



Annual Report

Year Two Report of Sponsorship Funding Agreement

July 2021 to June 2022

Pause
Breathe
Smile



Brought to schools
by Southern Cross

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to outline the impact and reach of the Pause Breathe Smile programme through the activities completed by Pause Breathe Smile Trust for the organisation's second financial year. The activities of the Trust are fully focussed on achieving its mission and the outcomes of the Sponsorship Funding Agreement with Southern Cross. This report provides an update on the following metrics:

1. **Number of children reached by the Wellbeing Programme**
2. **Number of Schools who have received Pause Breathe Smile training**
3. **Number of Educators trained**
4. **Number of school enquiries and conversions**
5. **Programme reach by region and by decile**
6. **Pause Breathe Smile PLD delivered by type**

Along with these metrics, this report includes:

- **Commentary on the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the Trust's responses**
- **Appendix: Case Study.**

Outcomes Report

The Pause Breathe Smile programme continues to reach and positively impact the lives of children across New Zealand. Despite persistent Covid-19 disruptions, a rapid shift in operational delivery methods meant large-scale postponements or cancellations were avoided this year.

41,800 children from 139 schools nationwide will now have the Pause Breathe Smile programme taught to them by over 3,400 educators that have been trained in delivering the wellbeing programme this year.

This brings the total reach of the programme since signing Sponsorship Funding Agreement with Southern Cross 7 August 2020 to 30 June 2023 to:



Preliminary Wellbeing Survey results

One of the outcomes of the Sponsorship Funding Agreement is that Pause Breathe Smile will improve children's wellbeing, as measured by the Wellbeing Survey. The design, analysis and reporting of the Wellbeing Survey is independently contracted by Southern Cross. Pause Breathe Smile Trust administers the Wellbeing Survey in participating schools.

Preliminary results show that positive improvements have been seen in the indicators of student wellbeing and behaviour across a broad range of measures at the one-year period including:

- The aggregate student wellbeing score increased very significantly.
- The perceived proportion of flourishing students increased, and the perceived proportion of languishing students decreased.
- Descriptions of students on a 22-item measure were significantly more positive, and reported students' behaviours on a separate 22-item measure were also significantly more positive.

Responses at three months showed significant perceived improvements in many student characteristics, notably around being focused, considerate, perseverant, self-motivated, and anxious. There were also significant perceived improvements in all positive student behaviours listed, and many negative behaviours such as withdrawal from others, failing to concentrate, getting upset, and giving up on tasks.

The full report, with specific data, will be made available to the Southern Cross Health Trust Board when it is completed, likely at the end of the calendar year to coincide with the school year-end.

Wellbeing Survey feedback:

“This is a very valuable, practical programme that can make a real difference in children’s lives”

“This is a great programme that I can see will continue to make a positive impact on the wellbeing of our staff and students.”

“Please maintain the funding. It’s so important for our children to have the knowledge and power of knowing about their emotions and inner voice.”

“We really appreciated having the Pause Breathe Smile programme funded in our school, thank you.”

