



BIG BUDDY MENTORING IMPACT REPORT

Term Four 2025



TERM FOUR 2025

Big Buddy Mentoring

| First Name | Connections - buddy mentoring |
|------------|---|
| Grace | 6 learners at Wainui School |
| Katie | 24 learners at Dairy Flat School |
| Liz | 22 learners at Silverdale School |
| Noah | 17 learners at Dairy Flat School |
| Simon | 11 learners at Ahutoetoe School 15 learners at Orewa Primary 20 learners at Silverdale School 15 learners at Wainui School |

We have five youth workers placed in five local primary schools. Their main focus is supporting learners through our Big Buddy small group mentoring programme. In addition they also interact with learners in their breaks, support staff with class activities and join in with school wide activities. In Term Four 130 learners have benefitted from mentoring with one of our team.

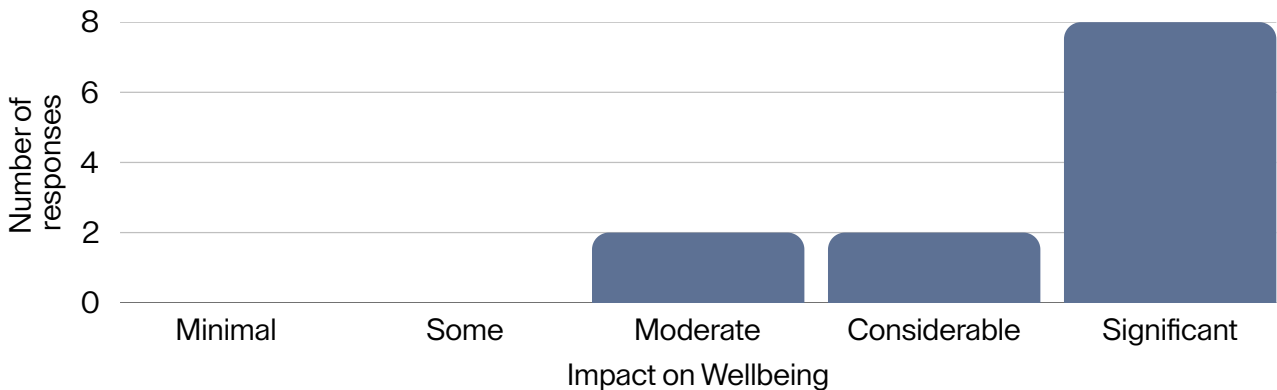
Term Four had a challenging start with uncertainty around funding for this programme. With the potential of needing to halve our hours in schools. Thankfully through generous donations and our Op Shop sales picking up we were able to continue in our normal capacity.

We are very thankful to our schools for partnering with us to collect food donations through mufti days and school wide events for our Foodbank. A number of families from each of these schools are supported by the Foodbank.

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Staff Feedback

What impact has seeing one of our Big Buddy Mentors had on your students' wellbeing?



Please share any positive changes you have noticed or been told of that seem to be related to your student/s spending time with a Big Buddy Mentor

Confidence, communication, social skills.

They love their one-on-one time

Liz has done amazing work, withdrawing some of the tamariki in my class to support their emotional regulation over the years. They have massively developed their interpersonal skills (sharing, cooperating, compromising). Simon has helped one of the tamariki in my class to build his confidence in social settings this has been so valuable!

My own son Ollie has been seeing Simon. It has been phenomenal for him due to a rough separation of my partner and I during Covid. He has loved the male role model and one-on-one time.

The student has been given tools to help her with friendships.

Modelling positive interactions with peers really important, strengthening a sense of belonging and increasing self confidence

The students that go see Katie & Noah have benefited from this time with them so so much!! You can see the way the kids light up when they are with them and the way they are able to have dedicated time for just them. The feedback from our whole staff has been that it has made such a difference in the classroom and school environment. It has been incredible to see. Highly appreciate what Noah, Katie & the Salt trust do for our school. Student is always excited to spend time with their big buddy.

Some students have shown noticeable improvements in their behaviour, both in and out of the classroom. They are more respectful, cooperative, and display better emotional regulation.

Much better communication from tamariki to me. Helps breaking down the barriers to some of the communication issues we have. The connections they develop are also crucial for them

It gives the tamariki that don't have positive influences at home, a positive influence. Someone who cares, listens and gives them the time of the day. They support with strategies to encourage tamariki to make better choices.

The positivity the kids show when they come back from their sessions with SALT is awesome, especially as they are usually very self negative.

