

# National Results of the BIG 3 Growth Survey



## Purpose

Children and youth who have experienced adversity are more likely to suffer from emotional, social, and mental distress during adulthood (Juwariah 2022). Adverse childhood experiences can also lead to increased levels of stress and poorer academic performance in children/youths (Ezekiel 2021). As part of Big Brothers Big Sisters' mentoring program, young people facing adversity (mentees) are matched with professionally screened mentors to build developmental relationships. As a result, mentees gain a variety of measurable outcomes that improve their emotional, social, and mental health.

The Big 3 Growth Survey examines the role that BBBS mentoring programs play in helping mentees develop social and emotional competence, better mental health, educational engagement and employment readiness.

In this document, both quantitative and qualitative data are used to showcase the national results of this survey, and to demonstrate the successes of its pilot. Results are based on analyses that focus on the percent distribution for both post- and pre- survey responses, as well as the percentage point change from pre to post responses. Excerpts from answers to an open-ended question at the end of the survey are woven through the results to deepen the findings.



The prototype survey was originally developed by BBBS Canada and members of the TIE committee. It was reviewed by external subject matter experts. Taylor Newberry Consulting (TNC) was hired to revise the mentee and caregiver versions of the tool based on this feedback and to pilot test them with the 34 agencies involved in the Scotiabank Thriving Communities Project.

<sup>1</sup> Juwariah, T., Suhariadi, F., Soedirham, O., Priyanto, A., Setiyorini, E., Siskaningrum, A., Adhianata, H., & Fernandes, A. da. (2022). Childhood adversities and mental health problems: A systematic review. *Journal of Public Health Research*, 11(3).

<sup>2</sup> Ezekiel, F. (2021). Mental health and academic performance in postsecondary education: Sociodemographic risk factors and links to childhood adversity (thesis).

## Impact of BBBS on Social and Emotional Competence

**Mentees are more likely to see themselves as sensitive to others after taking part in the program.**

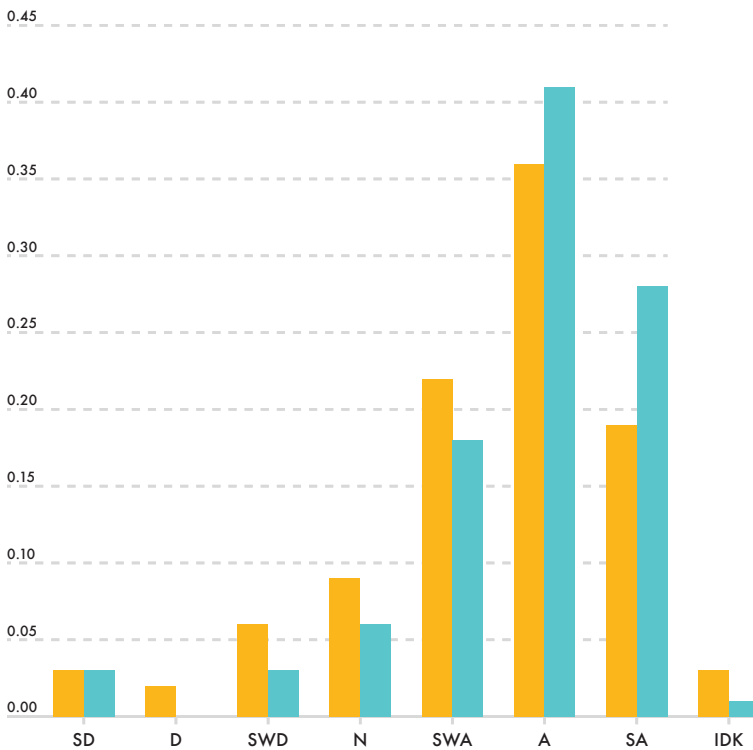
Seven out of ten mentees strongly agree or agree that they are sensitive to others' needs and feelings after participating in BBBS mentoring, compared with only five out of ten who strongly agreed or agreed prior to participating in the program.

