Taitamariki Maori
korero about intimate partner relationships

Researchers Moana Eruera (M.Phil) & Terry Dobbs (M.A.Dist)

Amokura
Family Violence Prevention Consortium
Taitamāriki Māori kōrero about intimate partner relationships

Amokura

Piki mai taku manu
Kake mai taku manu
Ki te taha wao nui
Ki te tahi wao roa
Ka whakakiki
Ka whakaka
Nau mai piki mai kua tae mai
Tuhewa ngānangāna te kauhe
Kauhe ki te kauhe
Karo te mata o te hunga ora
Tuhewa ngānangāna te pu
Tuhewa ngānangāna te kauhe
Kauhe ki te kauhe
Karo te mata o te hunga mate
Marangai, marangai
Ko taku manu he manu
Rere ki uta, rere ki tai
Ka rere ka tau.

Te Amokura

Te kaupapa o te amokura, he kaitiaki. E ai ki te kōrero, ka hoe te hunga whakawhititanga i te moananui a Kiwa, tērā ka tataēa e te āwhā, e te maringai. Ka piki e te kaipuke ngā ngaru nui, ngā ngaru roa. Tae noa mai te hēmanawatanga i te kaha o te hiahia kia tau kia uta. A reira ka whakaatu mai te amokura i tōna kaitiakitanga, arā kei tua tata nei te whenua. Koia ka mohio nga kahoe he whenua ka kitea.

“Te kaupapa o te amokura, symbol of guardianship and safety is described. Amokura are the tail feathers of the tawake, a seagoing bird. Those at sea and far from a distant shore knew the sighting of the amokura meant that they would reach land and safety. The word amokura is made up of two words ‘amo’ meaning ‘to carry’, and ‘kura’ meaning ‘red’ and symbolizing the sacred. The name therefore symbolizes safety and the carrying of that which is sacred, sacred trust and responsibility. The name Amokura was adopted by iwi of Taitokerau for a project that would work for whānau safety and violence prevention” (Grennell, 2006).

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E karanga ana, tenei waiata ki ngā taitamariki
Mai ngā tauira a rūpuna, mahara ki ngā mea kua wheturangitia
Kia kore tātou e ngaro noa, e nga tu pakari ai tātou i tēnei a o hurihuri
Kua riro ra ma tēnei reanga te māhi whakatika i tēnei whenua
Kua tae mai ra ki tēnei wa te wa hei whakao ho hei kimi oranga

He mihi miharo, he mihi hōnore tēnei ki ngā taitamariki, ngā pakeke hoki e tautoko ana ki tēnei kaupapa whakahihohira o te oranga taitamariki. Nā te māhi taktini kua kawea ngā rēo me ngā whakaāro o ēnei taitamariki Māori hei tauira hei wawata kia whai oranga i tēnei ao hurihuri. Nā reira tena koutou kātoa.

This project combines the contributions of many people. Firstly to the taitamariki participatory action research group who are an important part of the research team and participated actively and honestly with us. They openly shared their experiences and knowledge with us in order to ensure that youth voices led the development and implementation of the project. Also to the taitamariki Pilot group who assisted with the research methods for their enthusiasm and feedback. A special acknowledgement to the Wharekura, especially Whāea Jo Elliot, for embracing this kaupapa and recognising the benefits for taitamariki. She provided the opportunities for us to work alongside these akonga and assisted with organising taitamariki availability, venue and other supports.

To our advisory ropu; Dr Fiona Cram, Naida Glavish, Tame TeRangi and Pane Thomas who provided their expertise in kaupapa Māori research, te rēo me ōna tikanga and taitamarikitanga to confidently develop the project.

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Mauri ora ki a koutou
Moana Eruera & Terry Dobbs
Researchers

2. Waiata written by Reo Takiwa Dunn, Ngapuhi
The Māori population is a youthful one, with just over one in three Māori (35.4%) aged under 15 years (Statistics New Zealand, 2006). Taitamariki Māori are therefore a key stakeholder in the positive, long term transformation of Māori communities and Aotearoa society. As taitamariki mature and prepare to take on adult roles they manage a range of developmental changes through this period of transition. These changes include, coping with physical and sexual development, mastering more complex thinking, establishing emotional and financial independence, developing identity, learning to relate differently to peers and adults (McLaren, 2002). The development of quality relationships through this period is significant to taitamariki making a positive and healthy transition to adulthood. Invariably this includes developing relationships of a more intimate nature with peers of the opposite or same sex, often referred to as intimate partner relationships. These relationships are complex with many challenges and sometimes this may include violence.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is an ongoing issue within Aotearoa and given its prevalence and the youthful demographic of the Māori population there are growing concerns for taitamariki Māori in the healthy formation of their intimate partner relationships. In a recent study held in Northland, preliminary findings found a high percent of 16-24 year olds had experienced violence in their intimate partner relationships (Koziel-McLain, 2009). However, ‘whānau ora models’ grounded in cultural values, beliefs and processes provide a guide in which to build on the resilience and strengths of our taitamariki, and their environments, and recognise the opportunity for taitamariki to take a lead role in the development of initiatives that support them through this important part of their development and consequently help protect them from violence.

The Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium is an integrated community change initiative to promote whānau well-being and violence prevention in Tai Tokerau led by Chief Executive Officers of seven iwi authorities for the region. The consortium activities are guided by the Mauri Ora framework which aims to dispel the illusion that violence is culturally valid, remove the opportunities for violence to take place and teach transformative practices for the collective responsibility and wellbeing of whānau, hapū and iwi. Tai Tokerau has a high population of Māori and following on from national trends a significant proportion of this population are children and youth. More than half of the Māori population in Northland is under the age of 24 years (Ministry of Social Development, 2008).

“In recognising that youth are the key population to influence, it is essential that the specific needs of youth are recognised, in particular indigenous youth, and consideration given to young Māori within the context of their whānau, hapū and iwi, if long-term changes are to be achieved” (Erai, Pitama & Allen, 2007, p.19).
These factors have particular relevance to Amokura activities due to the young Tai Tokerau Māori population, prevalence of IPV and iwi commitment to the implementation of violence prevention strategies. Therefore this project will contribute to the knowledge base for ‘whānau ora’ initiatives for taitamariki and violence prevention for Māori communities within Tai Tokeranu and nationally.

Much of the research related to Māori in the field of whānau violence has been undertaken by non-Māori using deficit and/or pathological approaches. Māori academics, health, welfare, education and justice professionals argue that models of analysis and intervention methodologies based on Western or mainstream thinking have been consistently ineffective for Māori (Grennell, 2006; Pihama, Jenkins & Middleton, 2003; Kruger, Pitman, Grennell, McDonald, Mariu, Poma, Mita, Maihi & Lawson-Te Aho, 2004). Whānau ora models also known as Mauri Ora and/or oranga whānau (the names are used interchangeably) are grounded in common understandings of a Māori worldview and work to strengthen whānau wellbeing. When discussing ‘oranga whānau’ in relation to whānau violence Grennell & Cram (2008) write:

"...strategies based on strengthening whānau are a relatively new phenomenon in a field that has often taken an individual or couple-based approach to intervening in family violence" (p.1).

The purpose of this report is to examine the existing research and literature and combine it with taitamariki Māori knowledge and lived experiences and the wisdom of cultural experts. Together these components have guided the development of a research methodology that sought to create a space for taitamariki Māori to discuss intimate partner relationships. The present report includes:

i) An overview of the Mauri Ora framework which guides this project and its relevance to working with taitamariki Māori in whānau violence prevention

ii) A literature review that draws on relevant national and international literature including traditional knowledge from Te Ao Māori, the contemporary world of taitamariki Māori in Te Ao Hurihuri and Transformative Practices for research with taitamariki Māori

iii) The Study informed from the literature review which describes the processes used with the PAR group and their recommendations for use with the Pilot group. It also includes the outcomes of the Pilot group

iv) Recommendations on preferred practice when researching with taitamariki Māori in the field of violence prevention and more specifically intimate partner relationships
Executive Summary

This project aimed to develop a methodology and methods for exploring taitamariki Māori intimate partner relationships and pilot that process with one pilot group. The process was guided by the Mauri Ora framework developed by Māori practitioners from across Aotearoa founded in a Māori worldview using Māori cultural values, beliefs and practices to address violence. The Mauri Ora framework assists to meet the priorities identified for this project when working towards taitamariki Māori development and violence prevention within their intimate partner relationships. The framework provides:

- A kaupapa Māori foundation and cultural imperatives for analysis and practice of whānau violence prevention. This report views taitamariki Māori within the context of their whānau.

- A Māori wellbeing framework which works towards the goal of whānau ora (at both collective and individual levels). This provides the opportunity to consider the wellbeing of taitamariki and their specific needs during this significant time of transition within the context of their whānau, hapū and iwi.

- A multi-layered approach for the analysis and practice of violence prevention by including:
  - Te Ao Māori (traditional and historical perspectives including the impacts of colonisation)
  - Te Ao Huruhuri (context of Māori in today’s society and the socio-economic, cultural and political influences)
  - Transformative practice (transformative elements which apply cultural constructs into today’s context)

- Cultural practice imperatives as a guide to whānau violence prevention. This project provides the chance to apply these imperatives of whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana into work with taitamariki.

- Has the potential to create space for mana āhua ake taitamariki (recognising taitamariki uniqueness, agency, capacities and potential within the life cycle) and taitamariki voices to be prioritised within this study.

Mauri Ora with its multi-level approach to whānau violence prevention has a strong alignment with current youth approaches as well as violence prevention approaches, many of which use ecological frameworks to analyse, report and practice. However, in addition to these things Mauri Ora is founded on cultural constructs and requires the inclusion of historical perspectives which are necessary to accurately understand the current context when working with Māori and indigenous peoples.
The Study

The objectives were to:

- Find out from taitamariki how best to engage with other taitamariki Māori (tāne me nga wahine) in research on their intimate partner relationships.
- Ensure that the research addressed some of the issues and the gaps that had been highlighted in the literature review.
- Ensure taitamariki Māori full participation in research on matters which effect their lives.
- Ensure that this project was carried out with taitamariki Māori and not on them.
- Use a methodology which enhanced taitamariki Māori wellbeing – which reflected a kaupapa Māori focus.
- Ensure that taitamariki Māori voices were being heard within this field of research.
- Address some of the definitional, sample and methodology issues, and explore further issues of gender – placing some context for these for taitamariki Māori.
- Acknowledge that without taitamariki Māori voices being heard any prevention programmes will fail them.

Recommendations

These recommendations were drawn from the combined sources of the literature review, taitamariki PAR group, Pilot group and Advisory group in order to guide research projects for taitamariki Māori in the field of violence prevention.

i) Participants

- Are aged between 14-18 years as they have experience of relationships and are able to identify prevention strategies to use with 10-14 year olds.
- Recruitment of participants must include provision of support processes.
- Rural and urban contexts are included in the study.

ii) Researchers

- Māori researchers with the option of a researcher who has ‘rēo Māori’
- Training or experience in child advocacy and talking with taitamariki
- Gender issues need to be explored further therefore we recommend 3 groups:
  - Taitamāhine with wahine researcher
  - Taitamatāne with tāne researcher
  - Taitamatāne with wahine researcher

iii) Methodology

- Kaupapa Māori, qualitative and responds to the ‘mana āhua ake o taitamariki’ by being youth centred (we recommend participatory action research) as able to achieve this.

iv) Methods

- Mixed methods are recommended in workshops with small groups (6-8 participants)
- Methods could include brainstorms, discussions, written group worksheets and all discussions should be taped
- Semi-structured questions (like those used with the Pilot group) with prompt follow up questions (ideally these would be constructed with the assistance of a taitamariki PAR group)
- The use of ‘Rēo Māori’ must be explored further in the area of intimate partner relationships for taitamariki

v) Process

- The PAR process should allow time for taitamariki to be included in the prioritising, structure and writing of the report. Also in the presentation of findings to community.
The first section of this report, the literature review, begins by describing the Mauri Ora framework which provides a kaupapa Māori lens for this project and informs the structure, analysis and recommendations of the report. The core components of the Mauri Ora framework guide each section of the report starting from Te Ao Māori which includes traditional perspectives, origins and influences on intimate partner relationships. The next section called Te Ao Hurihuri describes the context for taitamariki within today’s society, and begins with examining the existing body of knowledge (national and international literature) on intimate partner violence (IPV) for young people. The scarcity of research internationally (with indigenous youth) and locally (with taitamariki) that focuses specifically on IPV meant that the current review of the literature took a broader focus. New Zealand research on youth relationships and violence has been included, although many of the studies have only small, if any, Māori participant samples. The review then moves to the national context and highlights the complex position of taitamariki Māori within Aotearoa society today. It outlines and summarises the common themes and learning from other taitamariki Māori research projects to assist in the development of the methodology and methods for this study.

The next section called Transformative Practices provides an overview of youth and violence prevention. It includes some examples of violence prevention initiatives which work towards addressing IPV for youth. It also includes youth development approaches in Aotearoa and identifies the potential of the Mauri Ora framework practice imperatives of whakapapa, tikanga, tapu, mauri and mana in providing a guide for approaches when working with taitamariki Māori. It highlights examples that parallel to current youth development approaches.

Finally the Study, begins with a description of the process used with the taitamariki PAR group guided by the Mauri Ora framework cultural practice imperatives (as described above), informed also by the literature. It summarises the recommendations of the taitamariki PAR group for use with the Pilot group (a distinctly different group of taitamariki from the PAR group). It then outlines and provides detailed information of the outcomes of the Pilot group. The report concludes with recommendations about possible methodology and methods for a larger study on intimate partner relationships and taitamariki Māori.

This project engaged with taitamariki Māori for a number of reasons. There is a commonly held assumption that adults know what is best for children and young people. This creates an attitude that adults make decisions in the ‘best interests of children and young people’ often without them (Dobbs, 2005). Melton (1987) argues that adults can be driven by their own political, social and religious views, albeit with noble intentions, and can end up promoting their own rather than children and young people’s interests. Smith and Taylor (2000) suggest that giving more prominence to children and young people’s voices is one way to ensure that their advocacy is well founded and that decision making is guided by a more complete picture of all the key issues. Young people’s perceptions of their own lives and experiences can provide an essential input towards creating better conditions for them in the future. Only when children’s experiences are listened to seriously will they begin to have a greater say in both their own lives and government policies.

In 2008, Towns and Scott investigated young Aotearoa New Zealand women’s experiences of intimate partner relationships, using focus groups with young women 18-25 year olds. The study was
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designed to capture, through a study of language, the social and cultural values and beliefs that contribute towards young women’s experiences of controlling behaviours from their male partners. The study was intended to inform the development of resources for high school students for the prevention of men’s domestic violence towards women. They describe the cultural heritage that provides the backdrop to young women’s experiences of relationships in Aotearoa and describe young women’s experiences of ownership in relationships and the cultural influences which appear to have informed their experiences.

When considering a prevention focus with young women entering relationships with young men, Towns and Scott (2008) explored the issue of ownership in relationships because this was an issue that the focus group had suggested and because:

“We were interested not only in the cultural heritage which had informed these practices but also in how young women made sense of such behaviours: what cultural and social influences they spoke about as contributing to their male partner’s controlling behaviours, possessiveness or jealousy. In these discussions, we wanted to try to capture the ways in which ownership practices may be hidden within existing accepted practices: within media representations and institutional practices – widely held understandings of how women should be in relationships and more generally. Finally we were interested in what young women thought might be the best ways to intervene to stop such practices....Men’s control of young women partners and jealousy have been associated with men’s violence towards them (Cano et al., 1998; Stets & Prog-Good, 1987) and indeed with deaths of women through men’s domestic violence (Campbell et al, 2003; Johnson, 2006) they suggested, New Zealanders are in the unique position of having a strong cultural heritage drawing from Māori, British and other new immigrant cultures. This study allowed us to explore the commonalities and the differences that some of these different heritages brought to men’s and women’s understandings about how they should relate to each other in terms of ownership practices” (p.13).

Towns and Scott (2008) reported that from the literature, different cultural perspectives that both Māori and Pakeha heritages had brought to bare on the ownership practices of men in relationships and the resounding impact that such practices had had, particularly on Māori women. They commented that the significance of these practices is not widely known yet and could provide a much greater understanding of certain anomalies in the data relating to Māori and other women’s experiences of domestic violence by men.

From the readings which informed Towns and Scott (2008) project and discussions with the projects Māori advisory group led them to consider that:

“...an important trajectory to this project would be a study driven by Māori and for Māori that would more fully investigate ownership practices experienced by Māori pre- and post- colonisation... there would also be great benefit for New Zealanders generally to have a better understanding of the impact of ownership practices on Māori women's relationships with men and subsequently on their experiences of men's violence... this knowledge would also provide a stronger platform for any developments which we might want to make towards the prevention of such violence... the focus groups in this study were with young women we were also aware of the need to be informed about young men's values and beliefs regarding ownership practices in men's relationships with young women. We were therefore keen for a subsequent study in which we talk to young men” (p.13).

The current project follows on from Towns and Scott (2008) study and contributes to this pool of knowledge and lays a pathway for future research in this field.
Mauri Ora Framework

Mauri Ora is a kaupapa Māori wellbeing framework to guide the analysis and practice of whānau violence prevention. Within the Aotearoa context Kaupapa Māori is an emancipatory theory with its foundation in a Māori worldview which has developed alongside the theories of other indigenous and minority groups who have sought a better deal from mainstream society (Cram, 2006). The most commonly used definition of kaupapa Māori is by Smith (1999):

“Related to being Māori, is connected to Māori philosophy and principles, takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori and the importance of Māori language and culture, and is concerned with the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well-being” (p.1).

There is a growing body of literature about kaupapa Māori theories and practices that are applied over a wide range of successful Māori development areas particularly in the fields of education, health and research. Within the Mauri Ora conceptual framework Mauri Ora has been defined as:

“One of a number of Māori terms for wellbeing/wellness and is regarded as the maintenance of the balance between wairua (spiritual wellbeing), hinengaro (intellectual wellbeing), ngākau (emotional wellbeing) and tinana (physical wellbeing)” (Kruger et al., 2004, p.15).

