

12 April, 2016

To Whom it May Concern,

Recently my School, and the Community of Taihape, suffered a terrible tragedy with the suicide of a 16 year old boy. This incident has had a profound effect on the health of the school, and community generally.

Any traumatic incident undoubtedly challenges the ability of support service to provide adequate, appropriate, and timely assistance. While we have received support of varying effectiveness from a number of services, with Youthline in particular very proactive, the support from our immediate school community, and from within, has been paramount.

Recently however we hosted Mike King for two sessions. The first was directed at parents, whanau, and community members, the second more at our Year 7-13 Students. Both sessions were absolutely outstanding, with a number of community members and parents choosing to return for the student session.

Mike is a wonderful entertainer, but it was the realism and relevance of his message that struck a cord with everyone. His presentations were engaging, and meaningful, to the lives of our young people. He didn't brush issues under the carpet, but developed the themes of depression, anxiety, and mental health in a real and empathic manner.

The buy in from our students was overwhelmingly positive, with many seeking ongoing contact and support from Mike. The immediate question from many was "when is he coming back?"

Regards

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