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Ahutoetoe School

Highlights

- A highlight for me this term was being invited to be involved with many lunchtime football games with students of various ages and connecting with a variety of students through that.
- Another highlight was receiving a couple of thank-you Christmas cards from my students at the end of the year expressing their appreciation and the value they had gotten from being a part of the Big Buddy programme.



Student Story

This term I got to see the fruits of a number of my students learning teamwork and compromising skills and putting them into action.

One example from this term that stood out to me was a student who two terms ago didn't know what the word "encouragement" meant. However, towards the end of the year I invited the students to reflect on what they had found beneficial from their Primary Project 'Big Buddy' time. This student in particular stated that one of his biggest takeaways was learning what it meant to encourage others. It was really awesome to see that throughout this term he had also been doing an incredible job of looking out for others in the group and encouraging them as well.

Earlier in the year this student struggled to look out for the needs of others and encourage them so it was amazing to see him progress to not only looking out for the needs of others but encouraging others and building up their confidence too.

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Dairy Flat School

Highlights

- My highlight of the term was seeing how much the students have grown in themselves, their confidence, their friendships etc.
- Another highlight was attending AG day and getting to support them with that. It was a very cool experience and I highly recommend going!
- Seeing the growth in students' confidence from Term 1 through to Term 4. Watching students become more comfortable in themselves, more willing to speak up, and more confident in who they are has been incredibly rewarding. Each term, you can really see how the culture of the school continues to form and strengthen, and being part of that process has meant a lot to me.
- Being involved in the Rippa Rugby tournaments and getting involved in the athletics days. Being present at these events allowed me to connect with students in different settings and see them shine outside of the classroom. It also reinforced how much the school values inclusion, encouragement, and giving students opportunities to succeed in ways that suit them.
- Working at Dairy Flat has been a huge highlight for me. The care the school shows for its students is obvious in everything they do, and the support and dedication of the teachers has been amazing to see. Being part of such a positive, supportive environment has been incredibly rewarding, and I've really valued the opportunity to be involved in the school community this year.



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Dairy Flat School

Student Story

One of my students has lots going on in her world at home. It's been an honour to journey with her and to help her build some skills to be able to face some of things and be able to express how she is feeling.

Student Story

Some of my other students have been struggling with being friends with one another. They are best friends and then all of a sudden are not friends at all and cause conflict between other students. We sat down and had a big conversation about our feelings, the girls both opened up that they missed each other but didn't know how to talk about things when it was hard. We talked about navigating conflict and being friends. The session ended on a positive note and the girls left happier than how they had arrived.

Student Story

My favourite student story this term came in the final week of school. A group of Year 6 boys – some who I had been formally taking out and others I had gotten to know through lunchtime conversations took the time to tell me how much they appreciated having me around.

They shared that it was comforting having someone a bit older who has already been through many of the daunting experiences they're about to face. We often spoke about what next year might look like for them, and hearing that those conversations helped them feel prepared and ready to move into the next stage of school meant a lot to me. Knowing they're heading into next year feeling confident and supported is something I'm really proud of, and I'm excited to see them do well.



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Orewa Primary

Highlights

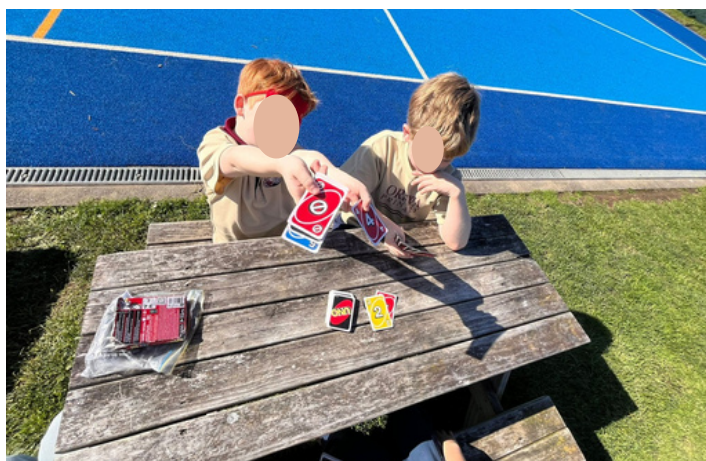
A couple of highlights for me this term has been seeing a growth in confidence in many of my students and being invited to join in on morning tea sports with students, and seeing a positive E Tū Tāngata culture start to come through in how they treat each other while playing.

