



# **Primary Principals' Sabbatical Report: Social Agencies in Schools**

**Peter Mitchener**

**Term 1 2014**

## **1. Title and focus of the sabbatical:**

The Role of Social Agencies in Schools to support the development of the whole child and family within a community approach.

Professional learning activity:

Schools within New Zealand and around the world are becoming hubs for social development within their communities over and above the core purpose of providing an education for their students. What is the role of social development within schools and how best can we support the development of the whole child and their family within a state school system at Stoke School.

## **2. About the author:**

I commenced working at Stoke School in 2008. Prior to this I was teaching at Appleby School in Nelson for 4 years, I was the Deputy Principal of Nayland Primary School for 4 years, a Principal of a country school, "Tinui" in the Wairarapa for 5 years, I taught at Victory School as a senior teacher for 3 years and I taught at Broadgreen Intermediate for 2 years.

Stoke School is a decile 4 (previously was a decile 2) contributing primary school and is the oldest continuously running urban school in New Zealand, established in 1845. We are a small school with the roll currently on 210; the roll has grown consistently over the last 5 years but we have still maintained a feeling of whanau and a country school feel with a supportive community.

We are 28% Maori, 10% Pacifica, 6 % Asian and 56% New Zealand European. We are extremely proud of our diversity and see this as a unique position within our Nelson community.

## **3. Acknowledgements:**

I would like to acknowledge first and foremost the Stoke School Board of Trustees for supporting my application for sabbatical leave. I am very fortunate to work with a highly motivated and empowered board that are driven to improve the outcomes for all of the students at Stoke School, who can see the benefit of focussed study to provide a considered opinion to base future developments on at Stoke School.

I also acknowledge my deputy principals Sarah Davies and Craig Logan for the great job they did in the management of Stoke School while I was away. I also recognise that a sabbatical gives many staff an opportunity to 'step up' and it tests the succession planning in a school, thank you to those of you who took on additional responsibilities for the term. Special thanks to the Office Staff, Di Fry and LEEANNE BERTRAM for ensuring the school administrative side kept moving forward so positively.

I acknowledge the Ministry of Education for making sabbatical leave available to teachers and principals. The opportunity to be able to take time out and look in depth at an aspect of our practice, to indulge in uninterrupted reflection and to have a period of refreshment is invaluable.

A huge thank you to Mary and Victor Turu (and their team) who have spent many hours questioning, talking to and listening to our community about the needs of our whanau. Your help has been invaluable in helping me gain the current needs and feelings of the community.

Thank you to the schools that have gone before me and taken the time to talk with me, share your schools and to record and post your findings about social agencies and 'hubs' in schools, your advice and findings and have greatly helped me shape my views and understanding.

Thank you to the social agencies in the Stoke, Nelson area that have been very approachable and positive about supporting our whole community.

#### **4. Executive summary:**

##### ***Rationale***

"It takes a village to raise a child." An old African proverb that I believe is crucial in educating and caring for a child and also supporting a family in all of society but particularly in lower decile areas where support can be missing.

There are a lot of social agencies supporting the community of Stoke and I am interested in working with them to look at how we can coordinate a hub approach so we can support families and therefore better support the children out of the classroom to enable them to be active participants in their education.

I love working at Stoke School and part of why I love working here is the relationships I have formed with the families, getting to know people and the values and beliefs they have. We want the parents involved with the education of their children but we do have communication issues with some families and health needs can be obvious leaving us with a feeling of "Whose job is this to address?" Our school nurse does a good job but she is not based at our school, she is very busy across a number of schools and recently a lot of her time has been dominated by a couple of families with major needs.