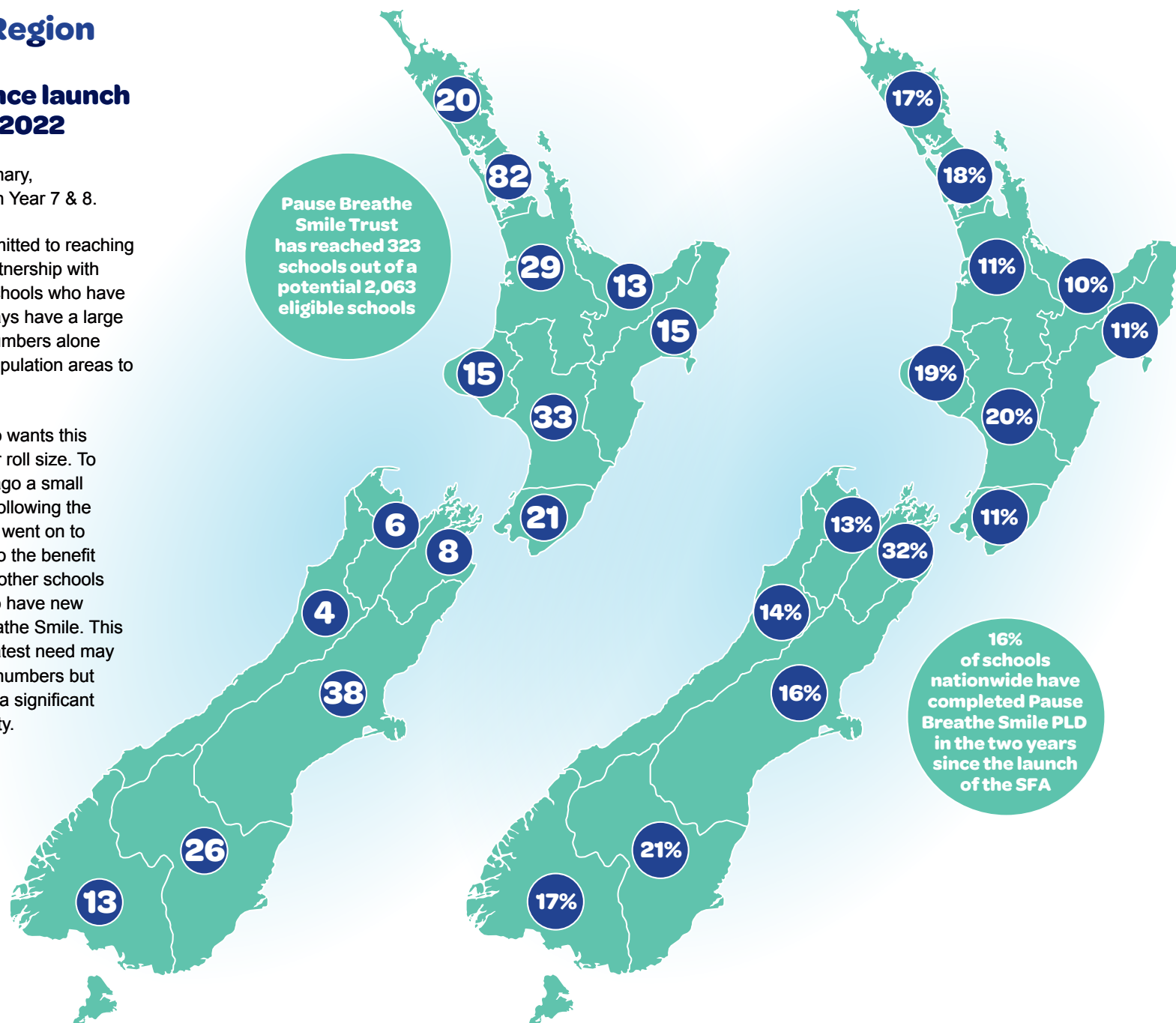
Programme Reach by Region

Consolidated total reach since launch of the SFA, Aug 2020 - June 2022

Eligible NZ schools include Contributing, Primary, Intermediate, Composite, and Secondary with Year 7 & 8.

While the Pause Breathe Smile Trust is committed to reaching as many children as possible through the partnership with Southern Cross, it is important to note that schools who have a high need for this programme may not always have a large school roll. In other words, prioritising high numbers alone creates the risk of focusing solely on large population areas to achieve targets.

It is the Trust's philosophy that no school who wants this programme will be left behind, no matter their roll size. To illustrate the importance of this, a few years ago a small rural school trained in Pause Breathe Smile following the tragic suicide of a year 8 student. The school went on to successfully integrate Pause Breathe Smile to the benefit of their students, proved influential in getting other schools trained within the local area, and continues to have new teachers at their school trained in Pause Breathe Smile. This example highlights how schools with the greatest need may not significantly add to achieving high target numbers but nonetheless, Pause Breathe Smile can have a significant beneficial effect on the local school community.



