Building Human Rights Communities in Education*

Human Rights Commission (New Zealand)

Two developments have put the spotlight on the right to education in New Zealand. In 2002, Amnesty International approached human rights organizations and educators to propose a joint project to support the development of New Zealand schools as "human rights communities", where human rights principles were reflected in both the formal and informal curriculum.[1] In 2003, *He Tāpapa Mātauranga*/The Right to Education Framework, was distributed by the Human Rights Commission as one of a series of discussion papers in the New Zealand (NZ) Action Plan for Human Rights consultation process. Submissions on the discussion document and information gathered from the national consultation process contributed to a status report on the right to education in New Zealand (2004).[2]

The report found that while New Zealand was successfully ensuring education was available, improvement could be made to ensure education promoted, respected and fulfilled the country's human rights aspirations and obligations.[3] As a consequence the NZ Action Plan for Human Rights (2005) proposed a series of priorities for education.

In 2006, a coalition of Amnesty International, the Development Resource Centre, the Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Children's Commissioner, and the Peace Foundation commissioned a baseline study to

gather information about human rights education in early childhood education (ECE) centers and schools in New Zealand.

Drawing on interviews with agencies involved with human rights education, case studies of ECE centers and schools, a mail-out survey and a review of literature, the study analyzed the understanding and practice of human rights education and the extent to which centers and schools that constituted "human rights communities" understood, promoted and respected human rights.

The study found a range of government and non-government initiatives in New Zealand contributing to improved human rights for children and young people in education. It also found that these initiatives tended to address aspects of the education experience only, were relatively ad hoc, and were not consistent across the nation.

International programs in Canada, England and Ireland are relevant to New Zealand.[4] Extensive research carried out on these initiatives has found that when human rights are central to the whole school, students show higher self-esteem, are more accepting of ethnic minority children, more optimistic about their future, show improved behavior and an increased respect for the rights of all. It also found that more time is spent on teaching, resulting in an increase in student achievement.

This article introduces the concept of human rights communities in education, highlights challenges to the realization of the right to education in New Zealand, identifies the extent to which ECE centers and schools intentionally, explicitly and systematically ensure the human rights of those involved in education, and proposes a way forward.

Human Rights Education and the Treaty of Waitangi

Much custom, lore and practice that guide *tāngata whenua* (people of the land/Maori people) are consistent with international human rights.

Te Mana i Waitangi/Human Rights and the Treaty of Waitangi traced the development of international universal human rights and the commitments contained in the Treaty of Waitangi.

It concluded that Treaty rights and human rights may be approached as complementary concepts. Both govern relationships among people in New Zealand and between peoples and the Crown. The Treaty and human rights form part of New Zealand's constitutional framework, and affect how public

officials should conduct themselves. Neither group of rights is set in stone. Instead both have evolved over time and will continue to evolve. At times there will be conflict between rights but resolving such conflicts through negotiation is a feature of dynamic, democratic societies.[5]

Māori will often choose to refer to their Treaty rights rather than their human rights, even when both frameworks uphold the same issue. Given the autonomy to do so, tāngata whenua will connect human rights with a Māori world view. The Draft Charter of the Rights of the Māori Child[6] published in 2002 by (the then) Early Childhood Development is an example. The ethos of this charter is that "the Māori child, like all other children around the world:

- has human rights which are the basis of freedom, justice and peace
- needs special care and attention
- grows up best within a loving whānau (extended family)
- needs legal and other protection
- will flourish in an environment that acknowledges and respects their cultural values."

The cornerstone of the Charter is the development of a cultural context, a whakapapa/genealogy, for human rights. In this case the genesis is that of Te Whāriki, the Ministry of Education's early childhood curriculum policy statement.

The Baseline Study: Summary of Findings

A baseline study was carried out during 2006 to gather information about human rights education in early childhood education centers and schools in New Zealand.[7]

In summary the research found:

- In addition to the regulation, funding and provision of ECE services and primary and secondary schooling there are a number of government and non-government initiatives in New Zealand that contribute to the realization of the right to education
- While participant early childhood education centers and schools had a general understanding of human rights based education, and while specific practices could be aligned with human rights principles, they were not articulated as such

- Of the education sectors, the early childhood sector through the national curriculum Te Whāriki reflected a more deliberate and comprehensive approach toward the creation of a human rights environment. Best practice in early childhood education centers was evidenced by those that consistently demonstrated the principles and strands of Te Whāriki
- The opportunities presented by the developing draft New Zealand Curriculum are significant
- Characteristics of participant early childhood education centers and schools that demonstrated best human rights education practice included the following:
  - a whole of center/school approach—students, teachers, leaders, managers and governors model human rights
  - a positive and active relationship with the center/school community
  - members of the center/school parent and whānau community are supported to understand, and encouraged to model, human rights
  - the centrality of community and whānau to the strategic direction, priorities, planning and resourcing of the school/service, such as Playcenter, and Te Kāhanga Reo (childhood education centers)
  - participation of children and young people in decision-making
  - encouragement of children and young people to be outwardly-focused, on local, national and global issues
  - interweaving of human rights education throughout the whole curriculum
  - innovative approaches to student management such as restorative justice principles, peer mediation, student engagement initiatives, consistently reinforced across the whole school community
  - physical environment that reflected and encouraged diversity and learner-centeredness.
- There is a lack of specific human rights resources available. Most centers/schools rely on resource materials that are developed and provided centrally in order to implement the planned curriculums. Only a few of the ECE centers and schools involved in the baseline study could identify resources that could support the delivery of human rights education.
- If there was a common feature to centers/schools it was that they were driven by influential and passionate individuals.

