



## Kiwi Can

### Research & Evaluation Update

March 2016

# KIWI CAN RESEARCH & EVALUATION UPDATE

## INTRODUCTION

It is the Foundation for Youth Development's (FYD) practice to stay at the leading edge in all areas of child and youth development, and evaluation is one of our strategic drivers. With our University research partners we know our programmes: improve attitudes and behaviour; improve academic results; help young people set and achieve their goals; boost self-confidence; reduce truancy rates and at risk behaviours; and help young people feel more positive about the future.

This Research and Evaluation projects Kiwi Can update provides details of research on FYD's Kiwi Can programme.



## KIWI CAN SCHOOL SURVEYS

Previous evaluations of Kiwi Can schools have used questionnaires to assess outcomes from the perspective of the students, teachers and principals of Kiwi Can schools around New Zealand.

Findings from these surveys include:

- Children look forward to Kiwi Can. They make every effort to come to school on Kiwi Can days and fully participate in the activities.
- Kiwi Can leaders are seen as making a positive contribution to the school.
- The leaders keep the children motivated and engaged and act as positive role models.
- Kiwi Can is particularly effective at building positive relationships and improving students' social skills.
- Students develop more positive and respectful relationships, and improve their ability to work with others and resolve conflict independently, using strategies taught in Kiwi Can.

## PROMOTING POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOL CHILDREN: PERSPECTIVES OF THE KIWI CAN PROGRAMME IN NEW ZEALAND

The University of Auckland research study *"Promoting positive development in school children: Perspectives of the Kiwi Can programme in New Zealand"* (Ahmed, 2010), aimed to clarify the theory underpinning the Kiwi Can programme. The researcher consulted with key programme personnel, reviewed documents and observed the programme to develop a greater understanding of Kiwi Can and how it contributes to the children's positive development. The findings showed that Kiwi Can aligned well with Positive Youth Development (PYD) theory. The key findings were:

- Leaders observe several positive outcomes following Kiwi Can lessons, such as student demonstrating greater communication skills, positive social interactions, cooperation and displays of kindness and caring.
- In the long term it was proposed these changes would lead to internalised attitudes and children who are resilient, confident, socially and emotionally competent, and of good character.
- The interactive action-based style of delivery provides children with valuable opportunities to practice new and important skills, build confidence and engage in learning.
- The leaders as role models were seen as having an important role in facilitating positive behaviour and building self-efficacy.
- Leaders frequently recognise the children's good behaviour and provide praise and encouragement during activities. This contributes to increases in the children's self-esteem, self-efficacy, and the strengthening of positive behaviour.
- Kiwi Can outcomes correspond to Lerner's five 'C's model which specifies five ideal outcomes that youth development programmes want to achieve with young people.

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<b>Competence</b>	Increase in social and emotional learning and the development of important life skills.
<b>Confidence</b>	Sense of mastery, self-efficacy and positive self-worth.
<b>Character</b>	Sense of responsibility and autonomy, knows what is right and wrong and guides actions by it.
<b>Connection</b>	Refers to the positive bonds and relationships one forms with other people and places.
<b>Compassion and Caring</b>	A sense of sympathy and empathy towards others, pro-social behaviour, altruistic and empathic.



As part of the study a programme logic model was developed demonstrating how Kiwi Can works to create positive change in Kiwi students. The model has facilitated effective programme planning and implementation to further develop and strengthen Kiwi Can.

## CAN IT? AN EVALUATION OF KIWI CAN, A SCHOOL-BASED VALUES AND LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMME, IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Building on the above theoretical programme evaluation, FYD continued their collaboration with the University of Auckland by supporting a PhD study designed to evaluate Kiwi Can (Williams, 2012-2014). The study used a positive education-based theoretical framework to examine both programme implementation and Kiwi Can outcomes.

### 1. Programme Implementation

The implementation evaluation was completed in 2013. The key findings were:

- Students reported a high degree of learning and enjoyment in the Kiwi Can classroom.
- Students liked their leaders.
- Students reported that they had adequate access to resources, and felt that the Kiwi Can lessons were well organized, topical and structured to meet their needs.
- The results show that the programme is being delivered to a high standard across all regions and students, regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity, are reporting similar results.

## 2. Kiwi Can Outcomes

The outcome evaluation of Kiwi Can was completed in 2014. This part of the research project used a quasi-experimental, pre-post survey design. A survey was created to evaluate the impact that participation in the programme had on individual developmental outcomes (Competence, Caring, Connection and Character) and the social climate of Kiwi Can and non-Kiwi Can schools.

The study showed that students in Kiwi Can experience high degrees of connection, caring/compassion, social competence and character at the personal and school level. In fact, at baseline and the end of the year, Kiwi Can students reported a deep personal commitment to prosocial attitudes and the incidence of regular, prosocial behavior in the school classroom.

However, these results were strongly influenced by the degree to which students experienced transience in their schools. An unexpected outcome from Kiwi Can research shows that long-term Kiwi Can students from highly transient schools report better social health outcomes than students from new or control schools. This finding raises some very interesting and important questions around transience. To address these questions plans are underway for a further project with the University of Auckland to evaluate the impact of participation in a modified Kiwi Can curriculum on social health outcomes for students in highly transient schools.

## SEEING THROUGH THE EYES OF STUDENTS: THE IMPACT OF KIWI CAN ON THE 5CS OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.

This project is a research collaboration between The University of Auckland and the Graeme Dingle Foundation. The researcher is a Master of Professional Studies student and a full time science and health teacher in a local high school.

The aim of the qualitative project is to build on the 2013 outcome evaluation of Kiwi Can and explore further the relationship between Kiwi Can and the five C's of Positive Youth Development.

The project will take place with a class of year 5/6 Kiwi Can students in one low decile Kiwi Can school in Manurewa. The researcher will visit the school three times during normal Kiwi Can class time so that minimal disruption to school and student routine is made.

The Kiwi Can leaders and researcher will give all of the students an opportunity to take part in classroom activities that explore competence, confidence, character, connection and caring. All of the students will think, read, write, talk about and listen to information exploring these terms. They will then be given cameras so that they can take photos that represent what they have learned about the 5Cs through the Kiwi Can programme.

Eight students who have their caregivers' consent and who have agreed to participate will be randomly selected by the supervisor from all of the students who have permission and want to participate. These

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students will talk about some of the photos they took and what those photos represent to them in a small focus group interview.

This project will capture the student voice around Kiwi Can, giving us the student perspective on their experiences and adding more depth to the quantitative part of the study.

*Kiwi Can has been an effective model of positive relationships which has engaged students and staff together. Students enjoy the lessons and so are engaged and want to attend. We gather data on bullying throughout the year and have noticed a reduction."*

*(School principal, Innovations Fund school survey)*



### References

A S Ahmed (2010). Promoting positive development in school children: Perspectives of the Kiwi Can programme in New Zealand. A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology; The University of Auckland

R Williams (2013) Can it? Conducting an Implementation Evaluation of the Kiwi Can programme in Aotearoa New Zealand. Report of Key Findings - Student Survey. A report submitted for the Foundation for Youth Development, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education; The University of Auckland