

BELONG AND DREAM

TAUPŌ KĀHUI AKO

AIM

Support Year 8 students transitioning to secondary school, particularly those at risk of disengaging.

IMPACT

- » Improved student attendance and engagement.
 - » Decreased behavioural issues and pastoral entries.
 - » Enhanced student well-being, including reduced anxiety and depression levels.
 - » Strengthened student-teacher relationships.
 - » Increased connection to school and community.
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CONTRIBUTING OUTCOMES

- » Overall attendance increased from **63%** to **79%** for programme participants.
- » Attendance on programme days exceeded **90%**.
- » **90%** of students showed a decrease in pastoral entries related to behaviour.
- » Psychometric testing revealed reductions in anxiety and depression levels.
- » **100%** of students reported feeling more connected to their school and increased self-confidence.





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BELONG AND DREAM

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VISION

To support Year 8 students transitioning to Taupō-nui-a-Tia College to successfully engage with members of the school, the wider community and the learning community.

MISSION

To identify students who are at risk of failing to engage in learning or who are late enrollers to develop positive transitions.

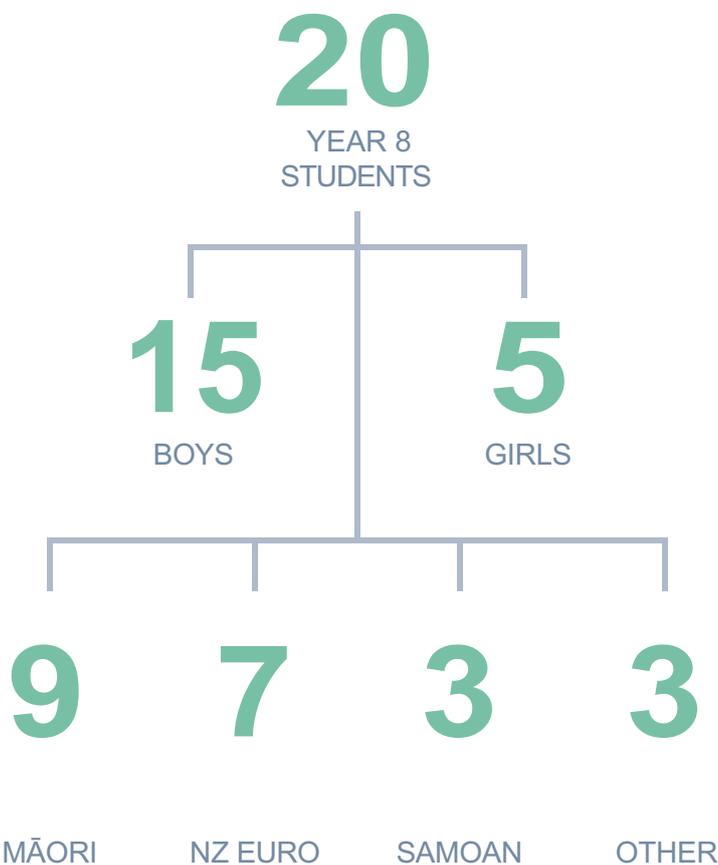
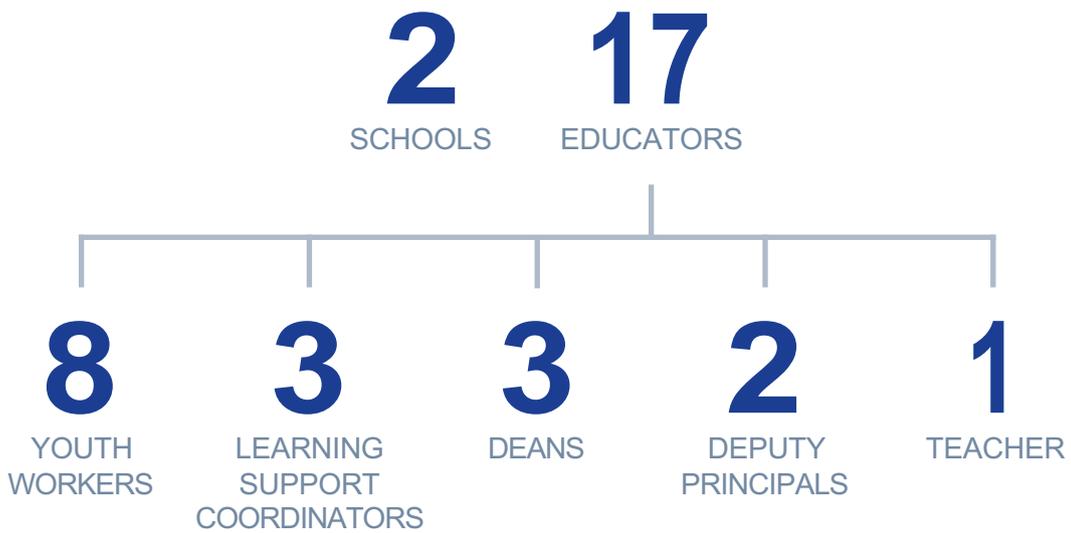
OVERVIEW

The Belong and Dream programme aims to support vulnerable students transitioning from intermediate to secondary school by fostering a sense of belonging and equipping them with the skills and support needed to thrive. This case study examines the programme's alignment with TRPET's strategic priorities, focusing on its effectiveness in building learning capabilities, increasing teacher effectiveness, and addressing inequalities.



