

# Sparklers

Helping tamariki live brighter

Free activities that help tamariki feel good, learn well and live brighter



## Supporting the mental health of tamariki

A formal evaluation of Sparklers in 2018 captured the experiences of students, teachers and other professionals using the resource.

## Sparklers

Sparklers is a wellbeing toolkit for year 1-8 students consisting of over 50 wellbeing activities that help give young people the skills and tools they need to build positive mental health and wellbeing.

It has been developed by All Right? with support from Canterbury DHB's School Based Mental Health and Health Promoting Schools teams.

## Evaluation findings

### Embedding wellbeing:

Interviews with school leaders found that Sparklers activities aligned with whole-school approaches to building wellbeing and creating culture change.

*'It fits really well with our overall focus on wellbeing for our school.'* –Deputy Principal

*'If the kids aren't ready to learn, or they don't feel safe, or they feel they don't belong... they're disengaged... we need to focus on wellbeing and I truly believe achievement will take off.'* –Principal

*'It was really easy. I just flicked out the site to my staff. All the resources are there, there are teacher notes, clips, videos and whatever you need... and a variety of activities. That really appealed to me.'* –Principal

## Building social and emotional literacy

All teachers interviewed spoke enthusiastically about the implementation of Sparklers with their students.



### Teachers appreciated:

#### The clear instructions:

*'It is actually so straightforward and I love that it says what sort of activity it is. Yeah, I don't think it could be any clearer.'*

*'I think it is a fabulous resource and it is very easy to integrate into the classroom routine.'*

#### How activities resonated with students:

*'It has helped us to focus on the positives of one another. Some students with low self-esteem look forward to hearing positives from their peers rather than just the teacher.'*

*'It was a good way to get to know the kids a bit more. A bit of sharing and things like that... I remember doing the 'Compliment posters' and you could just see the positive effect that it had on the kids. Who doesn't like getting a compliment?'*

*'It's got to the point where the children come in and they just know. They sit and they just relax.'*

#### Its alignment with school values:

*'With our values like respect, empathy and perseverance, it's quite good that you can choose activities to sort of represent one of those... we were thinking we actually should be writing the Sparklers activities into our lessons around school values.'*

## Sparklers is also popular with:

### Students:

*'They're really calming and... we feel really nice afterwards.'*

*'Sparklers is a place to feel comfortable and be yourself.'*

### Parents:

*'And I've recommended the resource to parents and I know they have used it. They've come back to me and said, 'That was really helpful. Thank you.'*

**–Deputy Principal**

### Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour:

*'What I like about it is that it has a positive psychology focus... so it's focusing on the positives for students and teachers and parents. So I think that's really good as opposed to a deficit model.'*

*'It gives us the authority to go and say, 'You need to prioritise wellbeing and here's a simple way you can do that.''*

*'We don't have to be mental health workers. We're facilitators of a resource that the school can just run with.'*

## Evaluation conclusions

Overall, the availability of the Sparklers resource was highly valued.

Sparklers offers a concrete starting place for a wellbeing focus to begin.

Sparklers provides a common wellbeing language across students, teachers, school leaders and other professionals. Sparklers has normalised talking about and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for the schools involved in the evaluation.