



The CLEAR Voice Initiative: A Community of Practice

**From the Chairs: Professor Melanie Beres and Jackie Barron
MNZM**

Welcome to the inaugural newsletter from CLEAR Voice, our Dunedin high schools Community of Practice (CoP). As Chairs, we are delighted to share this first update with you, as the first in a newsletter series, keeping our school communities informed about the work we are doing together to support our young people.

Our name, CLEAR Voice, (stands for Change, Learn, Educate, Advocate, Respect) was developed by the students at St Hilda's Collegiate School and represents the values and goals of our CoP. Our children are navigating a complex social world as they grow up. This includes learning how to form healthy, respectful relationships, make sense of sex and consent, and respond to powerful influences through social media and other online content. These challenges are not always easy to navigate, and it is important that we, as schools, families, and communities, provide thoughtful, coordinated support. CLEAR Voice has been established in direct response to these realities.

We feel it is our real privilege to be working alongside St Hilda's Collegiate School, Otago Boys' High School, King's High School, and John McGlashan College in this CoP. Co-chair Melanie Beres is a Professor at the University of Otago and has worked in sexual violence prevention for 25 years. Melanie also founded Te Whare Tāwharau, the University's sexual violence support and prevention centre. Co-chair Jackie Barron MNZM is the newly retired St Hilda's Collegiate School Principal and has been instrumental to the establishment and success of our CoP so far.

Through this newsletter, we will share updates on our progress and initiatives. This first issue will be slightly longer as we introduce you to CLEAR Voice. First, we highlight the cross-school student group project as an ongoing collaborative initiative between the schools. Then, each school highlights why being part of this CoP is important for them. And finally, we share some publications and resources relevant to the work of CLEAR Voice.

Melanie and Jackie.

Collaborative projects

This term, students from across the four schools joined together at Ōtakou Whakaihu Waka - University of Otago for a wānanga facilitated by Te Whare Tāwharau.

The wānanga was the first step in what will be an ongoing initiative to centre student voices in CLEAR Voice. The first wānanga focused on whakawhanaungatanga. Students discussed what it means to take a whole school approach, the strengths and challenges they face and explored ideas and actions for generating the change they want to see.

The students are due to meet again mid-June and we look forward to updating you in our new newsletter with what they come up with!

From the Schools: On participating in the CLEAR Voice



St Hilda's Collegiate School

At St Hilda's, our involvement in CLEAR Voice grew from listening carefully to young people and taking seriously what they told us about the realities they are navigating in relationships, online spaces, and wider social culture. The catalyst for our involvement was a collection of student letters that highlighted the importance of ongoing conversations across schools about respect, consent, relationships, and the broader cultural pressures young people are navigating.

What drives our involvement is a belief that these issues cannot be addressed by schools working in isolation. Meaningful change requires collaboration, curiosity, shared responsibility, and a willingness to have honest conversations across school communities.

Through CLEAR Voice, we hope to strengthen relationships between schools, share evidence-informed and youth-centred approaches, and continue building environments where young people feel safer, more heard, and more able to imagine respectful and equitable futures for themselves and others.



John McGlashan College

The Australia-based Man-Box study considers how men perceive social messages that a 'real man' thinks and acts a certain way, the degree to which men agree with these messages, and whether men's attitudes predict a range of behaviours and life outcomes. Two key takeaways of the most recent study (2024) were that four in ten Australian men (aged 18-45) feel pressure to conform to Man-Box rules, and that a quarter of Australian men personally agree with Man-Box rules. That's a concern. This is a difficult time for boys. There is a widening ideology gap between young men and women, and worrying trends in other metrics of socialisation, performance, and wellbeing. We must show boys what is possible to get the best out of them. Honesty is the disruptor, while curiosity and conversation will be the agents of change. Showing our boys what positive masculinity and healthy relationships look like, and helping them rise above the noise and negative messaging on social media, is key. We want our young people to go out into the world to realise their potential, be the best version of themselves as people and men, and to think of others and uplift the community. We value the opportunities CLEAR Voice presents to work together to make meaningful and real change in our school community, but also in wider communities.

Character-based education that is focused on positive masculinity and healthy and respectful relationships is a key priority for us. As a school for boys, we are in a privileged position to create a counter-narrative to the negative influences that our young people are exposed to, to listen to them, to encourage their curiosity and asking of questions, and to positively influence their beliefs relating to masculinity and relationships. CLEAR Voice encourages honest reflection, shared understanding, and empathy, and will support and enhance the work we are doing at John McGlashan College. It creates a safe but challenging space to explore the issues and possibilities for collaboration, and also positive accountability as we agree to activities and initiatives, within and across our schools. We cannot exist in silos, nor be blind to the issues; there is power in coming together and ensuring we make a difference together.



Kings High School

At Kings High school we're driven to CLEAR Voice due to a new understanding of the social and emotional challenges our young people face. We are committed finding the best ways that they can potentially deal with these challenges.

What does our school community hope to get out of the CLEAR Voice?

- To gain new knowledge to add to our socio-emotional curriculum and wider education
- To link the school and families, as appropriate, to generate new perspective and positive and healthy relationships among our teenagers
- To offer what we can to bolster change happening beyond our gate to tackle sexual harm and sexual violence, for the benefit of all young people



Otago Boys High School

Otago Boy's High School is part of the community of Dunedin and wider, through the hostel, Otago. Our involvement stems from a desire as educators, as parents and as leaders to be part of a solution to a definite problem. Our School Board, Staff, students and wider parent community understand that the 5 years here can create a such a well rounded and considered young man who is a servant to the community in a number of ways.

We hope to be part of raising awareness, through co-designing and implementing student focused programs that offer leadership and direction to some of the wider and more difficult experiences young people are having in this fast paced, largely electronic world. Our aim is to continue to allow young men to be young men in a manner that enhances their mana and the safety of all in our communities.

Resources and Publications

- Vine Aotearoa Issues Paper: Mobilising Aotearoa New Zealand to prevent sexual violence: a Te Tiriti approach.

[Mobilising Aotearoa New Zealand to prevent sexual violence: a Te Tiriti approach.](#)

- #METOO: A Cultural Shift? Young People, Social Media, And Sexual Harassment.

[#METOO: A Cultural Shift?](#)

- Gender Equal NZ: Good Guys Infographic based on the Gender Attitudes Survey focusing on Masculinity.

Get in touch with your school if you're keen to get involved with CLEAR Voice.



Contact: dunedin.highschool.cop@otago.ac.nz