*Parental involvement in learning: How students achieve in education is significantly influenced by factors outside the school. West-Burnham et al (2007) assert that approximately 80 percent of the difference in student achievement at school is based on the non-school factors of student background including personal factors. Alton-Lee (2004) in New Zealand reported that between 40-65 percent of the difference in student outcomes*

*is attributable to family and community factors, and between 16-60 percent to teacher and classroom-level differences. School-level variables account for between 0 and 20.9 percent of the difference in this analysis. Attribution across these factors varies depending on the education outcomes, curriculum and age level of schooling being measured. Despite these wide variations, the overall conclusion is that families and student background factors make a big difference to educational outcomes, and so do teachers.- paths of victory: Victory Village (Victory Primary School and Victory Community Health Centre) – a case study*

We have a dedicated Board of Trustees who recognise the value of supporting and working with the whole community and have acknowledged this by placing “**Whanau a Kura-Community**” as one of our 3 strategic goals in our Charter where: “All students feel safe physically and emotionally, they are included and able to take risks with their learning. Their identities, languages, abilities and talents are recognised and affirmed and their learning needs are met”.

Our school vision for 2016 includes:

- Students, staff and community feel supported and understood and trust each other
- The community feel that the school is the hub of their community and everyone contributes to support others and ensure Stoke is a great place
- All children have a sense of belonging.

## **5. Purpose:**

Specifically this sabbatical looked to decide what we could adopt/strengthen at Stoke School to cater for the whole child and their family:

What are the needs of our community according to our community?

What services are out there to support our community and do we want to provide a facility for them to work from at our school.

Do we want to create a ‘Hub in School’ at Stoke School?

## **6. Background Information:**

There is a huge amount of information about creating partnerships between the families, communities and schools to benefit the child, but it is more than just best practice we have a requirement to do so:

**The New Zealand Curriculum states:**

***Principles: Community engagement Pg 9***

*The curriculum has meaning for students, connects with their wider lives, and engages the support of their families, whanau, and communities.*

***Participating and contributing Pg 13***

*This competency is about being actively involved in communities. Communities include family, whanau, and school and those based, for example, on a common interest or culture. They may be drawn together for purposes such as learning, work, celebration, or recreation. They may be local, national, or global. This competency includes a capacity to contribute appropriately as a group member, to make connections with others, and to create opportunities for others in the group.*

*Students who participate and contribute in communities have a sense of belonging and the confidence to participate within new contexts.*

### **Effective Pedagogy**

*Teacher actions promoting student learning Pg 34*

#### **Creating a supportive learning environment**

*Learning is inseparable from its social and cultural context. Students learn best when they feel accepted, when they enjoy positive relationships with their fellow students and teachers, and when they are able to be active, visible members of the learning community. Effective teachers foster positive relationships within environments that are caring, inclusive, nondiscriminatory, and cohesive. They also build good relationships with the wider school community, working with parents and caregivers as key partners who have unique knowledge of their children and countless opportunities to advance their children's learning.*

ERO's publication in 2013 '**Wellbeing for Success: Draft Evaluation Indicators for Student Wellbeing**' states:

*The ethical responsibility of teachers, leaders and trustees is to consider, promote, balance and respond to all aspects of the student, including their physical, social, emotional, academic and spiritual needs. These considerations require deliberate expression and action across all curriculum areas, pastoral care, strategic priorities and teaching practice. To maximise the role that schools have in promoting and responding to student wellbeing, these systems, people and initiatives need a high level of school-wide coordination and cohesion.*

*Partnerships are vital in schools' support of student wellbeing. Partnerships with students, their parents, whānau, hapu-, iwi and the wider community, including professional health and social services have the potential to find solutions to actively improve the wellbeing of all students.*

*The mandate for this work exists in professional wellbeing frameworks including The Code of Ethics for Registered Teachers, Registered Teacher Criteria, the National Administration Guidelines, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Vulnerable Children Bill. As such, student wellbeing is not only an ethical and moral obligation for teachers, leaders and trustees, but also a legal responsibility.*

#### **MOE: Ka Hikitia Accelerating Success 2013-2017:**

*Schools and kura that work in partnership with parents, whānau, hapū, iwi, and Māori organisations, communities and businesses can better support more effective teaching and learning for Māori students. These partnerships can establish a shared commitment to hold high expectations for Māori students – a key action within this focus area. They can also create learning environments that reinforce the identity, language and culture of Māori students.*

