

Proactive Release

Submissions on the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy

August 2019

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet has released the following submission received during its public consultation on the child and youth wellbeing strategy.

Some of the information contained within this release is considered to not be appropriate to release and, if requested, would be withheld under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

- Where this is the case, the information has been withheld, and the relevant section of the Act that would apply, has been identified.
- Where information has been withheld, no public interest has been identified that would outweigh the reasons for withholding it.

Key to redaction codes and their reference to sections of the Act:

- **9(2)a** – Section 9(2)(a): to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

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From: Jadespeaksup <Jadespeaksup@violencefreecommunities.org>

Sent: Thursday, 13 December 2018 3:39 PM

To: 9(2)(a)

Cc: 9(2)(a)

Subject: late submission to Child and Youth wellbeing consultation

Thank you so much for your willingness to accept a late entry 9(2)(a) .

So I attach two pieces here... one is the summary of the full report of the ACC funded pilot 2017 work with 1300 children (aged 9-12) and 47 teachers.

The second attachment is a power point which was presented to the Unitec awards board, when this research was selected as one of four finalists in the Research with Impact award. We came second equall, out of 50 entries. It gives a summary of some of our findings.

We are now ready to analyse the results from our 2018 cohort of similar size and numbers.

The programme is designed to support robust, resilient relationships while also giving students an opportunity to develop their own safety plans around anxiety producing situations such as family violence and bullying.

We are very excited to see the positive results of the research. ACC has been very generous in assisting our programme to continue for the next year, in the hopes that the joint venture addressing reduction of family and sexual violence might support a wider roll out of the programme. Considerable interest from schools has been expressed.

We know that there are many different layers of the puzzle that developing increased well-being for children requires, and that this is a relatively small piece, but the solid results show great potential for a uniquely New Zealand solution to a deeply concerning issue.

We look forward to further dialogue with your team holding children in the spotlight. Thank you on behalf of us all!

Warmly,

Elaine Dyer

Project Manager

Jade Speaks Up

Violence Free Communities

9(2)(a)

Facebook: jadespeaksup

Web: <http://www.violencefreecommunities.org/jade-speaks-up>



Creating projects, events and tools that support people to enjoy active participation in their community.

www.violencefreecommunities.org

www.facebook.com/ViolenceFreeCommunities

Tui Glen Centre, 2 Claude Brookes Drive, Henderson, Auckland 0612



Summary Interim Report of Research 2017
 Geoff Bridgman, Elaine Dyer & Andrea O'Hagan. March / August 2018.



1. *Jade Speaks Up* Summary of Research 2017

1.1 Background to the study

The goal of our evaluation of the *Jade Speaks Up* programme was to demonstrate that a relatively small and short-term intervention giving year 5-8 school children the tools to develop trusting relationships and the strategies to keep themselves safe from violence, could result in children feeling safer and more resilient and in teachers finding the programme most effective in the areas of relationship learning. This project is funded by the Accident Compensation Corporation in the search for ways to reduce the cost of injuries due to violence in our communities.

With 1300 children from 47 classrooms in eight schools (seven in Auckland and one in the Bay of Plenty) involved in this research, at the outset, using two measures of childhood wellbeing and depression (Child Outcomes Rating Scale - Duncan, Miller & Sparks, 2003; and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies of Depression Scale for Children - Weissman, Orvaschel & Padian, 1980), we were able to show that 46% of children were in the category of “at risk” of psychological distress. From 2007 to 2017 the percent of children (aged 0-14) with a diagnosed mental illness trebled to 7% (Ministry of Health, 2017). Underlying this change is the increasing uncertainty in children’s lives driven by poverty, poor housing, homelessness and school pressure (Woulfe, 2018). These issues, added to children’s stories of parental emotional instability, unsafe family arrangements, addictions and harsh punishment, impact on classrooms, which potentially make them unsafe environments for some children. The *Jade Speaks Up* programme uses the classroom as the base for creating in children a sense of safety that can extend into their wider environments.

The first year of this enquiry has shown overall that the programme has been successful in achieving its stated goals. However, a more detailed analysis has shown many areas for improvement, such as allowing more time for the programme to run, a greater focus on teacher support, meeting the specific needs of each classroom and keeping the learnings from the programme alive after it has finished. How best to engage parents is also a key question in this second phase of the pilot study. What follows is an interim snapshot of our key findings.

Brief introduction to *Jade Speaks Up* (JSU):

JSU is a programme that provides safe classroom exploration of being violence-free. It helps children and young teens to learn about:



- feelings and safe ways to express them



- trust and the importance of having trusting relationships in our lives



- the fundamentals of respectful relationships



- how to keep ourselves safe from violence

The JSU programme is a detailed exploration of the skills connected with “feelings”, “trust”, “respect” and “keeping safe”. These skills are the foundation of the essential “4th R” of the school curriculum, competencies required for *Relating*.

1.2 Positive changes in children's attitudes and behaviours around safety

The evaluation showed significant shifts in children's behaviour around key messages that were part of the programme such as "going to a safe place", "just breathing and keeping calm", "asking for help from a friend to help sort things out" "talking to the person you are scared of", "making a safety plan" and "keeping calm in a time when you could have been angry".

- A Year 7 girl student went to the neighbours and phoned the police during a domestic violence incident. The student had recently shifted to the town and did not have a strong support network. She also self-referred to the school counsellor after the incident and talked the counsellor through the steps she had taken in implementing her JSU safety plan to keep herself and others safe. She said that the jingle 'Breathe, Think & Do' taught in the programme was what kept playing over in her mind in this scary situation.

1.3 Improvement in children's access to people and environments they can trust

Children in the programme were more likely to learn the phone numbers of non-family members they could trust and to identify a wider range of environments (friends, relatives, libraries, sports venues, meeting places in shopping centres and malls) where they can be safe, beyond the expected ones of family, school or the police. This may have encouraged children to speak more freely about family spaces that did not feel safe.