Programme Reach by School Decile

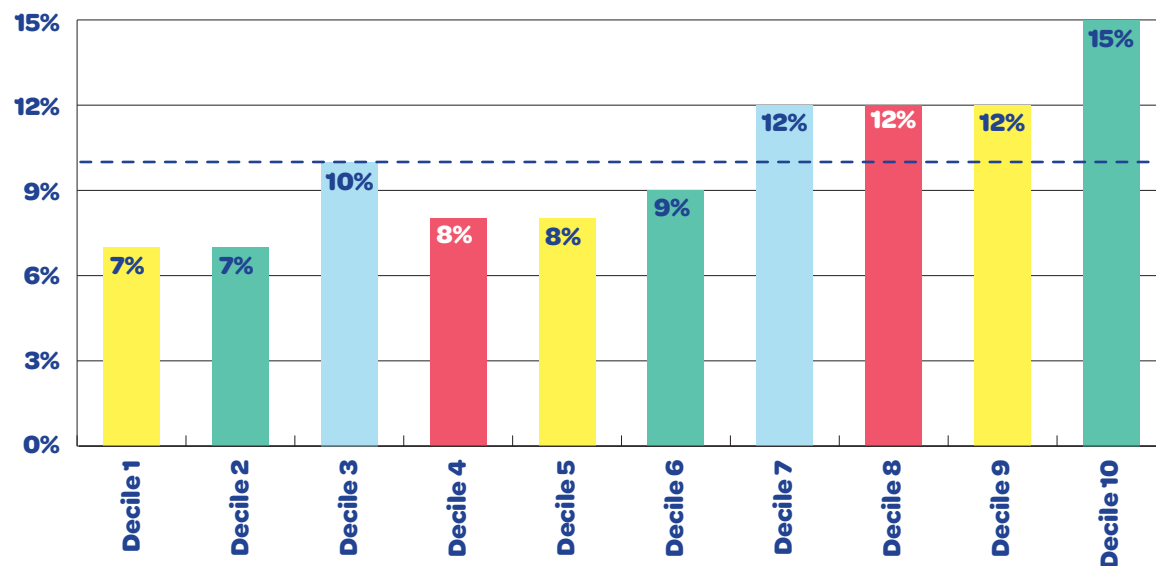
Proportions of schools completing training workshops in Years 1 & 2 within each school decile

This graph shows the proportions of PBS-trained schools across each school decile rating. The horizontal dashed line represents a perfect representation target, where each school decile would receive an equal 10 percent of workshops—10 percent being the very definition of a decile.

Data period = start of SFA to 30 June 2022.

The Trust notes the slightly disproportionate reach favouring higher deciles over lower ones since the beginning of the SFA. It is understood that lower decile schools have been more negatively impacted by the Covid pandemic than higher ones, particularly with respect to learners not returning to school following lockdowns, which adds to the complications of schools prioritising educator PLD at this time. It is also likely that lower decile schools may be focussed on meeting more fundamental learner needs such as ensuring learners have adequate food, clothing, stationery supplies and learning resources. Nonetheless, Pause Breathe Smile Trust is committed to ensuring the wellbeing programme is equally accessible to all learners, and hopes that the increase in Te Reo Māori resources and focus on making PBS accessible to full immersion Māori classrooms will help address inequities.

Note that the decile system will no longer be used in New Zealand from 2023 onwards. Instead, schools will receive funding according to a new “equity index”, which is intended to bring a greater level of fairness into the education system. We will keep abreast of these changes to the system and consider how this might influence our decision making regarding targeted advertising campaigns and according to agreed upon outcomes with Southern Cross.