Case Studies

The ten case studies in this report provide examples of early childhood education centers and schools that implement aspects of a human-rights-based education community. The case studies include situations where regular activities are approached creatively, and those that involve new and innovative practices that could be considered as international exemplars.

It is anticipated that most centers/schools would be able to relate to components of these case studies and be encouraged to develop their own initiatives to build human rights communities in education.

Case Study 1: Motu Kairangi Te Kohanga Reo, Wellington

Type	Roll	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Te Kohanga Reo	18	Maori	100%	2002

- Human rights-based education can address **communal rights**, not just individual rights
- Human rights communities create **choices** for students, staff and management
- Human rights communities are self-critical and solution-focused

In 1982 the Kōhanga Reo[9] movement became a champion for economic, social and cultural human rights for Māori children and their whānau/family. The explicit statement of the accountability of the individual to the community gave a communal lens to human rights that was unique at that time. Te Korowai describes these human rights in five principles: [10]

Principle 1: It is the right of the Māori child to be raised in the Māori language within the bosom of the whānau.

Principle 2: It is the right of the whānau to nurture and care for the mokopuna/children and grandchildren.

Principle 3: It is the obligation of the hapū/clan to ensure that the whānau is strengthened to carry out its responsibilities.

Principle 4: It is the obligation of the iwi/tribe to advocate, negotiate and resource the hapū and whānau.

Principle 5: It is the obligation of the government under Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) to fulfil the aspirations of the Māori people for its future generations.

Motu Kairangi Te Kōhanga Reo is located within a community hub that includes a playcenter, a community center and hall, an art club and a public play area. It was part of the beginnings of kōhanga reo. It opened in 1982

in borrowed rooms and after eleven years, and with assistance and support from Pākehā[11] community groups, Motu Kairangi moved into its own building. Motu Kairangi staff believe that human rights include the ability to make choices, and promote this by welcoming tamariki/children of all ethnicities to learn Māori language and culture. Whānau constitute the management of the kōhanga reo. Kaiako/teachers are informally and formally involved in all decision-making. Kōhanga reo are essentially whānau centered. Whānau are involved in the development and use of the curriculum through their curriculum collective.

The Kōhanga Reo movement that Motu Kairangi is part of is, at its most basic, about whānau coming together, united by a passion for their tamariki to learn Māori language and culture. Motu Kairangi has demonstrated a commitment to, and growing understanding of, the human rights of their community for over twenty-four years.

Case Study 2: St Francis Whanau Aroha Center, Rotorua

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Education & Care Centre	27	NA	European/Pakeha Maori Other	33% 59% 7%	2006

- Human-rights-based education provides a **framework** to understand community needs
- Human-rights-based education relies on **good planning**
- Human-rights-based education **transforms** student, staff, management and community expectations of life
- Human rights communities **involve** and are **guided by the whole community**

Funded through the Waiapu Trust, the St Francis Whānau Aroha Center is a free early childhood education service with a family support center attached. While St Francis would not have articulated its goals in terms of human rights, it is clear that the right to education is the first consideration, with its philosophy "to provide affordable childcare to anybody".

Referrals are regularly made to the Center from social service agencies. These children often have high needs. Programs are aimed at ensuring that all members of the Center respect and value each other. Through restorative methods of conflict resolution, children learn "how to interact peacefully with other children." The Center works with whānau and children to ensure programs and resources, such as Wāhi Patu Kore/Smackfree Zone, are relevant and accessible.

Whānau and community involvement in the planning of programs is encouraged as is parental responsibility. Parents are encouraged to stay and be involved during the day. The Center sees this as a social needs wrap-around service to whānau.

Staff say getting the community to feel comfortable in the Center environment has been challenging, but one testimonial of their success is that "in an area of a lot of graffiti, a lot of vandalism, this place has never been touched."

Case Study 3: Glenview Primary School, Hamilton

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Contributing	94	1	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	2% 35% 50% 7%	2005

- Human rights-based education is for **whanau**
- Human-rights-based education can be **directive**
- Human rights communities are **consistent** in the application of their values

The focus of Glenview Primary School is "respect for ourselves; respect for others; respect for learning; and respect for the world." It is assumed that children have the maturity to be able to take ownership for their behavior, relationships and needs. Accordingly the school values what the children bring to it, and this is considered in the planned and assessed curriculums.

Each year parents and caregivers are asked to inform Glenview of their expectations of the school. The religious affiliations of many in their local community, for example, are recognized as an important component of the school's values program.