“I was afraid to sign him up but his mentor is a true blessing. My child has benefited by renewed perspectives including a beautiful outlook in comparison to what he had prior to meeting him. It was a very positive turn around in his outlook, I am very grateful.”

**Caregivers are more likely to think that their child or youth can adjust their behavior after receiving BBBS mentoring.**

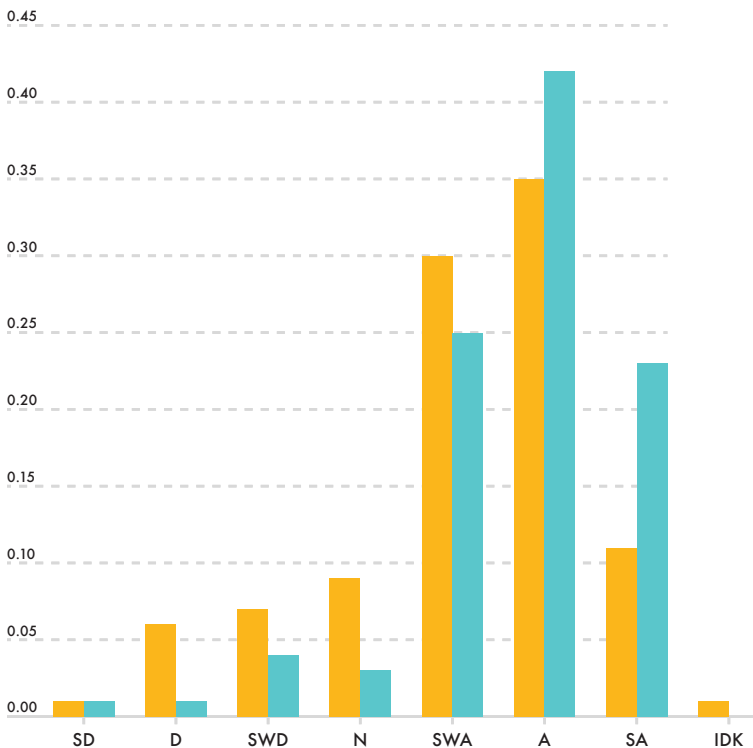
Exactly 65% of caregivers strongly agree/agree that their child/youth adjusts their behaviour depending on the situation, which is higher than the 45% who strongly agreed/agreed before the BBBS program.

“I believe the program has helped my son to develop life skills like creating and learning about friendship, and respecting people in general.”



**Figure 1. I am sensitive towards the needs and feelings of others.**

Responses to questions 7 and 14 of the Mentee Survey. Pre (n=187), Post (n=199). All respondents are mentees.



**Figure 2. My child/youth adjusted their behaviour depending on the situation.**

Responses to questions 8 and 15 of the Caregiver Survey. Pre (n=617), Post (n=674). All respondents are Caregivers.

PRE POST

SD - STRONGLY DISAGREE | D - DISAGREE | SWD - SOMEWHAT DISAGREE | N - NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE | SWA - SOMEWHAT AGREE | A - AGREE | SA - STRONGLY AGREE | IDK - I DON'T KNOW