- One male student noted the phone number for CYFS in the lesson on safety planning. On his own initiative, he later called the 0508 number and told them that things were not okay at home. CYFS took prompt action and placed him in a safe home with extended family. The school had been aware that the family had issues but had been unable to initiate change for the parents.
- A school counsellor noted a significant increase in disclosures from Year 7 students compared to previous years when the new Year 7's usually didn't approach her for such help. JSU was run with only the Year 7 cohort in this school.

1.4 Children's positive assessments of the value of the programme

Eighty-two percent of the children who rated the programme said it was helpful and 43% said that it was "a lot" helpful. As well, 79% thought the programme was interesting and 75%, fun. Only 3.4% rated the programme as being of no help. Especially liked were the safety planning, the trust and problem-solving tasks, the Jade video, and the stories and conversations they had. Compared with children who were positive, children who were neutral or negative about the value of the programme showed poorer wellbeing, fewer trusted support people, more aggressive beliefs, lower responsiveness to upsetting situations and fewer protective strategies.

- In two schools there was initial concern amongst students who were talking of home situations that this would 'contaminate' their safe/happy place within the school environment. However, in discussions, once appropriate support was given, there was a new understanding of what happens when a child talks with a trusted adult (teacher, SWiS, Counsellor).

1.5 Significant improvement both in children's wellbeing and in risk of depression

Overall there was a significant improvement in the combined measure of well-being and depression between pre-test and post-test which was sustained into the follow-up test, six months later. The percent of children meeting the "at risk" criteria fell by 11% between pre- and the post-tests, with the greatest improvement shown by the 78% of children who were positive about the programme and who had significantly better uptake of *JSU* practices than children who were negative (6%) or neutral (16%). However, these two latter groups improved most in the follow-up assessment.

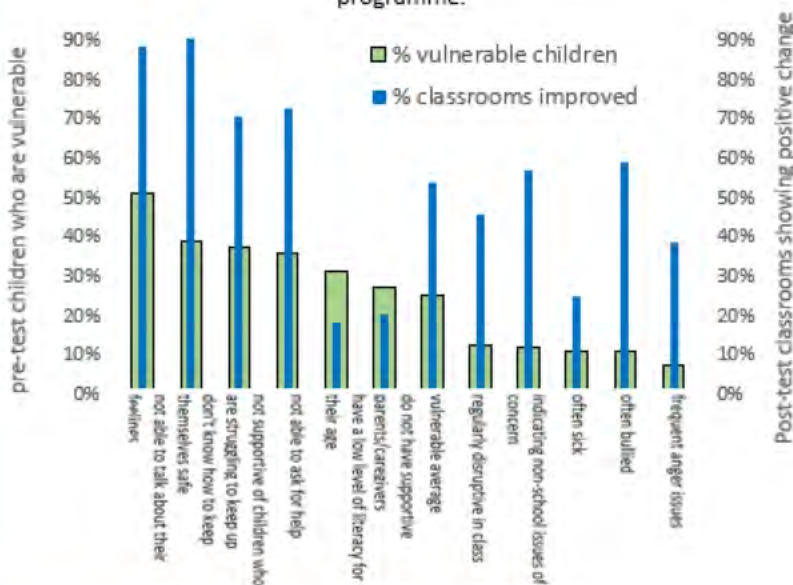
- One child from a home where domestic violence used to occur had parents who separated. When she was with Dad she 'took the weight' of Dad's behaviour towards her younger sisters. She used to talk only with her teacher about problems. Since participating in the *JSU* programme, she became able to share with a wider circle of classmates and reported feeling less isolated from her peers.

1.6 Improvement in the teachers' perceptions of children's vulnerability

Teachers were asked to rate the vulnerability of their class in the pre-tests. The four areas of most concern were that children: were unable to talk about their feelings; didn't know how to keep themselves safe; were unsupportive of children who were struggling to keep up; and were unable to ask for help (figure 1.1). In the post-tests, these were the four areas where the teachers judged the children as having made the most progress. 70% to 90% of teachers said their children had improved in these areas. Also, more than half the classrooms noted reductions in bullying and fewer non-school issues of concern.

- One of our pilot teachers agonised over the evident distress displayed by one of her students who was from a very unstable and troubled family already under attention of CYFS. The teacher's query, taken to her colleagues and contacts was "Are we doing these children any favours by opening up these painful feelings?". In the teacher's supervision session, we discussed this perplexing question. We acknowledged the importance of staying with the process, listening compassionately and providing the student with the pastoral support needed. In their post-programme interview, the teacher reported significant change in the girl. She was lighter, more confident, more outspoken and engaged more with people. Not only had there been a release of blocked emotion, but having safe adults attend to her was reassuring.

Figure 1.1: Comparison of teacher pre-test assessment of the % of children who are vulnerable in each classroom vs the % of classrooms at post-test where there has been positive change (a bit better/a lot better) due to the Jade Speaks Up programme.



1.7 Teacher assessments of value of the Jade Speaks Up programme

Overall the teachers rated the programme helpful and practical. The key features, such as the *Jade Speaks Up* video, the training sessions and the modules on *Keeping myself safe* and *Choices to keep myself and others safe*, were rated as being more than helpful (figure 1.2). The programme met clear needs within the schools. It had components that worked well and were successful in making positive changes in children's lives.

- A beginning teacher in a rural school reported: -

"One student ... has had some incidents at school but recently was able to come to his teacher with tears in his eyes, able to process what had happened and articulate what was happening for him. He understood why he may have reacted in that way and why the situation was what it was. *Jade Speaks Up* undoubtedly contributed to that".