Priority is given to the well-being of the whole child, driven by a philosophy that in order to be successful learners children need to be "building resilience and self-efficacy." The school acts as a locus for public health activity in the community and is committed to being a healthy school. The school is engaged with whānau, regularly giving public health and child safety advice to parents and ensuring their involvement in the school community. In 2005 the school gained support through a Pasifika Initiative that funded home-school partnerships.

The emphasis on partnership is reflected by the school. Adult role models for boys and girls are sought out and encouraged to be involved in the school. An outstanding kappa haka (Maori cultural performance) group and excellent music program give the school and community an opportunity to showcase this relationship.

Case Study 4: Otumoetai Intermediate School, Tauranga

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Contributing	94	1	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	2% 35% 50% 7%	2005

Human rights communities are future oriented
Human rights communities are a leader in their whole community
Human rights communities self-reviewing

In 2004, questionnaires were sent to over 1,300 past and present Otūmoetai Intermediate School students to gather information that would help create a school vision. This initiative was motivated by research that showed that effective schools are the ones that are galvanized around shared goals and values.

This vision was developed in consultation with students, and student expectations were discussed within the school, among students, teachers, parents, and peers. Initiatives have been developed to realize the vision such as Costa's "Habits of Mind" to develop higher level thinking, a Speak Up campaign to address bullying, an Achievement Recognition Programme recognizing citizenship along with sporting, academic and cultural achievements, and moving from a punitive to a positive discipline approach with a Redirection Programme.

Beyond the school, Otūmoetai is committed to the journey of a student through a schools' cluster that includes six contributing schools, the Intermediate school and Otūmoetai College. This cluster seeks to identify the desired character and values for a graduating Year 13 student. The college and intermediate schools are aligning their strategic plans, and aim to do so with the contributing schools.

Case Study 5: Nayland College, Nelson

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Co-educational	1,506	7	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	78% 12% 1% 9%	2005

- Human-rights-based education **uses the opportunities** afforded by the curriculum
- Human rights communities are **safe places** for students to be themselves
- Human rights communities are **externally focused**

Students nurtured in a safe and consistent environment is known as the 'Nayland Way'. The school considers that its major role in the community is "turning out students who are good citizens."

The school is known as "the friendly school" and for fostering diversity and tolerance. Human rights are inherent in this approach, and are demonstrated in the range of groups that have sprung up such as a homosexual rights group, CHOGM/Youth UN,[12] SENCO,[13] and Amnesty International groups. Human rights are also demonstrated in the strategic initiatives in the school, such as the establishment of a program for international students, and a ready access for students to management, peer mediators, and student council.

A commitment to diversity and tolerance is exemplified in the Social Studies program that is extended as an inter-disciplinary subject to Year 13. The Social Studies program offers students an opportunity to learn about and debate human rights. The discussion format allows open debate, and contributes to the flexibility of the curriculums. (Researchers observed a session, for example, in which the subject of discussion was the research focus - the extent to which the school reflected a 'human rights community'.)

Case Study 6: Opotiki College, Easter Bay of Plenty

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Co-educational	469	2	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	30% 69% 0% 1%	2003

- Human rights communities **learn** from other communities
- Human rights communities use **simple**, easy to understand processes
- Human rights communities seek to **restore** relationships

Ōpōtiki is a now a 'Restorative School'. In the past however, it had a high number of suspensions and stand downs, largely in response to the prevalence of drugs in the community which was having an impact on the school. By becoming involved in the 'Student Engagement Initiative' the school has committed to restorative justice principles.

Being a restorative school has involved professional development for all in the school community and consistent application of the restorative justice principles by teachers, managers, governors and students. In the first six months of the 2006 school year there were no suspensions or stand-downs. The detention system has been overturned and, more importantly, it appears that students' emotional intelligence has developed.

Up to August 2006 there were ten restoration conferences between the school, whānau and students which the previous year would have resulted in the same number of suspensions. Underpinning the new system is a school values education program called the "Cornerstone Values." Each term one value is highlighted, and becomes the key word for the school community. When the school visit was undertaken the key word was 'Responsibility', promoted in homework sheets, newsletters, displays in library and the staff room, and the local media. The promotion of common values gives a base point when behavior modification is desired.

The principal said that "without taking up too much of our time it has had quite a big impact."

Case Study 7: Pompallier Catholic School, Whangarei

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Secondary	485	8	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	66% 19% 2% 13%	2003

- Human-rights-based education is **internationally aware**
- Human-rights-based education encourages **dialogue with students**
- Human-rights-based education addresses **real life** issues
- Human rights communities **debate** differences in world view and clash of human rights, rather than avoid conflict

Pompallier Catholic College is a special character school with a reputation for good academic achievement, a family-oriented philosophy and an open door to a diverse, socially contributing student population.

Staff and management believe this is a result of explicit connections made between the school's commitment to the Marist philosophy of good scholars, good Christians, and good citizens. They endeavor to work with students and the wider community to "live in harmony," or more specifically, restoring and maintaining relationships between diverse individuals with differing needs.