In addition the Mauri Ora framework contains an analysis of the impacts of colonisation and identifies the environmental and contextual influences affecting Māori contemporary realities. It also acknowledges the diversity of Māori and the wide range of processes used to achieve and sustain wellbeing. This framework has been used to guide two Amokura taitamariki Māori research projects working towards whānau ora and violence prevention. Kruger et al., (2004) in the report outlines three fundamental tasks for analysing and approaching violence as.

i) Dispelling the illusion (at collective and individual levels) that whānau violence is normal and acceptable

ii) removing opportunities for whānau violence to be perpetrated through education for the empowerment and liberation of whānau, hapū and iwi

iii) teaching transformative practices based on Māori cultural imperatives that provide alternatives to violence

Mauri Ora is the goal of the framework and has been defined as the wellbeing of whānau (acknowledging individuality within the whānau collective), hapū and iwi. The Mauri Ora framework suggests these three elements as a guide to analysis and intervention:

i) Te Ao Māori (imperatives of whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana)

ii) Te Ao Hurihuri (contemporary influences within today’s society which undermine the practice of cultural constructs from Te Ao Māori)

iii) Transformative elements (the ability to apply Te Ao Māori constructs into Te Ao Hurihuri navigating the environmental and contextual influences of society today).

These three elements guided the structure of the literature review, starting in Te Ao Māori.

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4. Commonly used Māori frameworks include; Te Whare Tapa Wha (Durie, 1998), Te Wheke (Pere, 1984) and Mauri Ora (Kruger et al, 2004)
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"There is no one Tā Te Ao Māori, rather there are a collection of contributions that develop those principles which will collectively add to the philosophy of Tā Te Ao Māori" (Nicolls, 1998, p.60).

We begin our exploration and analysis from Te Ao Māori using the practice imperatives of whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri and mana which describe some of the traditional understandings which may be considered when approaching the subject of taitamariki intimate partner relationships.

**Whakapapa**

Whakapapa is often described as the foundation of a Māori worldview. Whakapapa is the process which records the evolution and genealogical descent of all living things; the interconnectedness of relationships between people and the environment, both spiritual and physical, as well as people to each other in an ordered process (Henare, 1988 and Walker, 1996). Therefore whakapapa embodies the origins and nature of relationships.

"Whakapapa describes the relationships between te ao kikokiko (the physical world) and te ao wairua (the spiritual world). …...The reciprocity and obligatory nature of whakapapa means that it can be used to create productive and enduring relationships to support change. Whakapapa establishes and maintains connections and relationships and brings responsibility, reciprocity and obligation to those relationships…” (Kruger et al., 2004, p.16.)

Whakapapa narratives describe accounts by which we can explore and learn from. The whakapapa creation story of Ranginui and Papatuanuku (although there are varied iwi accounts) tells of intimate partner relationships in the evolution of the world and also of humankind through Tāne (personification of man) and Hine (personification of woman). Whakapapa establishes the identity of an individual and assists to clarify themselves and their relationships with others. It enables the individual to understand their position in relation to their whānau, community and society and as such their roles and responsibilities.

"…the dialogue about inter-relationship between self and others is understood when a person identifies themselves. There is a weaving whitiwhiti kōrero that is laid down, to bind the human (people connections), natural (land mark identifiers) and spiritual (esoteric locators) dimensions of a person in their worldview as a means of highlighting their cultural identity" (Ruwhiu, 2009).

Traditionally whakapapa often influenced intimate partner relationships and was very important in the continued succession and protection of whānau land and overall wellbeing. For example the strategic joining of a man and a woman and therefore their whānau, hapū and iwi for the purpose of strategic alliances, land, blood lines or other such purposes was a common occurrence. The whakapapa of each partner was an important factor but even more important was the continuation of the whakapapa of their ‘uri’, or descendents, as a result of the union. The preservation of the people was paramount and the life-giving roles of land and women were therefore revered (Blazer et al., 1997). Whakapapa also ascribed roles for tāne and wahine in a variety of contexts. For example an individual’s line of descent and where they were positioned in the whānau created role expectations for the continuation of tikanga responsibilities and obligations. Often the mataāmua, or eldest in the whānau meant they had particular roles and sometimes these roles were gender specific in the practice of tikanga. For some iwi the eldest male was expected to be the kaikōrero or speaker for the whānau. In another context for wahine the important role of ‘te whare tapu o te tangata’ as the child bearers is described and accentuates the necessity for women to be protected as critical in the continuation of whakapapa.

**Tikanga**

Tikanga is commonly described as cultural customs and practices. There are many approaches or ways of looking at tikanga Māori.

"Tikanga is the practice of Māori customs and processes founded in a Māori worldview…Tikanga embodies Māori values and prescribes acceptable and unacceptable behaviours from a specifically Māori value base….The application of tikanga provides the opportunity for the restoration of order, grace and mana to whānau, hapū and iwi” (Kruger et al., 2004, p.20).
Mead in his writing on tikanga Māori describes these approaches. One explanation pertaining to relationships views tikanga as a means of social control to guide encounters and behaviour. Therefore tikanga provides a guide to relationship interactions.

“Tikanga guides interpersonal relationships and provides processes and rules for engagement such as how groups are to meet and interact, and determines how individuals identify themselves. Examples of this include group processes to guide ceremonies such as hui, birth, marriage and death. It may also include guidelines for behaviour of individuals and families” (Mead, 2003, pp.5-8).

**Wairua**

Wairua describes the connection between the spiritual and physical dimensions.

“*The spiritual and physical bodies were joined together as one by the ‘mauri’, the manawa ora (or life essence which is imbued at birth) which gives warmth and energy to the body so that it is able to grow and develop to maturity*” (Barlow, 2008, p.152).

Wairua is not easy to define as it is intangible and is often experienced as feelings. Wairua can sometimes be described in terms of the energy levels that a person projects, such as ‘she has a nice wairua’. Wairua may be subject to damage through the deeds of others such as abuse, neglect, violence, drugs and rape (Mead, 2003). When considering intimate partner relationships it is important to acknowledge wairua and its importance in relationships and connections between people. It is also pivotal in the facilitation of healing processes.

**Tapu**

When discussing intimate partner relationships it is also necessary to consider those values and beliefs which guided interpersonal interactions and behaviours such as tapu and noa. Metge (1976) gives the example:

“…men as a group are tapu in relation to women who as a group are noa…women of high rank are tapu in relation to some men and other women, and all women are tapu during menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth” (p.33).

Tate (2002) discusses three elements to the concept of tapu and within intimate partner relationships all these forms of tapu apply:

- **Tapu relating to value** – “te tapu o te tangata,” this is intrinsic tapu by reason of being and because of links with whakapapa; whenua, iwi and atua.
- **Tapu related to being** – “te tapu i te tangata,” which is the being and wholeness of the individual, whānau and its members. It is their total well being spiritual, physical, psychological, cultural, education and social wellbeing.
- **Tapu relating to restrictions** – a system of restrictions or prohibitions to ensure that in the various encounters of people there is order so that tapu is acknowledged and respected. This is often the most well recognised element of tapu (pp.2-3).

**Mauri**

Mauri is commonly known as the ‘life principle or life force’. A commonly heard term is ‘*tihei mauri ora*’ which acknowledges the sneeze of life and is symbolic of the newborn child, breathing independent of the mother. When a person is physically and socially well, the mauri is in a state of balance, described as mauri tau meaning the mauri is at peace (Mead, 2003). Within the Mauri Ora framework mauri is discussed as an intangible construct that is experienced at the most personal level, a personal sense of power and wellbeing that impacts on relationships with everyone around the person (Kruger et. al, 2004). When considering intimate partner relationship mauri can be impacted on by the nature of the relationship either positively or negatively.

**Mana**

A Māori way of expressing the worth of the human person is to speak of a person’s mana, sometimes described as an external expression of influence, power and achievement. Mana reinforces the connection between spiritual, natural and human domains.

“The mana which is the actualization, the realization, of the tapu of the person is threefold, mana tangata, power from the people, mana whenua, power from the land and mana atua, power from our link with the spiritual powers. Each person has this threefold mana” (Shirres, 1997, p.53).
There are two ways a person obtains mana, either being inherited through whakapapa, or earned or bestowed upon individuals or groups. This is described in Mead (2003) writing when describing mana as one of the principles underpinning tikanga:

“Every individual Māori is born with an increment of mana which is closely related to personal tapu. While an increment of mana is inherited at birth it is possible to build onto it through one’s personal achievements, through good works and an ability to lift the mana of the whole group. Mana is always a social quality that requires other people to recognise one’s achievements and accord respect” (p.51).

Ruwhiu (2001) describes mana as; “the cultural adhesive that cements together those various dimensions of spiritual, natural, and human within Māori culture and society.” Ruwhiu continues with a discussion about Mana-enhancing behaviour which he explains as “making sure those interrelations between people, the gods and nature are beneficial to all” (p.60).

Mana is an important concept within a Māori worldview when considering intimate partner relationships as it influences our attitudes and behaviour in our treatment of people. There is mana-enhancing behaviour as described above however at the other end of the continuum there are behaviours which may takahi-mana, or trample on people.

“Mana or the pursuit of mana often drives behaviours. It can serve as a motivator for violence and therefore has potential as a means of countering violence by creating wellness as an act of mana” (Kruger et. al., 2004, p.19).

In summary these six cultural imperatives are important constructs within a Māori worldview particularly when discussing wellbeing. The knowledge, values and beliefs contained within each one has the potential to inform the development of intimate partner relationships for taitamariki Māori, transform behaviours and provide alternatives to violence.

Finally, it is also useful to explore the use of language or kupu Māori used to describe relationships between male and female. Māreikura (female) and Whatukura (male) were used to describe the female and male elements of gender at an esoteric level. There are terms of endearment used to refer to an intimate partner such as: ‘te tau o taku ate’, whaiaipo, taupuhi, hoa rangatira. There are also the relationships between males and females that are not always intimate such as ‘taku tungane’ which refers to my brother or ‘bro’ (not always connected by whakapapa but sometimes a friend) (Personal communication, Ngati Whatua Kaumātua, Advisory Group, 2009). These terms are used depending on the degree of intimacy in the relationship and dependent on the knowledge and fluency of the language of the speaker.

Although much of this writing is located within a traditional framework, it is argued here that these are not historical concepts that are left in the past but are living, evolving processes that currently enable the survival and maintenance of kaupapa Māori within the contemporary world. These principles can guide transformative practices to inform strategies for whānau wellbeing and taitamariki in their development of intimate partner relationships.

This historical overview leads into the next section on Te Ao Huruhuri where the global, national and the current position of taitamariki are discussed.
Taitamariki Māori kōrero about intimate partner relationships

Te Ao Hurīhuri describes the current context of taitamariki within today’s society. This section includes three sub-sections;

i) Youth and intimate partner violence – national and international literature

ii) The current context of taitamariki Māori in Aotearoa

iii) Taitamariki Māori and research

Youth and Intimate Partner Violence – National and International Literature

As literature on intimate partner violence among Māori and indigenous youth is limited, information from broader sources has been included that has assisted in the development of this project. This information includes the following topics;

i) voices – perspectives on child and youth centred research

ii) definitions

iii) sample issues

iv) prevalence rates

v) theoretical frameworks

vi) gender

Voices

“Giving more prominence to children’s voices is one way to ensure that child advocacy is well founded and that decision making is guided by a more complete picture of all the key issues” (Smith & Taylor, 2000, p.x).

“If one is to represent the viewpoint of the child, it seems reasonable to argue that data ought to originate from the child at the cultural and developmental level of the child rather than from an adult report” (Sorensen, 1993, p.4).

Up until the 1990s much of the research carried out on children and young people was from information being collected from parents, family, teachers and other professionals. This approach began to be questioned in the mid-1990s. Morrow and Richards (1996) believe that children and young people continue to be viewed as the subject of research projects, with many research projects carried out on them rather than with them. Adults have established themselves as the “understanders, interpreters and translators of children’s behaviours” (Waksler, 1994, p.62). This has resulted in children and young people being viewed as developing beings less competent than adults. As long as researchers continue to gather data about children and young people from adults, they will reinforce the preconceived notion that children and young people do not have views worthy of consideration (Alderson, 1995).

Kiro (2000) suggests that research concerning Māori has been done from the perspective of outsiders to the culture, treating Māori as objects rather than subjects of their research, a double silencing for taitamariki Māori. The invisibility of children and young people is perpetuated and their basic human right to be heard is undermined when their voices are unheard in research (Dobbs, 2005).

All children and young peoples’ participation rights are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) and within the research context, more researchers are recognising that children and young people can be legitimate contributors to the research process, rather than simply being objects of research, to be observed and studied (Dobbs, 2005). The emerging sociology of childhood is providing a different view of children. Children and young people are not viewed as simply the passive recipients of socialisation. Their perspectives are now starting to be explored in the areas of health (Alderson, 2000), separation and divorce (Gollop et al., 2000), living in foster care (Smith et al., 2000) and in children’s legal representations (Taylor et al., 2000). Research is emerging on children and young people’s views on physical punishment (Cutting, 2001; Crowley & Vallianay, 2003; Dobbs, 2002; Willow & Hyder, 1998). However little is reported in the literature on taitamariki Māori views specifically and even less on taitamariki Māori views on intimate partner relationships. They may be included in research undertaken on the broader issues of whānau violence, or taitamariki Māori, may be included in the general research participant population.
Definitions

“Measurement is essential to science, but before we can measure, we must know what it is we want to measure” (Eysenck, 1952, pg. 34 cited in Zuravin 1991).

This observation was made in the early 1950s in the context of a need for a psychiatric classification system. While not advocating a ‘classification system’ per se, Zuravin (1991) argues that if we fail to formulate agreed upon definitions, researchers will use their own definitions, and the field will continue to be faced with the problem of not being able to integrate findings across studies (Dobbs, 2005).

Lack of consensus of an operational definition of dating violence is an issue when investigating its prevalence. Jackson (2002) points out that the dating violence literature shares definitional problems of all violence research because terms like violence, aggression and abuse are conceptually unclear and tend to be used interchangeably. Dating violence is a vague term and due to such ambiguity, prevalence rates fluctuate widely depending on the definitional criteria, sample and methodologies adopted for particular research (Lewis & Fremouw, 2001). Emery (1989) argues that defining an act as ‘abusive’ or ‘violent’ is not an objective decision but a social judgement. Archer (1994) proposes a clear distinction between violence and aggression, in which aggression comprises the act but violence incorporates the consequences of the aggressive act, such as injury. A few studies have provided a clear definition of violence for the purpose of their research. Within the literature there is also a failure to define what is meant by dating. Studies also omit to define whether it is only heterosexual relationships being examined.

Muehlenhard and Linton (1987), in a study of sexual aggression, provide a definition of dating as ‘planned social activity with the opposite sex’ providing examples of this. Carlson (1987), in her review of the literature, defines dating very simply as a romantic relationship between an unmarried couple. In recognizing the definitional problems related to dating, Sugarman and Hotaling (1991) propose a definition that encompasses commitment, future interaction and physical intimacy. At the same time, they acknowledge that dating can involve considerable variation on these dimensions. Confusion about ‘dating’ can easily be avoided if researchers make explicit their operational definition of dating for any given study of dating violence or aggression (Jackson, 2002).

However, the lack of studies that ask young people to define these measures – rather than researchers’ definitions compounds the problem of measurement. Sears, Byers, Whelan and Saint-Pierre (2006) suggest that with only a few exceptions (Feiring et al., 2002; Foshee, 1996; Jackson et al., 2000; Wolfe, Wekerle, Reitzel-Jaffe, & Lefebvre, 1998) studies of adolescents’ use and experience of dating violence have relied on measures that (a) were created for adults and college students and (b) reflect researchers’ ideas about this topic. For example, many authors have assessed the frequencies of specific behaviours defined a priori as physical violence or psychological violence. However, they have not determined the extent to which teenagers would also identify these behaviours in this way. As a result, it is not clear whether measures of dating violence capture youths’ understanding of this issue.

Until recently dating violence/aggression studies have commonly researched only physical violence. The consequence of excluding other types of violence rates in research may underestimate considerably the extent of violence, aggression, and abuse in young people’s relationships. Studies that investigate several forms of violence support this suggestion, as they report a higher rate of violence than studies which examine only physical aggression (Jackson, 2002; Lewis & Fremouw, 2000). Compounding this is that studies which include sexual and psychological violence also have the same definitional problems (Beres, 2007; Lacasse & Mendelson, 2007; Barter, 2009) as those specific to physical violence. According to Jackson (1999) violence rates are distorted because studies frequently use measures that do not capture the context or consequences of aggression.

Another issue highlighted in the literature of concern pertains to the method of measuring violence. Foshee et al (2007) report that 90% of the approximately 110 published studies of adolescent dating violence that measured perpetration, rely on acts scales derived from asking respondents whether or how often they used specific violent acts against a partner. The Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, 1979) and the Conflict Tactics Scale 2 (CTS-2; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) are the most commonly used acts scales for measuring dating abuse. Foshee et al (2007) argue that the primary concern with acts scales is that they do not adequately correspond to the complexity of violence perpetration. ‘Acts’ do not capture the ontological
status of the violence, including the context in which it is developed, interpretations of the contexts, their consequences, and meanings attached to them and offers an alternative measurement approach. Lapsley (1993) makes the point that surveys, such as the CTS, are unable to access “the long term pattern of fear, threat, emotional, sexual and physical abuse that go to make up battering” (p. 23).

