



**TOP BLOKES**  
FOUNDATION



# IMPACT REPORT

2024

# A YEAR IN REVIEW

At Top Blokes, we believe that every young male deserves the chance to lead a healthy, safe and fulfilling life. This report captures the impact of our work over the past year, grounded in evidence, fuelled by lived experience, and shaped by the voices of young men across Australia.

## WE'RE WORKING DIRECTLY WITH YOUNG MEN TO HELP BUILD THEIR FUTURE.

Through our mentoring initiatives, youth-led councils, community partnerships and advocacy efforts, we've supported thousands of boys and young men aged 10–24 to explore their identities, strengthen their wellbeing, and redefine what it means to be a 'top bloke'.

### IN OUR 14-17 PROGRAM IN 2024:

**61%** of young men reported an improvement in knowing how to reflect and think on things before they react.

**58%** reported an improvement in considering many aspects before making decisions.

**57%** reported an improvement in being able to describe how they are feeling and asking for help when they need it.

**46%** of participants **on average** reported an increase in self-confidence.

**41%** felt more optimistic about their future after completing the program.

**55%** felt they mostly or definitely were better at controlling their emotions after participating in the Top Blokes program.

**88%** felt inspired to make better choices in their life after the Top Blokes program.

**85%** have better tools to manage their mental health after the Top Blokes program.

### IN OUR 10-13 PROGRAM IN 2024:

**49%** of participants reported an improvement in their resilience.

**54%** reported an improvement in knowing what support networks and services they can access.

**50%** felt more knowledgeable about where they can get support when they transition to high school.

**65%** felt they were mostly or definitely better at controlling their emotions after participating in the Top Blokes program.



**“CONTROLLING MY ANGER  
WAS A BIG ONE. NOW I CAN  
STEP BACK, TAKE A BREATH  
AND LEAVE BEFORE THE  
SITUATION ESCALATES.”**

**10-13 Top Blokes participant**

We delivered **390 programs** across **220 schools and communities**, reaching **4,600 young males**.

Our Youth Ambassador Council helped guide Top Blokes’ wellbeing and mental health programs, bringing the issues that are important to young men straight to the heart of our organisation.

Behind every data point is a real story of courage, growth, and change. Boys who helped a mate seek support, teachers and parents who saw the shift unfold.

We’re proud of what we’ve achieved. But we’re just getting started. As we grow our local presence, strengthen our data systems, and advocate for national change, we remain focused on one thing: backing young men to lead their lives, their way.

Together we are building a future where more young males, for themselves, their mates, their families and their communities.



# OUR WHY

## TOO MANY YOUNG MALES ARE FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS.

They're facing rising mental health issues, navigating complex identity pressures, and growing up in a world where outdated stereotypes still dominate what it means to be a 'man'. From school exclusion and risky behaviour to silence around emotions, the consequences are real.

**1 IN 4 ADOLESCENTS EXPERIENCES A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION.**

**YOUNG MEN ARE OVERREPRESENTED IN SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS, YOUTH CRIME, AND DISENGAGEMENT FROM LEARNING.**

**73% OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO DIE BY SUICIDE ARE MALE.**







**“HE’S MORE OPEN AND SPEAKS TO ME ABOUT THINGS HE NORMALLY DOESN’T OPEN UP ABOUT WHAT EVER SUBJECT OR WHATEVER IS ON HIS MIND.”**

**– Parent**

## **THE CHALLENGE ISN’T JUST BEHAVIOURAL. IT’S SYSTEMIC.**

At the heart of these issues are socially dominant patterns of masculinity that teach boys to bottle things up, go it alone, and measure their worth by toughness. These expectations cut boys off from support and connection, reinforcing cycles of harm.

### **WE’RE HERE TO CHANGE THAT STORY.**

Top Blokes exists to provide a different path, one grounded in emotional safety, identity exploration, and mentoring by qualified Youth Workers that empowers young males to define masculinity on their own terms. We work in schools and communities because that’s where change begins. We engage boys early, walk with

them through their teenage years, and back them well into adulthood.

### **BECAUSE WHEN YOUNG MALES ARE SEEN, HEARD, AND SUPPORTED, THEY NOT ONLY DO BETTER THEMSELVES, BUT THEY ALSO HELP OTHERS DO BETTER.**

We believe that every young male has the potential to be a force for good in his world. That’s our why. And that’s what drives everything we do.

