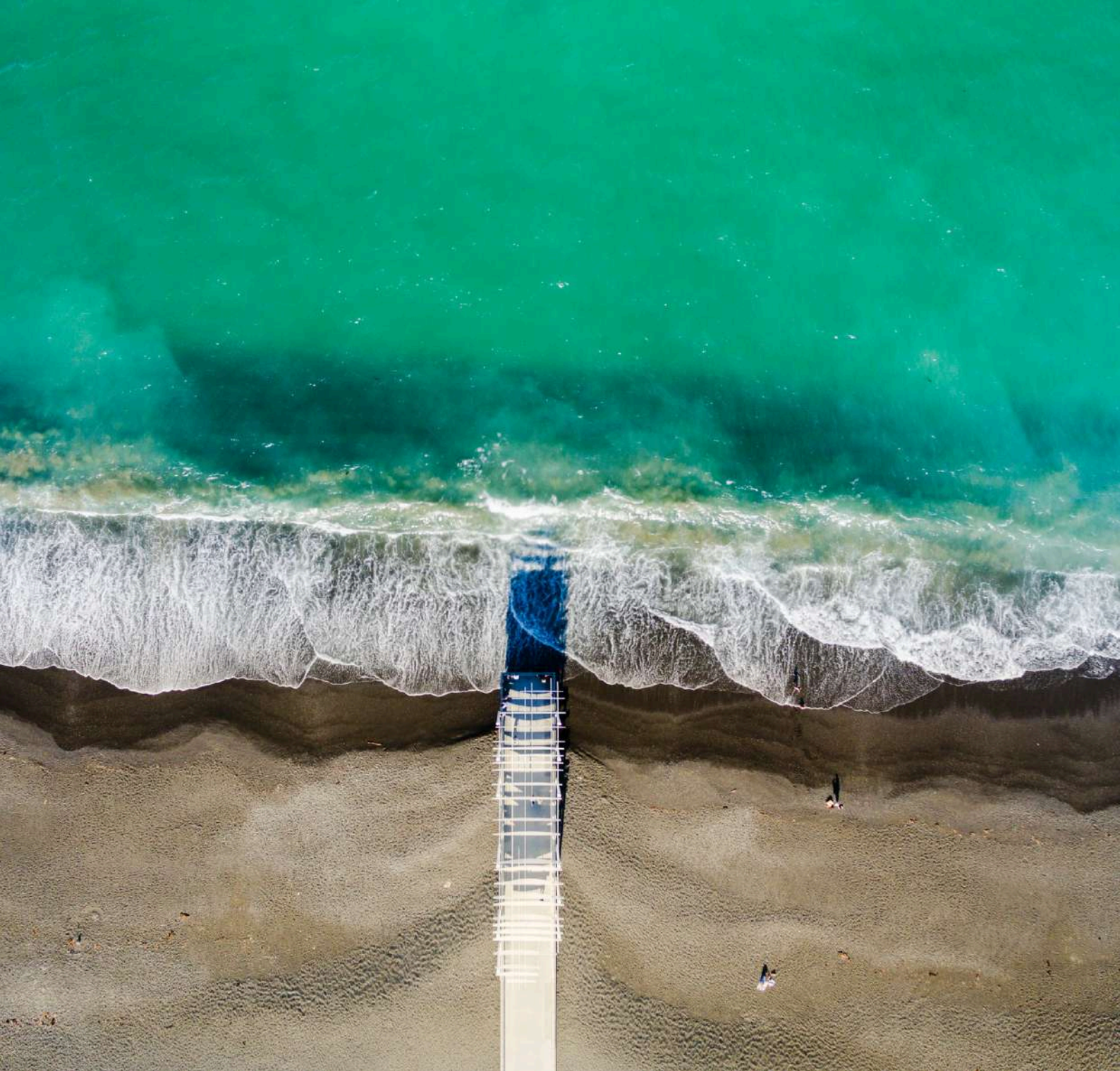




VOICES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Mates4Life impact, in the words of our partner organisations and trained Safety Aiders.