Consequently, to ensure the validity of research with young people on this topic, and to maximize the likelihood that it can be translated into effective prevention strategies, it is essential that we know how teenagers define dating violence and note that there have been few qualitative studies of dating violence, even though this research approach can result in much-needed information about the context in which dating violence occurs (Jackson, 1999; Lavoie, Robitaille, & Hebert, 2000). The term dating and intimate partners we suggest come from an adult Eurocentric base and would not be used in Aotearoa/New Zealand by taitamariki Māori and the general population. Barter (2009) suggest that young people use specific terms such as ‘hanging out’, ‘hooked up’, ‘being sprung’ and ‘being friends with privileges’, and that such terms vary by country, region, gender, age and ethnicity.

**Sample Issues**

Jackson (1999) points out that the majority of dating violence studies use white, heterosexual, college or university population and is primarily American, British or Canadian so the literature has a problem with representativeness. This is reported by others: Carlson, 1996; Foshee, 1996; Jackson, 1999; Hird, 2000; Lewis & Fremouw, 2001; McCarry, 2009 and Barter, 2009. Jackson (1999) suggests that the proportion of non-whites is very small and that this methodology may be more appropriate to a White culture. In addition to the prevalence of White students in the populations sampled, college and university samples also tend to represent middle to upper class socioeconomic groups. Consequently, there is a significant group of students from working class backgrounds not included and summarises this issue by saying:

“Restraints imposed by the use of college and university samples have not been sufficiently addressed in the dating aggression literature. Studies across other cultures, countries and groups would provide valuable information about the problem of violence in different social milieu, contributing to our knowledge of the generalizability (sic) of findings and of how cultural norms contribute to relationship violence. Clearly, the samples used limit knowledge that future research might begin to address by seeking community participants and assisting (financially and/or through training or supervision) with research conducted by those of different ethnicity and sexuality” (p. 237).

This point was also highlighted in a New Zealand study by Jackson, Cram and Seymour (2000) prevention study on violence and sexual coercion in high school students dating relationships which included 200 female and 173 male students whom 8.4% identified themselves as Māori. The sample included selected sixth-form classes attended by the majority of students, primarily English and free study classes across a range of schools. This meant that the most vulnerable young people, for example those of the same age who have already left school, truants or street kids were not included in the study. Although this allowed for easy access to a sample group there are barriers for Māori participation. Given the fact that participation rate in the study across all schools was high (95–100%) the low numbers of Māori participation may have been due to limited numbers of Māori participation in classes at this level as there is evidence that Māori have lower educational achievement rates than non-Māori. Due also to the prevalence of violence within whānau Māori, and the fact that it was voluntary participation it is possible that Māori students may have excluded themselves for fear of raising or exposing violent personal or whānau circumstances.

**Prevalence Rates**

The literature is inconsistent when trying to determine a prevalence rate. It is difficult to make meaningful comparisons between studies because of differences in sampling, methodology, data analysis and the operational definitions of dating violence (Murphy & O’Leary, 1994; Jackson, 1999; Lewis & Fremouw, 2000; Lavoie et al, 2000; Sears et al, 2006; Hyde, Drennan, Howlett & Brady, 2008; Barter, 2009). These issues must be kept in mind when we look at the prevalence of violence within young people’s relationships reported in the literature. Bearing in mind that physical violence has predominantly been studied until recently, violence rates vary from 10 percent to 50 percent. Carlson (1987, cited in Jackson, 1999) indicates a lower rate of 12.1 percent for college students and 36 percent...
low and middle class students. Smith, Whit and Holland found that 88 percent of college students in their study reported at least one incident of dating violence. Sears et al (2006) estimates that physical violence rates range from 9 percent to more than 40 percent.

White (1996, cited in Prospero, 2006) found rates as high as 96% of high school participants had experienced psychological abuse. Jackson et al (2000) reported the rates of ‘unwanted sexual activity’. Rates for girls were reported as 77% for girls and 67% for boys who reported having engaged in an unwanted sexual activity. In Hyde et al (2008) study they reported rates for ever felt under pressure by a boy/girl to have full sex; the rate for girls was 31% and boys 8.1%. Jackson (2002) suggests between 12% and 59% of young people may experience emotional abuse, physical violence or sexual coercion.

Some of the reported studies did not make reference to prevalence, highlighting the methodological issues as discussed above and called for methodologies that allowed young people to speak of their own definitions and be enabled to place their own context, consequences and meaning to partner violence (e.g. Jackson, 1999; Lavoie et al, 2000; Sears et al, 2006; Foshee et al, 2007, Barter, 2009; McCarr, 2009).

However, accurate the literature may be it is obvious that violence in all its forms is a concern within young peoples’ relationships. The need to respond to violence within young people’s relationships is indisputable. However, how best to approach this issue is controversial and unresolved. Teenage partner violence is an understudied area of maltreatment and this omission has significantly hampered the development of theoretical understanding and effective prevention programmes (Hickman et al., 2004). Given the critical nature of adolescence as a developmental period, it is surprising that so little is known about this social problem (O’Keefe et al., 1986; Williams and Martinez, 1999). A number of obstacles have been presented to explain this omission: including viewing sexualized behaviour as experimental, fear of stigmatization, a mistaken view that peer abuse is less harmful than abuse by adults, and low reporting levels (Barter, 2006). Young people are often among the most visible in the community, yet often those with the least opportunity to speak on their own behalf (Smith, 1999).

The lack of studies specifically asking taitamariki Māori about their experiences of intimate partner relationships and violence in their own context compounds the problem of developing effective theoretical understanding and developing effective prevention programmes. How young people learn behaviours, respond to these behaviours and normalise them or not is important to any prevention programme.

Theoretical frameworks

While western populations have been discussing the nature and causes of violence since the rise of feminism in the 1960’s, only recently has that debate and indigenous theoretical construction begun with regard to violence at disproportionately high levels within indigenous communities and prevention strategies to address these issues.

The predominant models for violence prevention have developed primarily out of violence research involving Western populations and we recognise that they do not readily translate cross-culturally or adequately address the complex range of factors which underlie the high level of violence found in indigenous communities. However some elements may contribute to assist in evolving new definitions between individual and collective experience as well as help to clarify understandings and explanations in order to create new indigenous frameworks:

…"recently explored models involve increased emphasis on socio-historical and cultural factors unique to these Indigenous communities, which include colonisation, poverty, social marginalisation, racism and ‘structural stressors’ caused by unemployment. Strategies that combine both ‘proactive and reactive methods which target different age and gender groups and incorporate Indigenous approaches to therapy and healing, restorative justice and traditional law and an indigenous definition of ‘family’ “(Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearinghouse issues paper 11, 2006, p.8).

The report also discussed ‘working with adolescents to prevent domestic violence – indigenous rural model’. This Western Australian project included a national literature review, audit of 98 Australian adolescent violence prevention programs, an environmental assessment and the design of a pilot program. An intervention pilot model was then developed suitable for Aboriginal communities. The projects theoretical position was “that the attitudes
and expressions of violence and its dynamic variables are embedded in learned, transgenerational, cultural values rather than evidence of individual pathology” (p.3).

The theoretical rationale for intergenerational transmission of violence is derived from social learning theory (O’Keefe, 1998). Social Learning theory suggests that behaviours are learned through the observation and imitation of others and maintained through differential reinforcement (Bandura, 1977) from parents or peers. More recently Barter (2009) suggests that the two psychological theories that have dominated research on intimate partner violence are social learning theory developed by Bandura (1977) and attachment theory developed by Bowlby (1969). She suggests that both these theoretical perspectives explain violence as being rooted in behavioural transference, generally from childhood experiences to current dating violence, either as victim or perpetrator. Barter (2009) argues, however, that within both these theories little theoretical interest has been paid to young people’s ability to change their circumstances through their own agency.

Chung (2005) suggests that feminist theories remain influential in explaining IPV between adults but again there has been little feminist focus on intimate partner violence in young people’s relationships. The feminist theoretical frameworks and ideologies that shaped explanations of domestic violence are rarely evident in the dating violence literature.

Both feminist and social learning theories pay little attention to power differences that result from inequalities related to age, gender, sexuality, abilities, culture or class. Jackson (1999) conversely suggests that social learning theory has the potentially significant contribution to make towards explanation and understanding of violence as a gender issue, she contends that a child’s early parental models are a powerful source of learning about gender roles. However, she does comment that social learning theory does leave many unanswered questions. Similarly, “feminist theory has empirical support but linking it to patriarchy needs more investigation and the way in which power is operationalised needs greater attention” (p.244).

Whilst many examples are evident on how feminism has impacted on the public life of young women, it is more difficult to gauge its influence on young women’s private lives. In Chung’s (2005) study she draws together feminist theories in the areas of sexuality, gender relations and gendered violence and suggests that gender inequality and intimate violence are common in young people’s relationships. She contends that her study indicates that:

…’essentialist ideas about gender remain dominant in young people’s understandings of sexuality and underpin their explanations of men’s involvement in coercive sex and violence. Young women’s experiences and definitions of violence, abuse and sexual coercion in relationships are mediated by the competing and contradictory discourses of heterosexuality, romance, gender, individualism and equality. These impact on young women’s capacities to negotiate an equal relationship and in identifying, and speaking about their experiences as violent, coercive or controlling” (p.445).

A feminist analysis of violence suggests that all forms of abuse are about power and control which is embedded in a patriarchal value system (Dobash, Dobash, Wilson & Daly, 1992; Loyd, 1991, cited in Jackson, 1999). Power and dominance underlay this, with men in control and women as dependent, which contributes to the use of violence in intimate partner relationships (Loyd, 1991; Carlson, 1987). The issue of control as a reason for violence is less clear and Jackson (1999) suggests more research is needed to clarify the meaning of control. Cross cultural studies of dating violence which incorporate the way in which women are regarded and treated within the culture is an area of research that could more directly address relationships between patriarchy and violence.

A number of recent projects and studies on youth development have focused on Ecological systems theory which views the individual as a product of his or her environment. The interdependence of the individual, other people and the environment is the central feature of ecological theory (Powell, 1998). The ecological perspective highlights factors that shape developmental processes and the role of social relationships. Bronfenbrenner’s (1992) ecological model illustrates the reciprocal nature of the interaction between the child and their environment and conceptualises several levels.

The macro system relates to the dominant ideologies and cultural patterns of a society. It corresponds to the overriding consistencies in beliefs, values and accepted practices within a culture or subculture (for example, the appropriateness of girls’ and boys’ activities, or what children should be doing at certain
The different environments that influence children's development and individual family are nested within a wider framework of social and economic influences (Smith et al., 2004). These ideologies and cultural patterns include government support for families, how the legal system is designed, how communities organise themselves and how families bring up children. The sphere of influence is a two way process between the developing child and his or her environment (Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992). The 'two-way' influence described by Bronfenbrenner has implications for changing societal views on the use of partner violence.

The mediational processes in the child could be divided into primary and secondary mediational. Most of the variables listed in the model (i.e. attribution, social information, and social controls) fall in the secondary or cognitive appraisal phase. However, the physical and physiological effects should not be ignored. The social context of the family, the community, and the culture may well influence the cognitive appraisal process (Holden, 2002).

Children and young people experience different cultures and are subject to different belief systems at the same time (Hutchins & Sims, 1999). These aspects of conflict need to be considered when exploring intimate partner violence.

"Conflict commonly occurs within macro systems in relation to racial/religious difference, class conflict, or fundamental tensions with individualistic and collectivist value" (Hutchins & Sims, 1999, p. 5).

The ecosystem is a system which does not contain the child but influences caregivers. Values come not only from the family, but also from outside sources (Garbarino, Katelyn & Barry, 1997) and suggest that communities can collectively reinforce parental values. For example:

"...Cross cultural studies comparing populations in different countries (Palmers & Scarf, 1994), have shown variations in disciplinary behaviours and attitudes. Deater-Deaker and Dodge (1997), suggest that within those groups where physical punishment is a predominant and normative form of discipline, parents would find physical punishment acceptable in other adults, but in groups where it is forbidden (for example, Sweden), it would be considered bad parenting..." (Dobbs, 2005, p.31.)

Within the literature on IPV Banyard, Cross and Modecki (2006) argue that Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is useful to help identify risk and protective/resilience factors for adolescent and dating violence. Smith (1999) suggests that violence does not occur in a vacuum and says that it is necessary to locate a discussion of interrelationship violence within a community context and its changing ecology. Whilst the literature reveals the use of ecological theory when researching youth development and youth at risk, finding specific research on taitamariki Māori and intimate partner violence within any of the above theories was difficult.

As previously mentioned many of the theories used in research are adult focused and therefore maybe irrelevant when researching with children. The sociology of childhood suggests that children and young people are social actors who influence others, whilst being influenced themselves. The key tenet is that children are not simply the passive recipients of socialisation (Mayall, 2000 and Prout & James, 1990).

The sociology of childhood has helped to put in the foreground of our thinking ideas about childhood as an important part of the social order, children as a social group with their own specific relationships with adults and power structures, and children as people who have their own purpose and meanings. (Smith & Taylor, 2000) Morrow and Richards (1996) describe this contrasting view as moving on from the narrow focus of socialisation and child development (the study of what children will become), to a sociology which attempts to take children seriously as they experience their lives here and now as children. In recent times the sociology of childhood has challenged the traditional view describing children as 'human beings' rather than as 'human becomings' (Qvortrup, 1994). Respect for children's status as social actors does not diminish adult responsibility. It places new responsibility on the adult community to structure children's environment, guide their behaviour and enable their social participation in ways consistent with their understanding, interests and ways of communicating, especially the issues that most directly affect their lives.

The inclusion of and testing of theoretical frameworks is scarce within the literature on young people's intimate partner relationships. Even scarcer is that on taitamariki Māori and IPV. How we view
children and childhood within these frameworks will affect how we respond to them and their needs. The above theories may or may not have relevance when researching with taitamariki Māori to find the causes of intimate partner violence and may not assist with the development of prevention programmes. A need for a more culturally appropriate theoretical framework using methodologies that allow taitamariki to speak of their experiences in a safe environment and honour their agency – being viewed not as subjects of research, but rather as active participants, worthy of being listened to and having their views respected, may be more useful than trying to ‘fit’ taitamariki into a dominant adult western research framework.

**Gender**

Studies of adults report inconsistent findings as to whether males or females are more likely to use violence towards their partners. Foshee (1996) suggests that although partner violence often starts during adolescents there are few studies that report findings of adolescent partner violence by gender. Jackson (1999) reports that given the empirical evidence that violence is a gender issue it could be expected that theories with the potential to explain gender-violence in relationships would underline research being done. This seems not to be the case. She argues that:

“...the issue of gender and violence is one that needs much more careful analysis. It is recommended that there be a specific research focus on the relationship between gender and violence with particular emphasis on how women’s use of violence is different to men’s in terms of purpose, nature, context and effect. The use of multiple methodologies… will considerably enhance the research data on gender and violence” (p.244).

Sears et al (2006) also suggest that gender is a critical component of abusive behaviour in dating violence and to better understand the nature of dating violence it is critical to consider variation by gender in the occurrence, context and consequences of this behaviour (as noted by Jackson, 1999). When discussing gender context and consequences, Sears et al (2006) report that although few studies have considered what motivates girls and boys behaviour, it appears that more girls than boys act aggressively in self-defense, whereas more boys than girls act aggressively in an effort to be playful or to control their partners. They also reported that even though boys and girls agreed on the causes of violence within their relationships (e.g., specific situations that evoke feelings of jealousy, anger, or confusion), girls were more likely to view violence as attempts to intimidate whereas boys saw the violence as provocation (Gagne & Lavoie, 1993; Jackson et al., 2000). Adolescents’ reports of the consequences of experiencing abusive behaviour also highlight the gendered nature of dating violence (Jackson, 1999; Sears et al, 2006). Other findings reported by Sears et al (2006) suggest that more girls than boys report a severe emotional reaction (e.g., fear) and physical injuries from dating violence whereas more boys than girls report that they were not bothered by the incident (Foshee, 1996; Jackson et al., 2000; Molidor & Tolman, 1998 cited in Sears et al, 2006).

“Given the variation in patterns by gender across studies, it is surprising that youths’ perceptions of how the use and experience of dating violence differ for girls and boys have not been investigated; that is, how do teens understand boys’ and girls’ use and experience of physical and psychological abuse? Do they view the context and consequences of dating violence as important for understanding boys’ and girls’ use and experience of abusive behaviour?” (Sears et al, 2006, p.1194)

The literature appears inconsistent when reporting who are more violent boys or girls. To cite some of these examples, research has indicated that girls and boys are both physically and psychologically abusive toward their partners. In some studies similar proportions of boys and girls report experiencing physical and psychological abuse in their dating relationships (Halpern, Oslak, Young, Martin, & Kupper, 2001; Hird, 2000, cited in Sears et al, 2006). Conversely, studies have found that more girls than boys report experiencing physical abuse (Bergman, 1992; Feiring et al., 2002), and more boys than girls report experiencing psychological abuse (Bergman, 1992; Molidor, 1995). Research on teenagers’ use of violence has often reported that more girls than boys are physically and psychologically abusive toward their dating partners (Foshee, 1996; O’Keefe, 1997; Wolfe et al., 1998), although boys are more likely to use severe physical violence.

An explanation for the inconsistencies within the literature is that of sample selection bias with more girls than boys participating in studies, boys’ minimization of their use of abusive behaviours, and girls’ use of abusive behaviours in self-defense or retaliation. Sears et al. (2006) suggest that methodologies will influence the data and findings.
Ashley and Foshee (2005) and Sears et al. (2006) also suggest that self reports on violence preparation and victimization have their weaknesses. Most of the studies above however are reporting the perpetration of physical violence and/or psychological violence. We caution and concur with Jackson (1999) that without sexual violence being considered there is a fundamental problem in asserting whether girls or boys are more or equally violent. Jackson (1991) points out that:

“Further distortion occurs as a result of confining investigation to physical violence, ignoring psychological and sexual violence. For example, when sexual violence is included, strong gender differences emerge, with women consistently reporting sexual victimization experiences more often than men… However, the argument as to who is more violent is somewhat tenuous. It is clearly more useful to examine men and women’s respective experiences of violence as perpetrators and victims to further our understanding of violence” (p.238).

