

# MAPPING THE DYNAMICS OF STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

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**SYNERGIA**  
*Centre for Systems Design*



# Mapping Structural Violence

The following two casual maps were developed as part of a project exploring the dynamics driving violence amongst youth in New Zealand. The aim was to go beyond the list of risk and protective factors and understanding how they interacted and played out to develop a 'system of violence'.

The maps that were developed looked at this issue through two interdependent lenses, the individual and the community. While there are significant overlaps between the two, we found that by developing two distinct maps we were able to emphasize the interdependence between the two. We all exist in communities which provides a context that has to be understood if interventions are to succeed, regardless of whether it is targeting individuals or communities.

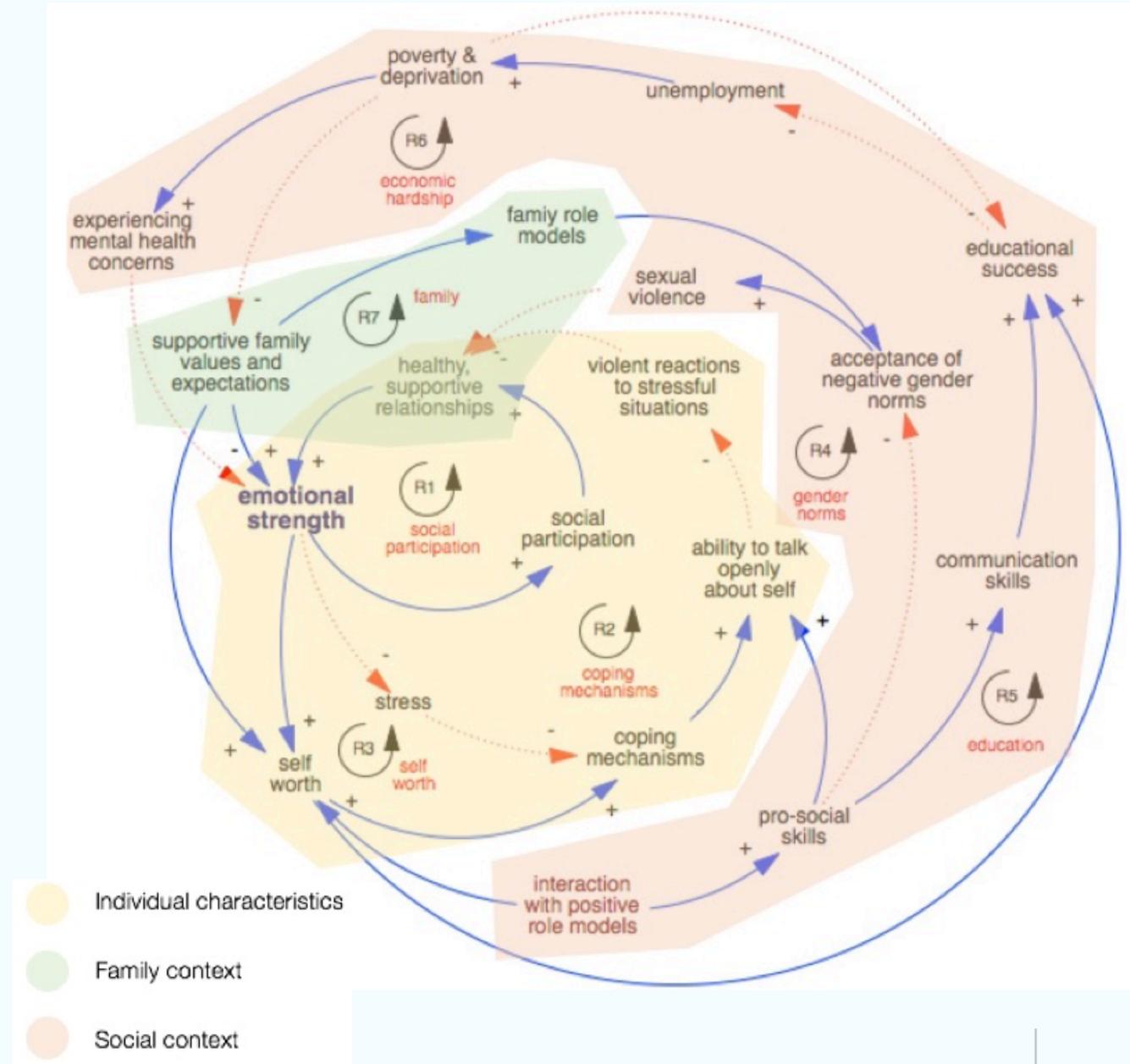
The maps have been refined and developed further in a number of applications and are being used to design and evaluate interventions

# Building Individual Resilience

This System Map shows the detail underpinning the interconnections between the factors affecting emotional strength. For example, social participation, affects an individual's ability to develop connections and relationships; and it is these connections and relationships that are a key factor in the development of emotional strength.