Figure 1.2: Ratings of the value of Jade Speaks Up. n=45 (3=slightly helpful, 4=helpful and 5=very helpful)

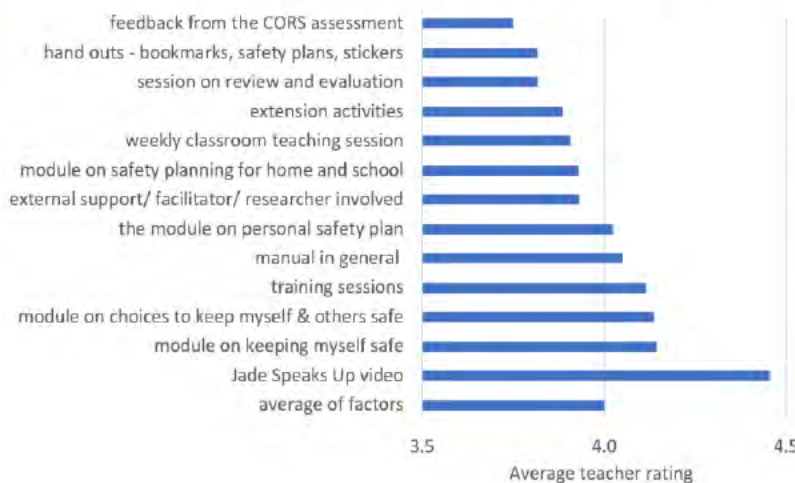
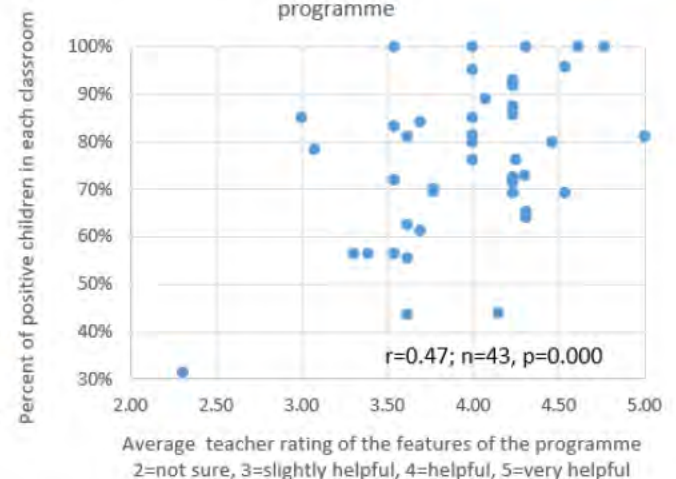


Figure 1.3: Correlation between percent of children commenting positively in each classroom and teacher's average rating of the features of the programme



Teacher enthusiasm for the programme was mirrored by student appreciation of it. Figure 1.3 shows the correlation between teachers valuing of the *JSU* programme and positive student comments. The feature that most strongly correlates with student support of the programme is that of having available *external support and supervision* ($r=0.60, p=0.000$). Only for this feature is there a significant correlation with two other student ratings, those asking - how interesting ($r=0.341, p=0.025$) and how much fun ($0.377, p=0.013$) was the programme. This tells us that teachers who valued the ongoing supervision and support of programme leaders were more able to make the programme interesting and fun for the students.

1.8 Pastoral care and training for teachers

In both training and supervision, it became evident that teachers' skills for responding to disclosures were either lacking or inadequate. We noted that in several schools there was a policy on disclosures in place, but the actual procedures were not familiar to some of the teachers. There was also a significant gap in the information loop between Oranga Tamariki and teachers following a referral. The supervision offered to the teachers was a unique part of the *JSU* programme and appreciated both by teachers and school management. Teachers noted that while the kaupapa of care of others was consistent throughout the *JSU* training and supervision sessions, they were unused to having supervision, so going through disclosure processes could be difficult for them.



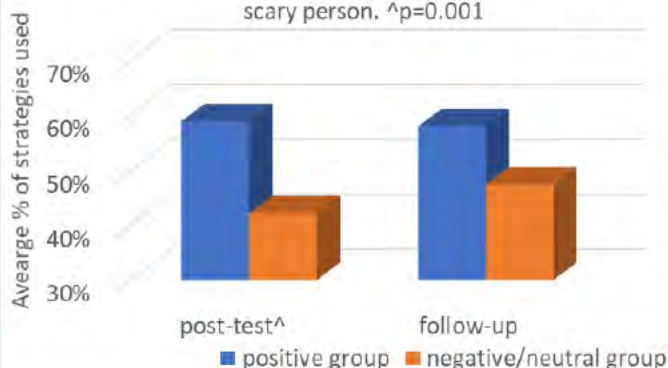
Predictably, not all teachers and students liked the programme. From figure 1.3 there were 5 teachers whose enthusiasm was marginal (below 3.5), and 7 classes where the percent of children commenting positively about *JSU* was below 60%. However, while there was an overall improvement in child wellbeing, it improved more for some schools (full primaries did less well) and some cultures (Asian/African and Pacific Island cultures made the most progress, while Pākehā/European made the least progress). Older children showed greater improvement in wellbeing scores than younger, and boys made more progress than girls. Such school and cultural patterns were repeated in the answers to many questions and in the ratings that children gave for the usefulness of the programme. There were no outcome differences for age. Girls were more enthusiastic about the programme and more likely than boys to put its teachings into practice, while boys showed greater improvement in wellbeing scores.

Informally, it was our observation that for Māori and Pacific students, having teachers of the same culture helped, particularly where aspects of the programme promoted a different approach to the student's home-discipline practices and survival skills' regimes in under-resourced social and economic environments. We heard teacher comments such as "this programme aligns to my Māori and Pacific values, so I feel at home with this work".



