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Reducing School Stand-Downs –

A case study of one New Zealand secondary school

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ABSTRACT

In 2012 schools in New Zealand stood-down over 13,000 students as a result of behavioural difficulties. Within this data are a disproportionate number of low decile, male and Māori students. This present study examines the stand-down processes at one secondary school to compare the study school's stand-down data with national norms, and conduct a case study within the school to gather different perspectives on a stand-down event from two students, their families, and school staff. Possible ways to reduce stand-downs and intervene early before behaviour peaks to a level that may justify a stand-down are examined from a global view and then in relation to the specific contexts at the study school. Successful measures that can lead to a reduction in school stand-downs include the implementation of a positive behaviour framework such as School-Wide Positive Behaviour for Learning which is being promoted and implemented in New Zealand, which take a targeted, tiered approach to behavioural interventions. Restorative Practices and seeking interventions that assess the function of student behaviour are also highlighted as successful measures to reduce the time students spend out of school as a result of behavioural incidents.

Table of Contents

Chapter One	1
Setting the Scene	1
A Snap-shot of stand-downs in New Zealand Schools	1
Rationale and Benefits of this Study	9
Chapter 2 – Literature Review	10
Impact of Stand-Downs	11
Initiatives to Reduce Stand-Downs	19
Targeted Programmes	34
Universal Programmes	40
Review	41
Chapter 3 – Methodology	43
Research Framework	43
Research Ethics	45
Research Participants	47
Research Process	48
Data Analysis	53
Chapter 4 – Results	55
Study school Patterns of Stand-Downs	56
Different Perspectives of the Stand-Downs	58
Destiny	57
Sharon	63
Neil	65
Tyson	68
Maggie	72
Craig	73
Analysis of Interview Data	75
Chapter 5 – Discussion	81
Comparing New Zealand Stand-Down Rates with Study School	82
Perspectives of the Stand-Downs	83
Steps the Study School Can Take to Reduce the Use of Stand-Downs	85
How the Target School Can Intervene Early to Avoid or Reduce Stand-Downs	88
Review	91
Chapter 6 – Conclusions and Recommendations	93
References	107

Appendices

Appendix 1 Interview Schedule – Student	113
Appendix 2 Interview Schedule – Parent	114
Appendix 3 Interview Schedule – School	115
Appendix 3 Ethics Committee approval	116

List of tables

Chapter 1		
Table 1.2 Percentage of Stand-Downs, by Behaviour (2000-2012)		5
Chapter 3		
Table 3.1 Data Gathering Tools and Participants		52
Table 3.2 Analysis of Interview Questions		53
Table 3.3 Assessing Risk Factors Associated with Stood-Down Subjects		54
Chapter 4		
Table 4.1 Stand-Downs by Behaviour at Study School 2012		56
Table 4.2 Comparison of National Stand-Down Data by Behaviour with Study School		57
Table 4.3 Office Recorded Behavioural Incidents for Destiny		58
Table 4.4 Office Recorded Behavioural Incidents for Tyson		69
Table 4.5 Stand-Down Perspectives: Male Student		75
Table 4.6 Stand-Down Perspectives: Female Student		76
Table 4.7 Risk Factor Analysis of Subjects' Stand-Downs		78
Table 4.8 Analysis of Strategies to Reduce Stand-Downs		89

List of figures

Chapter 1	
Figure 1.1 Age-standardised stand-downs rates by ethnic group	3
Chapter 2	
Figure 2.1 Social Discipline Window	27
Figure 2.2 Overview of Restorative Practices Within the PB4L Context	29
Figure 2.3 Decision –making guide: choosing appropriate alternatives to suspensions.	37
Chapter 6	
Figure 6.1 Decision Making Guide, New Zealand Adaptation	97
Figure 6.2 Decision Making Guide in Action	98