The intersection of faith, knowledge and personal opinion is exemplified by the religious education classes which are compulsory and aim to encourage students to engage with issues of ethics, human rights, and social justice. At an observed session it appeared that an environment had been created that enabled an open space for debate, and encouraged critical reflection. The discussion reflected on the decision of Mark Inglis' climbing party on Mount Everest in May 2006 to leave a dying climber, and required students to understand and apply human rights thinking in a specific and contemporary way. The teacher did not promote a particular answer.

The environment at Pompallier is further enhanced by a student management system that is based on a restorative justice conference system.

Case Study 8: Selwyn College, Auckland

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Secondary	1,068	5	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	38% 9% 11% 42%	2004

- Human-rights-based education can be **all encompassing**
- Human rights communities are driven by **committed and passionate** people
- Human rights communities are **open spaces** for wider communities to express themselves

The baseline study found strong elements of a human rights-based community at Selwyn College within an environment that values "individual self-determination coupled with concern for the rights of the community, personal and professional development, social equity and justice, mental and physical health, comprehensive pastoral care, a safe learning environment, a sense of community, co-operative decision making, diversity, co-operative learning, openness to challenge, restorative justice, and effective social interactions."

These values are demonstrated at all levels, by a power-sharing management, by staff who actively guide the culture and organization of the school,

by students who have been given agency in decision-making, and by whānau who are encouraged to be regularly involved with the school.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights underpins the school's philosophy. It is visible, regularly articulated, guides interactions, and is manifest in the emphasis on the "dignity of the person." A range of classes and activities demonstrated this commitment.

The 'Global Education Classrooms' educate Year Nine and Ten students in all areas of the curriculum with a constant focus on human rights and global issues.

A Student Mediation Team has been found to be particularly useful and necessary with helping junior students deal with bullying and harassment.

An early childhood education center on the school grounds for refugee children supports home language and culture learning, and has a free-flow approach which allows family members to visit the center throughout the day.

Case Study 9: Waimea College, Nelson

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Co-educational	1,208	8	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	88% 10% 0% 2%	2005

- Human-rights-based education is **action-oriented**
- Human-rights-based education leads to **measurable** changes
- Human rights communities **clearly communicate** their vision

Waimea College teaches human rights in social studies and health and has an extensive leadership program in Years 10, 12, and 13 promoting civics and values in students' personal conduct. Management is expected to be a role-model to staff and students in their class visits, school assembly addresses, seminars with senior students, and through extracurricular involvement. A comprehensive program of class placements and seminars ensures teacher trainees are well versed in the values of the school.

Christchurch College of Education offered a Mental Health Promotion contract to schools in the South Island which Waimea took up to conduct a Mental Health Promotion survey. The school went beyond the demands of the contract by basing the survey on the Mental Health Foundation's

Guidelines for Mentally Healthy Schools and by surveying student years nine and ten, management, staff, and the Board of Trustees.

Two areas of concern were teasing and bullying. This led to a Year Nine 'teasing' module and a zero tolerance bullying policy. A training day was undertaken with boys and girls separately. Teachers addressed the issues in the classroom and began a three step restorative process.

The impact of the new policies and modules was soon apparent. There were thirty-two reports of bullying and teasing in the first week, two in the second week, and three in the third and fourth weeks. The system became self-regulating and is consistently reinforced through role-playing, counselling, the leadership program and a social worker and nurse in the learning center.

Case Study 10: Wainuiomata High School, Wellington

Type	Roll	Decile	Student ethnicity		Last ERO report
Co-educational	937	3	European/Pakeha Maori Pacific Other	53% 33% 9% 5%	2003

- Human rights communities are concerned with the whole person

Te Matariki is a holistic student center, located within Wainuiomata school, and houses a wide range of services to ensure that the learning environment is safe. It was initiated because of the school's belief that educational achievement in a lower socio-economic community required a whole-student approach. Te Matariki's services include guidance counsellors, social workers, careers advisors, a medical center that supplies free medical care and prescriptions to students, peer mediation and comprehensive tracking of student attendance.

Reportedly the impact has been dramatic. When the school opened in 2002 it had "appallingly low academic results" which have risen considerably since. The center has caused some tensions with families, particularly in relation to sexual health (33 percent of referrals to the medical center are for sexual health, and about half of consultations are about sexual health) but others are very supportive of the service. Most fundamental to the school's approach is that the needs of the young people are addressed which supports their successful participation in the school.

Survey Responses

As part of the baseline study survey questionnaires were sent to two hundred ninety seven early childhood education services and two hundred eighty seven schools. Centers and schools were asked about their understanding of human rights education, features of a service or school as a human rights community, and examples of best practice.

There was a continuum of responses within and between centers and schools. While many of the schools had contact with human-rights-based organizations and were running programs that provided a practical outworking of human rights principles (such as Cool Schools and restorative justice programs), most schools did not consider they were providing specific human rights education.

Most schools stated that they did not understand how to integrate human rights education provision into the curriculum, environment and organization of the school and structures, and that resources to support quality human rights education were lacking.

Schools with the most extensive responses identified best practice in human rights education as providing comprehensive teaching on human rights, active respect for and demonstration of human rights within the school context, participation and lobbying in human rights issues in the wider community and the world, and equality of opportunity.