After providing an extra supervision session with a Samoan social work lecturer at the request of two schools, some teachers commented that they were now better prepared to engage in conversations with their students on the issue of caregivers using physical punishment. The teachers had been concerned to hear that some students were being physically punished at home. Students were struggling with the difference between home and school methods of discipline, and they now had opportunities in the classroom to safely talk about this difference. The additional supervision supported teachers in developing some conversational strategies that supported positive approaches to discipline and narratives within different cultures that affirmed these approaches

Figure 1.4: Comparison at post-test and follow-up of the average percent of seven JSU strategies that children would use when in the presence of a scary person. $^{\wedge}p=0.001$



At follow-up, six months after post-test, children continued to identify *JSU* strategies as ones they would use and were significantly more positive about the outcomes of using these strategies. However, we were concerned about the progress of the most vulnerable children, the group that only gave negative or neutral comments about *JSU* in the post-test. Figure 1.4 shows that at follow-up six months later, this group was catching up on the positive group in their expectation of use of *JSU* strategies in response to a scary person. Strategies like *walking away, going to a safe place and talking to an adult about what happened*. Not only are the negative/neutral group 5% more likely to use *JSU* strategies, their positive comments about using *JSU* strategies increased from 35% to 52%.



In their comments, many students referred to practical outcomes such as “deciding to learn all my friends phone numbers and my family’s just in case of an emergency”, doing a “safety plan ... because ... I’d be prepared and safe” or learning “the ‘I have the right to be safe’ sayings [which] helped me know what to do in tough situations”. Doing “the ‘111, write it on your thumb’ ...was very useful” because you know “there is someone out there to talk too.”

Figure 1.5: Comparison of post-test and follow-up of teacher assessment of what things have changed over the period of the Jade Speaks Up programme. Data from 8 schools and 25 teachers. 0=about the same, 1=a bit better, 2=much better; *=p<0.05, #=p<0.01.



occurring on all factors apart from *being able to talk about your feelings*. The biggest relative improvements are in *literacy* and *anger reduction*. The right-hand column shows the percent of classes for which teachers think that children’s behaviours have improved because of JSU. The teachers believe that every child has improved in knowing *how to keep themselves safe*, and nearly three quarters have improved in areas of key JSU teaching (*being able to talk about their feelings*, *being able to ask for help* and *being supportive of children who are struggling to keep up*). In 63% of 275 comparisons between follow-up and post-test, children had improved, in 35% there was no change and only in 2% had things got a bit worse (a bit more *sickness* and a bit more *anger outbursts*)

There were some gaps and significant questions that arose from the 2017 research which we aim to pursue in the 2018 pilot. Based on the 2017 teachers' feedback the manual has been updated, and the need to tailor the delivery of the programme to different cultural groups and school and community environments has been addressed. More input from teachers and students in other regions of the North Island as well as one city in the South Island will be valuable.

Can the results of the 2017 pilot be replicated in the regions outside of Auckland? Can children in other settings easily use the strategies taught to keep themselves safe and to get help? What will it take to ensure classrooms become even more of a safe haven for the children of New Zealand? Are we resourcing and supporting our teachers sufficiently as the 'chalk-face' agents of keeping children safe? Who can we partner with in rural and Māori communities further away from centralised resources? There is opportunity now for tangatawhenua in the regions to provide their local perspective through pre-pilot consultation and engagement with the researcher and developers of JSU to ensure that Māori participation in the research project aligns with their tūmanako (aspirations) and that tangible benefits are obtained.

We enter round two of our research with a mix of confidence and curiosity. We are assured that we have found parts of the answer towards supporting resilience and wellbeing in our children, but we know that the ultimate solution is beyond the reach of any single programme or organisation. Our data can contribute to these conversations. This year ahead is about us entering deeper collaborative conversations with others sharing our

Teacher's comment

This programme just worked in so well with my own personal beliefs around anxiety, yoga and mindfulness. It can be so terrifying to talk about deep topics (in case we stuff it up) that we avoid it entirely to the detriment of our students their whānau and ultimately our society.

Deputy principal's comment

This programme trumps other programmes, so present it to schools as: - here's the 'everything' but if you can't teach it in its entirety there are the one or two parts to really focus on and reference alongside other programmes/units of work.



I like Jade Speaks Up. Our kids are walking differently, more upright. They are confident and able to talk about what is going on for them. Jade Speaks Up should definitely be supported to continue.

School Principal

‘Kei a tatou katoa te taonga hua wairua hei tainga mo te katoa’.

Everyone has potential access to the treasures of the spirit for the highest good of all.
(Whakatauiki gifted to this work by Awa Hudson, Kuia to Violence Free Communities)

For more information contact: <http://www.violencefreecommunities.org/jade-speaks-up>

Or email: jadespeaksup@violencefreecommunities.org

Jade
Speaks
Up!