**“The
Pause Breathe
Smile programme is
implemented across our
school and has made a big
difference to student
wellbeing and their
ability to cope with
big emotions”.**

**“Thank you,
this has been a
great journey to be on.
Having the PBS skills and
lessons to draw on as children
returned to school post
covid lockdowns was
particularly valuable”.**

Pause Breathe Smile Metrics Year Two Report

These key metrics show the reach of the Wellbeing Programme for 2021-2022 and result from the Groups of Activities of the PBST (Business As Usual; BAU). The key metrics represent the deliverables resulting from the Groups of Activities.

Key Metrics representing quarterly deliverables resulting from core BAU Groups of Activities.

| | Number of Children | Number of New Schools | Number of Educators |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Q1 Y2 | 5,900 | 24 | 433 |
| Q2 Y2 | 5,550 | 22 | 445 |
| Q3 Y2 | 17,685 | 51 | 1,366 |
| Q4 Y2 | 12,665 | 42 | 1,177 |
| Year 2 Totals | 41,800 | 139 | 3,421 |
| Year 1 Totals | 46,200 | 184 | 3,153 |
| Totals since SFA launch 7 Aug 2020 – 30 Jun 2022 | 88,000 | 323 | 6,574 |

The impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the Trust's responses

The past year has tested children and teachers alike with uncertainty, fear and disruptions generated by Covid 19 circulating widely throughout New Zealand. We have both international and anecdotal evidence that the impacts can be significant and long lasting. All of these are new pressures that schools and educators are adjusting to. How well teachers and students are coping in the pandemic is a new consideration for school senior leadership when weighing up a decision to commit to professional development and implement a new school-wide initiative. Ironically the wellbeing programme is probably the most valuable learning that could happen within schools in response to covid-induced anxieties. The Trust's focus is to help school decision-makers understand that evidence-based wellbeing support for schools through Pause Breathe Smile should be prioritised to support teachers and learners as soon as possible.

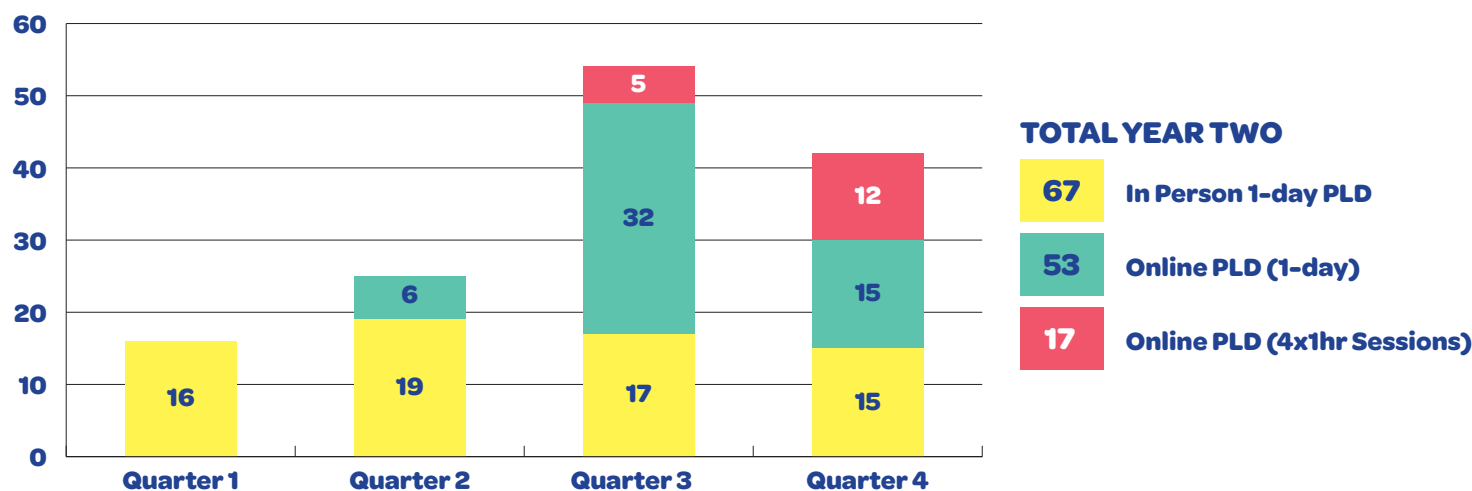
In response to the rapidly changing nature of the pandemic and its significant impact on schools during this financial year, the Trust adapted quickly and flexibly in the following areas:

