



# ONE TO ONE

*A huge thank you to Beacham Foundation, Edge Roadrunners & Antigua Boatshed for making our end of year Match event so memorable.*

**Watching the Matches having such an amazing time at the last event for 2016 made the team sit back and really reflect on why mentoring is so important.**

We're told the first 1000 days of life is when much of what we expect in life is mapped out. This includes how we form attachments. Through the stable and consistent nurture of our first caregivers we can learn to trust the love of others and not be overly sensitive to rejection later on. It really hurts then to see a young person experience difficulty in almost every relationship they have. They do not know where they belong. They may have experienced neglect or abandonment when they were very young or been lurching from caregiver to caregiver. It is as though they are homeless.

Research says young people respond in one of two ways: Some become hostile to all those who try to relate to them, defensive, defiant. They reject others before they get a chance to be rejected. Others though become passive and accommodating to avoid any chance of being rejected. Despite their compliance seeming healthy, it is based on fear of what they may lose.

To find them a home, a place they belong, is much more than a house. It requires time where they come to trust others

and to become less fearful of losing that trust.

Researchers looked into whether mentoring relationships have a causal effect on reducing this fear of rejection. Over 1000 young people were part of the study which concluded that mentored young people had a "reduced sensitivity to rejection". Not only this but they also had better social interactions with peers, more pro social behaviour and better relationships with their teachers (Kanchewa, Yoviene, Schwartz, Herrera and Rhodes, 2016).

Mentoring can be a "corrective experience" for young people who had learned poor attachment styles. However, it is not an easy path for the mentors of these children. They themselves must risk their own rejection by the young person as they are tested by the young person. As these children struggle to understand social etiquette, they are also unlikely to give the mentor any sense of them being valued. That said, the mentor is part of the building team for a new home for their young person. There is no guarantee the young person will want to live in that home, but the mentor risks investing their time in the belief that the young person they mentor is worth it.

## What Our Young People Are Saying:

- My mentor is 10/10. He is awesome, creative and I can definitely trust him
- Since knowing my mentor I feel happy all the time, I'm more positive (even at home) and I'm not naughty all the time anymore
- She is like my big sister, I am not nervous when I am around her.
- She has taught me how to deal with feeling angry and use good language.
- My mentor encourages me to do things I don't want to – I actually like that!

## What Parents Are Saying:

- I love seeing such happiness when my son comes home from spending time with his mentor
- I am really grateful; my child now has big plans for his future. He has more self-confidence and is able to express himself so much better
- My daughter has become less bossy and more patient with others
- She just seems to keep getting better and better. I am just so happy with it all



## My Letter To Keith



Dear Keith,

8 years ago when we met, you were bright eyed and extremely busy. I wondered if I had the ability to keep you entertained for the times we hung out together. Nowadays, I don't give a second thought to entertaining you: I'm happy to hang out and see where that takes us. I'd say the bond is lifelong, it feels like that for me. Something has changed in me during that time. And I like it. I want the best for you, but I don't feel any need to change you anymore. What I really want to make sure is that you know; I ain't going nowhere. I'm here for you whenever. I've heard great stories of mentors and young people catching up decades later and being like family to each other. I like that idea. You said you wanted me to mentor another young person. I am a little reluctant to be honest, because it doesn't quite feel right yet, because of what we have. I'll keep thinking about it.

I have seen you battle through some parts of life, with schooling, friends, tough family stuff and girls. What is remarkable is that you continue to have such a neat positive perspective on life despite all that. I understand there is a fair amount of hurt underneath all that, but this positive confident character conveys a humbleness and lightness that will serve you well. Your mum and I know how smart you are. You are so quick with numbers, memorising song lyrics and picking up complex concepts. You are always eager to help others and will do so at the expense of yourself. I really admire your desire to help others and how far you'll go for a friend.

The moments I cherish include the song we made "What we goin' to do with a little piece of bacon?", the trips to the Waimak either throwing stones in the water or teaching you to drive and the trips to Placemakers to have two (or more) free hot chocs. Closest to me however are those moments you let me in to your low times, when you have been vulnerable with me. I know you, you know me, and we will be friends for life. Thanks for the privilege of knowing you.

**Matt Button**

## My Letter To Matt

I remember being in primary and intermediate school and struggling socially, you helped me a lot through those years!

I always felt like I could talk to you easily and I valued knowing I could trust you with anything.