Within the literature gender has been highlighted as a consideration when discussing help-seeking behaviours (Sears et al, 2006; Ashley & Foshee, 2005; Foshee et al, 2007; Jackson, 2002, 2000, 1999; Smith, 1999) and when considering prevention and intervention programmes (Bater, 2009; Foshee et al. 2008; Foshee et al, 2007; Lewis & Fremouw, 2001; Lavoie, Robitaille & Herbert, 2000, Foshee 1996). Most authors suggest that most boys and girls do not seek help with IPV and that boys are less likely to seek help than girls although not all authors agree on this issue. The findings from the literature with regard to who adolescents will seek help from varied. From the Aotearoa literature Jackson (2002) suggests young people are unlikely to talk with school counsellors or skilled workers in the community. Feelings of embarrassment, and self-blame were seen as barriers to disclosure and seeking help. Both genders will talk to their friends. She also suggests that it makes sense to optimize this and to provide programmes to develop helping skills for students so that when friends do talk to them about abuse they are able to listen, respond appropriately and be able to make suggestions about what to do or who to see:

“…young people in this study offered some clear guidelines for programmes aimed at preventing abuse in relationships…programmes should focus on emotional aspects …communication skills…Above all, the strongest message for those committed to engaging in prevention work is that any education programme needs to happen in small discussion groups to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate” (Jackson, 2002, p.85).

The implications of Jackson’s (1999) study she suggests for education and prevention are clear: programs need to target males, challenge sex role stereotypes, and break down the myths that allow the acceptance of violence.

Some notable gaps exist in the literature on gender and are worth considering. We have found no reports on the impact on whether or not the gender of the researcher and the gender of the participants affect data collection. Sears et al (2006) noted that they were using gender specific focus groups due to their hypothesis that boys may feel more comfortable talking about sensitive subjects without girls in the focus group. We suggest that this may also be the case with girls. We also could not find any literature or any analysis of literature on adolescent partner violence studies being carried out by indigenous same culture researcher and participants and quality of data. Also, whether any consideration has been given to the context and consequences of the violence and sensitivity of the topic for young people which may mean they feel safer to talk with same culture researchers.
Taitamariki Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand

Taitamariki Māori have a complex position from which to navigate their development within today’s society in Aotearoa (Webster et. al., 2007 and Ormond, 2002). Firstly, as tangata whenua, the historical impact of dispossession and the dismantling of Māori social, economic and cultural structures through colonisation remains an important part in their day-to-day reality (Erai & Pitama, 2006). The human rights of taitamariki Māori, alongside other indigenous youth (defined as young people aged between 15 and 24 years) are often vulnerable as they find themselves caught between their indigenous language, customs and values and those of the wider community (United Nations Youth Unit, 2005). Ormond (2002) in her writing about the life experiences of young Māori shares a perspective that taitamariki Māori as tangata whenua, by virtue of their ancestry and ethnicity speak from a position of power. However this power is tempered by their minority population status and their peripheral location within mainstream New Zealand society.

Pihama, Jenkins & Middleton (2003) describe the impact of colonisation on Māori society in relation to family violence, the breakdown of Māori structures, the imposition of the nuclear family and the reconstruction of whānau and gender roles and relationships. Robertson & Oulton (2008) discuss the societal level risk factors that contribute to sexual violence to support this. They argue that:

…”colonisation introduced a patriarchal ideology, redefined the roles of women and undermined certain cultural practices which were protective…” (p.10).

Examining the effects of colonisation on violence within Māori communities therefore involves the consideration of issues such as the western gender role-norms imported into Aotearoa that positioned women as submissive to men, and placed men in positions of power and authority. Compare this to traditional Māori gender roles that were complementary in nature.

“The relationship between mana wahine and mana tāne is about complimentarity (sic) and reciprocity. For example, strictly speaking, a man cannot go onto a marae without a woman, and a woman cannot go onto a marae without a man, simply because of the complimentary roles that men and women play in the ritual of encounter on our marae. Te kawa ō te marae embraces and upholds both mana wahine and mana tāne” (Rimene, Hassan & Broughton, 1999, p.31).

However, colonisation combined with other structural dynamics within Aotearoa society today, has altered many Māori values and beliefs about gender role norms and as a result the view and expectations of intimate partner relationships.

In today’s society many taitamātāne Māori are exposed to, and subsequently influenced more, by dominant non-Māori forms of masculinity. Mediums such as the media, internet and music often shape the identity formation and expected behaviours of young men’s sub-cultures and in turn impact upon their relationships with young women. Yuen (2007) gives voice to young men and violence and describes her work with young men from minority and marginalised cultures, who were struggling with the effects of racism and the impact of dominant forms of masculinity that encourage violent responses to racism. A common theme which can offer an alternative to violence found in work with these young men was that they valued their relationships with their mothers and the significance of their mother’s hopes and dreams for them which offered alternative possibilities for their lives and identities. These young men were enabled to move from violence to non-violence by identifying positive values and connecting them to important figures in their families, histories or culture. In this way “a space can be opened to deconstruct dominant forms of masculinity” (Yuen, 2007, p.188).

A recent study of Māori men in Taitokerau explored how Māori men become and remain free of whānau violence, that is the factors that facilitated and sustained change processes for Māori men who had experienced and/or perpetrated violence earlier in their lives. These stories of change from older Māori men can offer information and ideas for taitamātāne Māori (Ruwhiu, 2009). In a recent article discussing an indigenous approach to masculinity and male violence for Māori men the following was offered:

“…we need to advance a new approach to decolonisation, to masculinity, to the validation of our indigenous ways and to appreciating ‘nga matauranga Māori’ in support of meaningful Māori men’s education and mentoring group work…” (Mataira, 2009, p.35).

Māori men and particularly taitamātāne Māori must play a key role in the healthy development of intimate partner relationships and wellbeing for whānau Māori.
The strength and resilience of Māori taitamariki cannot be underestimated and the impact of ‘te rēo me ona tikanga’ revitalisation strategies on taitamariki Māori in today’s society must be acknowledged. Many successful Māori development initiatives are founded on Te Ao Māori, or a Māori worldview, and work to revitalise and reinforce more traditional values. For example, Te Kura kaupapa Māori total immersion education focuses on the revitalisation of te rēo me ona tikanga within the school environment. The complementary nature of traditional gender roles is reinforced through the guiding philosophy of Te Aho Matua.

"He tapu tō te wahine, he tapu anō tō te tāne…. Kia kua tētahi e whakaiti i tētahi. Engari whakanui tētahi i tētahi i runga i te mōhoi ma te mahi ngātahi a te wahine me te tāne e tapu ora ai ngā tamariki me te iwi hoki (Te Runanga Nui o nga Kura Kaupapa Māori, 2000, p.1)."

Over the past 20 years through targeted Māori child and youth strategies such as total immersion education and other initiatives which promote positive Māori identity such as ‘its cool to kōrero’ there has developed a generation of taitamariki Māori who are able to move confidently between ‘te ao Māori’ and ‘te ao hurihuri’. The Youth 2007 report highlights many strengths and assets and from the 2059 Māori students surveyed (aged 12 to 18 years who attend school) “almost all taitamariki are proud to be Māori, and 34% speak and 39% understand te rēo Māori fairly well or better” (p.14).

While acknowledging the cultural construct of Māori youth within the context of their whānau, hapū and iwi there are also youth specific dynamics within Aotearoa that taitamariki Māori have to work through in their development. It is widely accepted that adolescence is a time when change takes place in several areas of young people’s lives, including: physical and sexual development, youth sub-cultures, the influence of their social environments, identity formation, cultural diversity and other impacts. Taitamariki Māori must balance these changes as well as often diverse cultural and contemporary expectations. Martin (2002) writes about overlapping identities for minority ethnic young people in Aotearoa that reflect mainstream, ethnic and sub-culture allegiances. For example, a Māori young person may speak English at home, attend a school which is total immersion Māori education and identify through a sub-culture with black American hip-hop music and culture. In this example Māori, English and African-American influences may lead to confusion in the development of a social identity and expectations for a Māori young person.

From her study about the cultural identity of rangatahi Māori, Borrell (2005) reminds us of the strengths and diversity that exists within this population. She suggests that services must recognise and respond to rangatahi to ensure that divisions are not created between those who are seen as ‘culturally connected’ and those who are not. Within her study many urban rangatahi aspired to have greater cultural connection but experience barriers to doing so. She says;

“Establishing a ‘secure’ Māori identity based solely on particular criteria of Māori culture (te rēo Māori, tikanga, marae, etc…) continues to be problematic for some Māori. Those who are not seen as connected in this way are often defined by what they are seen as lacking, hence terms such as disconnected, distance, detached and disassociated” (p.8).

The fact that taitamariki Māori within the context of Aotearoa society are more likely to be faced with considerable social issues and disparities in comparison to other ethnicities is a factor discussed by Māori researchers in conducting Māori youth studies. The Youth 2007 study found that taitamariki Māori are more likely to come from areas of greater deprivation compared to Pakeha/NZ European students.

Erai, Pitama & Allen (2007) make the connections between interpersonal violence and the wider contexts of poverty that are evident in discussions of violence prevention and early intervention. Webster et. al., (2002) argue that the issues taitamariki faces are compounded when they are:

“… labelled ‘at risk’ without any consideration of listening to their own stories as a means of creating positive solutions to issues” (p.179).

In summary, taitamariki Māori have a challenging position within today’s society and those supporting their development must assist them with ‘mana enhancing’ processes that enable them to reach their full potential. The Youth 2007 report concludes by stating that:

“…strategies and policies which seek to improve the health and wellbeing of taitamariki must take a broad ecological approach which acknowledges that young people are influenced by their wider environments” (p.31).

By reducing exposure to risks and emphasising the strengths and resources of youth and their environments we can build a more positive future for our taitamariki.
Taitamariki Māori and research

Smith (1999) and Walsh-Tapia (1997) suggest that generally the Māori experience has shown that research at best is often viewed with contempt and at the least with suspicion. Walker (1996) and Pihama (1994, cited in Webster et al, 2002) add that historically, Māori have been subject to Western constructions of knowledge that have had detrimental effects on them.

Historically there has been limited involvement of taitamariki in finding solutions to address taitamariki issues. However within the more recent studies there is an increasing use of participatory action research (PAR) which is youth driven and centred to achieve youth focused outcomes. There have been several studies by Māori researchers that focus on and work with taitamariki Māori. Although not on the subject of intimate partner relationships or violence they share commonalities in their research design and methods to engaging taitamariki Māori that can guide future studies. These commonalities included an adherence to kaupapa Māori which includes the application of tikanga Māori, recognises Māori youth diversity, affirms Māori identity and is strengths based (Erai & Allen, 2004; Keelan, 2002; Webster et al., 2007; Borrell, 2005). These themes deserve more detailed discussion in order to learn from the positive outcomes achieved.

Kaupapa Māori research has been central in guiding the studies with taitamariki Māori. In defining kaupapa Māori the literature frequently cites the work of Graham Smith (1990):

“Kaupapa Māori is unique to Māori and challenges the ideologies of cultural superiority by looking towards the development of a philosophy that takes into account being and acting Māori, it is grounded in a Māori worldview, and it takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Māori, the importance of Māori language and culture, as well as being concerned with the ‘struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well-being’.”

Kaupapa Māori research differentiates itself from other research in that it is grounded in Māori philosophy and knowledge and may use methodologies which reflect customary practices, values and beliefs, subjective approaches rather than objective (Eruera, 2005). As Māori have traditionally transmitted knowledge orally through storytelling, whakapapa and other methods kaupapa Māori research approaches have tended to lend themselves to qualitative studies however currently other methods are being used and tested.

Kaupapa Māori also encourages the space for Māori structures and organisations to participate in undertaking research. Predominantly research takes place within academic institutions however the studies examined showed a range of organisations including iwi and Māori organisations participating in research with taitamariki Māori. Webster et al., (2002) write:

“Most research is still conducted within research institutions or universities, but iwi and Māori individuals and organisations have aspired to be in control of their own research, believing that they could rectify the negative imagery long seen as an outcome of research by having strong strengths and solutions focussed research” (p.180).

Kaupapa Māori also includes throughout these studies the application of ‘tikanga’ or customary practices within the research approaches. Although there is not one universal understanding about ‘tikanga’, within the field of research many Māori researchers (Keelan, 2002; Ormond, 2008; Erai & Pitama, 2006; Borrell, 2005) have identified and applied Māori principles to their projects. Within the present project the Mauri Ora framework Te Ao Māori principles of; whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, maori, and mana were consistently applied throughout the implementation, analysis and writing.

There were some aspects of the research which highlight diversity of Māori understandings and tribal difference, for example the use of Māori language. Keelan (2002) in her framework for Taiohi Māori development discusses the varied use of ‘kupu Māori’ to describe Māori young people. Some of these kupu include; rangatahi, taitamariki and taiohi and there are varied descriptions for each. There were also varied age groups of youth involved in the research projects and this may be due to the different definitions of youth but most of the studies included taitamariki Māori aged from 12 to 24 years.

A number of the studies used PAR to work with taitamariki Māori to contribute their experiences and views in order to create positive social change for other Māori youth. This approach is discussed in more detail later in the review. The studies also included a variety of creative youth centred methods in which
to gather information that allowed taitamariki youth voices to be transmitted through different medium such as; digital photography (Erai & Pitama, 2006), indigenous community narratives (Ormond, 2008), national survey (Clark et al., 2008), individual focused life story interviews (Borrell, 2005), focus groups and many others. In discussing focus group interviews Punch (2002) cited in Webster et al (2002) demonstrates the variety of activities included as: ice breakers, brainstorming or mind mapping, group activities and an individual exercise called the 'secret box'.

Transformative Practice

Transformative practice within the context of this report describes work with youth that supports their Mauri Ora or wellbeing with a special focus on their healthy development of intimate partner relationships. This section covers:

i) youth and violence prevention
ii) youth development
iii) taitamariki Māori development

Youth and Violence prevention

Youth violence is a global concern and is a visible and harmful part of today’s society where many young people are either victims and/or perpetrators of violence. This includes IPV (referred to internationally for youth as dating violence). Globally there is a growing body of knowledge on the causes and prevention strategies for addressing youth violence. There is evidence that connects youth violence with other forms of violence impacting on young people such as; witnessing violence in the home, being sexually or physically abused, prolonged exposure to armed conflict and others.

The World Health Organisation (2002) report on violence and health analyses youth violence using an ecological framework to identify risk factors and summarise prevention strategies. They include: individual factors (biological, psychological and behavioural characteristics), relationship factors (family and peer influences), community factors (gangs/guns/drugs and social integration) and societal factors (demographic and social changes, income inequality, political structures and cultural influences). These global influences impact on our situation in Aotearoa and the way in which we consider violence prevention strategies.

Prevention is a systematic process that promotes safe and healthy environments and behaviours, reducing the likelihood or frequency of an incident, injury or condition occurring (Rosewater, 2003). IPV requires a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach which reframes the desired outcome of prevention as healthy relationships and healthy communities. The report continues by saying:
"Articulating the desired outcome of prevention as healthy relationships and healthy communities will engender new narratives about gender, power and relationships and encourage a positive approach to engaging people and organisations as partners" (p.14).

Violence prevention literature suggests that multi-level approaches are likely to achieve the best results (Robertson & Oulton, 2008; Prevention Institute, 2007; Grennell & Cram, 2008). Robertson and Oulton (2008) state that this could happen at an individual level where the aim is to strengthen individual knowledge and skills, and at a community level where the aim is to promote community ownership of the issue. They also argue that social change is most likely to be enhanced by building coalitions and there is a need to target organisational practices, policies and legislation. The Mauri Ora Framework also reinforces a multi-level approach to the analysis and practice of violence prevention for whānau Māori and communities.

From Rosewater (2003) in-depth analysis of domestic violence and prevention working with adolescents, a 2003 family violence prevention fund report concludes that adolescents and young adults are a highly victimized group in witnessing or experiencing violence as children, being victimized by other youth in dating and other situations; and that they suffer trauma as a result. These experiences can seriously impair social development, learning, physical and emotional health and the opportunities for healthy and safe development at this formative period of their lives. The report continues by stating that despite the evidence that violent behaviour begins in adolescence, few are paying attention to partner violence during this formative period and most studies show teenagers as victims of abuse or as witnesses of violence. Their study suggests that focusing attention and prevention on early adolescence, (10-15 year olds) would be a valuable way to reduce domestic violence in 16 to 24 year olds. Further to that they state that because this stage of early adolescence is a period of rapid development when issues of gender and sexual identity are forming most young people 10-15 years are still connected to family and school which makes universal prevention approaches possible through school or after school activities. Many of the promising approaches overseas have taken place through schools and the “Interventions that target change in the social context appear to be more effective, on average, than those that attempt to change individual attitudes, skills and risk behaviour” (Rosewater, 2003, p.14).

The Youth 2007 reports on violence for taitamariki Māori and focuses on witnessing violence and taitamariki as victims of violence. However IPV was not included in this report. They recommend that reducing the burden of distress caused by violence in the environments of taitamariki Māori will improve their health and wellbeing. When planning strategies and policies in the field of violence they suggest that there is “…overwhelming evidence that violence perpetration is determined by complex socio-ecological contexts, including characteristics of youth, their families, peers and schools. Prevention and early intervention and whole community strategies are more likely to be successful than trying to change youth behaviours alone” (Clark et al., 2008, p.14).

There are few published evaluations of prevention programs designed to reduce the prevalence and negative consequences of adolescent dating violence and date rape (Foshee, Bauman, Ennett, Suchindran, Benefield & Linder, 2005). Hickman, Jaycox and Aronoff (2004) in their review of programme evaluations, state they were unable to draw conclusions due to the limited number of published evaluations and methodological limitations such as inconsistent participation and small samples.