- Moving the one-day PLD workshop to an online format
- Developing a new online multi-session training model (4 x one-hour sessions) spread over several weeks
- Adapting our messaging and methods of engagement with schools
- Widening the reach of Pause Breathe Smile training to include more education and health professionals

All these responses have required a multitude of operational adaptations which the organisation has admirably achieved under pressure. The leadership of senior management alongside the team's commitment, flexibility, and dedication to achieving the Trust's mission and SFA outcomes in the midst of a global pandemic is highly commendable. As an organisation we are incredibly proud of what we have achieved. These responses have now become 'Business as Usual' and incorporated into the ongoing daily operations of the Trust.

In-person training has resumed from June 2022, however we anticipate that as additional covid waves impact school communities, that we will revert to online training from time to time through either public health need or upon school request. Waitlisted online training is now available for new teachers, or teachers that were sick with covid and unable to attend their school's PLD.

Pause Breathe Smile Professional Learning and Development by type



The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on schools are the greatest challenge for the Trust and we expect that covid related disruptions will continue to affect Trust operations to some degree for the remaining term of the sponsorship funding agreement at least. As predicted in the Risk Assessment of the 2021/2022 Annual Plan, some schools are delaying taking up Pause Breathe Smile due to a raft of new challenges. Illness of teachers and students, with Covid-19 and increased winter ailments such as the flu, have led to a situation where many schools have already exceeded their full-year reliever budget. In addition, there is a significant shortage of relievers in many parts of the country. Over 50,000 school-aged learners have not returned to the classroom since lockdowns. This means schools are dedicating resources to encouraging learners to return to school and facing funding shortfalls due to reduced roll sizes. Thus, a return to business as usual where schools have the capacity to prioritise PLD, is not quickly attainable for schools.

“I really wish I had this course when I was growing up... I feel this is a lifelong resource that not only the children will learn from, but the educators too. A fantastic toolbox of strategies for our tamariki to get them into spaces of awareness, calmness and control in such a chaotic world”

How our audience hear about us



Appendix

Implementing Pause Breathe Smile within a unique context: A case study of Stand Tū Māia

Stand Tū Māia is a nationwide New Zealand non-governmental organisation that delivers therapeutic and social work services including within home, school-based settings, and planned therapeutic communities (Children's Villages) for at-risk children aged 5 to 12 years. A family therapy service is also offered for children and youth (up to 18 years) and their families. The organisation employs community and school social workers as well as teachers to provide individualised support to children and families who have complex psychosocial needs. Stand Tū Māia offers a wide variety of specialised programmes with the main aim of addressing the unique mental health, education, and social needs of at-risk children.

In March 2022, Stand Tū Māia took part in the Pause Breathe Smile professional training. A total of 54 staff from across New Zealand participated in either one of two full-day online workshops. Staff taking part included a mix of predominantly community social workers, therapeutic care workers, and teachers, but also included were managers and team leaders. Each workshop followed the established format of four 1-hour blocks across the day with a minimum 30-minute break between each block to support learning and engagement.

Around two months following the training, feedback was sought on how Pause Breathe Smile was going for staff engaged in work with children. A convenience sample was utilised, with feedback solicited either directly from staff or collated by the Stand Tū Māia national training manager. Staff were invited to share their observations of children's wellbeing, how they thought Pause Breathe Smile was supporting wellbeing, and any other observations they thought were worth noting. Responses were collected and analysed for major themes, which are summarised below.

