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LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY

THE USE OF SPORT-BASED MENTORING PROGRAMMES
AS AN INTERVENTION FOR PREVENTING AND
REDUCING YOUTH OFFENDING



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Welcome to the third literature review summary on sport and youth offending in this series! This third document reviews relevant literature in relation to the use of sport based mentoring programmes as an intervention for preventing and reducing youth offending. It follows:



An initial [literature review](#) summary, which was published in 2019 which looked at why young people offend, the role of sport in promoting desistance and early interventions for young people at risk of offending.



A second [literature review](#) summary, which was published in 2020 which provided academically informed insight on the role of sport in addressing serious violence and crime for young people.

As content from the first two literature reviews has not been included in this document, it is recommended that the three literature review summary leaflets should be read in order of publication.

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INTRODUCTION

Closer collaboration between community sport and the youth justice and criminal justice sectors has resulted in a growing interest in the use of interventions such as sport-based mentoring programmes which have the potential to make a positive contribution to a reduction in youth offending and reoffending rates.

This literature review presents policymakers and practitioners with academic insight to support the development of formal sport-based mentoring programmes as an intervention tool to prevent and reduce youth offending.

Although positive activities such as sport are well-suited to be an integral element of formal mentoring programmes, academic literature on sport-based mentoring is limited, particularly around the use of formal, structured sport-based mentoring programmes. This literature review, therefore, draws on wider research from youth mentoring programmes in the context of positive youth development, early intervention, desistance and youth offending.

MENTORING AS AN INTERVENTION TO PREVENT OR REDUCE YOUTH OFFENDING

Mentoring is often considered as a useful intervention to work with young people to prevent and reduce youth offending. It is most effective when it is based on adopting a child-centred, asset-based and positive development approach to working with young people rather than a risk and deficit reduction approach (Liang et al., 2013). This aligns with the Child First approach of offering child-centred support resulting in positive behaviours and outcomes (Haines & Case, 2018). Emerging evidence has shown that this can contribute to the development of a pro-social identity which can reduce first-time entrants to the Youth Justice system (Hazel & Bateman, 2020).

PRO-SOCIAL IDENTITY

ENGAGED IN CONSTRUCTIVE ACTIVITIES AND ROLES	MAKING POSITIVE CHOICES
STATUS AND SECURITY ARISE FROM POSITIVE DECISIONS	FUTURE ORIENTED – LONG-TERM VISIONS

As an intervention, mentoring is more appropriate at the secondary or tertiary level with its focus on a targeted approach which recognises that these young people have more complex needs and vulnerabilities and will benefit from an increased level of child-centred support.



DEFINITIONS OF INTERVENTION LEVELS AND APPROACHES (HENNIGAN ET AL., 2015)

PRIMARY	SECONDARY	TERTIARY	+	UNIVERSAL	TARGETED
Prevention work where all people receive the benefits rather than individuals (universal approach).	Early identification and targeted support for those at high risk of becoming perpetrators (targeted, pre-offending).	Support for offenders to rehabilitate and prevent recurrence (targeted, offending and post-offending).		Universal approach includes all young people. This is often used at the primary intervention level.	Targeted approaches are based on work with specific individuals and sub-populations. This approach is used at both the secondary and tertiary levels.

The benefits of mentoring programmes as an intervention to prevent or reduce youth offending include:

- The potential to engage with ‘high risk’ young people who would not choose to engage in universal prevention programmes.
- Building young people’s skills and confidence to manage conflict, peer pressure and to make the right choices (Big Lottery Fund, 2018).
- Supporting young people to reflect and think critically about their futures (Thompson, 2019).
- Providing appropriate professional support which is important for young people at a ‘critical moment’ such as taking a pathway out of gang membership (Thompson, 2019).
- Providing alternative source of social support as a protective factor for young people leaving a gang. Includes satisfying the young person’s need for esteem, identity, belonging and companionship as well as providing advice, guidance and, for some young people, access to financial and material resources (Cullen, 1994).