Internationally the ‘safe date’s project’ evaluation which took place in North Carolina offers some useful insights about dating violence prevention strategies. The programme activities were designed to:

i) After dating violence norms by increasing the adolescence perception of negative consequences associated with dating violence and altering peer responses to dating violence

ii) After traditional western norms related to gender roles (where females are considered in a submissive position relative to males who were considered as in positions of power and authority) by decreasing adolescent acceptance of these traditional gender roles

iii) Activities to improve conflict management skills with dating partners. Weak conflict management skills have been found to be associated with youth aggression in general (Slaby & Guerra, 1988 cited in Foshee et al., 2005).
The programme intervention activities included; school activities (a theatre production performed by peers, a curriculum of ten 45 minute sessions taught by health and physical education teachers and service provider training). In providing direct guidance for the development of future dating violence prevention programmes they suggest that: ‘‘…efforts at changing dating violence norms, gender-role norms, and awareness of community services hold promise for preventing adolescent dating violence and that the content from ‘Safe Dates’ that focused on teaching conflict resolution skills and altering beliefs in the need for help need to be modified’’ (p. 257).

The literature has shown clearly that adolescents help-seeking behaviour is usually accessed from peers, family or persons they trust. Community intervention programmes are still critical for this age group. The safe dates programme included promoting awareness of community services which respond to dating violence and service provider training as important. Foshee & Linder (1997) studied the factors that influence service provider motivation to help adolescent victims of partner violence. They state that although a significant number of adolescents are involved in violent dating relationships, service provider’s responses to youth seeking support for IPV need to be further analysed. When planning a multi-level approach to prevention, organisational practices and responses is a key area of focus.

Within Aotearoa Jackson (1998) examined the links between family violence and teenage IPV and made some recommendations for prevention programs. Firstly, individual interventions for those who have been victims of abuse in their families so they can deal with the emotional consequences of that abuse and learn to have healthy relationships with a partner. Although this may be difficult as there is much evidence which shows young people may not seek outside help but are much more likely to seek support from their peers. Awareness and education about violence which will encourage young people to seek support may be needed. Secondly, prevention strategies for groups of young people whose experiences of violence in their homes make them vulnerable to experience of abuse in their own relationships. This may occur within programmes using age appropriate methods to build strengths, resilience and coping skills.

At another level Jackson (1998) recommends the following education strategies which assist to help improve relationship skills, provide opportunities for students to resolve problems or issues that come up in intimate partner relationships, programmes that incorporate constructive ways to express and deal with intense emotions and could utilise peer education groups processes. Within the education strategies she also suggests education about violence including definitions, knowledge about power/gender and an analysis of the media and how it perpetrates violence. Although these studies may not have included taitamariki Māori the recommendations and learning from the above examples give us information to consider when designing taitamariki Māori violence prevention strategies.

**Youth Development**

Current youth development policy and practice approaches share common themes in their work towards the healthy development of young people in Aotearoa. These include; using strength based approaches, the importance of quality relationships and connectedness, youth inclusion and participation in finding their own solutions, learning from well informed and evidence based practice (Ministry of Youth Development, 2007; McLaren, 2002). When referring to quality relationships and connectedness these approaches discuss the importance of having positive connections with many social environments, primarily; whānau, school, peers and community:

“Quality relationships within these environments impact on a young person’s healthy development. For example, as young people move into adolescence, relationships with friends and schoolmates become increasingly important and having at least one close friend becomes a protective factor” (McClaren, 2002, p.22).

Following on from this it is also increasingly important that young people are supported to understand and develop healthy intimate partner relationships and to strengthen protective factors.
Taitamariki Māori

For taitamariki Māori there are some traditional approaches to draw from which describe taitamariki development.

“Strong bonds between individuals and whānau were based on trust and respect that ensured the health, survival and growth of rangatahi and the community and the wellbeing of future generations. At least three strategies were commonly employed to ensure young people developed in ways that were healthy and equipped the hapū with people who could protect and enhance the interests of the community: pūkengatanga (mentored by elders), whare wānangā (formal structures to pass on specialist skills and knowledge) and urūngatangā (education through exposure)” (National Youth Workers Network Aotearoa, 2008, p.10).

Another model for understanding the transition through the life stages in a Māori context has been described using the traditional social structure arranged around whānau, hapū and iwi. It shows the progression of the taitamariki (child/children) through to kaumātua/kuia (elder male/female). The protective factors identified in this model are; belonging and acceptance within a community, gaining competence and acting with responsibility and generosity towards the community (Knox cited in Martin, 2002). Similarly an American Indian perspective on the transition into adulthood identifies four community responsibilities in assisting the young people in their development. Martin (2002) has aligned them into the context of Aotearoa, they are; “belonging and the need for connection, mastery and the need for competence, independence and the restoration of choice/power to make decisions and mana through generosity and purpose” (Martin et al, pp. 154-157).

Strengthening taitamariki development requires a Māori philosophical base, with strong participation by taitamariki to enable them to find solutions that are self-determining (Clark et al., 2004). Smith, Boler, Kempton, Ormond, Cheuh and Waetford (2002) suggest that:

“The view that youth are passive individuals waiting for adulthood has served to deny the possibility of young people exercising agency over their lives, making their own experiences and being engaged in purposeful and strategic analysis of social structures” (p. 177).
Introduction

This section of the report provides a description of the goals of the participatory action research group (PAR) and Pilot group and provides a rationale for the use of qualitative research including PAR groups, and the Mauri Ora framework, to ascertain taitamariki Māori perspectives on intimate partner relationships. The research process and findings are then outlined. To conclude this section the recommendations for future research with taitamariki Māori are discussed.

Table 1. Process

The goal of the PAR group and the subsequent Pilot study was to ensure that taitamariki Māori participated fully in research on issues which may affect their lives. It was important to our kaupapa that this project was carried out with Taitamariki Māori and not on them, using a methodology which enhanced taitamariki Māori well being and reflected a kaupapa Māori focus. We wanted to address some of the definitional, sample, gender and methodology issues which became apparent from the literature review. We also wanted to contribute to the scarce body of literature on taitamariki Māori and intimate partner relationships.

Mauri Ora Framework Imperative

The Mauri Ora framework in its description of Te Ao Māori identifies six cultural constructs or imperatives (whakapapa, tikanga, wairua, tapu, mauri, mana) which can be applied as practice principles when working towards Mauri Ora or collective (including individual) wellness or wellbeing. These have been used to guide a kaupapa Māori approach to the development of the research methodology and methods with the PAR group and the Pilot group. Some of the aspects of qualitative research methodology and PAR methods align well within the Mauri Ora framework and these have been included.

Whakapapa

Whakapapa informed the development of the methodology in several different ways. We identified whakapapa when working with taitamariki as incorporating approaches which develop identity, relationships, belonging and connectedness. A Wharekura (total immersion Māori secondary school) was approached to engage taitamariki to participate in the PAR group and Pilot group. The Wharekura was chosen for a number of reasons validated and reinforced by the principle of whakapapa. Kaupapa Māori principles and practices are fundamental to Wharekura as they are founded from a Māori philosophy. These principles are applied through daily use of ‘te rēo me ōna tikanga’ within the school environment. The Wharekura guiding philosophy also recognises and places an emphasis on the importance of the interconnectedness between the key environments of taitamariki, that is; whānau, school, peers and community. This is consistent with current literature on taitamariki healthy development and environmental protective factors.
The Study

There were strong connections between the Wharekura and the researchers that meant that trusting and reciprocal relationships existed, with these facilitating easy access and agreement to participation in this project from the Principal, teachers, students and parents. Kiro (2000) discusses qualitative research methods and the unique position for Māori researchers (insider researchers), which we believe applies to research with taitamariki Māori as well. Kiro (2000) says that:

“We know each other in ways in which the wider New Zealand community, and international community, do not, and are therefore in a stronger position to both exploit and be influenced by these relationships. As such we act as insiders, often gaining access to Māori participants because of this insider status. Such a status raises questions about boundaries for the researcher and research participants…being an insider means they trust the researcher enough…but they also expect that the researcher will act in their interests…” (p.29.)

She suggests that mainstream researchers, outsiders to the culture, are not subject to the same moral codes as those within the community of study, nor do they understand the true dynamics that exist within this community and rely on a tradition of western science and values. She suggests that Māori research methodology like feminist research validates insider knowledge as more accurate, since only an insider can understand the nuances of the social phenomenon affecting research participants.

Whakapapa was also a core principle in facilitating the engagement of the Advisory group as the cultural consultants (kaumātua and kuia), research expert and taitamariki representative had existing relationships, some through whakapapa and others professionally to the researchers.

Tikanga

Tikanga guided the processes used throughout the project, particularly for the taitamariki PAR group. We identified tikanga when working with taitamariki as incorporating approaches which include protocols as a guide to safe and inclusive processes and behaviours, also that encourage and develop cultural customs.

Māori research sees Māori culture as the nucleus of Māori perceptions of their lives and seeks to reflect this in the research (Kiro, 2000). Building on this, kaupapa Māori methodology is founded on a Māori worldview with Māori knowledge and cultural customs.

Tikanga was applied with the PAR group through:
1. The use of karakia to formally start and finish the sessions.
2. Mihimihi created the environment and space to acknowledge and reconnect each other at the three hui; outline the process for the session and reinforce our agreed processes, for example respecting each other and the sensitive nature of some of the discussions shared between us. As these taitamariki were in total immersion Māori schooling this is a natural part of their tikanga within this environment.
3. The sessions were conducted in ‘te reo Māori’ as well as English to ensure the PAR group had the opportunity to express themselves in whichever language was more comfortable.

4. The group shared kai together through the sessions.

The Advisory group were available as experts on tikanga pertaining to ‘tikanga Māori’ (cultural customs) and ‘tikanga rangahau’ (research process). One of the taitamariki PAR group members volunteered to be the youth representative on the advisory group for this project. The cultural consultants were particularly insightful with their expertise in ‘te reo Māori’. Their input was invaluable in clarification around the Māori words and expressions used for ‘intimate partner relationships’.

Tikanga also ensured safe participation and accountability processes for all involved in the project, for example, the PAR group agreed to ground rules that included things such as accountability to each other by texting or emailing each other if unable to attend. Some of the PAR group contributed to the discussion by email when unable to attend the hui. The use of tikanga included the use of consent forms, disclosure protocols and other such ethical safeguards. Tikanga is essential for safe implementation of kaupapa Māori research. Tikanga also included deciding on what methodology would facilitate a safe and inclusive process for taitamariki voices.

“Qualitative work with children should be regarded as a process of narrative inquiry. Children are both living their stories in an experimental text, but also telling their stories as they talk to their own selves and explain themselves to others” (Butler & Shaw, 1996, p. 25).

The literature suggests that most of the research in the field of intimate partner violence has used the same methodology, namely self report questionnaires/surveys with closed questions which have limitations as they provide little or no context for the violence that occurs (Murphy & O’Leary, 1994; Lovoie et al, 2000; Foshee, 2007). Structured questions can oversimplify and ignore important information, and hypothetical vignettes about what may happen in families may have little to do with what actually happens in families (Smith et al., 2004). These methods have tended to stifle the expression of children’s own voices and decontextualised them from their family or institutional settings (Biddulph, 2004). More recently the literature on researching with children and young people on possibly sensitive subjects suggests using more qualitative methods.

The literature suggests that qualitative research is primarily descriptive and has an emphasis on process, meaning and understanding gained through the use of words and pictures (Creswell, 1994). Qualitative research “speaks to issues of everyday life” (Sarantakos, 1993, p. 50) and is inclusive and connected to the human experience. It explores how social experience is created and given meaning (Dobbs, 2009). Bronfenbrenner (1992) believes that what is needed is information on how individuals experience their environments as well as objective data. Greig and Taylor (1999) suggest that the qualitative framework entails a methodology that endeavours to “understand the social world from the point of view of the child living in it” (p. 43).

**Mana**

Mana as a Mauri Ora imperative guided us in our research approach. We identified mana when working with taitamariki as incorporating approaches which guide and develop their unique strengths and potential, assist full participation so they can achieve and work towards independence and also encourage service to others as ‘mana enhancing’ to themselves and for others.

Rangimarie Pere in her Te Wheke model describes ‘mana āhua ake’ as the personal dimension, the absolute uniqueness and divine right that we have to our true self (cited in Ministry of Social Development Māori Reference Group Taskforce, 2009) and when discussing this with regards to tamariki and taitamariki she explains it as a “child’s uniqueness, views, capacities and potential as an individual within the whānau collective” (Pere, personal communication, 2006). Within this research project we wanted to ensure that we used ‘mana enhancing’ practices and that the ‘mana āhua ake o nga taitamariki’ was prioritised. The PAR process described below provided distinct methods which worked towards achieving ‘mana enhancing’ practice for taitamariki.

When engaging in research with children and young people it is necessary to use a method that will ensure that participants become active participants telling their own stories in their own way (Dobbs, 2007). McHugh & Kowalski (2009) suggest that when developing research projects involving indigenous people that communities
should be given the option of PAR approach. The Canadian 2007 Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal Peoples says that this approach has emerged as a deliberate form of resistance to traditional research practices that were perceived as a colonizing tool by research participants. Its primary goal is to create positive social change by involving participants as researchers. This involvement will educate participants to make the changes they need (Fals Borda, 2001). The term “collaborative research” is often used for action research or participatory research (Harrison, 2001). Harrison (2001), in her book on collaborative programs in indigenous communities, explains that collaboration refers to sharing responsibility and authority.

The main purpose of using PAR groups is to draw upon participants’ attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions in a manner not feasible using other methods such as observation or questionnaire surveys (Gibbs, 1997). PAR groups are useful when there are power differences between the participants and the researcher (Morgan & Kreuger, 1993). Interaction is the crucial feature because the interaction between participants highlights their view of the world (Kitzinger, 1994). PAR groups give participants an opportunity to be valued as experts and the chance to work collaboratively with the researcher, empowering for many participants (Race, Hotch & Parker, 1994). Lewis (1995) suggests they encourage children and young people to develop and articulate their thoughts, allows the researcher to view children and young people as socially interactive beings, and enable them to assist each other to extend their thinking.

There are many definitions of a PAR groups/focus group, but features like organised discussion, collective activity and interaction identify their contribution to social research (Kitzinger, 1994, 1995; Powell & Single, 1996). The parameters for these groups should ensure that participants have a specific experience of or opinion about the topic under investigation; that an explicit guide is used; that participants possess a basis for sharing their views. Having the security of being among others who share many of their feelings and experiences, the participants possess a basis for sharing their views. Thus PAR interviews, when conducted in a non-threatening and permissive environment, are especially useful when working with categories of people who historically had limited power and influence (Morgan & Kreuger, 1993). The strength of engaging in PAR with indigenous communities has been highlighted by a number of scholars (Bishop, 2005; Smith, 1999, 2005). Wheeler (2001) advocates the use of community-based approaches to research when working with Aboriginal peoples because:

“…history has demonstrated that outside ‘solutions’ for the ‘Indian problem’ simply do not work in our best interests. We are the only ones with the insight and capabilities to identify our ‘problems’ and come up with our own answers” (Wheeler, 2001, p.101.)

Bishop (2005) suggests that PAR researchers strive to break down the power hierarchy that is so prevalent in more traditional research. We believed that using PAR is particularly useful when working with taitamariki Māori as we believed that they want and are capable of developing the skills and capacities to tackle their own challenges. We wanted participants to view themselves as the experts and to recognize their power to create change. We also needed a methodology that would enhance the Mauri Ora framework. Taitamariki responses to the use of PAR process are reviewed later in this report.

McHugh & Kowalski (2009) suggest: “Strong relationships are identified… as key factors in the success of PAR projects. In terms of ethical research with Aboriginal peoples, Smith (2005, p. 97) explains that, at a very basic level, research ethics is about “establishing, maintaining, and nurturing reciprocal and respectful relationships” (p.124).

Recent studies have begun to engage young people in the analysis of the research data and the writing of and distribution of such literature. More importantly young people have been engaged in informing all stages of the research studies process (e.g. Webster et al, 2002, 2008; Dobbs, 2007). This relatively new development has encouraged a children and young people’s participatory focus. This will enable us to provide, along with young people, valuable insight into how best to assist them.

Another ‘mana enhancing’ method was used in the process of informed consent with taitaimariki. The ethics of research with children and young
people involves informed consent, confidentiality and protection (Davis, 1998). To be able to consent one must understand what it is one is consenting to (Dobbs, 2001a). Our approach was respectful (aroha ki te tangata) providing information to enable taitamariki Māori to fully comprehend what the research entailed.

“Consent is about selecting options negotiating them, and accepting or rejecting them. Beyond making a decision, consent is about making an informed choice and becoming emotionally committed to it. Consent can only happen when there is no force” (Alderson, 1995, p. 69).

Time was spent with the PAR group explaining the purpose of the study and an explanation of what we would be talking about. The young people were given an information sheet as part of this explanation and were told that their parents or guardians had agreed to their participation; however, they were under no obligation to participate. They were told that if they chose not to participate there would be no consequences for them, their parents or the school. Alderson (1995) recommends that gaining parental and children’s consent is advantageous, as parental involvement at this level supports children’s consent to participate. This is also supported by Te Ao Māori imperatives.

The young people were given the opportunity to opt out of taking part before the discussions began. We were aware that it may have been difficult for the young people to say to an adult that they did not want to participate and that peer pressure would also make this difficult for some. All care was given to assist the young people to feel comfortable about saying no. The young people’s individual written consent was gained before the PAR discussions began. The consent process is a continual process throughout the entire research process, so we emphasised their right to withdraw at any stage.

Children’s and young people’s positioning in society means that they are rarely able to decide one hundred percent for themselves whether they participate in research or not (Masson, 2000). The young people in the PAR group however, were told that they did not have to answer questions if they did not wish to, and that there were no right or wrong answers. They were also told that they did not necessarily have to discuss what they personally thought, but could talk about what they believed young people generally thought about intimate partner relationships. Mahon (1996) believes that children and young people make their own decisions about whether to participate, and that they themselves identify which issues are sensitive during the research process.

