, Sit down, Chin up, Pipe down, Socks up, Don't cry, Drink up, Don't whine, Grow some balls](#)". As author [Tim Winton beautifully argues](#), "boys and young men are so routinely expected to betray their better natures, to smother their consciences, to renounce the best of themselves and submit to something low and mean. As if there's only one way of being a bloke, one valid interpretation of the part, the role, if you like." That such rules – or roles – of masculinity have remained constant, despite an increasing awareness that such rules hurt *everybody*, points to just how ingrained and pervasive these expectations can feel as evidenced by [White Ribbon's own research in 2019](#).

This campaign we are asking men to speak up about the #Outdated ideas they hear and sometimes feel pressured to conform to. We've all heard these phrases and this November we want to highlight behaviour that exemplifies healthy masculinity, and in doing so we will challenge the #Outdated. Healthy masculinity is about being kind, empathetic, finding peaceful resolutions to problems. It is about boys and men being confident in who they are without feeling pressure to be a certain type of boy/man (See the section on Healthy Masculinity for more information). This campaign continues our focus on Respectful Relationships which are built on equality between women and men, the effective use of non-violent communication, flexible gender behaviour for men and women and respectful sexual relationships, which includes consent.

KEY MESSAGES

There are three primary phrases we are promoting (but there are a whole range of others). Note that while we are alluding to the negative, our focus is on promoting the positive phrase.



Treat 'Em Mean ~~Keep 'Em Keen~~ Equal

The opposite of violence is showing respect. When kids hear old clichés like “treat em mean, keep em keen” they’re receiving a false idea about relationships. They’re hearing that negative behaviour has positive results, which is really dangerous. Respectful Relationships aren’t about manipulation and mind games - they require us to treat our partners as our equals by listening to each other and making decisions together.

There is a difference here between “treating mean” like treating badly, and “playing hard to get”. Dating and relationships are dynamic, and some men don’t want to come across as too enthusiastic in case they look desperate. In saying that, there is a big difference between not immediately replying to a text, and acting like a jerk. No-one likes to be put down or demeaned, and it doesn’t set up a very good dynamic for your future relationship. So sure, be ‘cool’ if that is what you want to do, but being cool also means not being a dick! Treat people the same way you would want to be treated.

Show Them ~~Who’s Boss?~~ You Love Them

When kids hear this outdated advice, they’re getting an idea of manhood as being in control of their partners, family, even their friends. This can lead to men mistaking fear and intimidation for love and respect. The strongest relationships are those that respect the people in our lives as their own people. Particularly, it means not assuming there are set roles or rules that give men power over women. Showing that you care creates better relationships and teaches the behaviour you want your children to learn.

Boys and men are often handed down ideas of manhood that cast them as being ‘the boss’. Healthy relationships consist of equal partners not one person being in control of the other or the wider family. Being in a family or a relationship is not like being in a business or the army. Being in a family and a relationship is about communication, compromise, and compassion. Healthy masculinity is about sharing with others, challenging yourself to change, and being brave enough to recognise you don’t need to be in control. Relationships are not competitive power grabs where one person is dominant and takes charge, they require collaboration and respect to thrive.

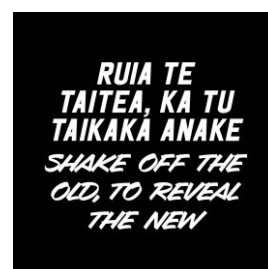
Kids Should ~~Keep Quiet~~ Be Heard

When a kid asks a question, they’re reaching out to us to learn something. When a child engages in play, they are learning important skills that teach them how to behave in the world. When a child cries, they are asking for comfort. Kids ask us for attention because they are learning how to navigate the world and build relationships - they need to be able to speak and be heard, so they can learn and grow.

Children are naturally curious, but they are very sensitive to parental criticism. Without being able to speak and be listened to we can close down their views of themselves and what the world can offer them. Good advice is to listen to your kids, ask follow up questions, and engage them in some critical thinking. Show the boys in your life that it’s okay to cry and to be silly. Help to nurture those behaviours that will let your children lead a well-rounded, fulfilling, and open life.

Secondary Key Messages

These statements are not the only #Outdated Ideas, there are a whole range you can talk about. The campaign developed a few others that might be useful to speak to, but please note this list is not exclusive.



A Real Man ~~Takes Charge~~ Shows Respect and Girls Like ~~Bad Boys~~ Being Respected

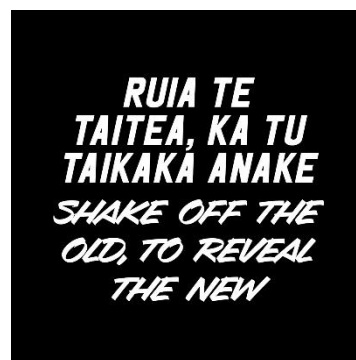
Boys are often told they need to be dominant. This pressure on boys to be in control of others or to be the bread winner can lead to domestic violence and undermines gender equality, which is a cornerstone of Respectful Relationships. Healthy masculinity is about being kind, empathetic, finding peaceful resolutions to problems. Healthy masculinity is about treating everyone with respect and having Respectful Relationships (which always include consent).