*"I'll be happy and smiling
all the time"*

*The impact of safety and
relational learning for 9-12-
year-old children.*

*Elaine Dyer
Andrea O'Hagan
Geoff Bridgman*

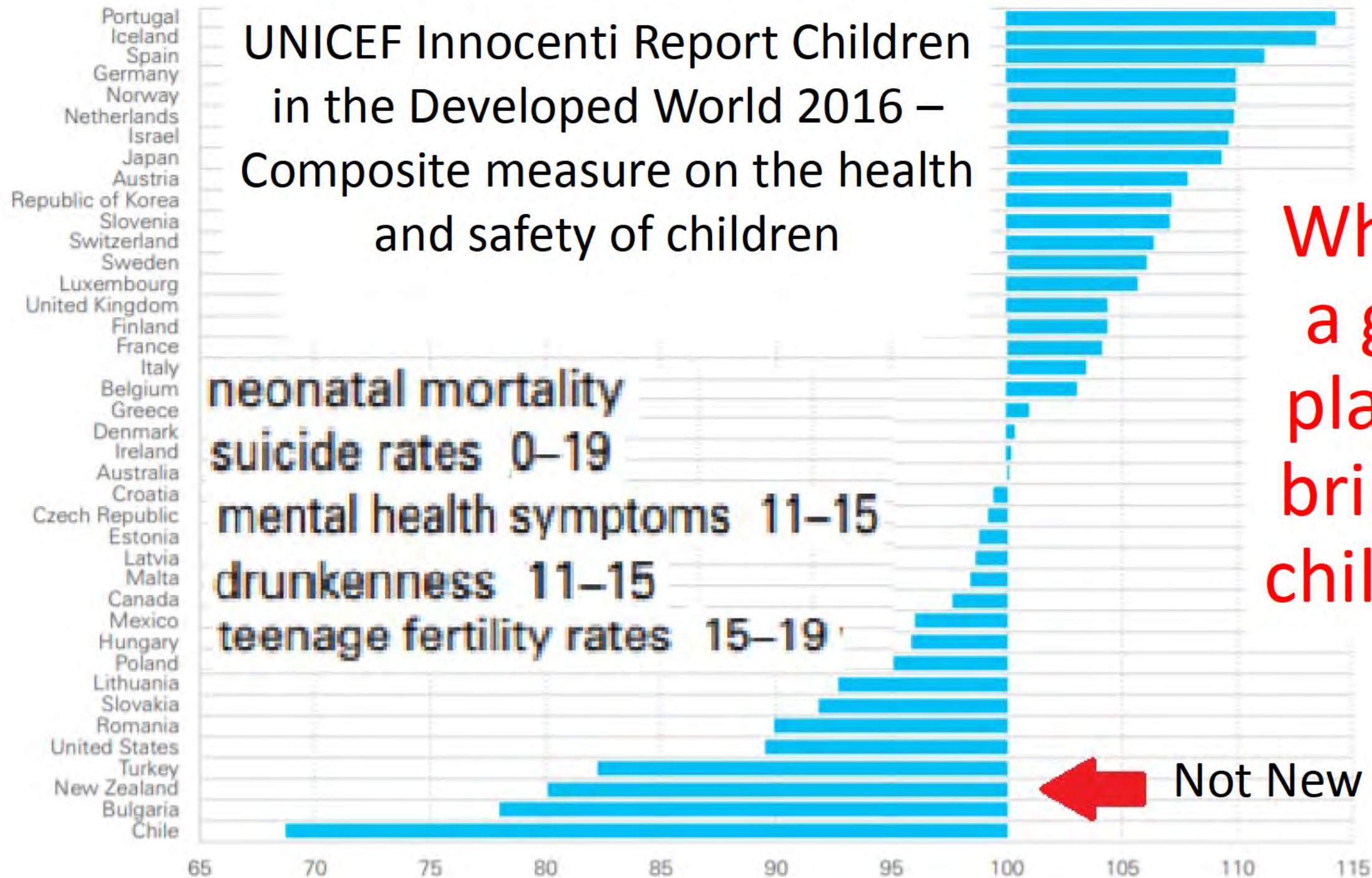


UNICEF Innocenti Report Children in the Developed World 2016 – Composite measure on the health and safety of children

neonatal mortality
suicide rates 0–19
mental health symptoms 11–15
drunkenness 11–15
teenage fertility rates 15–19

Where's
a good
place to
bring up
children?

Not New Zealand



What's happening in our schools? Unsafe and unwell?



- The OECD 2015 PISA international surveys show New Zealand educational achievement in **science, maths and reading declining** against past OECD surveys and in the rank order of more than 50 nations
- New Zealand has the second highest percentage of school children who are **frequently bullied, double** the OECD average

- Our age-standardised rates of admissions to mental health services for **10-14 year olds** have risen 63% from 2010 to 2016 and from 8th of 18 five-year age brackets to **third**, and are **rising faster than any other age** group (Ministry of Health, 2013, 2014a,b, 2016a,b,c, 2018).



- A NZ programme for 9-12 year-olds created by Elaine Dyer and Andrea O'Hagan
- Teaches safety strategies for responding to family violence and bullying
- Real enough and safe enough to address the issues for children
- Gives children practical and relational strategies to keep themselves safe
- Develops emotional literacy, trust and self agency
- A key resource is the 7-minute Jade Speaks Up video



How is it delivered?

- Whole of school/cohort approach
- Teachers, ancillary, supervisory and external support staff – one day pre-training
- Schools funded for teacher time in training
- Teachers supported by a manual with lesson plans aligned with the Health and Physical Education Curriculum and linked with literacy, social sciences, drama, art, music
- Communication skills, emotional literacy, safety planning, making choices, managing self, good self-talk, respectful relationships
- Taught over a school term or longer
- Teachers given support and supervision during the programme



Who pays?



\$0.74M 3 yrs



Why?

ACC is an insurance company. It pays out \$80 M /year on assault claims. It hopes to reduce this

For what?

