

White Ribbon Campaign Outline - 2022

Background

The White Ribbon Campaign exists to change attitudes and behaviours to prevent men's violence towards women. The Campaign began in Canada in 1991 following the massacre of 14 women at a Polytechnic in 1989 that was described by the killer to be an anti-feminist protest. Today, the White Ribbon campaign movement involves more than 60 countries around the world. In New Zealand, White Ribbon was part of the Families Commission's (renamed Superu) response to family violence and became a campaign in 2009. In 2014, the White Ribbon Campaign Trust assumed responsibility for the campaign, holding a month of intensive activity each November.

In 2015 the campaign began the first of a multi-year plan focusing on respectful relationships. Having highlighted the issue of respectful relationships and consent over four consecutive campaigns, in 2019 and 2020 the focus shifted to healthy masculinity and challenging outdated ideas about what it is to be a man. Last year, in response to the increased violence experienced as a result of the pandemic and lock downs, we chose to shine a light on violence prevention to share what we know works to help prevent violence. We also worked to increase connections with specific groups that experience high levels on violence, working with the disabled community and the rainbow community to highlight issues and provide resources that will be useful within all our communities.

This year, starting on 11th November, the White Ribbon campaign aims to create a movement of men advocating for change within New Zealand society by modelling a new norm of 'men without violence', where violence against women is considered unacceptable. In 2022 we are again focusing on disrupting rigid ideas about gender by reclaiming the often negative statement "boys will be boys" and instead highlighting all the great qualities boys have. We are also encouraging Dads, caregivers and mentors to speak to their children about these core issues – respectful relationships, consent and healthy masculinity and updating our resources to ensure we are providing information that is helpful and appropriate for the different ages and stages of childhood and the teenage years. We have over 220 White Ribbon Ambassadors from all walks of life from the Far North to the deep South, who speak out on these issues.

Overview

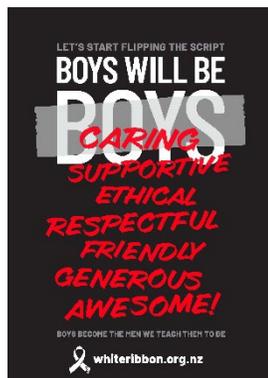
The 2022 campaign will focus on bringing together resources and good advice for parents (especially Dads) to communicate with their kids about important issues like consent, healthy masculinity and respectful relationships. We want to keep it simple and focus in on what we know helps to reduce violence. Parents (and other family members, mentors, coaches etc) can have a huge impact by stepping in at the right moment with good advice for their kids that is age and stage appropriate. As part of that effort to focus on positive healthy masculinity we are reclaiming the saying:

“Boys will be boys”

Boys will be boys is usually a negative, so this year we plan to flip it on its head. It’s time to change the narrative and demonstrate what boys will be boys should mean. There are awesome things about being a boy that we need to celebrate.

- Boys have heart – encourage them to show it, not just in being tough or brave or strong but in showing that they care.
- Boys can and should cry – it’s part of being human and it serves a purpose, expressing your feelings allows you to work through them – bottling up emotions isn’t healthy.
- Boys can play sport, be part of a team, like fast cars and still stand up and speak out when they hear others being abusive.
- Boys are loyal friends and can call others in – have a quiet chat with a mate if he says something abusive or offensive about girls or women, don’t just let it go. Share your feelings, ask why they feel that way – you can help. Be the change you want to see in the world. Every person can make a difference.

It takes strength and bravery to stand up and speak out in a world that too often wants to limit you to stereotypical gender roles. We need to celebrate the good we see in our young men and change the script. Men can be part of the solution. Talk to your son or the boys in the team you coach or at your school about being a good human and what that looks like in your daily life. Be an ally and help them make good choices. So many of the hyper masculine stereotypes hurt men as well as women. If we look at violence, not just against women, but also between men, incarceration rates, mental health struggles and suicide statistics it is obvious these perceived rules of masculinity are broken. We need to give our sons and all the boys in our lives the tools for a healthy violence free life. Everyone feels angry, there is no shame in that – we just need to work on how we express these emotions in a way that helps not hurts us. Both men and women benefit from equality.



