

## Significant Episode: Mad Maths Monday

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### *Finding 4.6: Cross age*

*Use older students as mentors for younger students as this improves the mathematical understanding of both.*

When we first started our Mad Maths Monday groups I took the Aboriginal Stage 1 (Year 1 and 2) students. Within this group there were three boys in Year 2 who were often disruptive. They had numerous issues with other students in the group and between themselves. I used various behaviour management strategies which had little to no result.

In Term 2, 2012 the Aboriginal Kindergarten students were introduced into our group. Unexpectedly, this had an immediate positive influence on the three Year 2 boys. Without too much emphasis I told the Stage 1 students that they should help the Kindergarten students because they were new in our group and didn't know the games we played.

The 3 boys took this on enthusiastically. They each chose a student (this was not my influence) and each week would play the games with them and show them what my expectations about behaviour were. Previously it was a struggle for them to act in a safe, respectful way; now they were not only doing it, but showing another student how to do it.

**“I could not believe how a bit of responsibility given to the boys transformed how they acted within the group. It was a great thing to witness.”**

### **Some questions to prompt discussion:**

- 1. Why was this experience of mentoring younger students so significant for these boys?**
- 2. What impact might the mentoring have had on the younger students?**
- 3. What other interesting or important aspects are in this Significant Episode?**

