

Standard Operating Procedure for youth justice residences: Violence by a tamaiti or rangatahi

What is this SOP for?

This SOP outlines how to respond to a situation in the residence where a single tamaiti or rangatahi is acting violently.

What is 'violence'?

For the purposes of this SOP, 'violence' includes but is not limited to hitting, punching, kicking, throwing objects, spitting.

Violence may be directed towards an individual or group of tamariki, rangatahi and/or kaimahi, visiting whānau or family members, or contractors. Violence may also be directed towards property belonging to te tamaiti or rangatahi, or to others.

Why is this SOP important?

Adolescence can be a challenging time for many tamariki and rangatahi. Tamariki and rangatahi in residence are experiencing these challenges while in a unique environment, away from their usual supports and whānau or family.

This means that tamariki and rangatahi may express their frustration, worries, changing moods and emotions in a way that is harmful or violent towards themselves, others or property. Tamariki and rangatahi in residence may also have been more likely to have experienced violence as a feature of their whānau or family, or among peer groups, including as victims. This could influence the likelihood of violence within a residence.

Responding effectively to violence will help us to intervene and resolve issues as quickly as possible, prevent events from escalating, and ensure the safety and oranga (wellbeing) of te tamaiti or rangatahi and other tamariki, rangatahi and kaimahi in the unit.

Who does this SOP apply to?

All kaimahi in the residence.

Understand the tamariki and rangatahi in your unit

Knowing the needs and risks of te tamaiti or rangatahi can help you respond more effectively.

Read the risk summary for each tamaiti or rangatahi in your unit – this will help you to have an understanding of their needs, what might cause them stress or anxiety, how they may respond when stressed or anxious and/or to specific situations and give you an indication of the level of risk they pose to themselves and/or others.

Know what the risk summary says about what interventions are appropriate to use if te tamaiti or rangatahi behaves in a way that is violent.

Respond early and de-escalate if possible

Use de-escalation techniques you have learnt in your STAR training. This will help you intervene early in a non-confrontational way, increasing the chances of resolving a situation early and before it develops into violence. Refer to Aggression or Potential Violence by a Tamaiti or Rangatahi SOP.

If te tamaiti or rangatahi acts violently

If te tamaiti or rangatahi acts violently towards themselves, others or property, an immediate response is required.

Each tamaiti or rangatahi is different and will have different needs, challenges and risks. There is no one standard way of responding to a situation where a tamaiti or rangatahi is acting violently.

If te tamaiti or rangatahi is acting violently, then you **must**:

- respond immediately – call for assistance (refer to Use of Radio Telephones in Residence SOP)
- **not** try to handle the situation on your own – your team is there to support you and te tamaiti or rangatahi
- call for additional kaimahi support (from another unit), if required (refer to Use of Radio Telephones in Residence SOP)
- keep yourself as safe as possible throughout the incident.

Decisions will need to be made promptly, with as much awareness as possible of the needs and risks of all the tamariki, rangatahi and kaimahi in the unit.

- Use your training (particularly STAR training), knowledge of te tamaiti or rangatahi and judgement to respond to each individual situation.
- Act decisively and with confidence. This will encourage te tamaiti or rangatahi to listen and respond to your directions and interventions.
- Working together as a team is critical.
- Ensure you are compliant with policy requirements at all times, in particular the Use of Force and Secure Care SOPs.

Consider if physical intervention (use of force) is necessary

Refer to Use of Force SOP.

Assess whether secure care is required

Consider whether secure care is required to prevent te tamaiti or rangatahi from behaving in a manner likely to cause physical harm to themselves or to any other person. Refer to Admissions to Secure Care SOP.

Following the incident

Once the situation is over, any injuries to tamariki, rangatahi or kaimahi need to be attended to as a priority.

Provide support and assistance

Ensure the victim of any violence (whether they are tamariki, rangatahi or kaimahi) is provided with support, including responding to their physical and emotional needs and any concerns they may have for their future safety. Support tamariki or rangatahi who are the victim of violence to make a complaint under the grievance process, if they wish to.

Other tamariki, rangatahi or kaimahi who have witnessed the incident may also require wellbeing support. Ensure they are spoken with and given the opportunity to identify any concerns and have their needs met.

Unpack the situation and talk with te tamaiti or rangatahi

When there is available staffing and it is safe to do so, identify which kaimahi is best to unpack or talk about the situation with te tamaiti or rangatahi.

Provide a quiet, safe place for te tamaiti or rangatahi to calm down and have the opportunity to talk through what happened for them and what might have been the trigger or reason. Understanding why they have behaved in a particular way, and how they could respond differently in the future, is an important goal of any intervention with a tamaiti or rangatahi.

It will also help kaimahi assess the potential for ongoing escalation and put in place plans for supporting te tamaiti or rangatahi to self-regulate and manage similar situations better in the future.

Record and report

Ensure that all recording and reporting is completed promptly.

If a tamaiti or rangatahi has been harmed by another tamaiti or rangatahi or other person during an incident, a report of concern must be made (refer to Reporting Harm to a Tamaiti or Rangatahi SOP).

Enter a casenote on the CYRAS record for each tamaiti or rangatahi involved in the incident.

The Team Leader Operations notifies Police and informs the Residence Manager.

Depending on the event and response made, the following recording and reporting may include:

- entry in the daily log (refer to Daily Log SOP)
- completion of a Serious Event Notification (SEN)
- a mySafety incident report (refer to mySafety Incident Reporting SOP).

Date completed	Review date
July 2024	February 2025