# OUR APPROACH

At Top Blokes, we don't believe in surface-level solutions. Real change takes time, trust, and a space where young males feel safe to show up as they are.

Our approach is grounded in evidence and guided by experience. We work alongside boys and young men aged 10–24, creating consistent, strengths-based opportunities for them to explore who they are, what they value, and how they want to show up in the world.

## **WE FOCUS ON PREVENTION, NOT REACTION.**

Through weekly small-group mentoring sessions, our qualified Youth Workers create space for real conversations about identity, mental health, relationships, respect, resilience, and more. We challenge harmful stereotypes while championing healthy, positive masculinities that allow young men to be their full selves.

## **WE BACK YOUNG MALES WITH TOOLS, NOT RULES.**

We don't tell them who to be. We help them build the skills to think critically, speak openly, support others, and lead lives they can be proud of. Because when young men are empowered to take ownership of their choices, they become the role models their communities need.

## **OUR PROGRAMS ARE DESIGNED FOR THE LONG TERM. AND SO IS OUR COMMITMENT.**

Whether a young man connects with us in Year 6 or at 24, we walk with him. We offer post-program support through our Grad Club, and leadership opportunities via the Youth Ambassador Council.

This is how we create lasting impact, not just in the lives of young males, but in their schools, families, communities, and futures.





## OUR IMPACT BY NUMBERS

Behind every number is a young man stepping into his potential.

Here's what we achieved together in 2024:

**4,600+ YOUNG MALES PARTICIPATED IN TOP BLOKES MENTORING PROGRAMS.**

**390 PROGRAMS DELIVERED IN 200+ SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY SETTINGS ACROSS NSW AND QLD.**

**3 AGE-BASED STREAMS (10–13, 14–17, 18–24) PLUS GRAD CLUB AND YOUTH AMBASSADOR COUNCIL.**

### YOUTH AMBASSADOR COUNCIL

**In 2024 we officially launched our Youth Ambassador Council made up of ten young men across NSW and QLD.**

**The group meet virtually and in person to help support Top Blokes' strategic plan, vision and be a strong advocate for young men everywhere.**

**"TIMES ARE CHANGING, NOW MORE THAN EVER, WE NEED TO START VOICING OPINIONS MORE AND START EXPRESSING OURSELVES MORE, RATHER THAN FITTING INTO THESE SOCIAL STIGMAS THAT WE FIND OURSELVES IN EVERY DAY"**

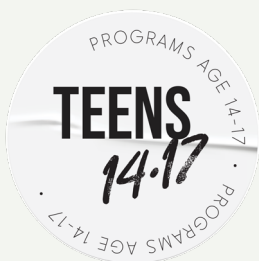
**– Austin, Youth Ambassador Council 24-25**

# IMPACT 22-24

Over the past three years, we've supported thousands of young males across Australia through our 10-13 and 14-17 mentoring programs. The results have improved each year and are clear: Top Blokes creates meaningful, measurable change in the lives of boys when and where it counts.

## MENTAL HEALTH & DECISION MAKING

Across both age groups, young males showed **significant growth** in their ability to think critically, stay safe, and seek support:



71%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BOYS THAT SAID THEY COULD DEFINITELY OR MOSTLY DESCRIBE HOW THEY ARE FEELING AND ASK FOR HELP WHEN THEY NEEDED IT (FROM 24% TO 41%).



AN AVERAGE OF 46% FELT THEY COULD BETTER EXPLAIN THE IMPACTS OF SMOKING, SEXUAL ACTIVITY AND SUBSTANCE USE.

65% INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BOYS THAT SAID THAT REFLECTING AND THINKING BEFORE REACTING WAS DEFINITELY OR MOSTLY LIKE THEM (FROM 26% TO 43%).

65%

53%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BOYS THAT SAID THAT CONSIDERING MANY ASPECTS BEFORE MAKING DECISIONS WAS DEFINITELY OR MOSTLY LIKE THEM (FROM 30% TO 46%).