## **7. Methodology:**

To achieve the purpose of the sabbatical I worked with a group from the local community to survey the community. I met with a large number of social agencies; I visited an example of a hub in schools, Victory Primary School in Nelson. Attended Inspiring Communities courses and conducted a lot of reading around case studies of community hubs such as Sylvia Park and Colwill School. I read online accounts of the history of social agencies in

schools such as 'Headstart' in the USA and 'Surestart' in the UK. I read research around inequality in education, child poverty, reports such as the PPTA report on 'Equipping schools to fight poverty: a community hub approach and the Green Party of NZ's Green discussion paper on Schools at the Heart, School Hubs; ensuring education is a route out of poverty.

## 8. Findings:

**“all persons**, whatever their ability, rich or poor, whether they live in town or country, have a right as citizens to a free education of the kind for which they are best fitted and to the fullest extent of their powers. So far is this from being a mere pious platitude that the **full** acceptance of the principle will involve the reorientation of the education system.”

- Clarence Beeby 1939

*For almost a century New Zealanders regarded our education system as the foundation of our free society. Education was the great equalizer. It allowed all of us, whether we were rich, or poor, to be all we were capable of being. Education remains the most effective route out of poverty. But school only works for children if they are in a position to be able to learn. Many Kiwi kids come with a complicated mix of social, health and family issues, often related to low income, that need to be addressed before they can get the most out of school. Children can be blocked from a good education and become trapped in poverty unless barriers such as hunger and sickness are addressed.*

-Schools at the Heart- Green Party 2014

These two paragraphs sum up my feelings at the outset of this research. I want all children at our school to have the ability to access their education in an equitable manner and not be hindered by health needs such as glue ear or concentration issues from hunger or tiredness, or a lack of experiences because of financial hardship. I want to support the whole child by supporting the family. Later in this research I will continue to highlight elements from the Green Party of New Zealand's discussion paper but first I would like to give you a quick historical and global view.

Community hubs within schools are definitely not something new. An early form of a community centre in schools was in Rochester, New York in 1907. *Edward J. Ward, a Presbyterian minister, joined the Extension Department at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, organizing the Wisconsin Bureau of Civic and Social Development. By 1911 they organized a country-wide conference on schools as social centres.* - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community\\_centre](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_centre)

In 1965 a programme called Head Start was launched in the United States of America by its creator and first director Jule Sugarman. Head Start was originally conceived as a catch-up summer school program that would teach low-income children in a few weeks what they needed to know to start elementary school. The Head Start Act of 1981 expanded the program and it was further revised and reauthorized in December, 2007. Head Start is one

of the longest-running programs to address systemic poverty in the United States. As of late 2005, more than 22 million pre-school aged children had participated.

The **Head Start Program** is a programme of the United States Department of Health and Human Services that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. The program's services and resources are designed to foster stable family relationships, enhance children's physical and emotional well-being, and establish an environment to develop strong cognitive skills. A major point in this programme is it starts with children as young as 3 and continues until children start elementary school (age 6-7 depending on your birthday). Funding is from the federal government budget and in 2011 it cost the government 8.1 billion. -[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head\\_Start\\_Program](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head_Start_Program)

In England they have had a similar programme based within schools from 1998 called 'Sure Start'.

***Sure Start** was a UK Government area-based initiative, announced in 1998 by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, applying primarily in England with slightly different versions in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The initiative originated from HM Treasury, with the aim of "giving children the best possible start in life" through improvement of childcare, early education, health and family support, with an emphasis on outreach and community development. Funding was substantial, with £540m allocated for expenditure between 1999 and 2002, £452m of it within England, to set up 250 Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) reaching up to 150,000 children in areas of deprivation. - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sure\\_Start](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sure_Start)*

From my research it appears that a school transforms from operating as a typical school opening from 9-3pm to operating within hours that meets their community needs and is in fact not called a school any longer but a Sure Start centre that a school exists within. Examples include breakfast clubs and pre-school care opening from 7:30am and providing after school care and parent education programmes going well into the night. This has strong correlations with the New Zealand based examples with the major difference being that it appears in New Zealand funding is contestable and as yet does not come through the Ministry of Education system but requires numerous applications to social agencies.