Student Story

The last term or two I have had the privilege of seeing one student in particular really grow in his self confidence and subsequently his ability to navigate anxiety.

Earlier this year this student was really struggling to navigate high levels of anxiety, so much so that it was affecting his attendance at school. Now, his attendance has gone way up, and he has had a really evident growth in confidence with peers, in his SALT Big Buddy sessions and in class.

I am so grateful to have been able to play a small part in this and to be able to witness this growth. I look forward to continuing to work with this student and to see his self confidence continue to grow!



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Silverdale School

Highlights

- Getting to know 10 of my newest learners on a more personal basis, deepening our connections and trust with one another, and seeing the progress they've made this term.
- Meeting a couple of their parents and them telling me how happy they, and their child, are that they are seeing me.
- Seeing the majority of the students/groups that I see grow in their confidence, team work, and compromising skills.
- Seeing all the awesome creative work the year 5s and 6s have done on their TUI X projects and how proud they were of their projects.
- Receiving really positive and encouraging feedback from both teachers and parents.
- Being invited to ref a few lunch time rippa rugby games for the year 5/6 students.



Student Story

I hang out in the play areas during the learner's break times, allowing myself to be seen and accessed by all school learners. Many come up to say Hi, some stay to connect, others seek me out for help. It also allows me to see who may be struggling socially.

There was one girl I noticed often playing in the sandpit by herself, never smiling, appearing withdrawn and lacking in confidence. I started spending regular time with her, and watched her confidence and smile grow, as she got to know me more. Now she confidently seeks me out, connects with the other children around me, and smiles and laughs everyday - an absolute joy and privilege to see!

Student Story

One of the girls I see, was struggling to stay at school for a full day, due to the anxiety she would experience. She would need to be collected by the end of 4th period before lunch. Since she's been meeting with me this term, she's now able to stay through the lunchtime period, all of period 5, and the afternoon break too, before leaving at 2:10 instead, nearly the whole day - what a breakthrough! Her Mum and teacher are thrilled with her progress.

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Silverdale School



Student Story

It's always so rewarding and such a joy to hear how well some of my past Primary Project/Big Buddy learners are now doing. One girl I journeyed with for a couple of years, went on to Orewa College and has just won the gold award for manaaki - which is a core Māori concept meaning to support, care for, protect, and show generosity and hospitality to others. This is a huge turn around for her, from being in a regular negative state of mind, hating school, and dreading going onto college. What a success!



Student Story

One of the students I see had an evident growth in self-worth and confidence. From time to time this student would say things like "I'm so dumb" or "everyone hates me", however during one of the sessions this term I got to see a real change in that. This student initiated a great conversation about how he recognises that he has purpose and value and doesn't want to take it for granted.

It was really cool to see the shift from negative self-talk to positive self-talk and how that positively impacted his confidence. I look forward to continuing to see this student grow in his confidence and sense of value for himself and others.



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Wainui School

Highlights

- There have been plenty of highlights in term 4 with the students, particularly from seeing their growth. I have loved seeing how the students have developed their ability to articulate their feelings. It has also been incredible to see how the students have been more inclusive of each other and their classmates.
- I had the honour of attending the school's AG day and it was so lovely to support the students and have opportunities to meet and connect with some of the parents.
- There are a few highlights for me, which I think are highlights for me every term. The first is being able to meet a need for students that are really struggling by creating a safe space for them to talk, feel heard and valued.
- The second would be seeing a few of my groups really grow in their teamwork and compromising skills.
- The third highlight for me would be connecting with a large variety of students through lunch/break time sports.

Student Story

This term the students have seemed to grow in trust and vulnerability as they are quicker to open up and share their worries with me. A moment where I saw growth in the students was during a game to see who could make the tallest tower out of the paper. The girls were very supportive of one another, despite being in competition with one another. At the end of the activity, they were tasked to create the tallest tower together, and it was amazing to see them working with one another, collaborating in their ideas and recognising the strengths they each brought to the table to create a tower over a metre tall!



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Wainui School

Student Story

Earlier this term I had a new student join one of the mentor groups. It was really cool to see how inclusive and patient the other members of the group were to this new student.

Just one or two weeks after beginning with this student I briefly talked to his mother after the session had finished. She stated how after just one or two weeks of being in the SALT Big Buddy programme, he would come home super excited and joyful after each session. She went on to say how already his confidence was going up which was really incredible to hear.

It is such a privilege to not only receive positive feedback like this but to be able to witness the growth in confidence in these boys throughout the term/year.