ECE centers demonstrated significantly more confidence in and understanding of human rights education. The majority of responses focused on a definition of human rights education that ensured accessibility of early childhood education to all and equitable and fair treatment of all children, regardless of socio-economic, gender, ethnic, religious and cultural differences. Respondents seemed confident that human rights were integrated in the curriculum Te Whāriki.

There were several centers that believed they lacked human rights education resources, but most were able to identify general resources used in the learning environment (books, posters, puzzles, dolls, audio and video tapes) as the central means of communicating about human rights to children.

All but a couple of ECE respondents considered that their center was a human rights community. The key indicators the respondents identified were fair and equitable treatment of all children, the rights-based approach

of Te Whāriki, and the diverse range of backgrounds of the children enrolled at their services.

New Zealand Initiatives

The baseline study found that there was a range of government and non-government initiatives in New Zealand that were contributing to the realization of human rights and responsibilities in centers and schools. (Unfortunately it has not been possible to include all the initiatives in this report.)

Government Programs

Early Childhood Education: Te Whāriki

The principles, strands and goals of this curriculum meet the broad standards of acceptability, adaptability, accessibility and availability.[14] Further, the responses of early childhood education services to the baseline study reflected a greater comfort with the language of human rights, and a clear understanding of what human rights education might look like, with often direct reference to Te Whāriki.

Ministry of Education: NZ Curriculum: Draft 2006-2007[15]

Proposed curriculum changes introduce greater alignment with the early childhood education curriculum, Te Whāriki. Although in draft form, proposals indicate that the curriculum will reflect more strongly a human rights framework such as: integral placement of the Treaty of Waitangi; recognizing the importance of te ao Māori (Maori language) to all New Zealanders; delivery of the curriculum through te Reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language; and explicit inclusion of human rights education in learning. As this report goes to print, Te Kaupapa Marautanga o Aotearoa (Māori Medium Curriculum) for kura kaupapa Mäori is under consultation.

Ministry of Education (MoE): Schooling Strategy[16]

The focus for the Ministry of Education is to increase student achievement through improving teaching effectiveness, increasing the engagement of families and communities, and building the quality of education providers. Examples of MoE-funded programs include the Student Engagement Initiative (SEI), the District Truancy Services (DTS), the Suspension

Reduction Initiative (SRI), and the project to promote positive behavior in schools. The SRI and the SEI, which identify schools or regions that have unusually high levels of student disengagement, sets targets for improvement, monitors change, and employs facilitators to work locally. These initiatives encourage achievement for all students by supporting teachers, enhancing support for schools with challenging students, and working across agencies to improve social services to better support specific groups, families and individuals. [17]

Ministry of Youth Development: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Five Year Work Programme 2004-2008[18]

The MYD is focused on addressing education disparities, non-participation of specific ethnic groups and barriers to access, and raising awareness of the convention and children's rights.

Non-Government Programs and Independent Crown Entities

Amnesty International in schools[19] has over one hundred school and youth groups nationwide. A recent survey of Amnesty International group student leaders and teacher coordinators in New Zealand schools indicated that both students and teachers derive benefits from being involved in a human rights group.

Aotearoa Global and Development Education Network[20] is a coalition of representatives of non-governmental organizations, educationalists, community groups, and individuals that focus on educating around such issues as poverty, violent conflict, communicable diseases, international debt and trade, environmental degradation, and human rights, and how they affect individuals, communities and societies globally.

Associated Schools Project - Net[21] was established by UNESCO International in 1953. ASPnet today links students and teachers from over 5,000 educational institutions across the world with the aim of fostering international peace and understanding. Over sixty schools in this country are involved, including several that have been part of this baseline study.

Cool Schools[22] is a restorative conferencing program run by the Peace Foundation. It focuses on the primary and secondary sectors and on the home. It introduces peer mediation into the classroom and playground, teaching children to resolve their own conflicts, trains student and staff me-

diators and encourages the reinforcement of these skills in the home. The Peace Foundation is also piloting a new program, Roots of Empathy.

Development Resource Center is a development and global issues information and education organization, that includes Dev-zone and the Global Education Center, working for 'change for a just world'.

Health Promoting School program[23] was initiated by the World Health Organization in the early 1990s and in NZ in 1993 by the New Zealand School Trustees' Association (NZSTA). It involves a framework which works in partnership with the whole school community to identify and address health issues of concern.

Human Rights Commission/Te Kāhui Tika Tangata[24] promotes the right to education through all its key functions—education, advocacy, mediation, policy development, monitoring and evaluation.

Mindful Schools Resource[25] is an online resource that includes an introduction to school mental health promotion. It is designed for teachers and student teachers in secondary education, to provide guidance on supporting the mental health of people in school communities.

Quality Public Education for the 21st Century (QPE 4 21C),[26] produced by NZEI Te Riu Roa, is a well-researched and evidence-based paper that sets out strategic policy and proposals for a public education service in New Zealand. Principle 1 recognizes education as a human right and public good and poses the Right to Education Framework as a strategic tool.