**Tapu**

Tapu was another of the Mauri Ora practice imperatives that guided our approach to issues of confidentiality and safety. We identified tapu when working with taitamariki as incorporating approaches which are respectful of self and others, value their contributions and which have clear boundaries/restrictions in order to keep everyone safe.

“Listening to the voice of youths...makes young people feel they are valued and contributing members of society...However...the approach is not without complication. To overcome adult-centred interpretations and covert relations of power, it is essential to employ a methodology that allows youth to speak from, and be appreciated for, their own perspective” (Barron, 2000, pp. 44-45).

Docherty and Sandelowski (1999) suggest that there is a particular need to get inside the unique culture of children and young people to understand how the world actually appears to them.

Ethical practice demands openness and honesty when working with children and families and an obligation to report suspected child abuse (Dobbs 2005). We therefore could not guarantee absolute confidentiality to the young people. Amongst most researchers there is consensus that complete confidentiality can never be given to young research participants (Alderson, 1995; Mahon, 1996). Alderson (1995) suggests that discussions should be had with participants at the start of the research to make this clear, and to have a plan in place should the participants disclose potential harm. Because of the nature of the topic there was potential for the young people to disclose situations of likely or actual harm. The young people were told at the beginning of the discussions that what was spoken about in the discussion group was private, but that if we had any worries about their safety or some-one in their whānau then we may have to tell some other adults to help make them safe.

Within this project all three elements of Tapu (as discussed on page 16) were reinforced within the interactions, behaviours and relationships of all those involved; participants, researchers and others. For example, tikanga guided expected behaviours
from each person from which to respect 'te tapu o te tangata'. From the maintenance of confidentiality of discussions to enabling each person to actively contribute to the hui.

**Wairua**

As previously mentioned wairua is not easy to define as it is intangible and may often be experienced as feelings. We identified wairua when working with taitamariki as incorporating approaches which reinforce values and beliefs and assist in growing confidence and self-esteem. For this project the importance of the connection between wairua (the physical and spiritual dimensions) when looking at intimate partner relationships.

**Mauri**

Mauri is another intangible however, we identified mauri when working with taitamariki as incorporating approaches which care for and maintain their ‘mauri’ or life force and wellbeing and encourage or build motivation.

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**The PAR Group**

The aim of the PAR taitamariki Māori group was to inform the subsequent pilot study on taitamariki and their intimate partner relationships.

The PAR group met three times over a six week period at the Wharekura. The PAR group comprised of taitamariki between the ages of 13 and 17 years of age. On average there were seven taitamariki (taitamatane me nga taitamahine) at each PAR group. Taitamariki came from two different classes at the Wharekura. Each PAR group sessions was approximately an hour and a half in duration.

The objectives of this component of the research were to:

- Find out from taitamariki how best to engage with other taitamariki Māori (taitamatāne me nga taitamahine) in research on their intimate partner relationships.
- Ensure that the research addressed some of the issues and the gaps that had been highlighted in the literature review.
- Ensure taitamariki Māori full participation in research on matters which effect their lives.
- Ensure that this project was carried out with Taitamariki Māori and not on them.
- Use a methodology which enhanced Taitamariki Māori wellbeing – which reflected a kaupapa Māori focus.
- Ensure that Taitamariki Māori voices were being heard within this field of research.
- Address some of the definitional, sample and methodology issues, and explore further issues of gender – placing some context for these for taitamariki Māori.
- Acknowledge that without taitamariki Māori voices being heard any prevention programmes will fail them.

Taitamariki Māori participation enabled the lived experiences of taitamariki Māori to contribute throughout the development of the project. Primarily we were seeking input from the PAR group about how best to engage with other taitamariki Māori when doing this sort of research and to ensure that the methods encourage active participation for the gathering of quality information.
The PAR group met three times and considered the following:

Session 1
Taitamariki Māori definitions of intimate partner relationships and their views on what constitutes a healthy relationship.

Session 2
How best to engage taitamariki Māori in research on this topic so that they feel comfortable and safe.

Session 3
i) The best words and questions to use to find out about how taitamariki Māori experience intimate partner relationships.
ii) The best words and questions to use to find out about how to prevent violence in intimate partner relationships for taitamariki Māori.

Methods
A range of methods was tried within the PAR group (this was at the suggestion of the PAR group) to gather information about the above topics including; discussions in the full group (taitamatane and taitamahine together), brainstorming in small groups (tāne and wahine separately) and then coming together for discussion; individually writing ideas to short answer questions (to prompt thinking) and then sharing ideas in the discussion group.

“Most children and young people are not accustomed to being encouraged to articulate their opinions in an open and honest way; they consider them to be unimportant to anyone but themselves, a view often confirmed by adults around them in their everyday lives” (Butler & Williamson, 1994, p. 38).

It must be noted that talking to children and young people to gain their perspective for research purposes is considered different from interviewing them for clinical, therapeutic or legal purposes (Gollop, 2000).

We wanted to create an environment in which the young people could talk freely. Children and young people quickly ascertain when adults are not ‘tuned’ into them; they are not being understood, and when adults are ‘pretending’ to be interested in them (Dobbs, 2005). The key to collecting good data is to establish rapport (Gollop, 2000) and to talk with them in their own language. It would be advantageous for researchers to have training on the most effective ways to engage with children and young people in research (Polson, 1998). We suggest that being insider researchers and having whakapapa connections with those in the PAR group assisted the researchers to develop rapport and trust successfully.

Adults are powerful figures in the lives of children and young people and are often perceived by them as omnipotent and omnipresent (Garbarino & Stott, 1992). Children from an early age experience adults asking them questions to which the adult already knows the answer. They learn that much of this questioning is ‘test’ questioning (‘I know the answer, but let’s see if you know’) to which there are right or wrong answers (Dobbs, 2005). Hence, in order to produce the required response, much of the children’s effort consists of working out what is in the adult’s mind (Brooker, 2001). We adopted a ‘one-down’ position or the ‘least-adult role’ discussed by Mandell (1988). In both techniques the interviewer is taking on a non-expert adult role by emphasising that he/she does not have the knowledge that the child participants have.

As stated previously PAR discussions were also used to avoid giving the impression that the discussions were aimed at questioning individual taitamariki Māori about their personal experiences.

“Having the security of being among others who share many of their feelings and experiences, the participants possess a basis for sharing their views. Thus focus group interviews, when conducted in a non-threatening and permissive environment, are especially useful when working with categories of people who have historically had limited power and influence” (Morgan & Kreuger, 1993, p. 15).
Taitamariki Māori kōrero about intimate partner relationships

Amokura

The purpose of engaging with the PAR group was two-fold. Firstly to inform the pilot study questions and secondly to guide our methods and methodologies. We also wanted to address some of the definitional, sample, gender and methodology issues which became apparent from the literature review. Within these processes we inevitably gained knowledge of the experiences and thoughts this group of taitamariki Māori have on a range of topics within the intimate partner relationships topic. The questions stimulated lots of conversations and debate within the group.

In this section some of the data is reported. The methods used in each session are explained and a summary made of each session held with the PAR group, concluding with a discussion on the taitamariki recommendations for the Pilot group.

Session One

In session one, the study topic was introduced and consent gained from participants. As an introduction to the topic the participants were told that adults do not always know what young people think, so we thought the best people to ask about what young people think were young people. We told the group that we needed their assistance in working out the best questions, words and ways to ask other taitamariki Māori to be able to find out about other taitamariki Māori intimate partner relationships. In this session the kōrero was taped and then transcribed.

The purpose of session one was to find:

i) Taitamariki definition of and words to describe intimate partner relationships;
ii) What the components that make a good relationship were;
iii) How they learnt about what an okay and not okay relationship was; and
iv) Who influenced their relationships?

We hoped this would assist in our understanding (putting into some context) of the taitamariki Māori definitions of an intimate partner relationship. The group discussions were very open and honest and there was debate within the group. This mainly came about from the different gender perspectives.

Findings of Session one

The consensus of the group was that the word relationship was used by most taitamariki to describe an intimate partner relationship and friendship was used to describe just ‘being mates’. A friendship was defined differently. Within a relationship there was sexual contact, and the nature of the interaction was based around time spent together, behaviour and commitment. Good relationships were described as both taitamatāne and taitamāhine showing respect, having good communication and a feeling of good wairua. The group came up with a number of factors that contributed to defining what a relationship was, including: loyalty, communication, hanging out, trust, respect and not putting pressure on each other to do things they did not want to do. Both genders appeared to agree on these. Whether the taitamatāne and taitamāhine were engaging in a sexual way seemed to be an important factor for the tāne in the group whereas this was less important for the wahine.

It was interesting that when te rēo was used with the group they clearly understood the questions being asked however responded in English saying that they do not “really speak Māori about these kinds of things” (wahine). For example when the question was asked, “i kōrero koutou i te rēo…he aha te kupu Māori kia whakamārama te whaiāipo, te hoa wahine/tāne ranei?” One of the girls responded “we don’t talk Māori like that.” This could be explored further as there are many possible explanations for this such as; these subjects are not expressed or discussed in the same way in the Māori language, and/or taitamariki lack of descriptive words in Māori to express themselves.

The PAR group said that taitamariki Māori learn about what is okay and not okay in a relationship from their parents, watching other people and using their common sense. Peers did not seem to have a big influence. Whilst this was a small sample the theoretical framework of social learning as described in the literature review needs to be explored further. Conversely the issues around children and young people’s agency also need to be explored.
Intimate partner relationships – kūpū and definitions

“Relationship…yeah” (taitamāhine)
“If it was mates it would be friendships” (taitamatāne)
“Hook up” (taitamatāne)
“Like if some-ones going out the boys will go ‘oh your mittys’ or something like that, they won’t call it boyfriend or girlfriend” (taitamatāne)

What is a healthy relationship?

“Spending time together, talking to each other, communication” (taitamatāne)
“Understanding if she doesn’t want to do anything” (taitamāhine)
“Don’t pressure her to do things she doesn’t want to” (taitamatāne)

How do you learn what a good relationship is?

“Just learn from watching other people” (taitamatāne)
“But not my parents they argue all the time…you learn from them” (taitamatāne).
“You will try and make a better relationship than them” (taitamatāne)
“My Mum is way different to my Dad, like my Dad will ask me if I have a girlfriend or he will ask me now and then and my Mum will be like why you want a girlfriend; don’t try to be a man…” (taitamatāne)

“Feelings, if you feel good together, not like sleeping…but like you know if you’ve got a good wairua together, I reckon thats all you need” (taitamāhine)

Session Two

Session two began by checking with the group that we had recorded their responses to session one’s questions correctly. Consent to participate in this session was also gained. This session was taped and transcribed. As well as a group kōrero we asked participants to write answers to questions individually on a sheet of paper. The individual answers were then compared to the group kōrero in an attempt to determine whether this method would be useful in eliciting data or not from the PAR group on a more potentially sensitive topic as violence.

The purpose of session two was to find out:

i) The best methods/tikanga to guide us with other taitamariki Māori in research on this topic so that they felt comfortable and safe.

This was achieved by asking taitamariki Māori what were the most important things that would make young people feel safe about talking to adults about relationships? We suggested that they comment on the processes and feelings when they first meet us; what things did we do to make them feel okay and what things we did that made you feel ‘a bit suspect’. We also asked them about issues of gender and comfort about talking about relationships.

Findings to session two

The consensus was that separate groups for taitamatāne and taitamāhine were the preferred options. Taitamāhine from this group said they would not feel comfortable talking with a tāne researcher whilst the tāne in the group did not indicate that talking with wahine researchers was a problem for them. However, they did suggest taitamatāne may be more comfortable talking with a tāne researcher.

The PAR group concurred with Webster et al (2002), Kiro (2000) and Dobbs (2007) suggesting that being with other taitamariki they knew and the fact they had a whakapapa connections to the researchers assisted them in giving consent and feeling okay about talking about the topic freely. The way we presented ourselves also assisted taitamariki Māori. The PAR group suggested that a number of methods should be used; recognising the diversity of taitamariki Māori who may not all respond in the same way. They commented that any electronic surveys would be unreliable as it was easier to be untruthful.
Tikanga/methods/whakapapa

Participants and researchers

“Just being with people that you know” (taitamātane)
“Yeah and having good people talking to you and not grumpy people” (taitamāhine)
“Food and friendly faces” (taitamāhine)
“We knew whaea so all good (talking about consent process)” (taitamātane)

Process of information gathering with taitamariki

“I’m thinking okay….like getting people into groups and then having a question on it and a brainstorm like….what’s another word for relationships and make them do a brainstorm, so that everyone can put their ideas in” (taitamāhine)

“Like little kids are silly and they lie on Bebo” (taitamātane)

Gender for pilot group

“Boy’s group, girl’s group” (taitamātane)

“Girls will like say something, they’ll say something and if the boy doesn’t agree then they’ll …..I’ll change my mind” (taitamāhine)

Researchers

“I don’t really like talking with dudes, I mean men, but it’s alright with the boys around (taitamāhine)

“Boys will be more comfortable with men I think” (taitamātane)

Length of interview

“I reckon about two hours cause if it goes too long they just lose interest” (taitamāhine)

Session Three

At the beginning of session three, consent was gained for this session and checking with the PAR group that we had recorded session two correctly.

In this session we discussed with taitamariki Māori that adults may have a different understanding of words than young people. So we needed to make sure that the words in the questions we used for the Pilot study could be understood by other taitamariki Māori. We stated we knew that in some relationships violence occurred and we were interested in their views on this topic.

The aim of session three was to find out about:

i) The best words to use and questions to ask taitamariki Māori to find out about their experiences of intimate partner relationships; and

ii) The wording to use and questions to ask to find out how to prevent violence in taitamariki relationships.

From these questions we were interested in finding out:

i) How taitamariki Māori define violence;

ii) Their ideas about the causes of violence within relationships;

iii) What they thought the consequences of this violence would be;

iv) What helped or hindered taitamariki Māori from seeking help; and

v) Whether there were gender differences in their responses.

From the discussion in the previous session on gender comfort taitamariki Māori were put into two groups – taitamātane in one group and taitamāhine in the other. We felt this may also highlight any gender differences more clearly if they were present. We facilitated a brainstorm session with each group and then returned to the larger group to report back and discuss further.

Whilst some of the questions used in this session were very similar to session one, we wanted to see which method elicited difference or more information. We did not audio-tape the taitamariki Māori discussion whilst writing their answers on the brainstorming sheets. We believed we should have to help place some context to the written words. We did audio tape the group feedback.
Findings for session three

Taitamariki Māori recommendation on words and questions to use:
What things create conflict in relationships? (researchers)
What starts an argument in a relationship? (taitamariki Māori)
How is the conflict resolved? (researchers)
How is the argument fixed or worked out? (taitamariki Māori)
Do tāne/wahine see conflict differently? (researchers)
Do tāne/wahine see arguments in a different way? (taitamariki Māori)

Describe violence in relationships. What is and what isn’t? (researchers – no change)
What causes violence between boyfriend and girlfriends? (researchers – no change)
What might be the consequences of violence in a relationship? (researchers)
What might be the results of violence in a relationship (taitamariki Māori)
Who would you get help from? How come you would do that? (researchers)
Who would taitamariki Māori get help from, how come they would do that? (taitamariki Māori)

Whilst not reporting all of the kōrero from this session, as a results of these questions, it was evident that both taitamātane and taitamāhine were able to be specific about what constituted violence with in relationships – encompassing physical, emotional and sexual violence; some of the causes of this violence and the consequences of the violence. Whilst taitamariki, both taitamātane and taitamāhine, agreed that gender made a difference to how they viewed arguments it was difficult to ascertain the reasons for this.

Taitamariki Definitions
Bashing them physically – pushing, hitting, using fists punches.
Taking the body
Verbally abusing them – put downs, swearing, putting their friends down
Abusing their families

 Causes
Jealousy, no respect, cheating, no trust, not being honest, drinking, pushing friends away

 Consequences
Jail, death, lonely, feel unsafe, no friends, no family, won’t be able to trust again.

 Gender differences in arguments within relationships
“Yes wahine see differences cause people have different ideas of conflict.” (taitamāhine)
“Yes [see arguments differently like] if you saw your girlfriend talking to another boy then you would get jealous and start an argument.” (taitamātane)

The literature suggests that young people are more likely to turn to peers for support and prevention programmes should be designed around school activities (Family Prevention fund, 2003). However, from this small group of young people it appeared that they would seek help from parents, whānau and extended whānau. School was seen as supportive as well and some mentioned talking to teachers. The difference between the literature and lived experiences of this group of taitamariki may be due to some of the points about whakapapa and relationships (see above), however it would be worth exploring this further in future studies.
Discussion and Summary

The purpose of the PAR group was to inform the Pilot study. Specifically, informing the Pilot study questions, method and methodologies. The PAR group were able to express themselves in a clear and precise way. They assisted with the wording of questions, the methods by which to ask them so that the Pilot study participants could better understand what was being asked of them, in their own language and in a way that respected and promoted their wellbeing. They also gave us some insight into the context of taitamariki Māori intimate partner relationships.

We were guided by the PAR group when considering the best methods to collect the data. Group activities – group kōrero or small group ‘brainstorming’ and reporting back to the whole group appeared to work better for the taitamariki Māori than individual exercises. Facilitating free narrative in the group kōrero and when reporting back to the whole group placed valuable context and meaning into both what the PAR group were discussing and the written words from the brainstorming sessions. We therefore believed that it was imperative to tape the smaller brainstorming group kōrero as well as the whole group kōrero and feedback sessions. Using both gender and single gender groups was recommended by the PAR group. We concurred with this as we felt the issue around gender needed to be explored further in the Pilot group.