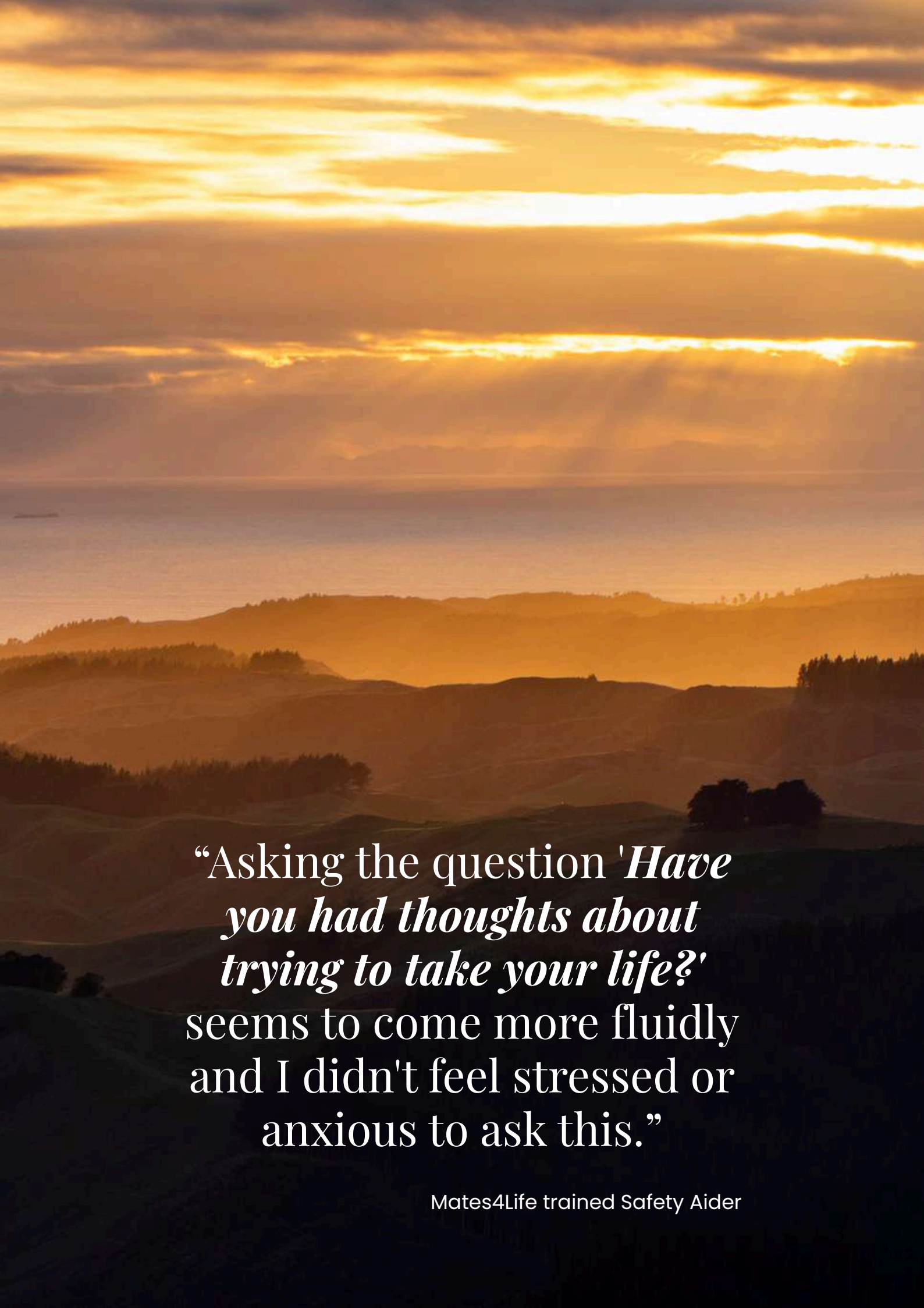
Mates4Life exists because mental distress and suicide are still far too common in our Te Matau a Māui community, and we want to change this. We believe everyone can help prevent suicide if they know what to look for and how to respond. That's what our programme teaches.

Since 2021, we've worked with over 300 local organisations to start conversations about mental health, break down stigma, and train everyday people to recognise the signs, and know how to help.

We've trained nearly 1500 Safety Aiders (mental health first aiders), and sparked conversations with over 20,000.

