

A New Directions Conference

A New Directions conference is used when a student seems to be engulfed in trouble with many teachers and many situations about the school. It involves a lot of people and has a powerful effect to move a young person onto a new direction.

The process is based on the Waikato model of restorative conferencing. Key stakeholders are invited including the student, family, whanau, and teachers. It is important that those who can attest to the problems are present. It is also important to have present those who have experienced the student in other situations, situations where his/her behaviour is an expression of respect and trust. It is these behaviours that will form the basis of the New Direction.

First everyone is welcomed and the process is explained. It can be written on the board as such;

3 stages

- 1) The problems and their effects.
- 2) Times when these problems are not present – how do we describe Sam (*the student's name*)?
- 3) What can we put in place so we move from the problems to a New Direction?

Guidelines

- 1) Respectful language.
- 2) State facts rather than 'shoulds'.
- 3) Stages 1 & 2 speak to me.
- 4) The problem is the problem, the person is not the problem.

Stage 2 of the conference needs to produce a rich description of the sort of person that the student is when the problems are not about.

At the end of this conference a follow up meeting is organised to gauge what progress has been made and to include any others in this new direction.

At the follow up conference it is important to start with the description outlined in stage 2. The stages of the follow up meeting are;

- 1) When have you seen any evidence of this New Direction over the past four weeks?
- 2) In the past four weeks have there been any problems that have gotten in the way of Sam's New Direction?
- 3) We put the following plan in place to support Sam achieving this New Direction. Do we need to add or subtract anything?

This same process can be repeated at a later date.