I liked having someone in my life that wasn't my mum or dad that I could talk to and get advice from. You always have good advice and that's a leaf I have tried to take out of your book, I try to give good advice to people too

What I liked best about having a mentor (along with knowing you were there for me) was that you are just as weird as I am. I can't quite believe that I have known you for 8 years and when I stop for a moment to think of any other friends I have had for that same amount of time, I can only think of two others.

The only low-lights of having a mentor was that when it started I only got to see you once a week, I wanted to see you more. Now I am an adult I can understand more about the commitment of one hour a week and how big it is!

When I was a kid I just loved hanging out with you and one hour over a whole week felt like such a small amount of time. That is the only negative thing I can come up with.

We had such cool memories together, like the pizza song, your little green car that was stolen and how I gave you a little matchbox car because I thought it would cheer you up, the movie we made together where we were Russian spies and there was a soccer ball that we pretended to use as the bomb. You were like a father and a friend. I can't say a bad thing about you, you are a genuinely nice person.

I hope you mentor again because I want another kid to have what I got to have with you.

I know we are going to stay in contact, I will still come over to see how everything is going, still see you, still talk to you and I know we will always be in touch.

Thank you for being there for me.





Joe and Jordan were 1 of 5 matches who celebrated their 5 year anniversary with a generous \$50 voucher donated from Joe's Garage!

Congrats to:

Joe & Jordan

Tabitha & Lizzy

Lilly & Chantelle

Sheralle and Natasha

Scott and Damien

## Bonds That Are Like Family

Jane and Danielle have been matched for 3 and ½ years. Match supervision from BBBS has recently ended as Jane has relocated to the Nelson, however once a bond like theirs has been forged - not even distance will stop the friendship from continuing on.

Jane has also recently had a baby girl and as a way of marking how much of a significant part Danielle has become in her life, Jane decided to give her daughter 'Danielle' as a middle name. When we asked Danielle, (a young girl who came to the programme shy and lacking in confidence) what she thinks about Jane and her match, she had these fantastic things to say: "I feel like we are very close and it was very successful. I think Jane has made a difference in my life. She has just impacted me, in such a good way. I love her personality and love that I can really trust her, I feel like I can talk to her about anything and everything". When asked what aspects Danielle enjoyed the most about having a mentor, she said that it has helped her feel more confident.

"I am more confident and I feel more confident meeting new people and that's because of Jane". Her favourite thing was just getting to hang out with Jane and feel like she was part of her family.

"Knowing that Jane has named her daughter after me make me just feel really really good, it made me feel like I was closer to her". Danielle is very confident that her and Jane will always stay in touch, she feels very lucky to have been able to have a mentor at all and especially that her mentor was Jane.



Danielle and Jane were able to attend Swan Lake because of the generous donation from the Beacham Foundation.



Danielle holding Indianna Danielle



## Our Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge grants and support recently received from the following funders and donors, without whom we could not operate.

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## Regular Givers Programme

Our generous Regular Givers set up an automatic payment (weekly or monthly) to support Big Brothers Big Sisters Christchurch. For as little as the price of one cup of coffee per week you can support a new mentor match!

Email or call us on 358 4019 to discuss this opportunity further.

## Sponsor a Mentoring MATCH

\$30 a week

or

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Project & Programme Expenses

\$50

Volunteer Training & Acknowledgements

...You can make all the difference...

For more info on how to sponsor a match contact BBBS of ChCh  
P: (03) 358 4019  
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[www.christchurchbigbrothersbigsisters.org.nz](http://www.christchurchbigbrothersbigsisters.org.nz)

## This Editions Big Heroes

Cameron & Co., Joe's Garage, Coffee Culture, The Edge FM, St Aidans Anglican Church, Copyprint Riccarton, Hatrick Services (Z Stations), Jefkar Holdings Ltd (Z Stations), Dave Sewell, Craig Ogilvie.



Kiwi Labels

## Kiwi Labels

We gratefully acknowledge the support of the team at Kiwilabels who donate the design and layout of this newsletter to Big Brothers Big Sisters. Thanks to Nic and Guy for their patience, creativity and valuable time!

Do you have a business that could help BBBS Christchurch?  
Contact [christchurch@bigbrothersbigsisters.org.nz](mailto:christchurch@bigbrothersbigsisters.org.nz)

## I Want To Help

Do you want to help Big Brothers Big Sisters Christchurch go the extra mile?

- \$200 pays for our office rental for a month
- \$127 recruits a new volunteer
- \$90 pays for 6 children to attend one of our group events
- \$56 pays for resources in a school for a mentor
- \$26 pays for training a new mentor

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