Identifying challenges and adapting to the unique context of Stand Tū Māia

The unique context of Stand Tū Māia provided a range of challenges to implementing Pause Breathe Smile. These included integrating with what may already be a complex mix of interventions:

With the children and families that I have worked with since the programme, I have already had other intervention plans already in place, so it didn't feel appropriate to incorporate pause, breathe, smile into the mix as well.

More often, however, many respondents saw Pause Breathe Smile as being able to dovetail easily with concurrent interventions and children's needs. For example:

It fits in nicely with our other programmes that we run and as such slotted in with them without too much disruption to the children in what we were offering.

Excellent programme, suits many of our tamariki—safe [and] non-threatening.

We believe this programme can be implemented well into our children's village and will provide great outcomes for the children. We have already introduced mindful eating into our morning tea structure which we learnt about in training.

There were challenges identified around using Pause Breathe Smile in individual and family-based therapeutic contexts rather than within a classroom setting:

My only concern is that I largely work one on one with children, so when I have tried to do this with tamariki, I sometimes feel like it is quite intense for them without having

a whole classroom joining in as well (they might feel I am too focused in on them, adds a bit of pressure).

I imagine there might be aspects of Pause Breathe Smile that could be used with families, but it would be difficult to implement it in its entirety and in the sequential way it is structured.

Notwithstanding, most respondents working within these settings found value in integrating at least some of the core practices of Pause Breathe Smile. Such practices—on top of the programme as a whole—have been highly portable:

Even though I haven't had the chance to implement the program yet, I have utilised parts to empower and create gratitude within daily life.

Unfortunately, I have not utilised the programme as much as I initially hoped I would... However, I have used some aspects of it, and wish to use it more in the future.

The breathing exercises have been something that I have easily been able to utilise in many different areas of my practice even if the child hasn't completed the programme.

We have implemented most of the core practices into our daily routine...since the training and it has been transformational, particularly mindful eating practices.... In time I can see myself using all the techniques and strategies we learnt.

We have started to implement the programme into the TCE [Therapeutic Care and Education] daily. While at this stage we are not using it as an eight week programme, we are looking at how we can implement it further.

A final subtheme related to adapting Pause Breathe Smile to the work context of Stand Tū Māia was the utility of the available resources, with many respondents communicating appreciation of both the online and printed resources:

The guided meditation links and the learning booklet [have] been a great resource to use and also share learnings with caregiver/parent. The case child I am working with, presents with high functioning anxiety, and it was important to link brain, body connections and wellbeing strategies that work for them.

The resources that are now available such as meditations for children are great.

I have enjoyed listening to the Te Reo versions as well and practising them with my own family, so I am familiar with the content.

We are very excited to be able to use the Pause Breath Smile language and the lesson plans, which are well set out.

Navigating emotions

A second major theme that was identified in the feedback relates to children navigating their emotional experiences. There were three subthemes that comprised this overarching theme, which included emotional literacy, emotion regulation, and the utility of finding calm through mindfulness practices.

Emotional literacy comprises awareness of one's emotions—and with mindfulness, this means being able to recognise and name what's going on emotionally, while it's going on. This has implications for how we respond to our emotions, but as a first step knowing what we are feeling is crucial. Feedback suggests that children practising Pause Breathe Smile were seeing benefits in terms of increased emotional literacy:

Increased ability to share thoughts, ideas, worries and challenges. Recognise the rise and fall of feelings and body triggers and responses.

Being able to really identify and think about their body responses (so can notice when they are feeling anxious or agitated).

From there, the second step of emotion regulation can take off, and surveying the feedback from the respondents, a clear subtheme of using mindfulness practises to help facilitate emotion regulation emerged:

Sensory and breathing I find help ground the child and it enabled them to recentre themselves if they begin to get elevated from emotions whether that may be excitement or anxiety.