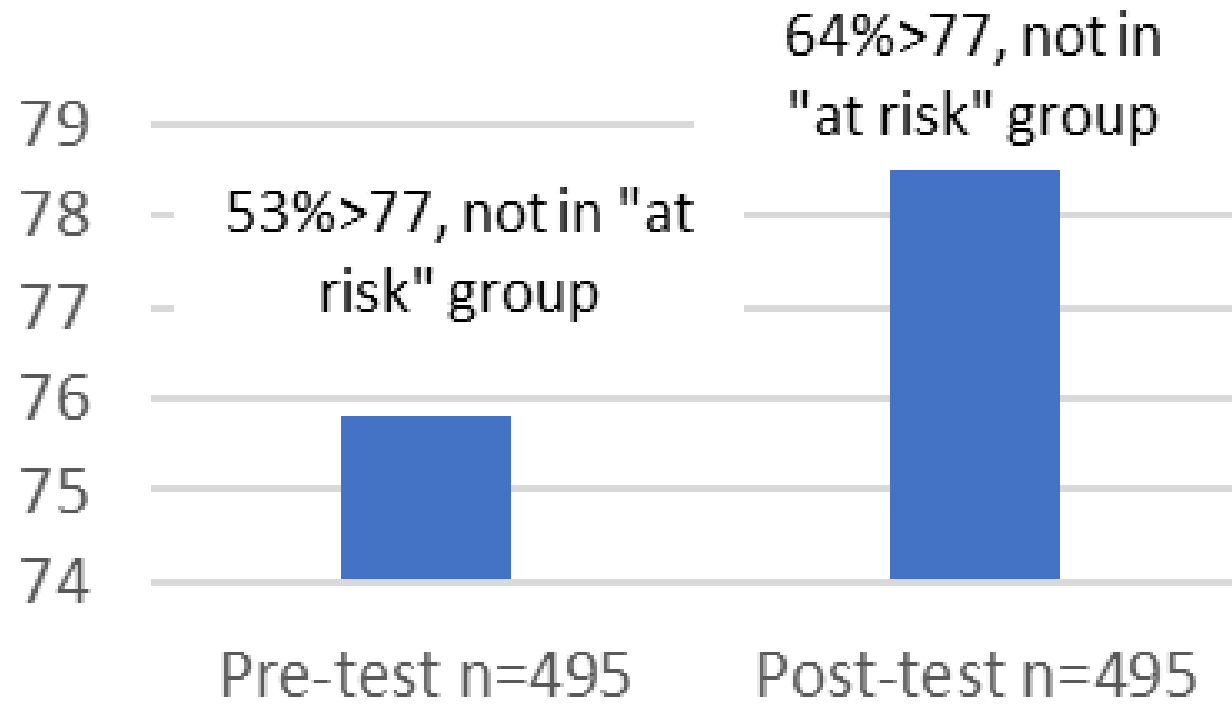
- Delivery and evaluation of the programme 2017 – 7 schools in Auckland, one Bay of

Plenty –1300 children, 45 teachers – 5 intermediate level, 3 full-primary.

- Experimental and control groups, online pre- post- and follow-up tests (6 months later).
- Assessing child wellbeing, emotional competency, trust, safety attitudes and use of safety skills, value of the programme
- Assessing teacher challenges, programme impact and value, child progress

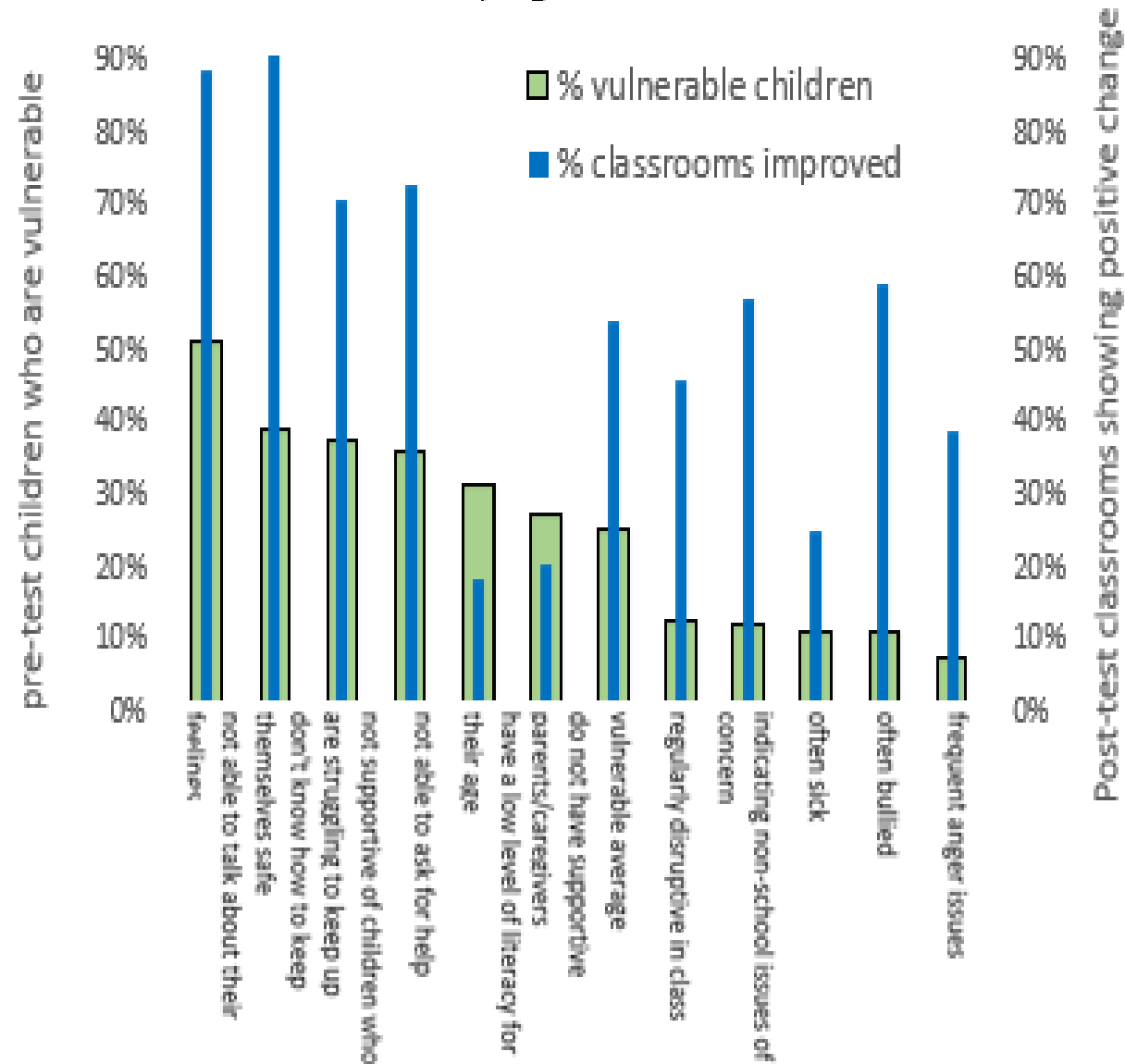
Headline 1: Significant wellbeing improvement

