



BLACK DOG INSTITUTE

30 March 2018

Ms Emma Wood  
Committee Manager  
Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Emma

The information below is provided in response to an additional question from the Inquiry into the Prevention of Youth Suicide:

*Could you please describe the differences between Black Dog's "Sources of Strength" program and batyr's "Being Herd" program? Are they applicable to the same contingents?*

Point of clarification: Sources of Strength is being trialled in Australian high schools by the Australian National University and the Black Dog Institute. The program is owned and licensed by the Sources of Strength organisation in the US.

### **Being Herd (Batyr)**

#### Aims and target audience

Being Herd is a program for 18-30 year olds who want to learn how to share their experiences of mental ill health to help other young people. Batyr takes these speakers into high schools and universities to deliver short programs aimed at reducing stigma about mental illness and encouraging help seeking. **The high school programs do not appear to be targeted at a particular year or age group.**

#### Evidence

It is our understanding that a trial of the Batyr high school program has been undertaken. Results of the trial are not yet published so effectiveness of the program is unknown at the time of writing. We are therefore unable to provide detail on outcomes. However, on the program's website, it is stated that 78% of participants said that they were more likely to seek help after completing the program.

## Sources of Strength (SOS)

### Aims and target audience

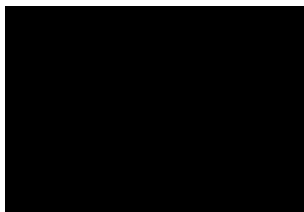
The Sources of Strength program is designed to build protective influences across an entire school student population and focuses on enhancing help-seeking norms, youth-adult communication, and coping skills to promote help seeking. **It is aimed at high school students aged 12 to 15 years.**

### Evidence

In a randomised controlled trial, peer leaders reported increased support to peers and a greater connection of distressed peers to adults, with peer leaders referring suicidal friends to an adult four times more than untrained peer leaders in control schools. The trial also found improvements in peer leaders' adaptive norms regarding suicide, their connectedness to adults, and their school engagement. Among the wider student population, the program increased perceptions of adult support for suicidal youth and the acceptability of seeking help. There is an Australian trial underway that is also examining the program's impact on suicidal thoughts and behaviours.

I hope this information is satisfactory. Please do contact me if you require further detail.

Yours sincerely



**Fiona Shand, PhD**  
**Senior Research Fellow**

Hospital Road  
Prince of Wales Hospital  
Randwick NSW 2031  
Telephone 61 2 9382  
4530  
Facsimile 61 2 9382  
8208  
Email  
blackdog@unsw.edu.au  
Website  
[www.blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au)  
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