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BELONG AND DREAM — OUTPUTS FOR 2023/24



120 HOURS OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

- golf
- swimming
- baking
- treetop walk
- ten pin bowling
- mini-golf
- rock climbing
- Rotorua day trip
- jet boat ride
- Motion Entertainment
- snow skiing
- kiwi sanctuary
- cooking
- environmental support work
- box fit
- sport coaching at primary schools
- Huka Falls walk
- The Cave VR
- CrossFit
- escape rooms
- fly fishing
- forestry

Fostering positive transitions and empowering students

The Belong and Dream programme aims to support vulnerable students transitioning from intermediate to secondary school by fostering a sense of belonging and equipping them with the skills and support needed to thrive.

Empowering students through connection

The students participating in Belong and Dream face challenges in areas such as school engagement, social integration, mental health and systemic inequalities. The programme addresses these challenges through:

1. Early intervention and support

Belong and Dream proactively identifies Year 8 students who may be at risk during their transition to secondary school, enabling timely intervention and support.

This proactive approach aims to prevent potential issues from escalating and to promote a smoother transition to the new school environment.

2. Building strong relationships

The programme focuses on building positive relationships between students and senior school staff, creating a supportive environment where students feel comfortable interacting with teachers and seeking guidance.

This focus on relationships helps to improve communication and trust, which are crucial for effective teaching and learning.

3. Addressing underlying needs

Recognising that academic success is often hindered by unmet basic needs, the programme addresses situations where students lack access to essential resources such as uniforms and food.

By alleviating these barriers, Belong and Dream creates a more equitable learning environment where all students have the opportunity to focus on their education and personal growth.

4. Culturally responsive practices

Belong and Dream demonstrates a commitment to culturally responsive practices, particularly by incorporating elements of Te Whare Tapa Whā, a Māori model of well-being.

This approach acknowledges the importance of cultural identity and holistic well-being for Māori students.

The programme also aims to increase engagement among young Māori and Pasifika students to reduce their over-representation in alternative education pathways.

5. Engaging whānau

The programme acknowledges the important role of whānau in a student's educational journey and actively facilitates communication and collaboration between school staff and whānau.

This partnership ensures a holistic approach to supporting the student and recognises parents and caregivers as integral partners in the learning process.

“The value of this programme for our community and the specific young people involved is immense, positively impacting their success in education, social, emotional and physical health. Learning Support at Taupō-nui-a-Tia are doing an amazing job in advocating for these young people so they can have early intervention and experience successes.”

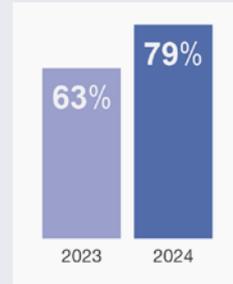
– Real Southern Lakes, Taupō

Measurable Success

The programme's positive impact on student well-being is evidenced through:

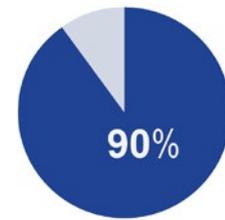
Attendance

- » Overall participant attendance increased from **63%** during Term 4 (2023) to **79%** during Term 4 (2024).
- » Participants' attendance on programme days exceeded **90%**, with many identifying these as their **favourite days**.



Behaviour

- » **90%** of students showed a decrease in pastoral entries related to behavioural issues.
- » Improvements suggest better emotional regulation, social skills and constructive self-expression.



Mental health

- » Psychometric testing revealed reductions in anxiety and depression levels.
- » Results highlight the programme's role in supporting emotional well-being.



Social interactions

- » Observations showed **improved group participation** and a **decrease in offensive language**.
- » Enhancements in social skills promoted belonging and positive peer relationships.



Student feedback

- » **100%** of students reported feeling:
 - » **More connected** to their school
 - » **Increased self-confidence**



Contributions to TRPET's strategic priorities

Belong and Dream effectively addresses all three of TRPET's strategic priorities:



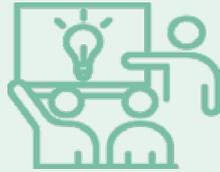
#1

Building Learning Capabilities

The programme strengthens learning capabilities by proactively identifying and supporting vulnerable Year 8 students as they transition to secondary school.

By improving their attendance and engagement in the classroom, the programme enhances their ability to learn and succeed academically.

This early intervention helps prevent potential challenges and ensures smoother, more positive transitions and learning.



#2

Increasing Teacher Effectiveness

The programme indirectly contributes to increasing teacher effectiveness **by fostering positive relationships between students and senior staff.**

This improved communication and trust create a more supportive environment for teaching and learning.

The decrease in pastoral entries related to behaviour issues also allows teachers to focus more on instruction.



#3

Addressing Inequalities

The programme's commitment to culturally responsive practices, such as Te Whare Tapa Whā, helps reduce educational disparities exacerbated by cultural mismatches or a lack of cultural responsiveness.

In addition to academic support, the programme addresses basic needs such as uniforms and food, fostering a more equitable learning environment and increasing student representation in education pathways.

Looking ahead

Belong and Dream has demonstrated success in its initial implementation. To sustain and enhance its impact, future development plans may include:

- **Programme expansion:** Expanding the programme to other schools and regions would allow more students to benefit from its positive impact.
- **Sharing best practices:** Disseminating the programme's findings, methodologies and best practices with other educators and organisations would help to inform and inspire similar initiatives across the country.

By addressing students' academic, social, emotional and cultural needs, Belong and Dream empowers them to thrive during their transition to secondary school and beyond.

This programme — with its strong alignment with TRPET's strategic priorities — showcases the transformative potential of investing in early intervention, culturally responsive practices and community collaboration to build a more equitable and effective education system for all learners.

Belong and Dream is a **powerful example of how a targeted, holistic approach** to supporting vulnerable students **can create lasting positive change**



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