In June 2026, we completed our first survey of existing partner organisations and Safety Aiders to understand the longer-term impacts of our programme.

While the statistics are impressive, it is the experiences behind them and the stories shared that truly bring the impact to life and show just how Mates4Life is helping prevent suicide in our local community.

A full-page background image showing a sunset over rolling hills. The sky is filled with horizontal bands of orange and yellow light, with some darker clouds. The hills in the foreground and middle ground are silhouetted against the bright sky, with some trees visible on the ridges. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

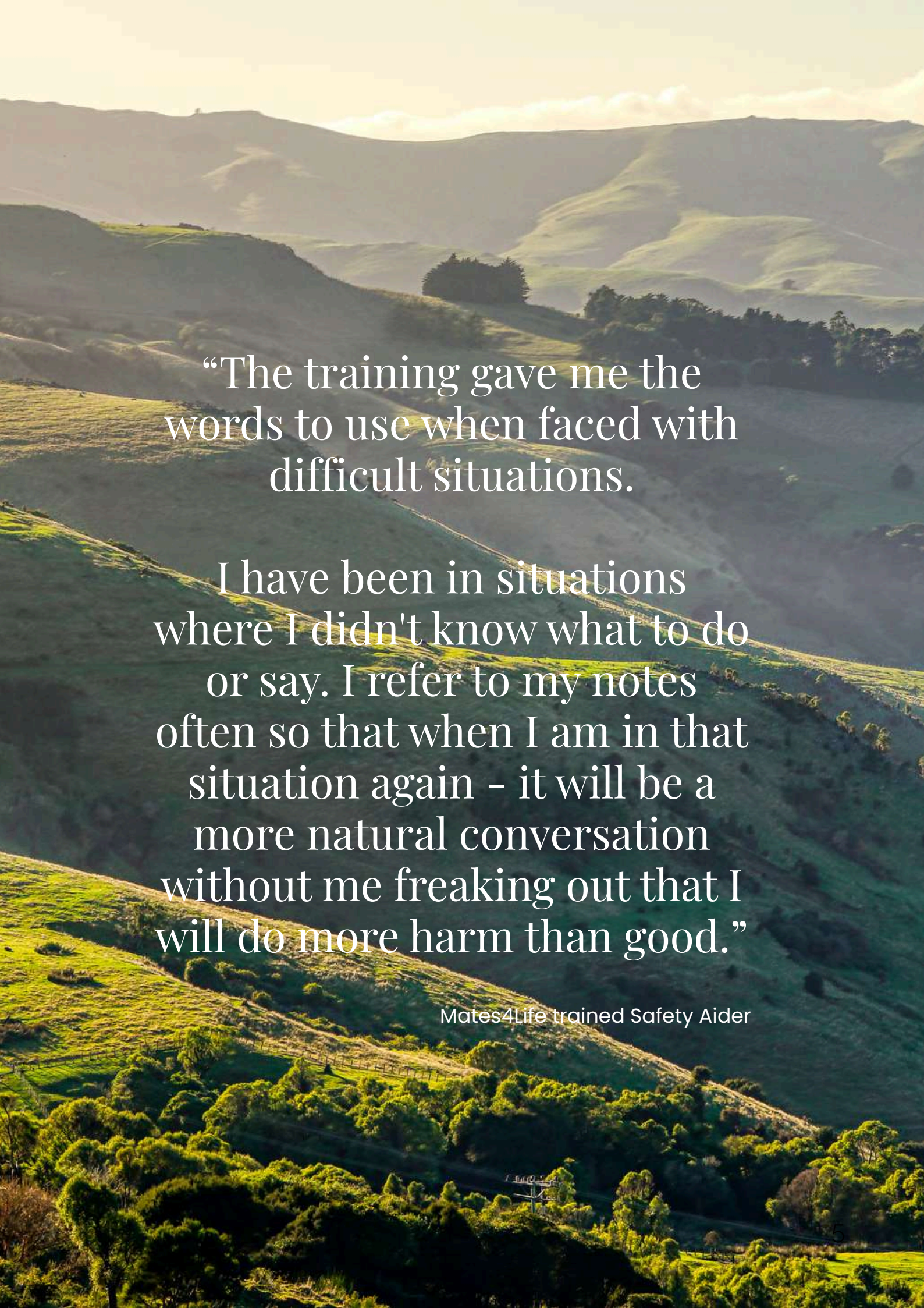
“Asking the question '*Have you had thoughts about trying to take your life?*' seems to come more fluidly and I didn't feel stressed or anxious to ask this.”

