

WORKING WITH HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Dealing with people who have engaged in harmful sexual behaviours.

PURPOSE

This policy provides Tautoko Tāne Aotearoa (TTA) member organisation's (TMO), trustees, employees, contractors, consultants or volunteers, guidelines for dealings with persons who have, or are at risk of, engaging in harmful sexual behaviour (HSB).

This Policy recognises that offering support or services to persons who have or are at risk of engaging in HSB requires specialist expertise that is outside the services provided by TTA or an TMO.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all TTA and TMO people who through their work or service delivery, are interacting with male survivors.

OBJECTIVES

Applying this Policy will:

- ensure the safety of male survivors who are the recipients of peer support or other support services is given paramount consideration.
- ensure the safety and wellbeing of all TMO people, is considered in all decision-making concerning work with HSB.
- provide clear guidance for dealing with persons who have, or are at risk of, engaging in HSB.
- minimise the risk of harm to male survivors and other victims and/or potential victims of harmful sexual behaviour.
- ensure informed decisions supported by appropriate expertise are made in all dealings with survivors who have engaged in HSB.

DEFINITIONS

Approved HSB Specialist Services

Means only the following community-based specialist services:

- Safe www.safenetwork.org.nz – upper North Island
- Wellstop www.wellstop.org.nz/ - mid North Island and below
- Stop www.stop.org.nz/- South Island

Children and Young Persons	For this policy Children and Young Persons are defined as persons under the age of 18 years
Harmful Sexual Behaviours (HSB)	HSB, or sexually abusive behaviour, is a descriptor for sexual behaviours that involve elements of force, coercion and/or power by one person over another for the purpose of sexual gratification and control. These behaviours can include both contact and non-contact behaviour ¹ .
Male Survivor	Means a person identifying as male who has experienced sexual, physical, mental, emotional, or domestic violence, abuse, or harm ²
TMO	The authorised Member Organisations of TTA that together form the national network of TTA.
TMO people	Means any trustee, employee, contractor, consultant, or volunteer engaged by a TMO in providing support for male survivors.
Peer-worker	Means an individual engaged as employee or volunteer by a TMO to provide peer-support services to male survivors.
Person who has engaged in HSB	Means a male survivor who has, or is at risk of, engaging in harmful sexual behaviours recently or historically, that has or may pose a risk to any person, whether they have previous convictions for sexual offending or not.
Trustee	Means a trustee of TTA or an TMO.
TTA	Is the national organisation Tautoko Tāne Aoteroa (formerly Male Survivors Aotearoa), which provides advocacy for male survivors, national governance, coordination, and representation for Member Organisations.

PARAMOUNTCY PRINCIPLE

Any TMO staff who interact with persons who have engaged, or are at risk of engaging, in HSB must ensure their first and paramount consideration is that all actions taken and decisions made are in the best interest of, and assure the welfare and safety of, any person who may be at risk, including children and young people.

¹ HSB is any unwanted sexual behaviour towards another person; anything sexual without consent (physically, verbally, visibly or online) and includes sexual harassment, sexual assault (including rape), incest, bestiality, any form of unwanted sexual advance, requests for sexual favours and any unwanted behaviours that is sexual in nature

² This definition includes trans men and those who identify as male survivors including gay men and bisexual males who have experienced sexual violence abuse or harm

CORE ELEMENTS

- 1. A male survivor who has engaged in HSB should NOT be given support by a peer support worker or be included in peer-support group activities except as provided in Core Element 2 below.**

This requirement is consistent with the principle of paramountcy and recognises the risk of offering peer support services to a person engaged in, or at risk of engaging in, HSB, including:

- the possible detrimental effect for peer workers
- disrupting peer-support services
- the harm that can be caused to other male survivors.

Due to the complexity and specialist nature of the support required for people who have engaged in HSB, if due to the circumstances there is any doubt if support services should be offered, this decision will be informed by, and made pursuant to, the assessment and advice of an Approved Specialist Service.

However, any TMO peer worker may refuse to provide support services to any person who has engaged in HSB including in circumstances where the support service may be approved pursuant to this policy.

- 2. A male survivor who has engaged in HSB as a child or young person MAY receive support services from an TMO provided their service engagement is pursuant to the assessment and advice of an Approved Specialist Service.**

This provision recognises that some male survivors, who may have been involved in HSB as a child or young person, and who have not been involved in HSB as an adult, may not present a risk to other male survivors when engaging in TMO support services to address their victim-related issues.

- 3. When services or support are unknowingly given to a male survivor who has engaged in HSB, once known, support or services should immediately pause the service and/or support and seek advice from an Approved Specialist Service.**

No support or services should continue to be given to a person who has engaged in HSB without the assessment and advice of an Approved Specialist Service pursuant to this policy and in observance of the principle of paramountcy.

Consideration should be given to referring the person who has engaged in HSB to an Approved Specialist Service for support.

- 4. If TMO people interact with any person who presents a threat to the safety of children and young people and/or other male survivors, then immediate mitigation action must be initiated.**

All TMO people must strictly observe:

- the TTA Child Protection Policy,
- the TTA Code of Ethics,
- the paramountcy principle of this Policy.

Where any TMO person becomes aware of any information that indicates the safety of any person may be risk, they are obligated to take immediate action to remedy the situation. Appropriate interventions may include:

- cessation of support service,
- making a referral to another appropriate service,
- reporting the matter to an appropriate statutory agency such as NZ Police or Oranga Tamariki.

All abusive behaviour that constitutes a Criminal offence against children and young people must be reported to the NZ Police.

If in doubt of the appropriate intervention to be taken, advice should be sought from:

- NZ Police,
- Oranga Tamariki,
- Child Matters - Consultancy Service (<https://www.childmatters.org.nz/>), or
- Safeguarding Children NZ (<https://safeguardingchildren.org.nz/>)