



## Peer review of 'Exploring the Efficacy of Growing2gether on Mental Health, Education and Behavioural Outcome report (2017-2023)

### Overview

In December 2024 we published a report on '[Exploring the Efficacy of Growing2gether on Mental Health, Education and Behavioural Outcome \(2017-2023\)](#)' and we asked Highland Councils Educational Psychology team if they would peer review the report.

Below are the comments from the team and we are grateful to Bernadatte Cairns, and her team for supporting us with this.

### Peer review Feedback

We prioritised 'Exploring the Efficacy of Growing2gether on Mental Health, Education and Behavioural Outcome (2017-2023)' as this was the report to be shared with Education Scotland and Nicky Grant. Hopefully the feedback will be useful – I'm not sure if we've managed within the timescale Growing2gether were hoping for. Let me know if you're happy with the comments below and if you would like to share (or would like me to).

#### Feedback on 'Exploring the Efficacy of Growing2gether on Mental Health, Education and Behavioural Outcome (2017-2023)'

We thought the report was well-written and clearly structured with relevant links to theory and other literature.

The introduction section clearly signposted the reader and the sections linking Growing2gether to relevant theory and literature concerning areas such as mental wellbeing and connectedness, self-esteem, social-emotional learning and growth mindset were very successful. We thought this theory section was very good, as was the strong justification provided for creating and undertaking the intervention.

We remarked on how powerful the case studies were towards the end of the report - particularly the comments from the young people – and considered these valuable additions. They also provided us with further information about the content of the intervention and we wondered if this could have been elaborated on nearer the beginning of the report. For example, how the young people and children were selected and paired, what the interactions

between the young person and child looked like, how often they occurred and the role of the facilitator. We felt this would help us better understand the key features of Growing2gether that make it so effective.

A few possible considerations...

- What is the impact on the younger child in the dyad? Could this be an area for future research?
- Instead of using ACEs cut-offs, it might be more appropriate to use a descriptive term such as 'traumatic experiences' as the list of ACEs can be exclusive.
- In Table 1 on page 8, the percentage changes from the teacher questionnaires were impressive. Calculating an effect size or 'impact factor' might be worth considering as an alternative way to quantify this improvement.
- Could some of the measures/questionnaire items be included as appendices to give a flavour of the tools used?

We really enjoyed reading and discussing such high quality work. Congratulations to all at Growing2gether on the positive results!

Kind regards,

*Sarah*

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