Mates4Life trained Safety Aider



93%

of participants found the
Safety Aider workshop
extremely or very valuable.

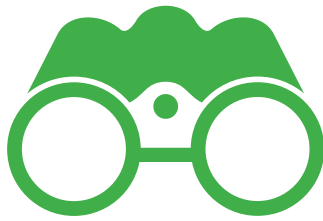


“The training gave me the words to use when faced with difficult situations.

I have been in situations where I didn't know what to do or say. I refer to my notes often so that when I am in that situation again – it will be a more natural conversation without me freaking out that I will do more harm than good.”

Mates4Life trained Safety Aider

**PERCENTAGE OF SAFETY AIDERS
WHO STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE
THEY ARE MORE CONFIDENT...**



96%

recognising the signs of
distress



96%

starting a conversation with
someone in distress



89%

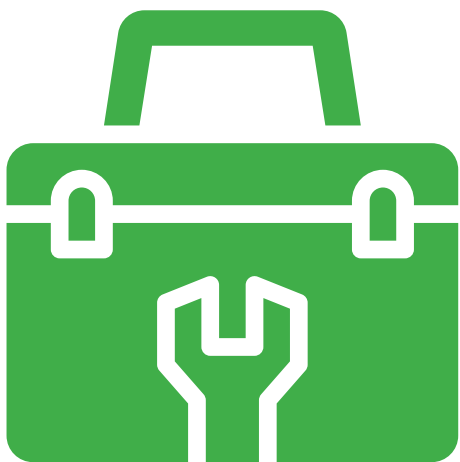
knowing where to go to get
more help for someone in
distress



“The roleplays were hard but helped to give me confidence.

The presenters were amazing and made us really think of our responses and why some did and did not work.”

Mates4Life trained Safety Aider



52%

of Safety Aiders have used the tools to support someone in distress since they were trained.

37% have used them on multiple occasions.

“I was able to use the tools with my own adult child; being direct and asking them post a suicide attempt if they were still experiencing those thoughts and planning.”

“These skills and tools are good to know especially for the kind of work that I’m in around domestic violence. We come across clients who just wants to give up on life because their kids have been stripped away from them.”

“I’ve used the training two times with people from work. I was able to listen to them tell their story, acknowledged their anxiety and stress then talked about help that was available. I sat with one while she contacted our EAP provider and GP. I checked in with her a couple of days later.”

“Honest truth the night after my Safety Aiders course I personally identified it (mental distress) in my dad”



92%

of organisations found the partnership with Mates4Life to be extremely valuable or very valuable to their organisation.

An aerial photograph of a vast vineyard with rows of green grapevines stretching across the foreground and middle ground. In the background, there are rolling hills under a clear blue sky, with some patches of green and brown. A small cluster of buildings is visible in the distance.

“The most valuable outcome for our organisation has been giving our team the confidence to know that they are not alone if they or someone close to them is facing a difficult time.

Mates4Life has helped raise awareness of the support available and has shown our staff where to turn for help, whether they need it themselves or want to support someone else.

It has fostered a culture where people feel more comfortable reaching out, knowing there are trusted people and resources available to help them through challenging times.”

Mates4life Partner Organisation



89%

strongly agree or agree the Mates4Life programme has increased their organisations' confidence to recognise and respond to mental distress.

92%



strongly agree or agree that Mates4Life are easy to work with and deliver well.

“We have a predominantly Samoan team both from within NZ and with our overseas workers. This course opened conversations that many had traditionally felt were taboo. It connected our elders with the younger people more and created a safe environment to share experiences.