Many schools in New Zealand have been involved with formal and informal Restorative Justice Programs in their student management systems.[27] Restorative justice has been found to be a viable alternative to punitive management, provided it is used consistently with backup training for staff, management and students. [28]

Safety in Our Schools[29] is an action kit with a health and wellbeing focus. Strategies are based on the health and physical well-being curriculum including the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, Youth Health: A Guide to Action and the New Zealand Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy and Health Promoting Schools. Connected to this, Safety in Schools for Queers (SS4Q)[30] was launched in 2005 to confront discrimination, harassment and bullying in schools for queer students and teachers.

Upstart Magazine[31] is produced by Save the Children Fund in collaboration with *Tearaway Magazine.* It is written for and by 7-12 year olds and includes educational content about an aspect of child rights, communicates

with young people about these issues and supports the provision of educational and entertaining material for children.

UNICEF School-Room[32] creates information resources teachers and students can use to build their knowledge about the important issues in children's lives around the world.

Young People's Reference Group (Office of the Children's Commissioner) is made up of ten young people from 12 to 16 years, from different parts of New Zealand. The group has been established to "help OCC make decisions about the work it does, to talk to OCC and to help them find out what's happening with children and young people in our communities, and to explore children and young people's rights and what they mean in New Zealand."[33]

Programs

Building Human Rights Communities in Education

Building Human Rights Communities in Education is an initiative developed by a coalition of agencies—Amnesty International, the Development Resource Centre, the Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Children's Commissioner, and the Peace Foundation. The vision is for early childhood education centers and schools to become communities where human rights are known, lived and defended.

The initiative is working to promote the development of ECE centers and schools as human rights communities by:

1. Facilitating a rights-based approach to education that includes,
   - human rights through education: ensuring that all the components and processes of learning, including curriculums, materials, methods and training are conducive to learning about human rights
   - human rights in education: ensuring the respect and practice of the human rights of all in early childhood centers and schools
2. Supporting the Ministry of Education and others in introducing the United Nations World Programme for Human Rights Education by:
   - analyzing human rights education in early childhood centers and schools, and disseminating the results of the study
   - identifying the stakeholders that are critical to the implementation of the World Programme and engendering their support
   - facilitating discussion with key stakeholders to set national priorities and develop a strategy that involves,

  - policy and legislation development and implementation
  - the learning environment
  - teaching and learning practices
  - education and professional development of teachers and other personnel
- supporting the implementation, monitoring and evaluating of the World Programme.

International experience shows the positive impact of collaborative human rights education programs that involve both obligatory and aspirational strategies [34] [35] and that move beyond the rhetoric of children's rights to the mainstreaming of a human rights perspective into all public policy.[36]

Initiatives implemented over the past decade indicate a move in this direction. The Schooling Strategy goal "All students achieving their potential", for example, sets out three priorities: all students experience effective teaching; children's learning is nurtured by families and whānau; and practice is evidence-based. The practice of human rights in early childhood services and schools has the potential to contribute to this public policy.

Professional development has been critical in changing educational pedagogies, and it is likely to be the key to developing an educational workforce equipped to ensure education is human-rights-based.[37] [38] [39]

Recommendations

Those involved in education in New Zealand:

Recognize and act on their responsibility to ensure early childhood education centers and schools explicitly meet New Zealand's human rights obligations.

Early Childhood Education Centers and Schools:

Develop a whole center/school approach to human rights-based education in which human rights are integrated throughout the formal curriculum, the teaching and learning environment, and the school organization.

Identify those practices that contribute to the integration of human rights in their centers/schools, and submit these to the Building Human Rights Communities in Education database to be publicly available.

Ministry of Education:

Amend the National Education Guidelines to make explicit New Zealand's obligation to provide education that conforms to human rights standards.

Work with other agencies to ensure human rights concepts and practices are integrated into all aspects of education including,

- policy and legislation development and implementation
- the learning environment
- curriculum principles, values, key competencies and learning areas
- teaching and learning processes
- education and professional development of principals, teachers and other education staff.

Conclusions

The base-line study showed that some early childhood education centers and schools are involved in initiatives that contribute to the realization of New Zealand's obligation to provide education that conforms to human rights standards. The study also highlighted the ad hoc nature of these initiatives and the lack of connection between them.

This publication introduces the concept of early childhood education centers and schools as human rights communities. Rather than an added impost to an already busy center/school existence, this concept offers a framework that will weave through the day-to-day life of the center/school, and that will provide tools, an approach and a language to address issues experienced by centers and schools.

The extent to which children and young people in New Zealand are able to fully enjoy their basic rights depends on the extent to which all people in New Zealand enjoy human rights. Equally, a society that meets the basic rights of its children and young people (to freedom from discrimination, education, health, an adequate standard of living and safety from violence) is building a future in which all its members are more likely to enjoy their human rights.

Early childhood education services and schools that organize as human rights communities will confront human rights abuses against children and young people, enable young people to leave school with a strong sense of

their own value, confident in their ability to learn, live and work in a variety of settings, and able to respect, appreciate and value diversity and difference.

*This is a shorter version of the report of the same title published by the Human Rights Commission in May 2007.

Endnotes

[1]See Janine Mcgruddy, "Human Rights Education in New Zealand – The Challenge of Developing "New Zealand Schools as Human Rights Communities," *Human Rights Education in Asian Schools* 8/89-92.