In New Zealand there are a lot of great examples of hubs in schools and all appear to come back to the same rationale of catering for the whole child by encompassing the whole family.

***Victory Village** in Nelson is a great example of a hub in schools approach. It is a partnership between Victory Primary School and Victory Community Health. This partnership led to the establishment of a physical 'community hub' at the school. The hub is a multipurpose community, health and recreation centre and school hall located on the school grounds. The centre provides one-to-one health services for residents, as well as a large number of recreational and social programmes and community events.*

*Community centre services are open to all residents – not just parents of children at the school. The school itself has a family-centred philosophy and involves parents in a number*

*of ways, from social and curriculum events to adult education. These systems of education and community health and development positively overlap and intersect in many ways to nurture families. -<http://www.familiescommission.org.nz/sites/default/files/downloads/paths-of-victory.pdf>*

The publication: **Paths of Victory: Victory Village (Victory Primary School and Victory Community Health Centre)** – A case study by DAVID STUART FAMILIES COMMISSION 2010 is a great resource as it explores the innovative practices and outcomes associated with the convergence of health, education, social and community development goals at Victory Village. This partnership of agencies led to the establishment of a physical ‘community hub’ at the school.

In the case study they listed a number of implications from the Victory Village approach that would assist other schools and community development organisations thinking about a ‘social innovation’ approach to improving outcomes for families in their communities. I have included these in my Conclusion/next steps as I think we (Stoke School) can refer to these for reflection and guidance.

The overall driver that came out of visiting Victory and the readings for me was getting parents involved in the education of their child by providing a welcoming, supportive environment that nurtures/supports the whole family.

**Colwill School Community Hub:** Public Health Nurse health education / promotion programme.

Colwill School is located in the increasingly culturally diverse community of Massey. It is a decile 3 school with a high number of Maori, Pasifika and refugee students.

*Colwill School has recently developed a Community Hub on the school site and are in the process of developing and maximising the use of this Hub. The benefits of this Hub are:*

- *Increased communication between school, Board and community.*
- *Positive outcomes for the students and wider local community.*
- *Increased support of students through increased support of whānau.*
- *Support for adult literacy, ESOL and the pursuit of adult education.*
- *Support in job seeking to enhance incomes and reduce poverty.*
- *To instil a sense of trust and ownership between school and community.*
- *To assist the community with legal support/advice in the Family Court and free Legal Clinics.*
- *Free Health sessions.*
- *A free, safe, walking distance meeting space for the whole community -*

[hps.tki.org.nz/content/download/1531/7049/.../Colwill%20-%20final.pdf](https://hps.tki.org.nz/content/download/1531/7049/.../Colwill%20-%20final.pdf)

This hub has a focus on health needs and has strong support from their District Area Health Board. The school actively integrates the hub into everything the school does with integration on the school web site and health education programmes for the students and parents.

*Colwill School community identified the need and set a goal for a drop-in centre for all whānau /families to access the services of the Waitemata DHB Public Health Nurse (PHN), primary healthcare services and to be empowered through health education, advice and resources. - [hps.tki.org.nz/content/download/1531/7049/.../Colwill%20-%20final.pdf](https://hps.tki.org.nz/content/download/1531/7049/.../Colwill%20-%20final.pdf)*

**Sylvia Park School:**

***Mutukaroa: A School and Community Learning Partnership  
Raising Student Achievement***

*In 2009, our culturally diverse east Auckland primary school received funding from ASB Community Trust through its Māori and Pasifika Education Initiative to implement a School and Community Learning Partnership, which we call Mutukaroa.*

*Mutukaroa aims to shift the emphasis from the school to the child and their learning, focusing on student achievement and fostering the active engagement of parents through a learning partnership-* Mutukaroa Participants and Frances Hancock, November 2010

This school was concerned about the educational achievement of their students and what appeared to be a disengagement from the school by the parents. Seeking a new form of engagement with parents they took on a partnership approach. *“Driving our vision of Mutukaroa was this simple idea: If parents know more they can do more to support their child’s learning and have a more meaningful conversation and productive relationship with school. Through Mutukaroa, we wanted to find a way to move from blaming parents and community for student underachievement to taking responsibility and inviting parents to work with the school to support their child’s learning.* - Mutukaroa Participants and Frances Hancock, November 2010

Mutukaroa employed a fulltime project manager, transformed the former dental clinic into a parent centre and bought new furniture so parents have a place to come in and *chat*.