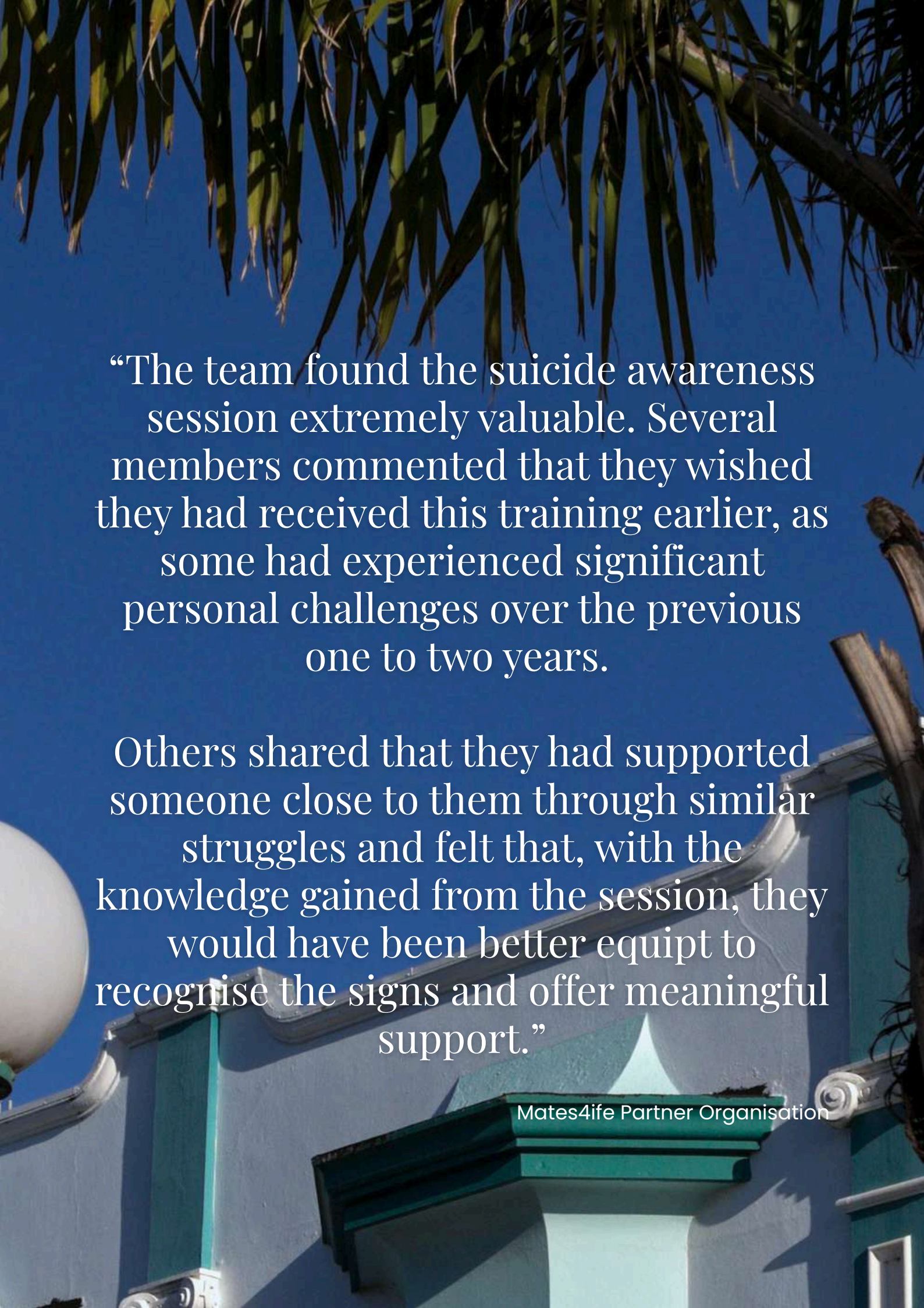
So many of our workers were grateful to have been given the opportunity to participate and many expressed a desire to share what they had learned with family and friends back home. The course had helped to remove the stigma previously attached to people in need of help.”

Mates4life Partner Organisation



IMPACTS OBSERVED IN THE ORGANISATION

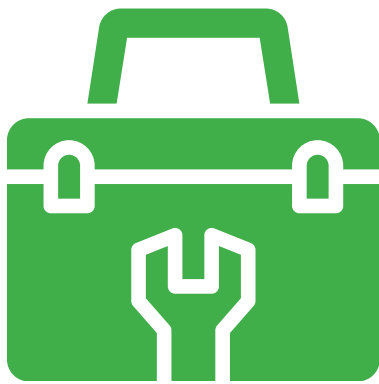




“The team found the suicide awareness session extremely valuable. Several members commented that they wished they had received this training earlier, as some had experienced significant personal challenges over the previous one to two years.