The taitamariki Māori in the PAR group reinforced this project being guided by a Mauri Ora framework using the six cultural imperatives, when researching with taitamariki Māori. Specifically, the interconnectedness between each other, school environment, and the researchers assisted taitamariki in the consent process and feeling safe to talk about the topic. These imperatives also guided ethical issues and confidentiality successfully.
Taitamariki Pilot Group

The aim of the Pilot group was to pilot and implement the outcomes of the PAR group and to further address some of the definitional, sample, gender and methodology issues which were highlighted from the literature review. Specifically we wanted to pilot the words and questions recommended by the PAR group and some of the methods used in the PAR group.

A Mauri Ora framework guided the Pilot study using the six practice imperatives. Whilst we cannot strictly describe the methodology used with the Pilot group as participatory action research, as we only met with them once, we used the same processes as we did for the group we named the PAR group. We used this method with the Pilot group as the taitamariki in the PAR group said it worked for them and were interested to find out if participatory action research methods would enhance and work in a Pilot study.

This study will contribute to the scarce body of literature on taitamariki Māori and intimate partner relationships.

Method

Recruitment

A Wharekura (total immersion Māori secondary school) was approached to engage taitamariki to participate in the Pilot study group. The Pilot study group participants were independent of the PAR group, however they were from the same Wharekura. The Wharekura selected the Pilot group which were students from one class. The criteria for selection were that the taitamariki Māori were aged between 14 to 17 years, had verbal skills to participate in a group discussion, and that they had not been previously identify as being ‘at risk’. Recruitment was also based on taitamariki availability on the day of the Pilot study and choosing a class time that was the least interruptive to their studies.

Participants

The Pilot study group made up of taitamahine and taitamahine participants aged from 14 to 17 years, (seven taitamahine and two taitamahine). They were all familiar to each other as they were in the same class at Wharekura, a recommendation made by the PAR group. The group engaged well with each other and were honest and upfront with their contributions to the session. They told us that knowing each other ‘made talking easier’ as well as the researcher’s whakapapa connection with this group of taitamariki.

Consent

Consent to engage with taitamariki Māori was gained from the Principal and the school Board of Trustees, by the Principal. Parental permission was gained through the form teacher. Consent from the taitamariki Māori was gained using the same kaupapa as described in the PAR group consent process (see Appendices 1 – 5). As previously discussed the ethics of research with children and young people involves informed consent, confidentiality and protection. Our approach was respectful (aroha ki te tangata), providing information to enable taitamariki Māori to fully comprehend what the research entailed. Time was spent explaining the purpose of the study and an explanation of what we would be talking about. We described what we had done in the PAR group and explained to the group what a Pilot study was and requested their assistance in testing the PAR outcomes. Importantly we discussed what would happen to the information that they gave us.

Dobbs (2007) report suggested that young people needed to know what was going to happen to the information they gave to researchers; commenting that when gaining consent, young people need to know what they are consenting to, the use and distribution of their information being part of this. The young people in their study suggested that if this was not explained there may be a tendency for young people to withhold information and create stress. The Pilot group were told that we may use some of the words that they used in our report but they and the Wharekura would not be identified. The Pilot group were told that their parents or guardians had agreed to their participation; however, they were under no obligation to participate. They were told that if they chose not to participate there would be no consequences for them, their parents or the school.

The Pilot group were given the opportunity to opt out of taking part before the discussions began. We were aware that it may have been difficult for the young people to say to an adult that they did not want to participate and that peer pressure would also make this difficult for some. All care was given
to assist the young people to feel comfortable about saying no. Individual written consent was gained before the Pilot group started. As discussed in the PAR group section of this report – The consent process is a continual process throughout the entire research process, so their right to withdraw at any stage was emphasised.

An important aspect of the consent process is the awareness that young people’s positioning in society means that they are rarely to decide one hundred percent for themselves whether they participate in research or not (Masson, 2000). However, Mahon (1996) believes that children and young people make their own decisions about whether to participate, and that they themselves identify which issues are sensitive during the research process. In light of this we told the Pilot group they did not have to answer questions if they did not wish to, and that there were no right or wrong answers. They were also told that they did not necessarily have to discuss what they personally thought, but could talk about what they believed taitamariki generally thought about intimate partner relationships.

The issue of confidentiality was discussed with the Pilot group as part of the consent process. As discussed in the Mauri Ora practice imperatives we could not guarantee absolute confidentiality to the taitamariki Māori in the Pilot group because of our ethical obligations to report any alleged or suspected abuse. The Pilot group were told that whilst everything that was said in the group was confidential, if participants said anything that made us feel they or someone in their whānau was not safe then we would have to get assistance to make them safe.

Process

Using the insights of the PAR group and from aspects of the literature review we piloted the questions in the following manner to ensure that the practice imperatives were adhered to, and to address some of the definitional, sample, gender and methodology issues, highlighted in the literature review. We also wanted to start looking at the context in which taitamariki Māori have relationships. This was done in four stages. Each stage is described and some of the findings discussed.

The questions used in the Pilot study formed the basis or guide for the discussions, there were a number of subsequent questions asked to elicit further information and/or to clarify what the taitamariki were saying.

Stage one

At the beginning of stage one taitamāhine and taitamatāne were together for karakia, to explain the pilot study and to gain consent. We were hoping to place wahine and tāne into separate groups. Because of the numbers of taitamatāne and taitamāhine, there was one group of taitamāhine (WG) and the other group had both taitamatāne and taitamāhine (TWG). We believed we would still be able to determine gender differences and test whether mixed gender or single gender groups assisted the participants. The group’s kōrero was taped and transcribed.

In stage one the Pilot group were asked:

- Taitamariki definitions for intimate partner relationships
- What is the difference between a relationship and a friendship?
- Do taitamatāne and taitamāhine see relationships the same or differently?
- Where do taitamariki Māori learn about relationships, how do they learn, know what’s okay and not okay?

Findings for Stage one

The consensus from both groups was that the words ‘relationship’ or ‘boyfriend/girlfriend’ described what taitamariki understood as an intimate partner relationship. Being in a relationship was defined differently than the relationship had with a mate. In a relationship there was sexual contact, closeness, spending more time together and communication that was different than with a ‘mate’. The mixed group acknowledged that mates can start as mates but this can turn into a relationship.

Both groups reported that taitamatāne and taitamāhine see relationships differently. Within the mixed gender group there was a great deal of debate when discussing who takes the relationship more seriously. Taitamatāne suggesting wahine took the relationship more seriously and taitamāhine arguing that taitamatāne did. Both genders saw this from a negative perspective. The taitamāhine group indicated that girls take relationships more seriously and on a deeper emotional level. The conversation within this question turned to ‘who makes the rules’ and ‘who was in control/boss of these relationships’ in both groups. The taitamāhine group were unanimous that girls were in charge of these relationships whilst in the mixed group there was a great deal of dispute over this issue. Taitamāhine
in both groups suggested that boys try and control the relationship by way of physical violence. Violence had not been mentioned by either researchers at this point. Some of the taitamātāne suggested that there shouldn’t be a boss and that decisions should be made jointly. The issues around control within taitamariki relationships need to be explored further.

The responses to where taitamariki Māori learn about relationships were slightly different between the two groups. The mixed gender group were quite adamant that movies and television influenced them more than friends and family. Conversely in the wahine group personal experiences and parents and whānau were their main influences on their learning about relationships.

Taitamariki definitions for intimate partner relationships

“Just say like in a relationship, not that intimate stuff” (TWG)- taitamātāne

“Like you might call them babe” (TWG) – taitamāhine

“Boyfriend or girlfriend relationship” (WG)

What is the difference between a relationship and a friendship?

“You do more stuff, and you talk a lot with your boyfriend than your boy mate”. (WG)

“Because you kiss the boyfriend and you don’t kiss your girl mate”. (TWG)- taitamātāne

“Like you are more physical with a boyfriend than a boy mate”. (TWG) – taitamāhine

Do tāne and wahine see relationships the same of differently?

“Like they are more serious and they can make you jealous” (TWG)- taitamātāne

“I reckon the girl would probably fall in love faster than the boy… the girl will have stronger feelings… and boys would just tap and gap” (WG)

“No boys take relationships more seriously… No girls do… The girls are the boss” (TWG) – (taitamātāne and taitamāhine arguing)

Where do taitamariki Māori learn about relationships, how do they learn, know what’s okay and not okay?

“You watch programmes on TV. Like so you know… TV” (TWG) – Taitamātāne and taitamāhine

“Parents… relatives that covers your whole family” (WG)

“Learn from your own experiences” (TWG) - taitamāhine

Stage two

In the second stage, both groups (taitamāhine and mixed gender group) were given questions to answer by way of brainstorming (writing the groups thoughts on big sheets of paper) then coming back together as a whole group to report their answers. It was noted that the discussions that occurred while the brainstorm was happening were in-depth, spontaneous and contained valuable information which would have been useful to audio tape. It would have placed more contexts into the written word.

The questions the taitamariki were asked are as follows:

- What things do young people think make a really good relationship?
- What sort of things can start an argument or problems in young people’s relationships?
- How are these arguments or problems worked out or fixed?
- Do you think that taitamātāne and taitamāhine see arguments and problems in relationships the same or differently? If so why might that be…?

Findings for stage two

Both groups reported that having respect for each other was an important aspect of a good relationship. Being able to communicate/listening and spending time together was also mentioned by both groups. Interestingly both groups mentioned respecting and knowing boundaries within the relationship. The wahine group reported that physical contact was part of a healthy relationship.

Similarly, issues of having no respect, jealousy, commitment and pressure for sex featured highly for both groups when discussing what things start an argument within taitamariki relationships. The taitamāhine group discussed outside influences: different nationalities, religions and whānau which can also cause arguments within taitamariki relationships. Good communication, showing respect and taking responsibility for your behaviour and seeking help were seen by both groups as a way to resolving arguments within taitamariki relationships.

The discussions on whether taitamāhine and taitamātāne see arguments in relationships differently generated a lot of debate within the mixed gender group. With some interesting insight in how
this group of taitamariki perceived the opposite gender. Taitamāhine believed they were responsible for raising any issues within a relationship and that tāne behaviour started most arguments. The reasons behind the behaviour stemmed from taitamatāne inability to think through the consequences of this behaviour. Issues of control were also alluded to, for example, taitamatāne may be physically stronger but taitamāhine are mentally stronger. The taitamāhine group reported that they thought girls were more responsible in relationships so saw arguments differently; however, there was not a consensus to this in the group.

What things do young people think make a really good relationship?

“Respect, communication, having fun, eye contact, love, respect the boundaries, hanging out with them and their whānau, kissing, hugging” (WG)

“Listen to what they say, honesty, trust, love, respect, knowing the boundaries, privacy - not letting others invade your time” (TWG)

What sort of things can start an argument or problems in young people’s relationships?

“Cheating, not listening, jealousy, relatives, drug and alcohol, wanting more sex, different nationalities and religions, having control, no respect, abuse” (WG)

“Talking to her like a dog, wanting more acts of sex, jealousy, cheating, men have outlets, women are more sensitive, peer pressure, no respect” (TWG)

How are these arguments or problems worked out or fixed?

“By showing respect, talking, listening, communicating, being truthful, being responsible, reliable, don’t be jealous, talk to someone” (WG)

“Communication, apologise, owning up to your mistakes, time out – cool off, talk it over with her and try and make it better, seek help” (TWG)

Do you think that tāne and wahine see arguments and problems in relationships the same or differently? If so why might that be…?

“Maybe, everyone has their own thoughts about relationships, girls are more responsible, boys just think about getting into their pants” (WG)

“Maybe, yes and no, yes girls do they are more serious, girls ask the questions, girls are more aware of their behaviour, girls just hassle and get jealous” (TWG)

“Physically men are stronger, and mentally girls are more aware, and they (men) don’t think” (Wahine in TWG)

Stage three

The next set of brainstorming questions were asked to start to ascertain further taitamariki Māori definition and understanding of violence within their relationships. The same process was used as described above.

Each group were asked to brainstorm the following questions:

- Describe or give examples of violence in young people’s relationships?
- What causes these types of violence in young people’s relationships? How come some young people get violent and others don’t?
- What might be the result of violence in young people’s relationships?
- In young people’s relationships where there is violence, is taitamāhine or taitamatāne more violent or not? If they are violent do they use the same types of violence?
- Is there one group in our society or community that young people think are more violent towards their girlfriends/boyfriends or not?

Findings for stage three

Both groups described violence very clearly in terms of physical, emotional and sexual violence. Similarly, both groups suggested that the main causes of violence within young people’s relationships were an inability to control anger and not showing respect and miscommunication. Jealousy and drug and alcohol were reported as factors which contributed to arguments. There were no indications from either group whether or not this behaviour was seen as acceptable or not.

In terms of why some young people are violent and others are not within their relationships, both groups responded by suggesting that your upbringing had an impact on your behaviour, however they did recognise that young people had some agency in this.

There appeared to be a slight gender difference in the responses to the consequences of violence in young people relationships. The taitamāhine group described the physical consequences and the mixed gender group described more emotional consequences. There was a lot of debate in the mixed gender group as to who was seen as more violence within young people’s relationships. The taitamahine in the group were adamant that taitamatāne

Taitamariki Māori kōrero about intimate partner relationships: Amokura
were more violent (taitamatāne disagreed) than taitamahine; the type of violence taitamatāne used was of a physical nature and used in anger. The taitamahine group reported that taitamatāne were more violent in relationships and the nature of the violence was also physical and used when angry. The wahine group acknowledged that taitamāhine may also be physically violent but this violence was used in defending themselves. An interesting aspect when considering how many studies in the literature review used the CTS Scale when determining the levels of and gendered violence.

The Pilot group were asked whether young people saw one group in their community or society that was seen as more violent towards their girlfriends/boyfriends. This question was asked to ascertain any perceived stereotypes that the young people may have or not. All the taitamariki talked about the violence within relationships within the gang culture and viewed this as negative. Interestingly, a comment was made by a taitamatāne in the mixed gender group about the role of taitamāhine within this culture: “girls are in it for the sex”. It was difficult to ascertain the meaning of this comment.

Describe or give examples of violence in young people’s relationships?

“Punching, biting, fists, putting relatives down, using objects to throw, ripping friends apart, drugging, put downs in front of people.” (WG)

“Bashing them vividly like using fist, verbally abusing them, like put downs, abusing their whānau, raping, phone sex, touching in places that you should not, shaming, dissing, hitting, manhandle, grabbing, mockery in front of other people, slapping, back hand, physical is the worst.” (TWG)

How come some young people get violent and others don’t…?

“Maybe you don’t want the same for you as your parents, some guys just don’t respect.” (WG)

“Depends on the whānau, arguments can be normal for some, depends on whether you get to think it’s okay.” (TWG)

What might be the result of violence in young people’s relationships?

“Death, choking, stabbing, murder, suicide, taking it out on someone else, hurt really bad, going to jail.” (WG)

“They go inside themselves, go quiet, depression, paranoia, flinch all the time, shock, relationship falls apart, sometimes they work it out sometimes they go back.” (TWG)

In young people’s relationships where there is violence, are wahine or tāne more violent or not? If they are violent do they use the same types of violence?

“Tāne, guys put all their physical anger into it, girls just fight back to defend themselves, girls yell more than fight, girls use objects, some girls rule some boys.” (WG)

“Boys say girls are and girls say boys are, women can start it but boys take it over serious, men hit harder and it’s a different type of violence – more angry violence.” (TWG)

Is there one group in our society or community that young people think are more violent towards their girlfriends/boyfriends or not?

“Gangs.” (WG)

“Gangs, Black Power, little youth gangs, MS 13 its an American copy gang, girls just in it for sex.” (TWG)
Stage four

The last set of brainstorming questions was centered on prevention and intervention strategies from taitamariki perspective.

The groups were asked to answer the following questions:

- If young people where in a violent relationship would they go and get help and advice usually?
- Who would they go to for help and advice?
- What might stop them or make it hard to get help and advice?
- What would make it easier for young people to get help and advice?
- What types of help and advice do young people need?
- What do you think adults need to know about young people's relationships and how best adults help young people can if they are in a violent relationship?

Finding for stage 4

The literature suggests that young people are more likely to turn to peers for help and advice when in violent relationships and that this should be considered when developing prevention programmes. This group of taitamariki Māori responses do not support the literature. In both groups whānau and extending whānau were reported as the people they would most likely turn to. This has some implication for prevention programmes for any taitamariki Māori violence prevention programme. The inclusion of whānau and extended whānau may be fortuitous.

When asked what stopped or made it hard for young people to seek advice the taitamahine group described a number of situations which all centred on a violent partner preventing young people from seeking help. Conversely, the mixed gender group focused on the person’s lack of knowledge of what might happen and the lack of knowledge of what the consequences may be if they were to seek help.

Both groups reported that if they knew what was going to happen to the information they gave when seeking help; felt that the person was engaged with them and allowed them to have a sense of control that this would make seeking help easier. These comments concur with Dobbs (2007) report. Having someone that had experienced partner violence to talk to was also mentioned. These comments have some implication for adults that are engaging with young people seeking help. Adults need to ensure that young people have a clear understanding of adult processes around intervention.

The last question the Pilot group were asked was about what they thought adults should know about young people's relationships and how can adults assist young people if they were in a violent relationship. Both groups focused on how adults can assist young people, it appeared that the young people were discussing what their parents could do. They said: have better communication with them, be more involved with their lives and their friends and that young people wanted good parental role models when it came to healthy relationships. These comments also have implication for prevention programmes.

If young people were in a violent relationship would they go and get help and advice usually?

“Yeap, some would, some would be too scared (WG)
Some would, maybe not, it’s hard for some people to talk about their love life.” (TWG)

Who would they go to for help and advice?

“Relatives, family, parents, aunties, uncles, women's refuge, teachers, counsellor, police, a safe home, friends” . (WG)

“Older cousins, whānau – may cause violence with boyfriend though, tāne: school counsellor not. They say it’s confidential but it’s not. Boys would go to boy cousins and girls would go to girl cousins, same sex as yourself, some would go to friends and some wouldn’t and some wouldn’t go to brother and sisters.” (TWG)

What might stop them or make it hard to get help and advice?