- Allowing young people in despair to see a future for themselves which reduces anxiety and anger and generates hope (Maruna, 2001).
- The potential to contribute to desistance from youth offending especially if it is part of a wider strategy and supplemented by other interventions (Bouffard & Bergseth, 2008).

However, the mentoring of high-risk young people with complex needs, including referred young people (often at the higher end of the secondary and tertiary level) can be challenging with the added risk of not being successful and of limited duration (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002). Although high quality mentoring is hard to achieve, it can have a positive effect on young people with complex needs including behavioural, emotional, social and academic (Higley et al., 2016).

When mentoring is done well, it is a promising intervention and can have positive effects for some young people (Rhodes, 2008). However, if a mentoring programme is not delivered effectively, it can also result in ‘negative effects’ or ‘no effect’ (Blechman et al., 2000).

DEVELOPING FORMAL YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMMES

Youth mentoring is generally defined as a relationship between a more experienced, formal adult (the mentor) and an unrelated younger protégé (the mentee) where the mentor provides ‘ongoing guidance, instruction and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character’ of the mentee (Rhodes, 2002, p3). This mentoring relationship involves a focus on the development of important youth assets such as self-esteem and the ability to cope.

The remainder of this section outlines what is known about best practice in creating a successful mentoring relationship.



FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAMMES

At the heart of a formal mentoring programme is sustaining a long-term, high quality relationship between the mentor as an experienced older person, and the young person (Higley et al., 2016) as mentoring is only effective when the mentor becomes a significant adult in the life of the young person (Dubois et al., 2002).

Mentoring programmes can vary in terms of duration, intensity, approaches, integration with other services and target populations (Rhodes, 2008). Approaches to mentoring can include formal mentoring, informal mentoring, peer mentoring and natural mentoring. Although there is mixed evidence about formal mentoring, it still emerges as one of the most promising forms of mentoring for working with young people on a one-to-one basis in a sporting context to prevent or reduce offending.

Key features include:

- The mentor as a more experienced adult from a similar background and with similar interests.
- Based in the community as this approach is better at engaging young people and able to offer more relevant opportunities (Garcia-Poole et al., 2019).
- Part of a quality, well-structured mentoring programme with formal training and support for the mentoring relationship.
- Based on a long-term approach.
- When mentoring is combined with other interventions (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2007).
- At the tertiary level, formal mentoring programmes based on volunteers or ex-offenders as adult ‘peer’ mentors have been shown to be effective (Buck, 2018). These types of mentors are more likely to meet the core conditions to support desistance from crime which include empathy, genuine care, listening and encouraging small steps (McNeill, 2006).

Effective formal youth mentoring programmes:

- Ensure that those involved understand the aims of the intervention and the role of the mentor and there are realistic expectations about the role and what can be achieved (Sandford, 2015).
- Require the mentee to be open to engaging in new relationships such as mentoring (Spencer et al., 2019).
- Avoid an approach based on predetermined programme activities and outcomes as individualised programmes of intervention based on a young person’s own strengths and goals are more promising (Hazel & Bateman, 2020).

- Should be based on a set of standards with formal processes and procedures to support the mentoring relationship (Higley et al., 2016) – please see Appendix A.
- Ideally provide the opportunity for a young person to select a non-judgemental mentor who they already know who has demonstrated belief in them (Spencer et al., 2019).
- Should aim to create close, enduring and effective mentor-youth ties (Herrera et al., 2007) and to adopt a pro-social approach (DuBois et al., 2002).
- Rely on sustained engagement from both the mentor and the mentee (Higley et al., 2016).
- Develop an empathic bond between the mentor and the mentee (Spencer & Rhodes, 2005).
- Provide opportunities for positive learning and social modelling (Spencer & Rhodes, 2005).

AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR

An effective mentor adopts the following approaches:

- Is non-judgemental and accepting of mentees’ emotions, imperfections and wishes (Buck, 2018).
- Listens and allows space for the mentee to make their own sense of things, to unburden problems (Buck, 2018).
- Responds flexibly to verbal and non-verbal cues taking into account the needs of the mentee (Pryce et al., 2018).
- Identifies and reflects on their own feelings as a mentor and the feelings of their mentee (Pryce et al., 2018).
- Avoids feeling responsible for an idealist, impossible dream (Buck, 2018).
- Is aware of the zig-zag pathway of desistance for mentees where lapses and relapses are likely and acceptable (Farrall, 2013).
- Is not motivated by personal gain and can develop emotional connections as legitimate mentoring tools (Buck, 2018).
- Sets manageable goals with their mentees – encouraging small steps to sustain motivation and to become markers of success that can be felt and can become reality (Buck, 2018).
- Has knowledge about services and other agencies that can provide additional support including education, training, welfare (Sulimani-Aidan, 2019).
- Where a mentoring relationship deteriorates, the mentor must try to repair the relationship through understanding as this offers the young person valuable learning and help start to shift their internal ways of thinking and behaving and strengthens the young person (Peck, 2003).

MANAGING THE END OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

- Up to half of mentoring relationships end earlier than planned (Grossmann et al., 2012).
- Mentoring relationships that end earlier than planned can be harmful to the young person (Higley et al., 2016) and can result in young people feeling sadness, disappointment, anger, confusion, rejection and less willing to engage in future mentoring opportunities (Hiles et al., 2013).
- Mentoring matches that last less than six months can lead to feelings of rejection, abandonment and unfulfilled expectations and can result in an increase in alcohol use (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002).
- Importantly the re-matching of a young person to a new mentor after a mentoring relationship had ended early does not compensate or avoid negative effects (Zilberstein & Spence, 2017).
- If handled well, ending a mentoring relationship can promote transformation and enable the young person to feel valued and helped (Knox et al., 2011). Learning to cope with loss can also help young people to prepare and face future stressful life event (Delgado & Strawn, 2012).

Ending the mentoring relationship requires effort from the mentor, mentee, programme staff and possibly the caregivers. A successful end can be achieved by adopting the following strategies (Zilberstein & Spence, 2017):

- Convey clear reasons for the ending of the mentoring relationship.
- Provide a date for the formal end of the relationship and plan how to mark the ending e.g. a favourite activity to get used to the idea of the relationship ending.
- Provide opportunities for the mentor and the mentee to experience, process and reflect on the range of feelings about ending the relationship.
- Celebrate positive aspects of the relationship and mark milestones to develop a sense of pride and accomplishment.
- Leaving mentees with pictures, narratives or mementos is valuable.
- Regard the end of the relationship as a transition recognising the contribution that it has made to the mentee’s life (Stroebe et al., 2005).
- Recognise that vulnerable young people (e.g. those affected by parental separation or with family members in prison) may need additional support as closure and endings might have special significance.

SPORT-BASED MENTORING

Engaging in sport is associated with a range of physical, mental and social benefits (Coakley, 2011), perceived as fun to do (Haudenhuyse et al., 2012) and non-stigmatizing (Coalter, 2015). Sport is often valued as a ‘hook’ to attract young people to programmes focused on developmental outcomes (Nichols, 2007).

Providing an environment conducive for supporting fundamental changes to a young person’s values, attitudes and beliefs underpins crime reduction sports programmes (Coalter, 2012). Involvement in this type of programme has the potential to contribute to the development of a pro-social identity for the young person.

Sport-based mentoring which aims to prevent youth offending and reoffending is usually community-based, often adopts a one-to-one mentoring relationship and is typically time- limited. It has the potential to make a contribution to preventing and reducing youth offending at the secondary and tertiary intervention levels as shown in Table 1.

Note: Intervention levels are helpful as a tool to identify the extent and type of support that a young person might need i.e. the higher the intervention level, the more specialist support required by a young person. It is important for practitioners to note that the boundaries between the three different intervention levels do not remain fixed for the young person and that this could change whilst working with them.