## Impact of BBBS on Mental Health and Wellbeing

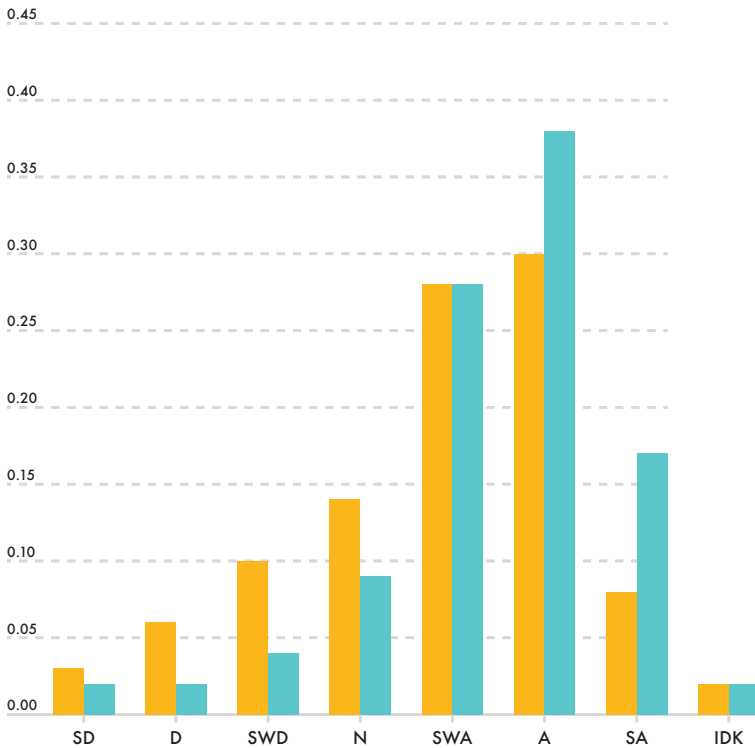
**After participating in BBBS, mentees saw themselves as better equipped to handle life's challenges.**

Prior to participating in BBBS programs, only 38% mentees strongly agreed/agree that they are able to handle challenges. After BBBS, mentees are 17% more likely to strongly agree/agree that they can handle challenges.

"I love this program and it has really helped my child to have another connection other than myself. I don't know if my answers in the survey reflect an improvement in my son's overall mental health. But I think it does. I think he would be more isolated if he didn't have his big brother since he doesn't have a ton of friends."

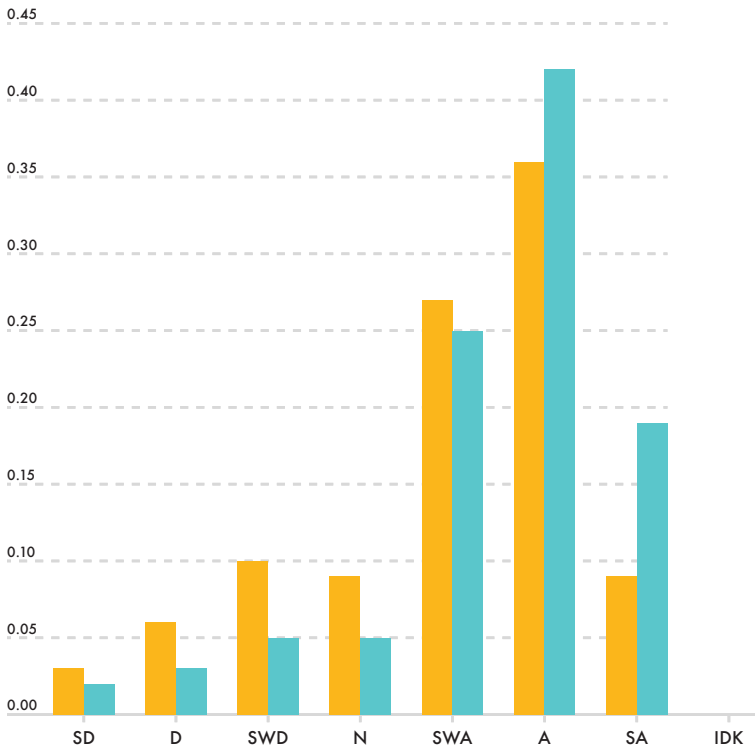
**Following participation in BBBS, caregivers agree that children and youth are more comfortable asking for help.**

Over 60% of caregivers strongly agree/agree that their child/youth feels comfortable asking for help from trusted adults. Prior to BBBS, only 45% of caregivers strongly agreed/agreed.



