



## THE DIFFERENCE A MENTOR MAKES



*For privacy the image does not represent the subjects in this story.*

When Joe commenced the Raise mentoring program he had no friends at school, or outside of school, and his father worked night shifts so he didn't see him very often. Joe found it very difficult being the centre of his mentor's attention and struggled to connect. Joe would also try to shock his mentor and the other people in the program with outlandish stories and it became obvious how others would find it difficult to be around him.

### One step at a time...

The Raise Program Counsellor decided to seek initial help from the school who responded immediately by planning to get Joe involved in social skills workshops and a writing group. Joe's mentor also remained committed and kept showing up each week despite the challenge of leaving work early in the afternoon whilst trying to understand if he was making any difference in Joe's life.

Towards the end of the program everyone started to see a definite change in Joe's behaviour. When teamed up with other boys in the program he was making a real effort to join in and match his mood to those around him. He also grew in confidence in his interactions and certainly with his mentor.

### Someone to turn to...

As the Raise mentoring program was ending, Joe unfortunately experienced a setback with his family and came to the mentoring session terribly upset, expressing his pain by physically punching walls. Whilst he had to be separated from the group, his mentor stayed with him and Joe was able to

open up and explain what had happened. He even agreed to go with his mentor and the Raise Program Counsellor to speak to his Deputy Principal and call his mum.

### A new network of support

Since then Joe has continued to receive strong support from his school including counselling both within and outside of school and maintaining access to programs which will continue to help him build on the social skills he was developing during the program. Importantly, his mum now also knows some of what her son is struggling with.

Through the trusting relationship Joe developed with his Raise mentor, he was finally given the opportunity to learn how to express himself and seek help. Joe now knows he has the school Principal and the wellbeing teacher as a go-to when he struggles in the future.

### About Raise

Raise Foundation is a registered Australian charity which provides mentoring programs for young people in high schools and in the community. Our mentoring programs provide a community of support around young people. Mentoring from a positive role model during the critical teenage years provides a nurturing pathway for young people to feel heard, supported and valued.

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