This suggests that interventions designed to increase an individual's ability to develop positive social relationships are likely to contribute to their emotional strength, by developing a positive feedback process in which social participation increases an individual's ability to develop positive connections and social relationships, which helps develop emotional strength.

Emotionally strong individuals are then more likely to have healthy levels of social participation, thus developing a virtuous loop. However, the reverse also applies, as low levels of social participation make it harder for an individual to develop positive connections and social relationships, which then limits or undermines emotional strength. Individuals with low levels of emotional strength are less likely to develop healthy levels of social participation resulting, in this case, in a vicious loop. Interventions funded by ACC, targeting emotional strength need to ensure that they move this dynamic in the right direction.

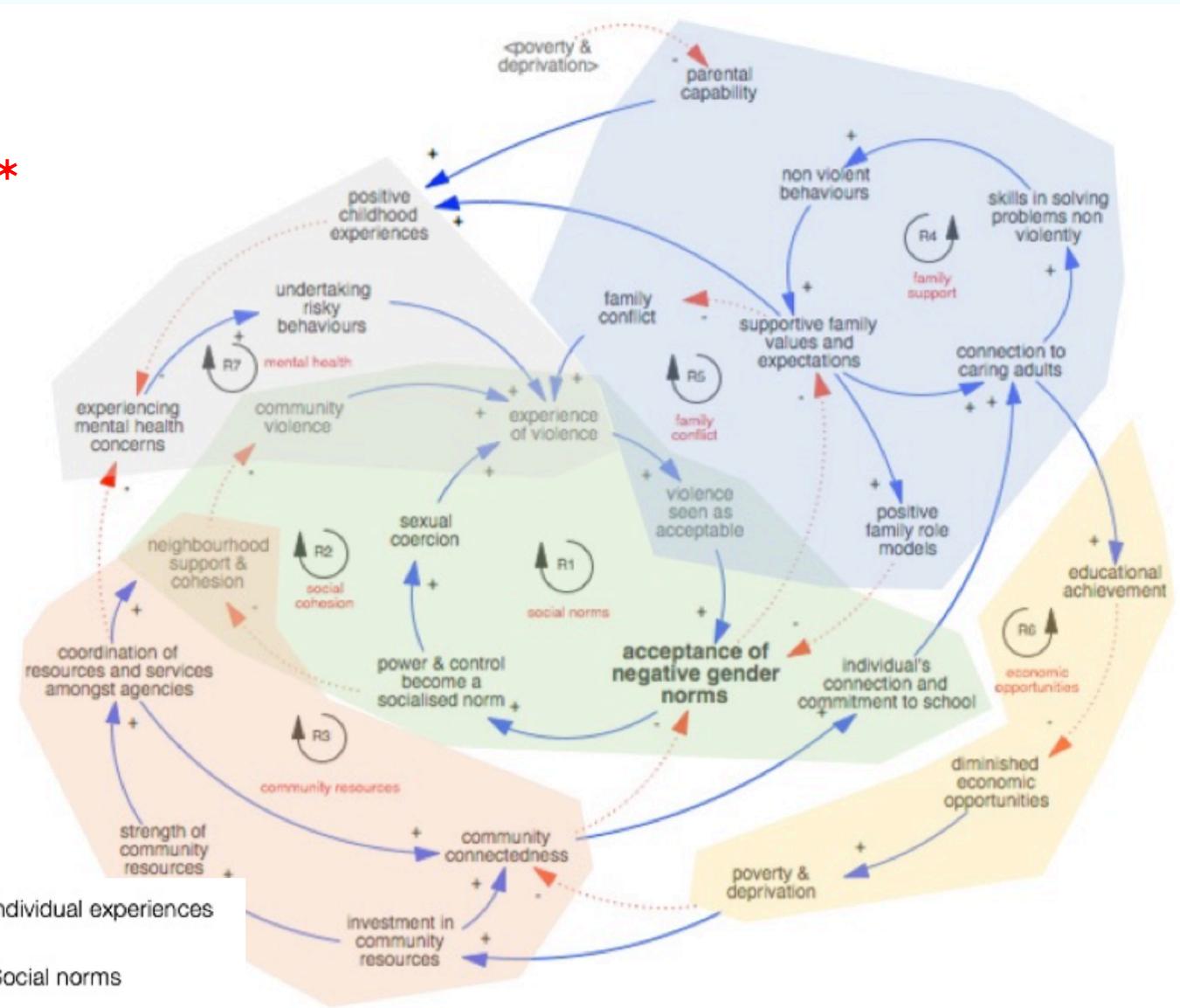


# Building Community Strength\*

This System Map shows the detail underpinning the interconnections between the factors affecting emotional strength. For example, social participation, affects an individual's ability to develop connections and relationships; and it is these connections and relationships that are a key factor in the development of emotional strength.

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- Individual experiences
- Social norms
- Family context
- Economic opportunities
- Community capability

\* This original work was rightly criticized for not making the cultural components explicit enough. Subsequent applications of this work in different contexts has remedied this and highlighted much more explicitly the importance of culture. (As an example see the case study on a community-wide strategy to tackle obesity).