The White Ribbon NZ campaign:

- Stresses the importance of men speaking out against all forms of violence against women
- Acknowledges that most men are not physically violent to their partners
- Raises public awareness of the issue
- Has a team of predominantly male role models

- Works in partnership with women’s organisations, the corporate sector, the media and other partners to generate messages that create change
- Supports community White Ribbon activities and other related anti-violence campaigns
- Uses social media to generate discussions about family violence/harm and to spread campaign messages and activity
- Hooks into popular social events/activities to disseminate anti-violence messages i.e. ‘violence-free Christmas’, Valentine’s Day, Father and Mother’s Day.
- Utilises diverse projects to reach a range of men such as the White Ribbon Ambassadors, the White Ribbon Ride, Workplace Accreditation, Youth Ambassador Leadership Programme and Community Events.
- Focuses on the positive stories from both former perpetrators and violence-free men (and now women) to illustrate healthy (respectful) relationships. The caveat to this is there is a push back about focusing on men’s violence and statistics are once again being utilised to show the significance of the issue.

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.

How individuals and organisations can support the White Ribbon Campaign

Share your stories:

Please share your stories – if you received some great advice we would love to hear about it. What helped shape how you see gender roles? Have your attitudes and behaviours changed? None of us are perfect, but if we keep being open to learning we can keep growing, getting better and improving things for the next generation. Boys will be boys – and then they will be men. Let’s ensure they are men who treat women with respect and have great lives and healthy relationships. Help us celebrate the great qualities boys show every day.

Create your own posters:

Our posters will highlight some of the great qualities boys have and that we need to encourage in them to undermine the rigid codes of masculinity that are holding them back. This year we are calling on schools

and communities to design their own posters highlighting the positive in: Boys will be boys. We would love to share the ideas and images you come up with as part of this year's campaign.

Highlight role models and their advice:

As part of the campaign we will find some professionals who deal with young men who are willing to help talk about how to support and mentor boys and young men. If you know someone who has good advice to offer, film them and send it to us so we can share it.

Toolboxes:

We will update our toolboxes to ensure they are consistent with the changes in language and direction that have occurred in recent years. We will add links to new research and resources to bring them up to date.

Use and share our Resources:

White Ribbon has produced a number of online and physical resources, many of these are free. Order your physical resources [here](#). The store features cloth and metal ribbons, flyers and posters, balloons, wristbands, window stickers, temporary tattoos and much more. Unfortunately, with no government funding what we have in stock is all that will be available this year. We recommend you order early to avoid disappointment.

2022 posters and flyers will be available to download from the end of October. 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 #Boyswillbe or #WhiteRibbonNZ or #RespectfulRelationships

Social media content:

As well as encouraging people to create positive Boys will be Boys posters that can be shared online, we will create 4 or 5 graphical posts for Facebook and Instagram using a tool that includes a hand writing text in real time. When these become available in November please share them widely.



Consent education:

We know education is vital and we have been approached by a number of individuals and groups who are concerned about the fact that some schools continue to opt out of consent education. We are collaborating with Consistent Consent a group of students at Wellington East Girls' College, who are campaigning to ensure consent education is compulsory from Year 7-13. We are rolling out a survey through all our media channels to explore people's attitudes on this issue. Please take the survey and forward the link to your networks.

Host or attend a White Ribbon Event:

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.

Ride:

We are thrilled to be able to hold the Ride after two years of cancellations. Please support local Ride events and encourage others to attend. The Riders will address the key campaign messages.

What causes men's violence towards women?

It is rigid ideas about gender¹ and roles that contribute to men's use of violence against females².

Even with 80% of family and intimate-partner violence incidents going unreported, New Zealand still has the worst rate for this violence in the world³. And our country has the third highest rate of sexual assault in the world⁴. This indicates that too many New Zealand men still express their masculinity through dominance and power over women.