**“TOP BLOKES HELPED ME WITH MY CONFIDENCE AND IT TAUGHT ME NOT ONLY HOW TO BE A GOOD LEADER BUT TO BE A GOOD TEAM MEMBER AS WELL.”**

– 14-17 Top Blokes participant



**74% INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BOYS THAT FELT THEY DEFINITELY KNEW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UPSTANDER AND BYSTANDER BEHAVIOUR (FROM 27% TO 47%).**



**68% INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BOYS REPORTING THAT THEY DEFINITELY OR MOSTLY KNEW WHAT SUPPORT NETWORKS AND SERVICES WERE AVAILABLE TO THEM (FROM 37% TO 62%).**

**50% INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF BOYS REPORTING THAT THEY DEFINITELY OR MOSTLY UNDERSTOOD HOW TO ADAPT WHEN SOMETHING WASN'T WORKING (FROM 40% TO 60%).**



## FAVOURITE WORKSHOPS

Top-rated workshops by participants included:

- Mental health and effects of drugs (14–17s)
- Peer pressure, risk-taking, and anger management (10–13s)
- Other favourites: sexual health, leadership, and healthy relationships



## RELATIONSHIPS & RESPECT

Participants also developed clearer views of respect and empathy, especially in friendships and adult relationships:



14-17S MADE MODERATE GAINS IN BUILDING RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS AND ADULTS, WITH ROOM FOR CONTINUED GROWTH.



**“I DIDN’T REALISE BEFORE THAT THE CHOICES I WAS MAKING MADE ME LOOK LIKE A BAD KID. NOW I KNOW HOW TO BE A GOOD PERSON AND SHOW OTHER PEOPLE HOW GOOD I CAN BE.”**

– 10-13 Top Blokes participant



# WHAT YOUNG MEN TOLD US

We asked boys what we could do to make Top Blokes programs better. Most boys who answered this question thought the program was “spot on”.

Others asked for:

- More Top Blokes
- Longer programs
- More sessions per week
- More activities: outdoors, sport, interactive sessions
- Real-world topics: money management, jobs, parenting

**“THE BOYS HAVE SHOWN A GREAT IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR SELF-WORTH AND VALUE OF THEIR OPINIONS.”**

– Teacher

## IDENTITY & BELONGING

We saw promising but slower changes in how young males relate to themselves:

10-13S SHOWED MODEST INCREASES IN LIKING WHO THEY ARE, FEELING SUPPORTED, AND NAMING PERSONAL STRENGTHS.



14-17S EXPERIENCED SMALLER IMPROVEMENTS IN SELF-WORTH, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND WEEKLY PARTICIPATION IN HEALTHY ACTIVITIES.



**“IT’S OK TO NEED HELP, EVERYONE DOES AT SOME POINT. THE WRONG THING IS THINKING YOU HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS LIFE WITHOUT A SUPPORT NETWORK THAT CARES AND WORKS FOR YOU.”**

– 14-17 Top Blokes participant

# TOWARDS THE FUTURE

“WE’RE NOT JUST MENTORING BOYS. WE’RE BUILDING A GENERATION OF TOP BLOKES WHO’LL GO ON TO LEAD, GUIDE, AND GROW OTHERS.”

– Melissa Abu-Gazaleh, Founder and Managing Director

AT TOP BLOKES, WE’RE PROUD OF HOW FAR WE’VE COME BUT WE’RE NOT STANDING STILL. HERE’S WHERE WE’RE HEADED NEXT:

## 1. DEEPEN LOCAL IMPACT

Expand **community presence** in regional hotspots, such as Cessnock and Toowoomba, where we are testing if community saturation strengthens long-term outcomes.

Strengthen partnerships with local schools, councils, and community organisations to embed Top Blokes mentoring as a core part of youth wellbeing.

## 2. MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

Evolve our **data collection systems** to better track progress against short-, medium- and long-term outcomes.

Capture post-program follow-up data especially through **Grad Club** and **alumni tracking** to understand sustained impact.

## 3. ELEVATE YOUTH VOICE

Expand the reach and influence of the **Youth Ambassador Council**, ensuring young men shape not only our programs, but public conversations and policy submissions.

Co-design new content and workshops with young males, including topics like financial literacy, fatherhood, consent, and online identity.

## 4. ADVOCATE FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

Use the insights gathered from young men to **engage government in policy reform** around mental health, masculinity, education, and suicide prevention.

Continue contributing to national conversations, such as parliamentary inquiries into pornography and youth mental health.