TABLE 1: IDENTIFYING THE APPROPRIATE SPORTS PROGRAMME(S) FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

(adapted from Stephenson et al., 2011)

← LOW LEVEL OF SUPPORT NEEDED HIGH LEVEL OF SUPPORT AND EXPERTISE NEEDED →		
PRIMARY Prevention	SECONDARY Early Intervention	TERTIARY Offending/Reoffending
PROGRAMME APPROACH • Universal/Open Access • Neighbourhood/ community level • Developmental provision to improve overall life opportunities	PROGRAMME APPROACH • Targeted at those considered at risk of involvement in youth offending • Can be an individual/ family approach and/or targeted at geographical ‘hot spot’ areas	PROGRAMME APPROACH • Targeted intervention for those already involved in offending behaviour ranging from less serious to more serious offending • Can also support rehabilitation programmes
Formal sport-based mentoring programmes are not usually associated with this level.	Formal sport-based mentoring programmes are valuable at this level, often as part of a wider, holistic approach.	Formal sport-based mentoring programmes can be valuable at this level BUT/ are likely to need higher levels of expertise and resources than at the secondary level to be effective.
EXAMPLES OF SPORT PROGRAMMES • Regular weekly sports activity sessions • Opportunities for volunteering and training/ qualifications • School holiday activities	EXAMPLES OF SPORT PROGRAMMES • Targeted and/or ‘hot spot’ group sports sessions • Sport-based one-to-one mentoring programmes • Formal sport volunteering opportunities including training and qualifications • Residential trips with outdoor adventure activities • Can be linked to ‘primary intensity level’ sports programmes to provide additional opportunities if and when appropriate	EXAMPLES OF SPORT PROGRAMMES • Sport-based one-to-one mentoring programmes • Targeted small group work using sport • Sport volunteering, training and qualification opportunities • Sport as one element of a more holistic programme run by other agencies • Sport programmes to support rehabilitation • Can be linked to ‘secondary intensity level’ sports programmes to provide additional opportunities, if, and when appropriate
Building on a young person’s strengths and developing a young person’s pro-social identity		

THE VALUE OF SPORT-BASED MENTORING

Formal, one to one sport-based mentoring provides a range of unique opportunities to use sport to build and enhance the relationship between mentor and mentee. Sports activities can be used in different ways at different phases of the mentoring relationship. This can include attracting the young person to the programme voluntarily, developing the mentoring relationship and providing a medium for skill development and achievement (Nichols, 2007).

Additional benefits of sport-based mentoring:

- The context of sport as an activity that is meaningful to the young person (Reagan-Porras, 2013).
- Sport can be conducive for creating synergy between the mentor and mentee and enhances their compatibility (Choi et al., 2015).
- Getting involved in sports activities together (mentor and mentee) and having a positive experience is a catalyst to developing a positive relationship based on mutual respect (Gunay & Bacon, 2019; Nichols, 2007).
- The choice of sport activities can be significant as an engagement tool for acting as the 'glue' that keeps the mentor and mentee together, acting as a bonding activity, social leveller and supporting skills development in an area of passion for the young person (Gunay & Bacon, 2019).
- Fun activities, teaching skills, caretaking and protection, problem-solving and presence in a crisis with the fun activity shared by both the mentor and mentee act as the glue for the mentoring relationship and can be used as the content of the sport mentoring relationship (Reagan-Porras, 2013).
- Offering the young person (the mentee) the additional opportunity to take part in group-based sport activities alongside or after mentoring helps to develop a sense of belonging to a group which is the basic ingredient for working on identity (Gioia, 2016).



- The opportunity to take part in team sports led by a good coach is an important way for the mentee to embrace values explored in the setting of one to one mentoring formal work and in particular for, developing skills for co-operation, sense of responsibility, trusting others, avoiding a sense of vulnerability and a sense of isolation (Johns et al., 2014).

There are some particular considerations for sport-based mentoring:

- Sport and physical activity mentoring can be a valuable tool in a box of interventions but should not be seen as the only solution (Sandford, 2015).
- The reliance on issue-based workshops with minimal involvement in sports activities as the basis for formal sport-based mentoring programmes should be treated with caution as it risks adopting a deficit-approach to working with young people. An approach which attempts to 'fix' young people tends to generate poor outcomes and dehumanises the young person (Dybicz, 2012). This approach also provides minimal opportunities for the young person to benefit from engaging in sport as a form of pro-social, positive activity.

