

Case study 12: Tohatoha – equipping librarians in schools

Tohatoha is an incorporated society that has worked in the information literacy (a term they use that overlaps with media and information literacy) space, equipping school librarians and co-delivering an information literacy pilot titled 'A Bit Sus' to 38 schools.²⁵⁵ Tohatoha believes that librarians are a vital part of the information literacy landscape and have the potential to offer expert knowledge in this area when they are given support and the tools to do so. The programme draws from the Stanford History Education Group curriculum and research that tackles information literacy using two main techniques, lateral reading, and inoculation theory, using examples that seek to connect to young people's day to day lives online.

Tohatoha offered their cohorts continued support beyond the initial PLD and codelivery through messaging and online groups, where librarians could troubleshoot, discuss their successes, and identify challenges. They believe peer support after the programme ends is a key part of its ongoing success.²⁵⁵ Tohatoha outlined the importance of research informed programmes in this space, with a continual process of developing interventions, delivering the programme, evaluating, revising then repeating all these steps.⁴⁰² This is particularly important with the rapid pace at which the online environment changes. The pilot, in its second iteration, produced an escape room activity that addressed issues such as misleading data, deep fake images and videos and social media bots, and supported librarians to deliver the escape room to their school. The idea was that the escape room connected with young people's real world experience of the online environment.²⁵² Tohatoha has evaluated this pilot programme, showing that librarians were using the knowledge they had gathered from the programme and many had plans to continue it. The evaluation identified the need for research into how best to evaluate the impact of the programme on young people's online behaviours and the effectiveness of this over time.⁴⁰³ Unfortunately, due to a lack of funding, Tohatoha is currently not conducting this programme.

References

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