“Threats, scared, kidnap you, keeping you away, drugging you, threatening your family, locking you up”. (WG)

“Too scared, not know what might happen if I tell, thought you knew what was going to happen and it didn’t, unsure of the consequences”. (TWG)

What would make it easier for young people to get help and advice?

“Don’t be scared, be free to speak your own mind, be strong, have help like cell phone, whānau protection and have a protection plan”. (WG)
“Knew what was going to happen when I told, need a sense of control, them being honest with me, someone that has been through it”. (TWG)

What types of help and advice do young people need?

“How to protect yourself, self defence classes, having a safety plan”. (WG)

“Positive and helpful, support all the way, feel they are on your side, both need help just not one cause they’ll do it again”. (TWG)

What do you think adults need to know about young people’s relationships and how best can adults help you people if they are in a violent relationship?

“Communicate more with their kids, get more involved in their kids relationships, check them out, give them a talk, keep tabs on them”. (WG)

“Talk to us, behave better yourselves [adults], give us cuddles, be interested in our mates and don’t judge our boyfriends”. (TWG)

Discussion and Summary

The aim of the PAR group taitamārīki Māori was to inform the subsequent Pilot study on taitamārīki and their intimate partner relationships. In the Pilot study we also wanted to ensure that we could address some of the issues and the gaps that had been highlighted in the literature review. We ensured that taitamārīki Māori participated fully in this project and that the project was carried out with taitamārīki Māori and not on them. Unfortunately because of time constraints taitamārīki were unable to contribute to the writing of this report.

An important aspect of the Pilot study was to address some of the definitional and sample issues highlighted in the literature; namely that most studies use researchers (adults) definitions and not those of young people (Barter, 2009; Jackson, 1999, 2002; Lavoie, Robitaille, & Hebert, 2000; Sears et al., 2006). It is essential we know how young people define intimate partner relationships and violence. The issues of sample (lack of indigenous participants) are highlighted by Carlson, 1996; Foshee, 1996; Jackson, 1999; Hird, 2000; Lewis & Fremouw, 2001; McCary, 2009 and Barter, 2009. This Pilot goes some way to rectify these issues by engaging with taitamārīki Māori for their definitions of intimate partner relationship.

We also addressed some of methodology issues. The literature called for methodologies that allowed young people to speak of their own definitions and be enabled to place their own context, consequences and meaning to partner violence (e.g. Jackson, 1999; Lavoie et al, 2000, Sears et al, 2006; Foshee et al, 2007, Barter, 2009; McCary, 2009). We asked taitamārīki Māori what methods would work best for them – using PAR groups and a kaupapa Māori framework the Pilot study began to look at other methodologies specific to taitamārīki Māori.

From the results of both the PAR group and the Pilot study we believe we used a methodology which enhanced taitamārīki Māori wellbeing and reflected a kaupapa Māori focus.

As reported earlier some notable gaps exist in the literature on gender and are worth considering. We have found no reports on whether or not the gender of the researcher and the gender of the participants...
Taitamariki Māori kōrero about intimate partner relationships

Amokura

Recommendations

The following are recommendations drawn together from the project sources; literature review, taitamariki PAR group, taitamariki Pilot group and Advisory group.

Participants

In order to increase understandings about strategies for taitamariki Māori and violence prevention we recommend participants are taitamatāne and taitamāhine Māori aged between 14-18 years. As identified on pg 41 the literature suggests focusing violence prevention activities on (10-14 year olds) however we recommend that research participants are from the older age group as they may have more experiences of relationships and be able to identify the best prevention strategies to use with 10-14 year olds. We also suggest that research participants have a connection with each other. We suggest that recruitment of participants considers the supports and monitoring required during and after the study and that both rural and urban context are included.

Researchers

The researchers for the project must have specific knowledge and skills to work with taitamariki Māori on sensitive issues to ensure a safe cultural and youth centred process. The researchers must be Māori, which includes having a researcher with ‘te reo Māori’. It is also important to be trained or have experience in child advocacy and skills in talking with taitamariki in a research context. Researchers need to have a capacity to see children and young people as having their own agency and view children and young people within a socio-cultural and sociology of childhood theoretical models, in which children and young people are viewed as social actors in their own right and their perspectives on, and participation in, the social world are validated. The issue of gender needs to be explored further and we recommend that the participants are separated into 3 groups; taitamāhine with wahine researcher, taitamatāne with tane researcher and also taitamatāne with wahine researcher to analyse and compare the different responses.
Methodology

The methodology recommended is kaupapa Māori, qualitative and responds to the ‘mana āhua ake o taitamariki’ by being youth centred (we recommend participatory action research) to able to achieve this.

Methods

Mixed methods are recommended which take place in workshops with small groups (6-8 participants). This could include brainstorms, discussions, written group worksheets. It is imperative that all discussions including brainstorming are taped to ensure that the context and depth of the kōrero is understood in its context. The questions used in our Pilot process are useful as a guide with subsequent follow up questions to explore issues spontaneously, clarify information and to allow free narrative from the participants. It is also important for the researchers to lead and encourage participants to use ‘rēo Māori’ if they choose to. However, from the response in the PAR group; that taitamariki Māori “don’t talk about these things in te rēo”, this needs to be explored further. There must be safety processes and supports in place for the participants during and after the project in case issues are raised for them as a result of their participation into the process.

Limitations of this project

Due to the time constraints placed upon us for this project we were unable to report back or involve the taitamariki participants in the writing up of the report, only to go through the report with them on its completion. In a full study it is important that a process for reporting back to the participants at different stages throughout the project is established and that they are involved in the writing up and distribution of findings. We had planned to explore the gender issues further in the Pilot however due to the taitamariki available on the day of the Pilot we didn’t have enough tāne to make up a full group on their own. It is important to have separate same gender groups in the full study as recommended above.
Taitamariki Māori kōrero about intimate partner relationships

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Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: the importance of interaction between research participants. Sociology of Health & Illness, 16, 103-121.


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Appendices

1. Taitamariki Information Sheet
2. Taitamariki Consent Form
3. Whanau Information Sheet
4. Principals Consent Form
5. Parents/Legal Guardian Consent Form
Moana and Terry work for Amokura, an organisation led by seven of the Iwi of Te Tai Tokerau, (Te Aupouri, Te Rarawa, Ngati Kahu, Whaingaroa, Ngapuhi, Ngati Whatua and Ngati Wai) who work towards ‘whanau ora’ and violence prevention within the rohe.

Moana and Terry are starting to do some research about taitamariki Maori and their intimate partner relationships (relationships between boyfriends and girlfriends). Adults don’t always know what taitamariki Maori think so Moana and Terry thought they should ask the experts, taitamariki Maori.

Before Moana and Terry do their research with other taitamariki Maori they want to know the best way to go about this - what works for taitamariki Maori and what doesn’t? So they are looking for a group of taitamariki Maori (tane me nga wahine) aged 16-18yrs who will participate in some group discussions to guide this project. They have approached your Wharekura and would like to invite you to participate in this group. If you agree they will make sure that your parents/caregivers also understand the project.

Your participation in the group discussions is voluntary, which means you do not have to take part if you don’t want to. Nothing will happen to you if you decide you don’t want to be in the group discussions. There will be six to eight other taitamariki Maori in the group discussions so this might make it easier for you to talk. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions you will be asked. If you don’t want to answer any of the questions, that’s fine. The group will meet a couple of times at a place and time that suits everyone.
To help find out the best way to do their research with taitamariki Māori on intimate partner relationships they will be asking you to talk about the following:

1. Taitamariki Māori definitions of intimate partner relationships (relationships between boyfriends and girlfriends) and your views on what a healthy relationship is.
2. How best to connect with taitamariki Māori in research on this topic so that they feel comfortable and safe.
3. The best words and questions to use to find out about how taitamariki Māori experience intimate partner relationships.
4. The best words and questions to use to find out about how to prevent violence in intimate partner relationships for taitamariki Māori.

The discussions will be taped. If at any time during the discussions you want to leave you can or if you want the tape turned off Terry and Moana will do that. The words on the tape will be typed out by a professional typist and will only be seen by Moana and Terry and the person who did the typing. After they have finished with the transcript and the tape they will be destroyed.

Your names and the name of your Wharekura will be kept private. If you have any concerns after the group discussions you can come and talk with Terry and Moana. They will keep everything you say private but if they think that you, or someone in your whanau are not safe, they might have to tell some other adults who can help make you safe. You can ask Terry and Moana any questions you like before you take part in the discussion groups.

Contact details:

Moana Eruera
Ph: 09-4362707
Cell: 021-450776
Email: kaeiukura@xtra.co.nz

Terry Dobbs
Ph: 09-4074311
Cell: 021-883521
Email: terryanne@xtra.co.nz
Taitamariki Consent Form

My name is: ______________________________________

I understand that:

• Participation in this study is voluntary which means I do not have to take part if I don’t want to and nothing will happen to me.

• Moana and Terry will be asking me questions about taitamariki Maori and their intimate partner relationships (relationships between boyfriend and girlfriend).

• There is no right or wrong answers and that if I don’t want to answer some of the questions that’s fine and anytime I want to stop talking that’s okay and Moana and Terry will turn the tape off.

• Moana and Terry may use what I say when they do their research with other taitamariki Maori but won’t use my name or the name of my Wharekura.

• The tape and the copy of my words from the tape will only be seen by Moana and Terry and the typist. The copy of my words from the tape will be kept private.

• If I have any worries about our talk then I can talk about these with Moana and Terry.

• Terry and Moana have told me that they will keep everything I say private but if they think that I am or someone in my whanau are not safe they might have to tell some other adults who can help make me safe.

• I consent (give permission) to Terry and Moana talking with me and to the talk being taped.

Signed (participant)………………………………………………………………

Date ……………………………………………………
Whānau Information Sheet

“Taitamariki Māori kōrero about healthy intimate partner relationships”

Kia ora koutou katoa,
He mihi whanui tenei ki a koutou nga karanga maha o Te Tai Tokerau i runga i nga āhuatanga o tenei mahi rangahau e pa ana ki te oranga o a tatou taitamariki. Ko te putake a o tatou mahi kia mahi tahi i nga taitamariki ki te kimihia o ratou whakaaro, o ratou mōhiotanga, matauranga hoki i nga hononga ratou i a ratou. Na reira, he tono tenei mo o tau tōko ki tenei kaupapa hei oranga mo a tatou whakatupuranga. Tena tato katoa.

The Amokura Project
The Amokura Family Violence Prevention Consortium is an organisation to promote ‘whānau ora’ and violence prevention in Te Tai Tokerau. The initiative is led by the Chief Executive Officers of seven iwi authorities; Te Aupouri, Te Rarawa, Ngati Kahu, Whaingaroa, Ngapuhī, Ngati Whatua and Ngati Wai. This taitamariki project (phase 1 and 2) is funded by ACC and is part of the Amokura research activities which aim to examine the experience, knowledge and explanations held by those in Te Tai Tokerau about family violence and whānau ora.

Background
Violence is an ongoing issue for Māori communities who continue to work on developing strategies, initiatives, projects and activities grounded in kaupapa Māori which work towards restoring wellbeing.

Te Tai Tokerau has a high population of Māori and a significant proportion of this population are children and youth. Statistics show that more than 50% of the total Māori population in Northland is under the age of 24 years. It is evident that the prevalence of violence within the intimate partner relationships of young people in Aotearoa and in particular taitamariki Māori has been identified as a growing issue of concern for Māori communities and specifically so for Te Tai Tokerau due to our young population and iwi commitment to violence prevention strategies. This project aims to contribute insights into the influences on taitamariki Māori developing healthy relationships.

Kaupapa
The project has three phases:

i) **Phase 1** - is to recruit a small group of taitamariki Māori to help us with phase two. Phase one primarily will be seeking from taitamariki Māori how best to engage with other taitamariki Māori when doing this sort of research.

ii) **Phase 2** - will be piloting questions to another group of taitamariki Māori, investigating those things which constitute and influence a healthy relationship between Māori young people (boyfriends and girlfriends). We will also be investigating from a taitamariki Māori perspective the best strategies for intervention and prevention. Therefore phase one and two will inform phase three.

iii) **Phase 3** - a full research project to explore the socio-cultural constructs which influence healthy intimate partner relationships for taitamariki Māori.
Who will be carrying out the project?

There will be four key groups who will participate and assist with this project:

- **Advisory group**
  - Kaumatua
  - Kuia
  - Research expert
  - Taitamariki representative

- **Taitamariki Project Group**
  - 3 taitamatake
  - 3 taitamawahine

- **Researchers**
  - 2 pakeke researchers
  - Taitamariki

- **Participants**
  - Taitamatake
  - Taitamawahine

**Participants** (phase 1-2)

We are looking to talk to a small group (six-eight taitamariki Māori) aged between 16 and 18 years of age, both tāne and wahine, who may be interested in this project. We will be asking for the Wharekura to assist us in this recruitment. We will be asking the young people and their whānau for consent to participate. We will be directed by you as to the best way to do this. We envisage meeting with this group of taitamariki two or three times.

**What will the participants be asked to do?**

Taitamariki Māori will be asked (in a group) to talk to us about:

1. Taitamariki Māori definitions of intimate partner relationships and their views on what constitutes a healthy relationship.
2. How best to engage taitamariki Māori in research on this topic so that they feel comfortable and safe.
3. The best words and questions to use to find out about how taitamariki Māori experience intimate partner relationships.
4. The best words and questions to use to find out about how to prevent violence in intimate partner relationships for taitamariki Māori.

The taitamariki Māori discussions will be recorded and transcribed. All information will be confidential. These discussions will assist us in formulating the research questions for the pilot group of taitamariki Māori.

We hope that you will support this project as a learning and leadership experience for taitamariki Māori who agree to participate. They will be valued and guided through the process.

*Na reira, na tou rouro, na tuku rouro ka ora ai te iwi.*

**If you have any questions please contact us:**

Moana Eruera  
Ph: 09-4362707  
Cell: 021-450776  
Email: kaahukura@xtra.co.nz

Terry Dobbs  
Ph: 09-4074311  
Cell: 021-883521  
Email: terryanne@xtra.co.nz
Principals Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. I have also read a copy of the Board of Trustees, taitamariki and parent’s information sheets and consent forms and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I understand that: (please tick in agreement)

☐ our Wharekura and taitamariki participation in this project is entirely voluntary and I am free to withdraw our Wharekura participation from the project at any time without any disadvantage to the Board, Wharekura or taitamariki.

☐ the personal data on the taitamariki [audio-tapes and transcript] will be retained in secure storage and that the personal data [names and consent forms] will be destroyed at the end of the study.

☐ I will assist to facilitate taitamariki participation in this project.

☐ I will invite the parents/legal guardians, if they are agreeable, to consent to their taitamariki participation in this project. I will give them an information sheet and a consent form to sign. I will also be advising them that Moana and Terry are available to discuss the project further should they wish to.

☐ I understand that the taitamariki will be part of group discussions. The group will be asked to discuss the following:

1. Taitamariki Māori definitions of intimate partner relationships (relationships between boyfriends and girlfriends) and their views on what a healthy relationship is.
2. How best to connect with taitamariki Māori in research on this topic so that they feel comfortable and safe.
3. The best words and questions to use to find out about how taitamariki Māori experience intimate partner relationships.
4. The best words and questions to use to find out about how to prevent violence in intimate partner relationships for taitamariki Māori.

☐ the taitamariki will not be interviewed without parental consent and the consent of the taitamariki themselves.

☐ I consent for Moana and Terry to notify an appropriate agency should any of the taitamariki disclose personal experiences during or after the discussion of a nature that they believe may be harmful to any taitamariki.

☐ I understand that Moana and Terry and the person who typed the transcripts will have had access to the information of the taitamariki discussions. I understand that the results of the project may be published but the Wharekura and taitamariki anonymity will be preserved.

☐ I understand that I have access to Terry and Moana should we need to discuss this project with them or discuss any issues that may arise from this project for the Board, parents or taitamariki.

☐ I give consent for our Wharekura to take part in this project.

........................................................................................................ Date........................................
(Signature of Principal)
Parents/Legal Guardian Consent Form

We have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. We have also read a copy of the taitamariki information sheets and consent forms. All our questions have been answered to our satisfaction and we know that we are free to request further information at any stage.

We understand that: (please tick in agreement)

☐ our taitamatāne/taitamawahine participation in this project is entirely voluntary.

☐ we are free to withdraw our taitamatāne/taitamawahine from the project at any time without any disadvantage to them or ourselves.

☐ the research data on our taitamatāne/taitamawahine [audio-tapes and transcript] will be retained in secure storage and personal data [names and consent forms] will be destroyed at the end of the study.

☐ our taitamatāne/taitamawahine will be part of group discussions and will be asked to discuss the following:

5. Taitamariki Māori definitions of intimate partner relationships (relationships between boyfriends and girlfriends) and their views on what a healthy relationship is.

6. How best to connect with taitamariki Māori in research on this topic so that they feel comfortable and safe.

7. The best words and questions to use to find out about how taitamariki Māori experience intimate partner relationships.

8. The best words and questions to use to find out about how to prevent violence in intimate partner relationships for taitamariki Māori.

☐ our taitamatāne/taitamawahine will not be interviewed without their own consent.

☐ that Moana and Terry and the person who typed the transcripts will have had access to the information from our taitamatāne/taitamawahine discussions.

☐ that the results of the project may be published but that our anonymity and our taitamatāne/taitamawahine anonymity will be preserved.

☐ that we have access to Terry and Moana should we need to discuss this project with them or discuss any issues that may arise from this project for ourselves or our taitamatāne/taitamawahine.

☐ I give consent for Moana and Terry to notify an appropriate agency should our taitamatāne/taitamawahine disclose personal experiences during or after the discussions of a nature that they believe may be harmful to my taitamatāne/taitamawahine.

We give consent for .............................. to take part in this project.

(Name of taitamatāne/taitamawahine)

..................................................  Date.......................................

(Signature of Principal)