Specific links between masculinity and violence are:

- Where a culture expects masculinity to involve dominance and toughness there is male violence against females.
- If an individual man over-conforms to perceived male gender expectations of strength, power and domination, he is more likely to rape women.
- There's more sexual violence where men and women have segregated lives, a belief in male sexual conquest, strong male bonding, high alcohol consumption, use of pornography, and sexist social norms⁵.
- Sexual violence serving as a tool for men and boys to prove their manhood, achieve the social status of a "real man," and establish power over others⁶.

¹ Gender is the socially determined, learnt behaviour for males or females, compared to sex, which is biologically determined

² Page 9, Brian Heilman with Gary Barker (2018). *Masculine Norms and Violence: Making the Connections*. Washington, DC: Promundo-US. From <https://promundoglobal.org/resources/masculine-norms-violence-making-connections/>

³ From https://www.nzherald.co.nz/family-violence/news/article.cfm?c_id=178&objectid=11634543

⁴ From <http://rpe.co.nz/latest-news/rate-of-sexual-assault-in-new-zealand-more-than-double-the-world-average-new-report-indicates/>

⁵ All information from pages 8-10, Baker, G. (2013). *Effectively involving men in preventing violence against women*. Auckland, New Zealand: New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse, University of Auckland, from <https://nzfvc.org.nz/issues-papers-5>

⁶ Page 11, Brian Heilman with Gary Barker (2018).

- When men believe that they are not – or are not perceived to be – “masculine enough,” they may use intimate partner violence to overcompensate or conform with gendered expectations⁷.

What prevents men’s violence?

White Ribbon promotes respectful relationships to prevent domestic and sexual violence against women.

Respectful relationships are based on:

- *Equality between men and women.* Gender equity in personal relationships and all social spheres, reduces violence against women.
- *Flexible gender behaviour for all.* Having men breaking out of the Man Box and choosing their own masculine identity prevents their use of violence.
- *Non-violent communication.* Men being emotionally aware and expressive gives them alternatives to aggression.
- *Enthusiastic consent for all sexual activities.* Having willing participation is crucial to preventing sexual violence.

White Ribbon also promotes adult men promoting the respectful behaviour of younger men. It also encourages men to be critical of pornography, especially the ways it promotes violence against women⁸.

White Ribbon’s toolboxes support men to behave respectfully and for care-givers to influence young men. See <https://whiteribbon.org.nz>

Promoting the key features of respectful relationships is an established, proven violence prevention strategy. It is also a positive approach that effectively engages men⁹.

What is the Man Box?

White Ribbon calls the expectations that men must always appear dominant, tough and in charge “The Man Box”¹⁰.

It’s a box that’s prescriptive and restrictive. Any different behaviours are dismissed as ‘being a girl’ or ‘gay’ i.e. not manly.

Often a boy and a man will believe he needs to appear tough and in-control in front of other men. This is from a fear, real or not, that they’ll reject him, possibly violently, if he doesn’t fit in. Being told to ‘Man Up’ is to be reminded to get back into the Man Box. A man may use violence to show his peers he is manly¹¹.



⁷ Page 9, Ibid.

⁸ See <https://whiteribbon.org.nz>

⁹ Pages 12-16, Baker, G. (2013).

¹⁰ The Man Box behaviours is also sometimes called ‘toxic masculinity’, as they damage those around the men, often with violence, and the behaviour often harms his own wellbeing

¹¹ Page 9, Brian Heilman with Gary Barker (2018)

Suppressing individual identities and diverse emotional responses is stressful. It's also unhealthy as these men avoid asking for help.

Men who break out of the Man Box to choose their own masculine identity report that they're less stressed, more satisfied with life and have happier relationships¹².

They're also much less likely to use violence against women. Having all men breaking out of the Man Box will help to eliminate men's violence against women.

White Ribbon has a [new toolbox](#) to support men to break out of the Man Box.

[Raise Our Men](#) is a 35-minute film featuring interviews with New Zealand men talking about their experience of being socialised as a boy and their experiences as a man. The film is designed to prompt men to choose to be more respectful towards women and break out of the man box.

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 –

¹² Pages 19, Baker, G. (2013).

- 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.

Poster

Boys will be Boys is the old phrase, this will be replaced with