Others shared that they had supported someone close to them through similar struggles and felt that, with the knowledge gained from the session, they would have been better equipped to recognise the signs and offer meaningful support.”

Mates4life Partner Organisation

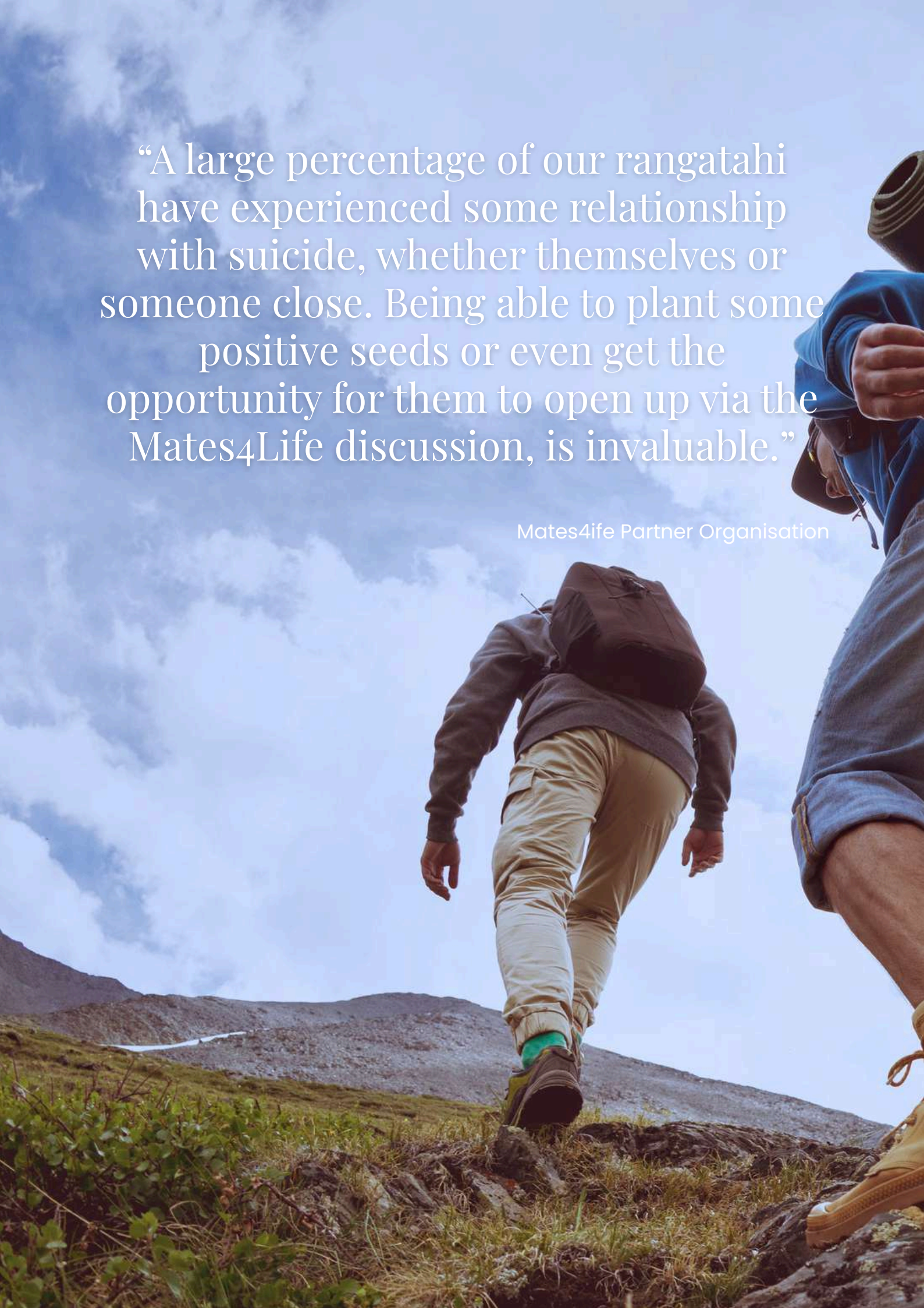


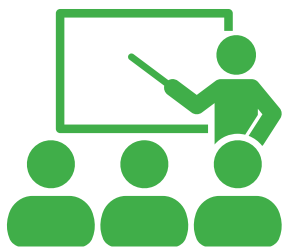
72%

of partner organisations felt the tools trained to their organisation had been used to help someone in mental distress.