[2]*Human Rights in New Zealand Today/Ngā Tika Tangata o te Motu*, Chapter 15 (August 2005)

[3]Right to Education Framework He Tāpapa Mātauranga (Appendix 2)

[4]Children's Rights Centre, University College of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada http://discovery.uccb.ns.ca/children/

[5]Human Rights Commission/Te Kāhui Tika Tangata, Te Mana i Waitangi Human Rights and the Treaty of Waitangi, June 2003:19 http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc/worddocs/67479%20HUMAN%20R%85HTS%20TREATY%20BO.pdf

[6]Early Childhood Development: A Draft Charter of the Rights of the Māori Child: Te Mana o te Tamaiti Māori, Wellington 2002.

[7]Ako Consultancy – Jo and Graham Cameron.

[8]Te Kohanga Reo (language nest); whānau (family); mokopuna (grand/children); hapū (clan)

[9]Philosophy of Te Kohanga Reo: http://www.kohanga.ac.nz/principles.html

[10]Non-Maori New Zealanders, mostly referring to European New Zealanders.

[11]The United Nations General Assembly to the Model Youth Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

[12]Special Educational Needs Coordinator

[13]Availability - To ensure education is available for all in accordance with human rights standards.

Accessibility - To ensure access to available education for all in accordance with human rights standards. Accessibility also includes affordability.

Acceptability - To ensure that all education provision conforms to the minimum human rights standards.

Adaptability - To ensure education is responsive to the best interests and benefit of the learner, in their current and future contexts.

HRC Right to Education: He Tāpapa Mātauranga A Discussion Document (Auckland: Human Rights Commission, 2004) pages 13-14.

[14]Draft NZ Curriculum: http://www.tki.org.nz/r/nzcurriculum

[15]MoE Statement of Intent, 2006 – 2011:
http://www.minedu.govt.nz/web/downloadable/dl11148_v1/ministry-of-education-statement-of-intent-2006---2.pdf

[16]MOE, Attendance, Absence and Truancy in New Zealand Schools in 2005 (Wellington: Ministry of Education, 2006).

[17]MYA, *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Five Year Work Programme 2004-2008* (Wellington: Ministry of Youth Development, 2004).

http://www.myd.govt.nz/uploads/docs/1.5.7uncroc2004-08.pdf

[18]AINZ School Group survey results released in 2007. http://www.amnesty.org.nz

[19]Aotearoa Global and Development Education Network: http://www.agaden.org.nz

[20]UNESCO Program ASPnet: http://www.unesco.org.nz/pa_edu_aspnet.htm

[21]Peace Foundation Cool Schools Peer Mediation Programme: http://www.peace.net.nz/coolschools.htm

[22]Health Promoting Schools: www.hps.org.nz

[23]*NZ Action Plan for Human Rights.* http://www.hrc.co.nz/report/actionplan/0foreword.html The Right to Education Framework/He Tāpapa Mātauranga is included later in this report.

[24]Mindful Schools: http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/page.php?122

[25]NZEI Quality Public Education for the 21st Century: presented by National President Irene Cooper to the NZEI 2006 Annual Meeting http://www.nzei.org.nz/annual_meeting/annual_meeting06/documents/QPE421C_000.pdf

[26]The range of restorative programs have included the above programs and the AIMHI project, the New Zealand Police's Stop Bullying: Guidelines for Schools, and the Office of the Children Commissioner's restorative justice project. Where successful, restorative programs have shown to improve the school environment, academic achievement, student behavior and community relationships.

[27]Buckley S & Maxwell G, *Restorative Practices in New Zealand Schools,* (Wellington: Victoria University of Wellington, 2005). See also Children's Issues Centre, Developing a more positive school culture to address bullying and improve school relationships: case studies from two primary schools and one intermediate school (Wellington: Ministry of Social Development, 2004).

[28]New Zealand AIDS Foundation, *Rainbow Youth, Out There, Safety In Our Schools: Ko te Haumaru i o tatou Kura* – An action kit for Aotearoa New Zealand schools to address sexual orientation prejudice: (Wellington: New Zealand AIDS Foundation, 2004).

[29]Out There, Safety in Schools Campaign: http://www.outthere.org.nz/SafetyinSchoolsCampaign.htm

[30]*Upstart Magazine:* http://upstartmag.co.nz. Also T*earaway Magazine:* http://www.tearaway.co.nz

[31]UNICEF, School Room: http://www.unicef.org.nz/school-room. The UNICEF Framework for the Development of Rights Respecting Schools is included in Annex A of this article.

[32]Young Peoples Reference Group http://www.occ.org.nz/childcomm/about_us/young_people_s_reference_group,

[33]Tomaševski K, "Human Rights in Education as prerequisite for Human Rights Education" *Right to Education Primers No. 4.* (Gothenburg: Novum Grafiska, 2001) page 44.

[34]UNESCO, The Dakar Framework for Action - Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments (Paris: UNESCO, 2000) page 9.