Being able to self-regulate, they refer to dropping the anchor when they are escalating.

Related to emotional regulation is developing the ability to find calm again after the storm. Many comments centred around this, thus deserving a subtheme related to the benefits of practising mindfulness to access experiences of relaxation and calm:

Being able to relax and belly breathe when they feel things are too hard.

Being able to pause, relax and regulate their breathing.

I believe this process is so critical for all children and adults who need help with grounding and conscious practice to calm the mind and heart.

The children describe their sense of calm, being more aware of deep breathing and lessened overwhelmed feelings.

Social interactions

A third major theme from the feedback centred around positive impacts on social interactions. This included peer interactions as well as children's interactions with adults. Some of the quotes below indicate this stems from enhanced emotion regulation; however, as an important domain of

holistic wellbeing, or hauora—and as operationalised in the Te Whare Tapa Whā model—this theme is deserving of its own space. The following is a selection of quotes related to this theme:

Some of the children are having more positive interactions with each other and staff.

During heated play the [children] can emotionally regulate in small ways more easily.

Calmer, more willing to engage with staff and peers – [dropping] anchor is a favourite.

The child I am working with is more tolerable of social anxiety, accepting coping strategies and knows that he has the right to express and tell trusted adults, if it does become too much for him.

Morning tea used to be quite a challenging time in the day, where children would refuse to eat together. But since we have implemented mindful eating, every child comes to the table and engages in rich conversation about the food in front of them.

Attention regulation

Finally, some respondents noted positive impacts on attention regulation. While this was a less prevalent theme, the impact is potentially significant, given the population of children that Stand Tū Māia work with, including children with autism, ADHD, and other contributing psychosocial factors that may impede cognitive factors and executive functioning.

During our sessions together, I have noticed that one boy (9) has more attention and focus and accepting more of direction and focus, he would often be distracted and rush through activities, but it has helped so much with noticing and taking the time to reflect on identifying these positive changes.

Attentional focus has been better on the whole.

I found the mindfulness eating was a fun way to engage children encourages very focused attention on the different textures and tastes etc.

Summary

The feedback elicited from staff at Stand Tū Māia indicated some clear benefits from introducing Pause Breathe Smile into their work with at-risk children. The benefits identified included: (1) helping children navigate their emotional worlds, including cultivating awareness of emotions and strategies for self-regulation; (2) positive impacts on social interactions, which likely stem from more skilful emotion regulation; and (3) potential positive effects on attention regulation. However, another theme that emerged from the feedback reflected the challenges of applying Pause Breathe Smile to the unique

context of Stand Tū Māia, which in many cases involved one-on-one work with children or family interventions. While many responses reflected the value of introducing individual mindfulness practices, it was acknowledged—either explicitly or implicitly—that implementing the whole programme was not without its challenges. Encouragingly, however, there appeared an intention to explore ways that this could be done going forward.

In sum, the feedback from Stand Tū Māia indicates that there are potentially many benefits that can be gained from introducing Pause Breathe Smile into a unique context of working with at-risk children. The application of core mindfulness practices and the use of Pause Breathe Smile resources has the potential to enhance

wellbeing for such children and warrants further attention. Acknowledging the challenges of unique contexts, however, should be front of mind as Pause Breathe Smile expands beyond the classroom so that creative adaptations can be considered and supported.

“We have implemented most of the core practices into our daily routine in Whiti Te Ra since the training and **it has been transformational**, particularly mindful eating practices. Morning tea used to be quite a challenging time in the day, where children would refuse to eat together. But since we have implemented mindful eating, every child comes to the table and engages in rich conversation about the food in front of them. In time I can see myself using all the techniques and strategies we learnt during Pause Breathe Smile”.

“**The resources that are now available such as meditations for children are great. There are a lot of resources we have access to now because of the training”.**

