

Quarterly  
information  
update for  
friends and  
supporters



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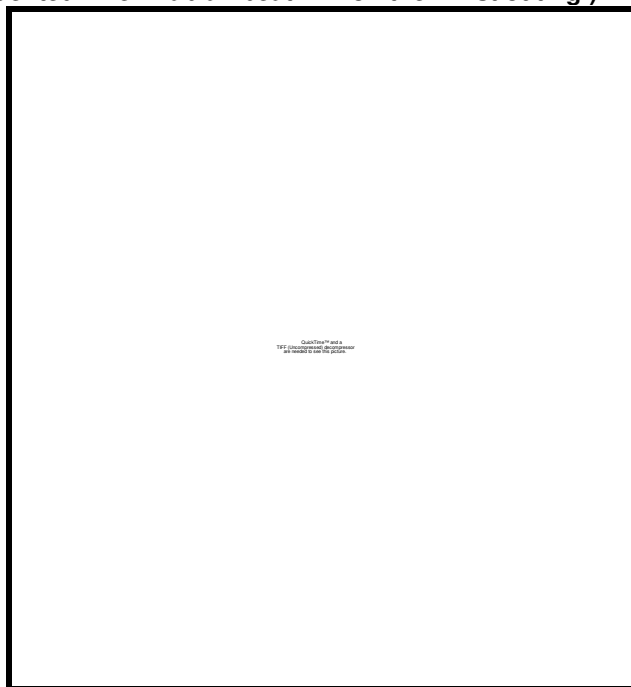
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Welcome to the new look quarterly Brothers in Arms newsletter – we hope to keep you all up to date with what we are doing and where we are going. Please feel free to email this newsletter on to anyone who you think would be interested in receiving it.

Brothers in Arms is a mentoring organization for at risk kiwi kids – kids that despite their young age are on the police radar, mainly because they came from homes where other family members have been involved in crime or other problems. Often these kids are truants and at risk of falling through the holes in the education system. Our mentors act as a role model, a buddy, someone who makes them feel valued and special. The pairs commit to meeting once a week for a period of at least one year. They spend quality time together doing ordinary things like kicking a ball, fishing or walking on the beach. What they do is not important - just showing up regularly and spending time with a kid is the most important gift a mentor can give. The emphasis is to have fun with the kids, to encourage and listen. The idea is simple but has profound results. Kids start to do better at school, form better relationships with others, and are less inclined to crime and abuse. The statistics on positive mentoring are clear and compelling.

Currently BIA has 25 pairs and another 8 mentors who are trained and waiting to be paired. Our latest pair are Brad Thom and Fabian Davis pictured below – Brad tells us Fabian is an awesome 10 pin bowler (Brad's ego was slightly dented when Fabian beat him on their first outing!)



A big welcome to our latest new pairs who are just beginning their mentoring journey

Brad and Fabian  
Jessica and Santy  
Sarah and Te Ana  
Adrain and Kenny  
Albert and Isaac  
Todd and Tui

We know you are going to have heaps of fun together.

And congratulations to the following pairs who have just completed one year together  
Dave and Anthony  
Felicity and Renee  
Charlie and Rob  
Tama and Sam

Our mentors at this stage are in pods based in Otara, West Auckland and Glen Innes and we are expanding numbers in all these areas. We will soon pair a mentor with a young boy in Whangaparoa (our most distant outreach to date). He is a cousin of one of our Glen Innes kids and recently lost his Dad. Fortuitously we found the perfect mentor from Orewa and soon they will be a functioning pair.

#### **TRAINING TO BE A MENTOR:**

We have a new training program beginning on September 10<sup>th</sup> – the training runs for four Monday evenings, and is based on an awesome program put together by mentoring guru Robin Cox. Dinner is available from 5.30pm so mentors can come straight from work or uni and we can be into the training by soon after 6pm. The training covers topics such as the mentoring relationship, setting and getting goals, resiliency, self concept and other adolescent issues, communication and resolving conflict. Everyone learns something about others (and themselves!!), and its also heaps of fun.

We plan to start another training group soon after this one, so if you have any friends or colleagues who you think may be interested in making a difference to a kid who doesn't have it all, get them to give David a call or drop him an email. It's a very worthwhile and practical way to reach into the community.

Mentors all undergo a police screening test and are interviewed, and referred by 3 referees. Currently most of our mentors have been recruited from church related groups and we find this a great way to reach suitable and willing volunteers. Some church youth groups are using it as their community outreach project and are taking ownership of managing the group once they are trained and paired.

#### **WHAT'S DAVE UP TO:**

Dave took a few weeks away from the office in July and went off to Europe to coach NZ's olympic representative on the RSX board, Tom Ashley. Thomas went on and won the pre-Olympic regatta in Beijing so looks like Dave is quite the ace coach!!

Since he got back to Auckland he's been working really hard and is especially spending heaps of time out in the community making contacts with police, youth aid officers, social workers, pastors and anyone who has a heart for getting in and helping at risk kids. We have made some great contacts with the group of Youth Aid Officers that cover the whole of West Auckland, and social workers in the West and Glen Innes areas. Alayna Matthews who is one of our mentors has just been appointed as a Youth Aid Worker in Glen Innes area – this is great for us to have someone who knows exactly what BIA is all about, and she will be especially looking out for kids for our program.

BIA had a presence at the Auckland Town Hall last week at the Focus on the Family's "Bringing Home the Prodigals" event. Armed with our brand new banner and information about BIA, we were able to make new contacts that may be very beneficial in the future. We plan to do this more often and will be part of the Promisekeepers Event in October.

BIA, along with others involved in mentoring programs in NZ, have been a part of providing information to The Youth Mentoring Trust who are putting together a framework for successful mentoring. It was really useful to hear and learn from others who have been in the mentoring business for many years, and hopefully the outcome will be a really robust framework that will lead to positive mentoring to become a respected and integral part of fixing some of the problem in our communities.

And Dave has a new assistant in the office – Penny Grayson (that me!) has taken on the office administration with the aim of freeing Dave up to really be out there raising the BIA's profile in the community. Penny will also be taking over the job of regularly touching base with our mentors to encourage and make sure is all going well, so mentors should expect a call from her soon. Penny can be contacted at [penny.bia@xtra.co.nz](mailto:penny.bia@xtra.co.nz) or on mobile 021 1071429.

We are often asked how helping one kid can actually make a difference in reality – problems within our society often seem so large as to be daunting. Where do we start? I like Mother Theresa's take on this. She said that you may think what you do is only a drop in the ocean but if you didn't do it, that drop wouldn't be there.