



Check and Connect

Newsletter 3 - 21 August 2012

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* MENTORS *



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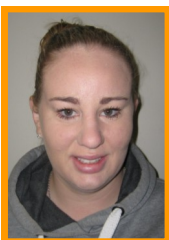
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* CHANGING THE STORY *

All Human Beings have a story about their lives. They and other people around them interpret life events and the reactions of others to make Narratives about **who they are** and **where they are heading**. Some teenagers have positive stories that say "I'm a success, and I know when I face difficulties I can overcome". Sadly others construct stories that say "I'm a failure and there's not much I can do about it".

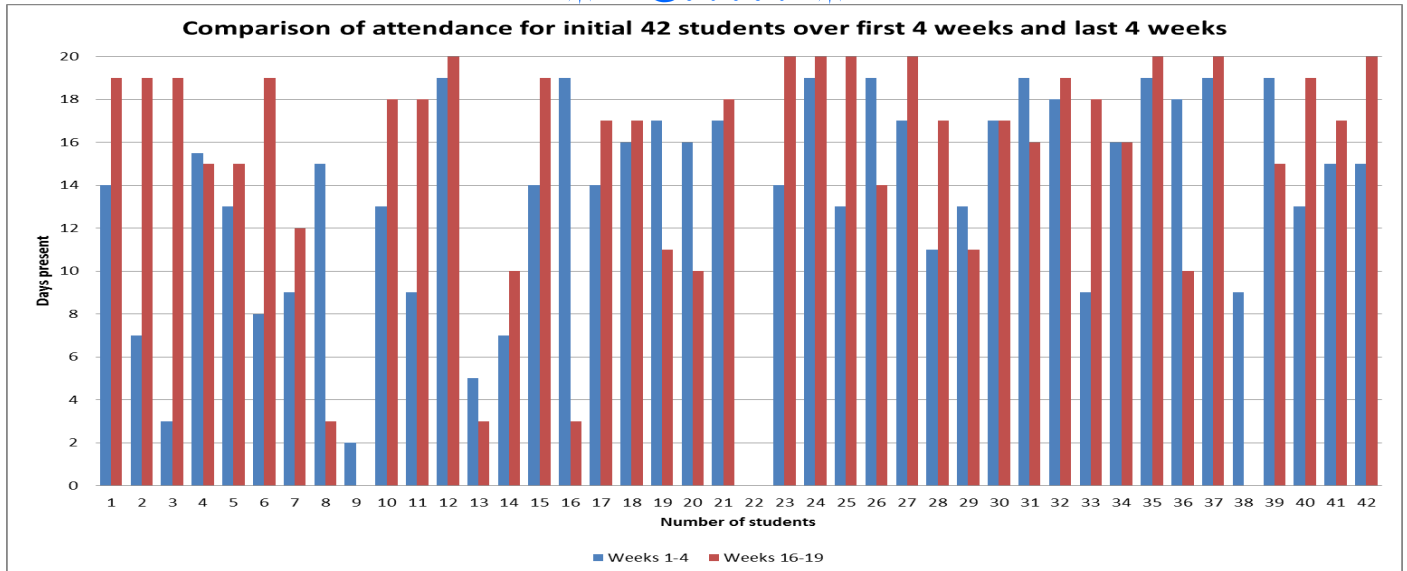
This second group of teenagers **ignore very real strengths they have in their lives**. One teenager described as 'angry' 'confrontational' and 'always late for class' actually displays incredible resilience and strength:

"The adults in my family often struggle with using drugs. I have brothers and sisters that I have to take care of. I have to stand up for myself and my little brothers and sisters. I don't let anyone know about my problems because they end up blaming my parents and judging us. I pretend to be a joker and a clown at school...it's my way of dealing with my problems"

This student has real resilience and courage. The mentor is working with him to recognize his strengths and discuss ways of harnessing them to create a new story for their life. A story about how he has worked through difficulty, having courage and not giving up.

Check and Connect are currently working with 63 students from 25 State High Schools/ Intermediate Schools and Full Primary Schools in Christchurch.

* DATA *



* SUCCESS STORIES *

PILLAR OF STRENGTH

The Mentor

He was one of my first students. The history and background I was given about him turned out to just be a snapshot – there was a lot more to him than that. This student had been a long term client of CYF and other agencies – would he see me as just one more professional? Over time we built a relationship. There were many challenges but we got there.

The Student

Since my mum died I've been passed around between different homes. I keep going to school. I think some of my teachers don't care about me. That's one of the things that makes me feel like quitting school. But so far I keep going anyway. I have a mentor now, so I meet with him and talk about stuff. I even try some of the stuff he suggests.

The Mentor

When I see what he goes through on a regular basis, I admire his strength and resilience. He is working with me. He always meets with me, engages, tells me things he doesn't have to and is willing to listen and try. We are still trying to get him to a place where he can feel confident and proud of what he has accomplished. This young man is far better off with us.

THE TURN AROUND

From a student's perspective...

I know I'm not stupid. I want to learn, to feel good at school, to feel like I belong. I need help and patience to get there. My mum was in big trouble. But she is a good mum. She loves me and tries her best. I think people who know about us judge me. Nobody understands what I am going through.

Now they've given me this mentor. What do I do with a mentor? I know, I just won't turn up. Or maybe I'll turn up but keep my mouth shut. If I don't say anything maybe they'll go away! Hmm... this mentor isn't going away. She listens to me and doesn't judge me. She respects me. This mentor just might understand me!



* REMEMBER *

Please send all attendance data for the week by 2 pm on Fridays. The referral committee meets every Thursday at 2 pm. Your help and support to this programme is most appreciated.

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