**Figure 3. I am able to handle challenges.**

Responses to questions 10 and 17 of the Mentee Survey. Pre (n=199), Post (n=188). All respondents are Caregivers.



**Figure 4. My child/youth feels comfortable asking for support from trusted adults.**

Responses to question 10 and 17 of the Caregiver Survey. Pre (n=618), Post (n=673). All respondents are Caregivers.

PRE POST

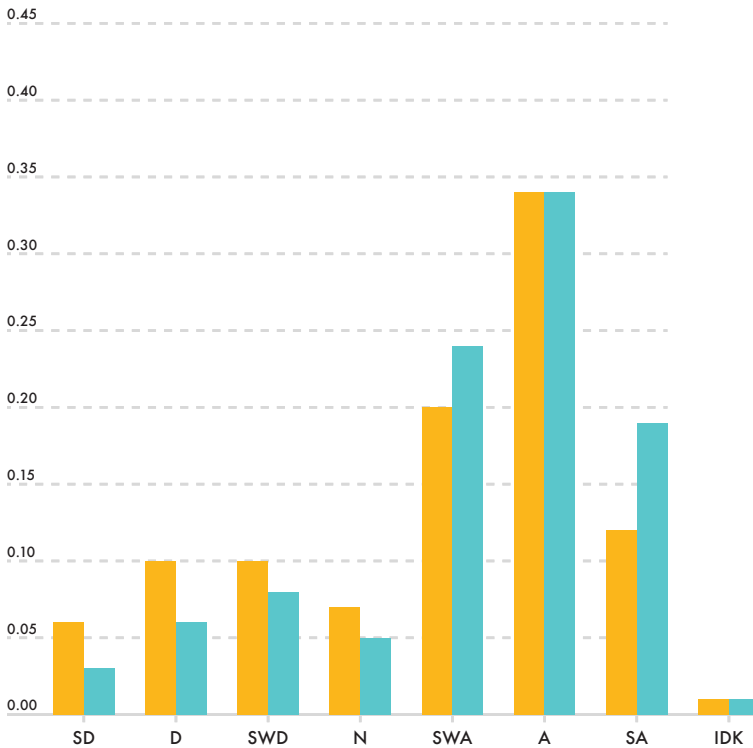
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## Impact of BBBS on Educational Engagement and Employment Readiness

**Caregivers agree that their children feel better equipped to succeed in school after participating in BBBS.**

Nearly 4 in 5 caregivers agree to some extent that their child/youth feels able to succeed in school. This is a 10 percentage point increase since before their participation in the BBBS mentoring program.

“The BBBS mentoring program has been so successful for my son. The relationship with his mentor could not be any better and his mentor has been instrumental in helping my son continue to grow and heal from his father’s death. He has also helped him in challenging situations at school and is an incredible role model for my son.”



**Figure 5. My child/youth feels able to succeed in school.**

Responses to questions 12 and 19 of the Caregiver Survey. Pre (n=618), Post (n=671). All respondents are Caregivers.

| Question  | Pre  | Post | Difference |
|---|------|------|------------|
| I am sensitive towards the needs and feelings of others                 | 5.42 | 5.80 | 0.38***    |
| My child/youth adjusted their behaviour depending on the situation      | 5.13 | 5.70 | 0.57***    |
| I am able to handle challenges  | 4.86 | 5.48 | 0.63***    |
| My child/youth feels comfortable asking for support from trusted adults | 4.97 | 5.51 | 0.56***    |
| My child/youth feels able to succeed in school                          | 4.84 | 5.27 | 0.43***    |

All five of the mean differences presented in this table were found to be statistically significant using paired t-tests ( $p < 0.001$ )”

PRE POST

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## More information: Mean Scores

Additionally, we calculated a mean score for each figure to see how mentees and caregivers typically respond to a question. Based on these scores, BBBS participants were significantly more likely to have demonstrated improved social and emotional competence, mental health and wellbeing, as well as educational engagement after participating in BBBS mentoring.