Figure 4.1: CES-DC+CORS repeated measure - showing improved wellbeing



- Two standardised assessments combined.
- At risk cut-off = 77
- All children completing both pre and post assessment.
- Pacific 34%, Māori 26%, Pākehā 21%, Asian/African 19%,

Figure 1.1: Comparison of teacher pre-test assessment of the % of children who are vulnerable in each classroom vs the % of classrooms at post-test where there has been positive change (a bit better/a lot better) due to the Jade Speaks Up programme.



Headline 2: The teachers' biggest challenges were addressed

The biggest challenges – % of children (pre-test) and % of classrooms that improved (post-test)

- Not able to talk about feelings – 50% (87%)
- Don't know how to keep themselves safe – 38% (90%)
- Not supportive of children struggling to keep up – 37% (69%)
- Not able to ask for help – 36% (71%)

Headline 3: Children more emotionally competent

- Better recognition of emotions
- Less upset by unpleasant events (e.g. being teased, put down)



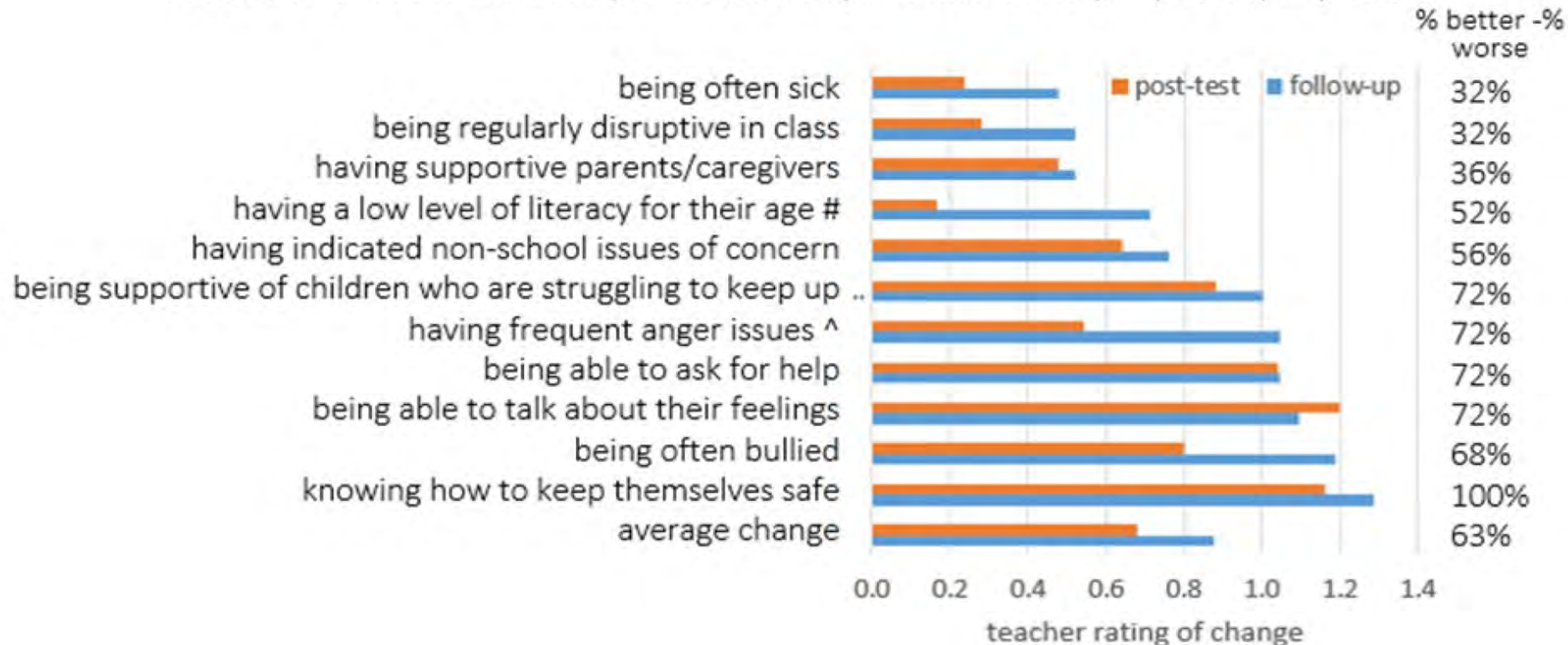
Headline 4: children's greater use of safety strategies

Pre-test to post-test to follow-up and **Experimental vs control**

- Go to a safe place
- Talk to an adult about what happened when you could
- Just breathe and keep calm
- Walk away when that person was there
- Ask a friend to help sort things out
- Call for help
- Talk to the person you are scared of

Headline 5: it gets even better at follow-up

Figure 5.6: Comparison of post-test and follow-up of teacher assessment of what things have changed over the period of the Jade Speaks Up programme. Data from 8 schools and 25 teachers. 0=about the same, 1=a bit better, 2=much better; *=p<0.05, #=p<0.01.