There are a lot of other successful, amazing School Community Hubs around New Zealand but I chose these 3 to highlight as they had common threads to our school (Stoke School), Victory proximity to Stoke, Colwill health needs and Mutukaroa a drive to improve educational outcomes through connectedness with the community.

### **Equipping Schools to fight poverty: a community hub approach**

In 2013 the PPTA (Post Primary Teachers Association) presented a paper to their annual conference developed by their national executive. In it they discuss the benefits and ultimately the need for schools to work as community hubs. Below I have captured some of their points but please refer to the full version at: <http://ppta.org.nz/resources/media/2797-media-school-hubs>

- 1. Schools are important resources for their communities, but they can become even more so. When a school is a community hub it means that through partnerships it builds the wellbeing and social capital of students, their whānau and the community as a planned and systematic part of its role. Schools cannot become a community hub on their own; this relies on long-term commitment from the wider community and the state,*

### **Schools as hubs: opportunities to improve education and strengthen school communities**

*Services and activities that schools offer can be targeted at their students, the families of their students and at the wider community. They can be provided primarily through or by the school and its staff, or through partnerships with other organisations and individuals. The table below lists some of these, some of which are commonplace, some rare, and some are not yet provided in schools in New Zealand though have been provided internationally.*

#### **Provided by school**

Mental health counselling  
Careers guidance  
Breakfast clubs  
Mentoring  
Lunch clubs  
Social skills/resilience programmes  
Chaplain

#### **Provided through partnerships**

Nurses  
Doctors  
Drug and alcohol counselling  
Mentoring  
After school care  
Social skills/resilience programmes  
Family group conferences



	Gateway STAR (Secondary tertiary Alignment Resource) Academies Homework centres School uniform provision Attendance programmes	Speech therapists Occupational therapist Physiotherapists Chaplain Police partnerships Homework centres School uniform provision Hearing/eyesight specialists Sexual health specialists Dental clinics
<b>Activities – youth focussed</b>	Sports Cultural activities Holiday programmes School gardens	Sports Cultural activities
<b>Services – family/community focussed</b>	Adult community education Technology training for whānau Adult ESOL classes	Social work Child-care Family group conferences Parent advice centres Technology centres for whānau Language programmes Child health nurses Whānau Ora coordinator Banking services WINZ/Social Welfare officers
<b>Activities – family/community focussed</b>	Use of halls Use of sports facilities Family breakfast/bbq Community art projects	Sports Cultural activities Community library Cultural centres School gardens Volunteering programme Parents groups Books in homes programmes Computers in homes programmes Refugee/migrant support Playgroups Community fitness/health programmes

### **Schools at the Heart: School Hubs; ensuring education is a route out of poverty**

Following on from the PPTA paper the Green Party of New Zealand presented a Green discussion paper called 'Schools at the Heart: School Hubs; ensuring education is a route out of poverty'.

*It proposes equipping schools as hubs, or 'one stop shops', which function as the anchor for a range of health, education, and welfare services, and offer cultural and other opportunities. By bringing services to schools we ensure every child is ready to learn, their family is included and is better able to support their learning, and we free up teachers to do what they do best – teach. Schools are already the heart of their communities and, with additional support, they can play an even greater role in engaging families and ensuring a great education is accessible to all children.*

They propose every decile 1-4 school gets provided with a hub and 4 key services:

1. School Hub Coordinator
2. Free After School and Holiday Care
3. A National School Lunch Fund
4. Dedicated School Nurses

Why:

*The percentage of New Zealand children living in poverty has increased from 11 percent in 1986, to 25 per cent in 2011 using the same measure. Parents are working longer hours, often in two or more jobs, but low incomes and hugely increased housing costs mean many are spending longer at work and are struggling to make ends meet with less money. For children, the combination of less parent time and less family income means less access to healthcare, good food and safe housing, and fewer opportunities to do sports, music and other activities which can boost their learning. This, combined with a much greater concentration of deprivation in lower decile schools, leaves schools in those communities facing unique challenges. In decile 1 to 4 schools, for example, about one in every 11 kids goes to school hungry. Children in these schools are three times as likely as other children to end up in hospital suffering from preventable diseases. This means days and weeks off school, which can put them permanently behind their peers. Many schools manage to mitigate poverty remarkably well, but successive Governments have failed to keep pace with such huge societal change, and inequality is becoming entrenched. One way to meet these new challenges is to bring health, welfare and family services to the places where kids learn - in schools.*

*International research has found that a 'one stop shop' model can have a significant impact on educational opportunities for young people, among other benefits including:*

- *reduced family violence*
- *increased access by families to preschool and child care*
- *improved school enrolment and less roll turnover*
- *improvement in service collaboration and coordination*
- *introduction of bilingual workers in hubs*
- *increased levels of participation by parents in school activities*

I know at our school (Stoke School, Nelson) this is exactly what we would love to have based at our school. The results from our community survey show that the community are concerned about healthcare for their children and after school/holiday time care. We currently run a breakfast club every day of the school year but we also supply lunches to some children that we have stored in the freezer prepared by our local church. A Hub coordinator would liaise between the teachers, parents and agencies and would hopefully short cut the current feeling of running around trying to find a solution. A dedicated nurse would be fantastic but I have also found, through the opportunity of this sabbatical that we have a lot of nurses available, such as at the local Marae, it is having the time and connections to know they are there.

### **Social Agencies that attended our School Hui:**

We held a meeting for Social Agencies at Stoke School to express our interest in exploring a community Hub based at Stoke School. We were really impressed with the response and have continued to build ideas with a number of these groups.

The agencies that attended:

Presbyterian Support  
 Health Action Trust  
 Nelson Marlborough District Health Board  
 Whakatu Marae  
 Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour  
 Stoke Maori Warden  
 Electorate Office of Labour  
 Te Hauora o Ngati Rarua- Whanau Ora Services  
 Stoke Kindergarten

St Barnabas Church  
Victory Community Centre  
Elim Christian Centre  
Te Korowai Trust  
Ministry of Social Development  
Department of Internal Affairs  
Community Oral Health Service, District Health Board  
Nelson Public Health  
Ministry of Education

Agencies Invited that couldn't make it:

New Zealand Police  
Nelson City Council  
Housing New Zealand

### **Stoke School Community Results:**

Together with local community members coordinated by Mary and Victor Turu we surveyed the local community by putting a survey in the school newsletter and going door to door around our immediate community. Below is the questions we asked:



### **Stoke Community Survey:**

*The Stoke Community Group (Stoke School and House 44) is interested in getting your feedback to develop our community further through the support of external agencies. Your comments would be really appreciated to help develop ideas around the needs of our community Please return the completed questionnaire to the school office.*

1. *What are the advantages of living in our community, what do you like about living in Stoke?*
2. *What would you like to see developed in your community in the future?*
3. *If you or your family could get extra support, what could it be?*

*Any other comments or feedback please do not hesitate to contact Pete Mitchener (Principal Stoke School) on 5477582 or [principal@stoke.school.nz](mailto:principal@stoke.school.nz) or Mary and Victor Turu on 5476055*

We received 100 completed forms:

1. *What are the advantages of living in our community, what do you like about living in Stoke?*
  1. Top result with 56 responses was Stoke is handy to all amenities such as shops, schools and sports.
  2. Friendly people with 34 results was second
2. *What would you like to see developed in your community in the future?*
  1. Top result with 38 responses was kids/youth activities, which included responses such as monitored care, holiday care and skatepark and sports facilities.
  2. 29 responses were that they are satisfied with current development.
3. *If you or your family could get extra support, what could it be?*

1. 57 responses said that they were fine but the humbleness of responses came through such as, “others need help before us”, “ we get by”, “managing alright at the mo”, “satisfied as we are, thanks”, “battling on with no support”. I felt they definitely acknowledged support could be useful in the community but a lot of people don’t like asking for help. The remaining responses were interesting:

2. Financial and assistance with food had 15 responses
3. Subsidized or free health care including A&D had 8 responses
4. Youth activities including holiday care had 5
5. Adult programmes had 5
6. Caring for the elderly, support, transport, recreation had 5.