“A large percentage of our rangatahi have experienced some relationship with suicide, whether themselves or someone close. Being able to plant some positive seeds or even get the opportunity for them to open up via the Mates4Life discussion, is invaluable.”

Mates4life Partner Organisation





ONLY

14%

of organisations would be likely or very likely to access similar training if Mates4Life didn't exist.



97%

of organisations are extremely likely or very likely to partner with Mates4Life in future.

An aerial photograph of a vineyard. The rows of grapevines are arranged in a grid pattern, with the vines themselves appearing as dark, thin lines against the lighter green grass. The perspective is from above, looking down on the rows. The lighting is soft, suggesting late afternoon or early morning.

“The Mates4Life programme has helped us immensely with a few situations that have arisen that we would have struggled to deal with had we not had Mates4Life come in”

“The programme has heightened our awareness and care for our staff. WE talk about those we have a concern about.”

Mates4life Partner Organisations

Stronger organisations, stronger community

Mates4Life partners with businesses and organisations across Hawke's Bay to build teams who are confident, connected, and equipped to look after one another.

Mental health can be a heavy topic to bring into a workplace, so our programme is structured to make sure the right support is in place first. That's why we start by training a group of your team as Safety Aiders, the equivalent of workplace first aiders and the people your colleagues know they can turn to.

Once they're ready, we bring your whole team together to build awareness, start the conversation, and introduce your Safety Aiders so everyone knows who to go to.

The impact doesn't stop at the workplace door. Stronger connection between colleagues, more open communication and improved team wellbeing carry through into whānau, friendships, sports clubs and neighbourhoods, helping build a safer, more supportive Hawke's Bay.

The three step programme

KAIABHINA HAUMARU SAFETY AIDER



1 day



10% of team

In-depth training focused on recognising distress and intervening safely. Safety Aiders create a safety net ensuring someone notices, and steps in, when it matters most.

AROĀ AWARENESS



1 hour



Whole team

An informative and practical session to build awareness, learn practical tips to look after yourself and others, and know where to turn for support.

KAI & KŌRERO



1 hour



Whole team

Making time for connection matters. We can bring the BBQ and share kai with your team directly after your Awareness session, creating space to reflect, connect and support each other.



Thank you to our supporters

None of the work we do would be possible without the generous support of our community.

A special thank you to Tumu, for being there with us since the very beginning, and to Royston Health Trust for their ongoing multi-year support. Thank you also to the many other funders who make our work possible, and to the many organisations, community members and programme participants who have donated along the way. We can't name you all, but we're incredibly grateful for every contribution.

Thank you also to the businesses and organisations who've partnered with us and enabled their teams to be trained, and to every Safety Aider who has stepped up for the courageous conversations that make Hawke's Bay safer.

Finally, to the dedicated Mates4Life team and Board, whose commitment continues to drive us forward every day.

If you'd like to be part of what comes next, and help Mates4Life achieve our goal of empowering 5,000 Safety Aiders across Te Matau a Māui by 2029, you can find out how to give at [**mates4life.org.nz/donate**](https://mates4life.org.nz/donate).



Ngā mihi nui,
Tyson Ataera,
General Manager,
Mates4Life





Team Leaders in particular have been reporting their concerns about welfare of staff more often. It has helped us to place people in work situations so that they have support people around them.

Mates4life Partner Organisation



Mates4Life has added to my kete of
understanding around suicide.

Mates4life Safety Aider



info@mates4life.org.nz
mates4life.org.nz
Hawke's Bay



NEED HELP?

If you or someone you know needs help:

1737

Call or text 1737 any time to speak with a trained counsellor.

111

If someone is in immediate danger or requires urgent medical assistance, call 111.