Headline 6: the most vulnerable children did well

- Child Outcome Rating Scale tests helped teachers notice when children were vulnerable – “I wouldn't have known there was any issue at all with this student if it wasn't for JSU, [he] keeps these issues well hidden”.
- Vulnerable children, when noticed, make significant gains in wellbeing (7.3 points on CORS)

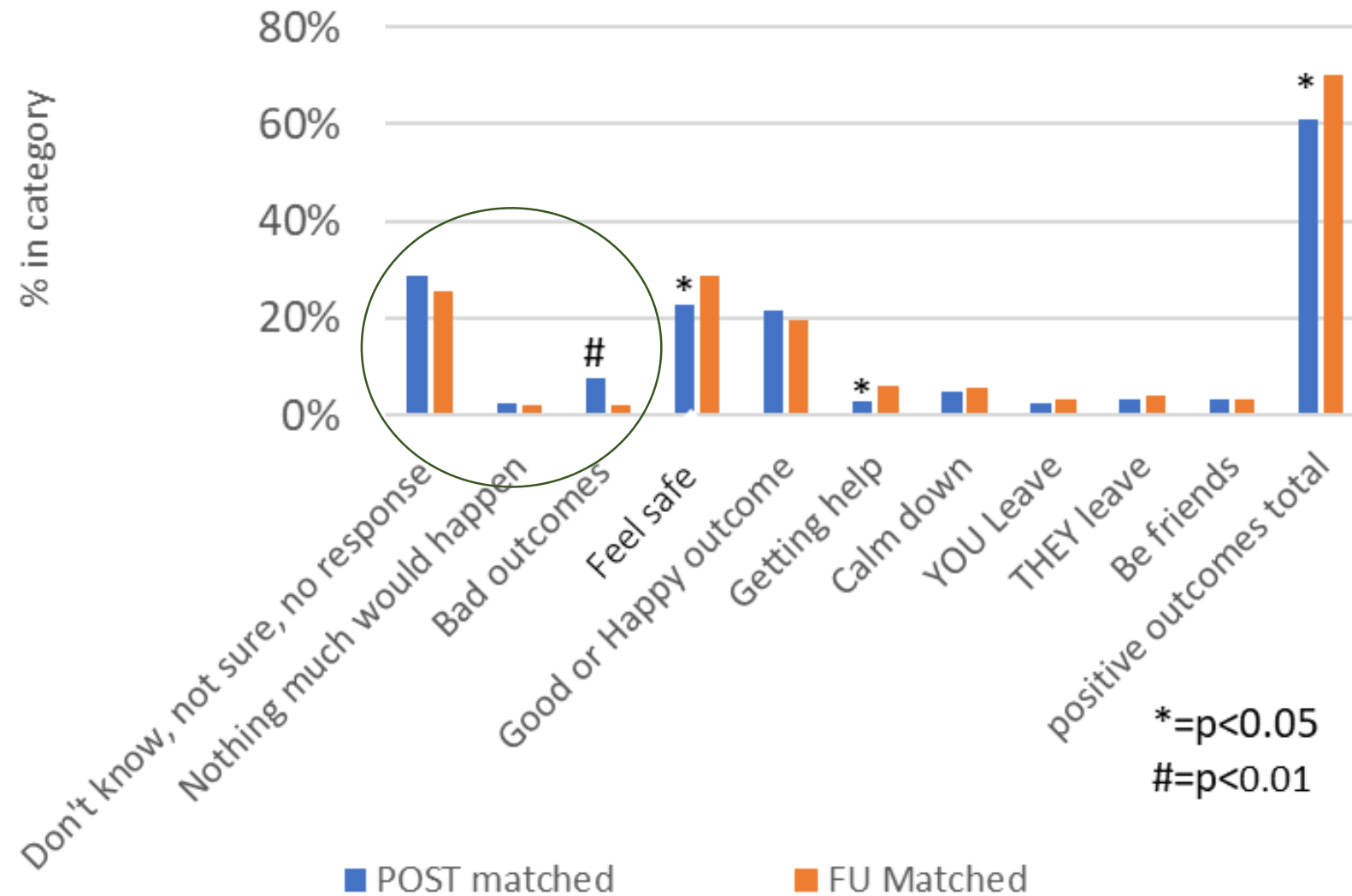
Figure 3.1: The Child Outcome Rating Scale (CORS)

The figure displays the Child Outcome Rating Scale (CORS) form, which consists of four sections, each with a rating scale from 1 to 10. The scales are represented by a horizontal line with a sad face icon at the left end (1) and a happy face icon at the right end (10). The sections are:

- Me** (How am I doing?)
- Family** (How are things in my family?)
- School** (How am I doing at school?)
- Everything** (How is everything going?)

Each section has a dashed line for the rating, with the number 1 at the left end and the number 10 at the right end.

Figure 4.4: Comments made to the question on post-test and follow-up: What do you think would happen next if you did these things (the things referred to in Table 23) n=319 repeated measures.



Headline 7:
the
programme
created
culture
change

Children who were
negative or neutral
about JSU made the
greatest shift from
post-test to follow-
up

Where to next?

- 2018: Four new schools in Dunedin, three new schools in Auckland; two repeat schools (one Auckland, one Bay of Plenty).
- Greater focus on full primary schools.
- New models of leadership, streamlined assessment, manual upgrade
- 2019: Ten to 12 repeat schools, one new collective school group outside Auckland
- Training the trainers/facilitators
- Negotiating the funding and structures for a 2020 national roll-out



“I like Jade Speaks Up. Our kids are walking differently, more upright. They are confident and able to talk about what is going on for them. Jade Speaks Up should definitely be supported to continue.” Deputy School Principal



*“I’ll be happy and smiling all the time.”
Intermediate School Girl*