Other ideas that had less than 5 responses but were worth mentioning was, visibility of Police in community and schools, community activities, community gardens, affordable housing, support for young families.

Survey conclusion: It is always difficult to summarize a snapshot of 100 responses from a whole community but it appears the main areas of need are:

- After school and holiday care for children, including recreation activities.
- Financial and Food assistance
- Subsidized or free health care

## **Conclusion:**

Lessons learnt from talking to existing hubs:

1. Take it slow and build on and celebrate success
2. Engage the community and ask them what they want
3. Make sure the existing staff and BOT is on board with the philosophy of open door connectedness and addressing needs beyond just education
4. Surround yourself with positive people
5. Join likeminded PLG’s such as the Inspiring Communities group, so you don’t feel like you are working alone
6. Because you are probably going to rely on contestable funding align yourself with an existing agency with the same philosophy who can take on the job of applying for funding, such as Public health organization, Presbyterian support, local council.

Implications from the Victory Village approach:

*> Look outward: Find those others in the community who have a similar vision of significantly better and sustainable outcomes for families, but have resources, networks and knowledge you do not have.*

*Find out what is already working and who is doing it. Travel to the edges of your professional arena and be committed to building deeper relationships with other professionals whose interests and actions in family wellbeing border your own.*

*> Look inward: Look to your own personal and organisational culture and practices and how they might be contributing to the patterns and outcomes ‘out there’ that you are trying to shift, and what your existing points of leverage might be.*

*> Invest time and professional development resources in bridging social capital practices at all levels of the organisation.*

*> Seek out what families and communities want for themselves and from you and others. Re-imagine and explore the capacity in your community to undertake positive social change. Think about how existing successes can be built on. Find out who the connectors are.*

- > Capitalise on bridging practices by developing collaborative approaches with providers and professionals to build a system of professional interdependence.
- > Be open and responsive to feedback, unexpected results and opportunities from these changes. The Victory Village approach was not planned for; it emerged.

### **What would I like to happen?**

From my time researching and reflecting I would like to proceed and try and get funding for a hub coordinator to support our school in linking with the community and local agencies. We have an ex-dental clinic that I would like to ask the Ministry of Education to use for our community as a hub without it counting against our square metre rate so it doesn't disadvantage our children from adequate classroom space. I would like to try and align ourselves with a local agency to help secure funding. We already work with Presbyterian Support and they currently provide us with a Family Counsellor one day a week so I will talk with them. The Ministry of Social Development have also shown a lot of interest and support. I don't think we currently need another nurse as I have learnt that we have a number available and hopefully I (or a hub coordinator) will get better at accessing support easily that doesn't cost our parents.

If we don't get funding then we will continue to develop Stoke School with an open door policy and ensure we participate in the local network of social agencies meetings that happen monthly.

Next Step:

1. Share with my school BOT my findings from this sabbatical and gain their approval to proceed.
2. Share research and findings with staff around the positive outcomes of social agency intervention.
3. Meet with local social agencies and shape what may be a starting point.
4. Inform the community on what is happening and continue to ask for their input.

***At the conclusion of this sabbatical we had a very exciting proposal from local social agencies in our community. St Barnabas Church, who already run a very successful after school youth programme, Presbyterian Support and the Ministry of Social Development applied for and received funding for a hub coordinator for up to two years (about 8 hours a week) to be based out of St Barnabas Church and/or Stoke School. Yippee, exciting times ahead.***

## 9. Contact Details for the Author:

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