



Mia's story

Mia was 16 years old when she began feeling self-conscious about her body. It all started when a few of her classmates made comments about her appearance. She started skipping meals and obsessing over her weight. Mia found lots of information on social media about reducing calories and started to avoid eating around others, often offering to help cook, but not eating the meals she made. Mia felt a sense of control when she restricted her eating, but her energy levels were plummeting and her friends began to notice she was losing weight too quickly.

Mia began feeling self-conscious about her body.

Seeking help

One of Mia's teachers noticed Mia was having trouble concentrating in class, seemed quite down, and had lost a significant amount of weight. Unsure about how to approach Mia, the teacher talked to the school's guidance counsellor who suggested the teacher contact Mia's parents. When the teacher called Mia's parents, they said they were worried about Mia and asked the counsellor to reach out to Mia.

Meeting with the counsellor

Mia ignored the first email from the school's guidance counsellor and refused to meet, despite her parents' encouragement. Mia's parents kept urging her to meet, and she eventually agreed. During several sessions of informal conversation with the guidance counsellor, Mia opened up and began to share her struggles with body image and eating.

Moving forward

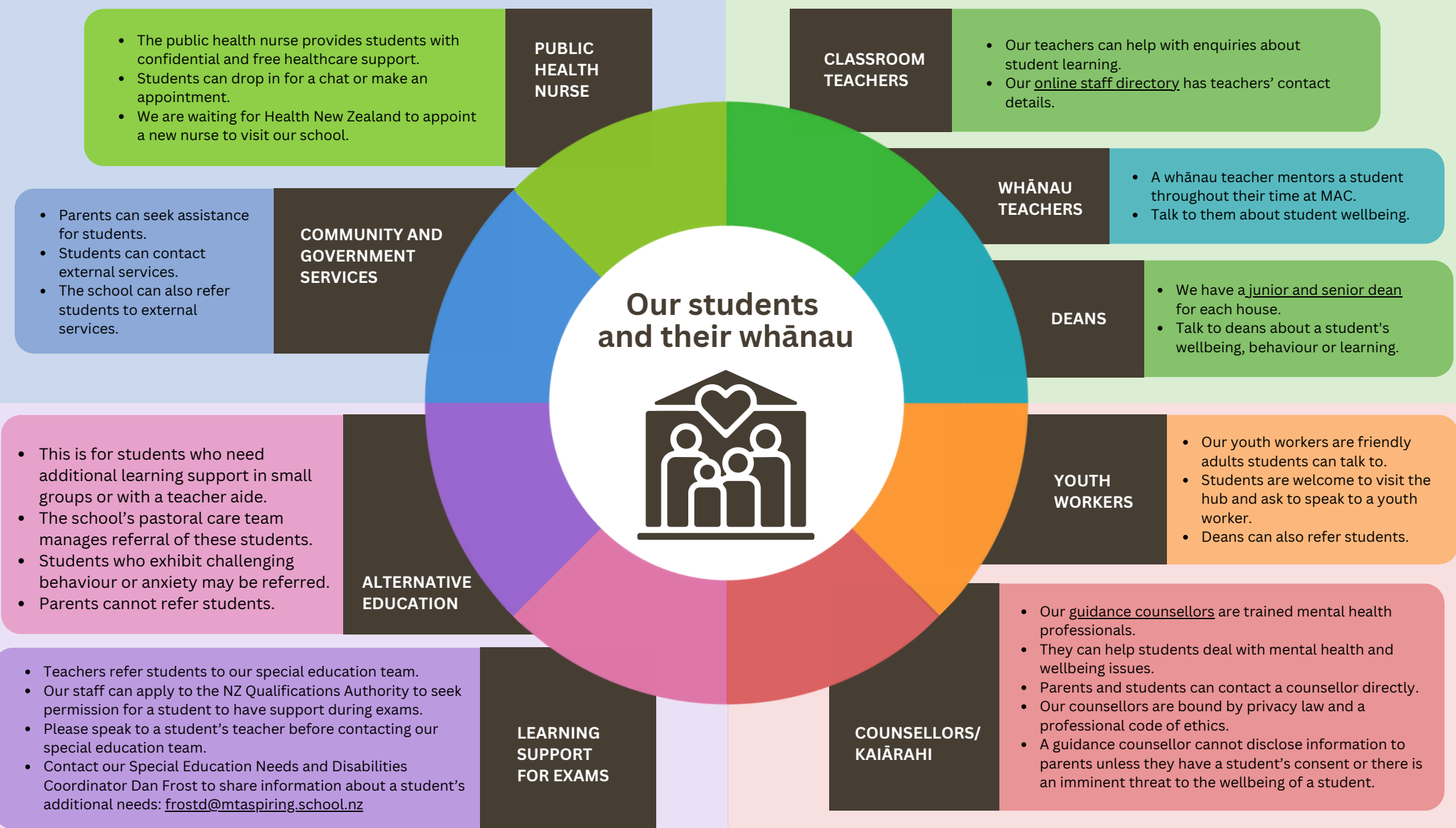
In addition to supporting Mia through one-on-one sessions, the guidance counsellor also recommended that Mia visit her local GP for a check up, and shared some useful resources with Mia's parents, including [Eating Disorders Carer Support](#), [Whāraurau](#), and [Feed Your Instinct](#).

REMEMBER

- **Anyone can be affected** by an eating disorder, not just teenage girls.
- **Highly active young people** can be vulnerable to eating disorders.
- Parents should **trust their instincts**. They know their child best.
- It's **not a taboo subject**. Ask questions.
- There is **lots of great information** out there. **Educate yourself** so you can help your child.



When students feel valued and supported, it helps them feel confident in who they are, engaged in their learning, and optimistic about the future.



THERE IS HELP.

Talk to a teacher or dean. | Visit the Wellbeing Hub near student reception.
 Contact a MAC guidance counsellor. | Monday to Friday during school hours in term time.
 E: dept-guidance@mtaspiring.school.nz | T: 03 443 0496



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