

Health and Society Research Fund - 2015 Science Investment Round Successful Proposals

Short title	Organisation	Term (yr)	Total funding (excl GST)	Summary
Developing an evidence based platform for family violence prevention in New Zealand	University of Auckland	4	\$2,880,059	<p>Between 2011 and 2014, family violence accounted for over half of the homicides experienced by NZ women. If nothing is done about the current rates of child abuse and intimate partner violence in NZ, it has been estimated that in the next 10 years, the cost to NZ society will be almost \$80 billion. This is likely to be a conservative estimate, as it is based on very limited information concerning the impact of family violence on men and the elderly.</p> <p>A lack of NZ data about risk factors for family violence exposure for both men and women prevents NZ government agencies from understanding where to start in order to turn the tide and change community attitudes towards violence. Prevention efforts that target individual groups within the NZ community are unlikely to be successful if the wider society remains passive to the existence of family violence, or holds on to attitudes and beliefs that endorse family violence. Because family violence generally occurs behind closed doors, efforts are required to enhance gender equality, reduce the acceptability of violence, and promote positive relationships.</p> <p>The aim of the investigation is to produce information necessary for informed policy making, working towards a goal of achieving intergenerational change in family violence exposure. Sweden is an example of how information can be used to inform policy change in the area of family violence. Information on community attitudes towards the corporal punishment of children, collected by the national statistics bureau, was used to inform a multi-strand, population based behaviour change initiative, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The timing of legislative change (when the community was ready); • The development of education campaigns supporting alternative strategies for disciplining children; • The identification of emerging high risk groups (e.g., immigrants whose children have not been born in Sweden since the time of the legislative change). <p>Although there has been a lot of discussion about the need for accurate information to inform policy decision making, the availability of the information alone will not ensure that effective policies are produced as a result of this information. This is where the point of difference lies with this research project. Senior policy advisors of key government agencies will be key members of the research team. Using a partnership approach, the research team will work closely with the government agencies to develop state of the art knowledge and policy development.</p> <p>By using this partnership approach and sharing tools and knowledge, it is expected that this project will contribute to effective policy development that will result in a reduction in the impact of family violence on the NZ community over time.</p>
Violence prevention: promotion of healthy relationships amongst high school students using a smartphone App	Auckland University of Technology	4	\$2,398,637	<p>Family violence is a human rights violation that has consequences for individuals, whanau and communities across Aotearoa New Zealand. In addition to acute and long-term health and well-being consequences, it impacts on participation in school and work. Economic costs of family violence are conservatively estimated at \$4.1 billion per annum. One in three NZ women experience physical or sexual violence by a partner, with rates significantly higher for Maori women. For many, the first experience of partner violence is during adolescence. Adolescent relationship abuse (also called dating violence) may include psychological, physical, sexual or cyber abuse and threats. Until recently, however, partner abuse prevention and intervention efforts (and research) largely ignored the critical period of adolescence, when individuals transition from childhood to adulthood. New Zealand secondary schools include 'healthy relationships' in health curricula and several programmes (such as 'Mates and Dates' and 'Loves-Me-Not') are being pilot tested. To realise a reduction in adolescent relationship violence, comprehensive, accessible, innovative and cost effective prevention interventions are needed that are informed by Te Ao Maori. In focus groups with taitamariki Maori in Northland, young people shared their understanding of healthy and unhealthy relationships and expressed a need for more information and more effective support from their friends and whanau. With young people increasingly seeking health information from technology, eHealth interventions offer promise for improved health and well-being across the lifespan.</p> <p>In this proposal we bring together an interdisciplinary, international team to test effectiveness and to disseminate an innovative App to</p>

			<p>support development of healthy partner relationships among young people, addressing both universal education (primary prevention) and targeted intervention (secondary prevention). With a young people participatory action research advisory group, and an implementation stakeholder advisory group, the App will be modified from a US-developed safety decision App (myPlan) targeting young adults (university women and their friends) and a NZ web-based safety decision tool (isafe). In the App, young people will (a) consider myths about relationship abuse, (b) learn about healthy and unhealthy relationships (presented as a quiz), (c) weigh their priorities for staying in a relationship or not, and (d) develop a personalised safety action plan with links to resources. The App will also provide a pathway for 'friends and whanau' to learn how to offer support. Using the implementation and dissemination RE-AIM framework, the App will be introduced into 8 secondary schools in a pragmatic cluster, stepped wedge trial, followed by national roll out. The study will advance our understanding of contextually appropriate and effective violence prevention interventions, as well as effective strategies for dissemination, in order to reduce the widespread negative health and social impacts of relationship violence. At the end of the four year project we will have a healthy relationship App purpose built for Aotearoa New Zealand young people that will be integrated into the secondary school curriculum; available to whanau, iwi and community; and accessible nationwide as a health sector family violence prevention resource.</p>
Total over 4 years			\$5,278,696