[35]Noonan R., "Early Childhood Education: Optional Extra, Privilege or Right?" *Australasian Education Union News 9* (9): 2003.

[36]Bishop R, Berryman M, Tiakiwai S & Richardson C. *Te Kōtahitanga: The experience of year 9 and 10 Māori students in Mainstream Classrooms* (Wellington: Ministry of Education, 2003) page 132.

[37]See also UNESCO, *Overcoming Exclusion Through Inclusive Approaches in: A Challenge and a Vision, Conceptual Paper* (Paris: UNESCO, 2003) pages 24-26.

[38]Wylie C., *Twelve Years Old and Competent* (Wellington: New Zealand Council for Education Research, 2004) page 34.

Annex A

UNICEF Framework for the Development of Rights Respecting Schools

ASPECT 1. Leadership and Management—embedding the values of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in the life of the school.				
The School's Provision?	**What validation / evidence is required?**	**What is already in place?**	**What needs to be done? (Who? When? What?)**	**What evidence shows this has been done?**
A Rights Respecting School has the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of the core values of a school. The processes of developing as a Rights Respecting School: • informs the schools arrangements for planning, development and review. prepares the school community to recognise the universality of children's rights and to support the rights of others locally and globally • ensures the school has strong arrangements for protecting pupils from all forms of abuse and harassment.	The school leadership team has measures in place to ensure the values of the CRC are integrated into its policies as they are reviewed at all levels.			
	The school has a process of evaluating and sustaining its culture which is open, transparent and rights-respecting. Students contribute to this process.			
	Teachers have opportunities to improve their knowledge and understanding of local and global issues and how they relate to children and human rights.			
	Students report that there is a culture of mutual respect for the rights of others, evident in all levels of school relationships.			
	Students are empowered to work for change, aware of how the CRC is a major instrument for improvements in children's lives worldwide.			
	The school's physical environment is a feature of its rights respecting ethos.			

ASPECT 2. Teachers, other adults and students know and understand the CRC and its relevance to the school ethos and curriculum.				
The School's Provision	**What validation/ evidence is required?**	**What is already in place?**	**What needs to be done? (Who? When? What?)**	**What evidence shows that this has been done?**
1. There is a broad understanding by the whole school community (including parents and carers) of the CRC and why the school is implementing it. 2. The curriculum provides regular opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of the CRC in four contexts, with respect to each child's ability. These contexts are: a. respecting each others rights in everyday life b. working for global justice c. valuing diversity d. environmental sustainability	1. Parents and community demonstrate awareness of Article 42 – knowledge and some understanding of the content of the CRC - and its relevance to the whole school community, the country and globally.			
	2. The school is maximising opportunities for cross-curricular consolidation to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the CRC.			
	3. Students are involved in the ongoing promotion of respect for children's rights both locally and globally.			
	4. All students are knowledgeable of the content of the CRC and its relevance to themselves, the school and the wider world (appropriate to age and ability).			
	5. Students can point to rights principles and their relevance in different curriculum subjects/ areas and across the school.			
	6. Provisions of Article 29 are reflected in the school's curriculum, development plan, policies and vision Statements.			

ASPECT 3. Teaching and Learning in Rights Respecting Classrooms				
The School's Provision	**What validation/ evidence is required?**	**What is already in place?**	**What needs to be done? (Who? When? What?)**	**What evidence shows that this has been done?**
The values of the CRC are reflected in the following aspects of the classroom experience: • systematic opportunities are provided for children to participate in decisions which affect them • children can think freely about, and express their views • there is a classroom climate which allows for different perspectives and views. Opinions can be expressed without loss of dignity there is fair and equitable treatment for all • children learn how to be active contributors to class, community and society.	All teaching staff recognise the importance of modelling rights and undertake a rights-respecting approach in their classrooms.			
	All teaching staff use a wide range of teaching and learning methods, with high levels of participatory teaching and opportunities for student interaction.			
	All teaching staff give students opportunities to make choices in their learning within the framework of the required curriculum, so curriculum requirements and students' interests and concerns are met.			
	Students have opportunities to give constructive feedback to their teachers			
	All teachers include aspects of the global dimension in their lessons, as appropriate, and with a children's rights dimension. This is reflected in the schemes of work.			
	Students are using a rights-respecting approach to resolving conflict.			

ASPECT 4. Students actively participate in decision making throughout the school				
The School's Provision	**What validation/ evidence is required?**	**What is already in place?**	**What needs to be done?**	**What evidence shows that this has been done?**
1. There are effective and inclusive arrangements in the school community for students actively to participate in decision-making. 2. The school ensures that pupils have the information they need to make informed decisions. (Articles 13 and 17) 3. The school community makes provision for students to support the rights of others, globally, nationally and locally. 4. All members of the school community understand their responsibility to listen to students.	1. School has systems and procedures that effectively engage students in the democratic running of the school, (i.e. implementing Articles 12 and 13).			
	2. Students participate in wider initiatives – local, national and global.			
	3. Students have frequent opportunities to feed opinions and suggestions to the school's governing body.			
	4. Students participate in staff recruitment process			
	5. An elected School Council / Union has a responsibility to function as ambassadors for the CRC within the school.			