~~Chicks~~ Stereotypes are ~~crazy~~ Outdated

Describing women (not 'chicks'!) as crazy both puts down women and lets men off the hook. It is demeaning to women because it buys into stereotypes of women as unreasonable and emotionally unstable (perpetuating an outdated stereotype of men as naturally stoic and emotionally hardened). But describing women as 'crazy' also suggests that women's emotional reactions (whatever they might be) are unreasonable and out of hand. These generalizations about women perpetuate stereotypes of women as inferior and in turn lead to a slippery slope justifying gendered violence. Let's update our vocabularies and our understandings to move past these old fashioned stereotypes and challenge the outdated.

The Whakatauki - Ruia te taitea, ka tu taikaka anake / Shake off the old, to reveal the new

The whakatauki is the essence of this campaign and should be an important talking point for use by White Ribbon and Ambassadors. If we think of the #outdated ideas as something that needs to be removed, in the natural world that removal often allows new growth to occur. In other words, if we remove that which is holding us back, we can grow as human beings and develop what we call healthy masculinity – shake off the old to reveal the new.



Resources to Promote the Campaign

White Ribbon has produced a number of online and physical resources, many of these are free.

Order your physical resources [here](#). Includes cloth and metal ribbons, flyers and posters, balloons, wristbands, window stickers, temporary tattoos and much more.

You can download all our online resources here. This includes files for Facebook and Instagram, animated posters, videos, digital versions of the posters and flyers and our online Toolboxes. Please share these starting on 16 November and or make your own videos and graphics and tag them #Outdated or #WhiteRibbonNZ or #RespectfulRelationships Download digital resources from [here](#).

Get your Resources



Events

There are hundreds of events that occur throughout New Zealand. If you want to find out how to create action or register an event [click here](#). You could organise a White Ribbon breakfast or morning tea, have a free screening of Raise Our Men (a White Ribbon Film), speak at a meeting/event or support an existing White Ribbon Event or connect locally with Riders taking part in the Virtual White Ribbon Ride. You could even organise to collect valuable donations.

Statistics

- New Zealand has the highest rate of reported violence towards women in the developed world
- Police investigated 151,454 family violence incidents in 2019, about one every four minutes
- That's 41% of a front line officer's time
- One in three women will experience partner violence at some point in their lives
- Less than 20 percent of abuse cases are reported
- Approximately 3,500 convictions are recorded against men each year for assaults on women
- Since strangulation became a separate offence, five people per day are charged (2019 NZ Herald)
- On average, 14 women a year are killed by their partners or ex-partners
- Between 2009 and 2015, there were 92 IPV (Intimate Partner Violence) deaths. In 98% of death events where there was a recorded history of abuse, women were the primary victim, abused by their male partner.
- Excluding 1st January each year (New Year's Eve), the 29th of March 2020, which was the first Sunday after lockdown shows the highest single spike in family violence incidences reported to Police for the last 3 years.

Healthy Masculinity

Our goal in preventing gendered violence as perpetrated by men is not the protection of victims, but to help men break out of some of the unhelpful stereotypes of being a man. Such a task requires a wider view of the attitudes and values that help to underpin, normalize, and lead to gendered violence. Our approach, and one that has been taken up in other countries as well, must be to find ways to help men open up to new ways of being a man. Part of that is stepping away from ideas of masculinity as dominant, violent, and overbearing, to embrace other possibilities for manhood: being kind, showing respect, and being open to change. If we want to break out of the man box, and model good behaviour for those around us, we don't need to protect our loved ones, we need to show them that all men are capable expressing love, respect, and are open to challenging outdated stereotypes.

What healthy masculinity looks like -

- Healthy masculinity is rejecting unhelpful stereotypes and unspoken rules about what it is to be a boy or man.
- Healthy masculinity is about being kind, empathetic, finding peaceful resolutions to problems.
- Healthy masculinity is about boys and men being confident in who they are without feeling pressure to be a certain type of boy/man.
- Boys and men can still be 'brave', and 'having muscles', assertive, tough, love rugby, enjoy time with other men and boys, enjoy a 'pint' with the lads (for men!). But boys and men should also be free to express sad emotions, enjoy cooking, dancing, gardening and anything else that does not fit into gender stereotypes.
- Healthy masculinity is treating everyone with respect.
- Healthy masculinity is recognising that people express gender and sexuality in a variety of ways.

Advantages of healthy masculinity -

- Healthy masculinity can lead to less stress and anxiety to conform.
- Healthy masculinity can mean that men and boys treat others better.
- Healthy masculinity can mean that boys and men are freer to follow their dreams and express themselves.
- Healthy masculinity can mean that women and girls are treated with respect.
- Healthy masculinity can mean that people feel freer to express their gender and sexuality without fear.