SPORT-BASED MENTORS

- A mentor's role should be to ensure that the mentee has fun whilst taking part in activities and can learn new skills (Reagan-Porras, 2013).
- A mentor should be recruited because they can play sport with the mentee on a level playing field rather than being an expert at playing sport (Nichols, 2007).
- A mentor can take on various roles including being a neutral adult, an educator, a supporter, advice giver and role model (Sandford, 2015).
- A mentor should show commitment, consistency and embed the relationship in the fun sport activity, not just teaching prevention as part of a curriculum. (Reagan-Porras, 2013).
- The mentor can also help the mentee to solve problems and be an available adult in a crisis (Reagan-Porras, 2013).
- Mentors should take the opportunity to identify 'teachable moments' whilst playing sport alongside the mentee (Choi et al., 2015).
- A mentor should be able to match the mentee to a risk level in sport (for example, taking part in an adventurous sport or as part of a new sport leadership role) that will challenge them just enough but not so much that they fail so that it stretches them and contributes to a sense of achievement and a different view of themselves (Nichols, 2007).
- The mentor's ability to link the mentee to a wider range of sports development activities makes it easier for the mentee to access volunteering, sports leadership qualifications and the potential for paid work (Nichols, 2007).
- Some mentors have a wider role outside the programme in terms of supporting areas such as access to housing, benefits, education and employment (Nichols, 2007).
- The values of the mentor should be grounded in the positive values associated with sport (Nichols, 2007). This should avoid negative values and potential risks associated with taking part in sport such as winning at all costs, positive attitudes towards violence on the pitch, cheating, drinking cultures and accomplishing their masculinity through the legitimacy of violence, physical size and strength.

Note: Although sports coaches can sometimes be considered as informal mentors with roles including youth work, providing protection from bullying/gangs, escorting young people home, breaking up fights, offering advice on difficult school work as well as relationships problems (Rogers, 2011) which can provide a valuable form of support to the young person, this approach does not provide the same benefits to the young person as a formal mentor as part of a one-to one, sport-based mentoring programme.

APPLYING CHILD FIRST PRINCIPLES TO SPORT-BASED MENTORING PROGRAMMES

A Child First approach supporting the development of a young person's pro-social identity needs to be at the foundation of a sport-based mentoring programme. Principles of the 'Child First' approach include (Haines & Case, 2015; Hazel & Bateman, 2020):

Universalism - universal and targeted promotion of positive pro-social behaviour and outcomes.

Diversion – into support services as part of an individualised support package to young people.

Normalisation – engaging young people in non-criminal activity.

Engagement - the efficacy of legitimate (trusting, moral, fair) treatment by adults in equitable relationships has been shown to enhance young people's engagement with interventions.

Pro-Social identity shift – developing a positive narrative for the young person based on constructive opportunities, co-created participation, co-ordinated support, consistent relationships and a customised approach.

The application of Child First principles to sport-based mentoring programmes can be found in Table 2.

TABLE 2: THE APPLICATION OF THE CHILD FIRST APPROACH TO SPORT-BASED MENTORING PROGRAMMES

(adapted from Haines & Case (2015) and Hazel & Bateman (2020))

CHILD FIRST PRINCIPLES	CHILD FIRST PRINCIPLES APPLIED TO SPORT- BASED MENTORING
Universalism	- Sport as a fun experience and promoting positive, pro- social behaviour. - If the mentor takes part in sport alongside the young person, playing at the same level, identifying ‘teachable moments’, developing skills, and role modelling their own positive, pro-social behaviour. - Avoiding a deficit view of young person to avoid reinforcing negative identities, negative labelling, and retraumatising young people as this may result in unintended consequences which harm the young person.
Diversion	- Mentoring planned with other agencies as part of a wider support package for young people where appropriate. - Sufficient resources are in place to enable the mentor and the young person to meet frequently and for a sufficient length of time.
Normalisation	- Focus on fun, positive sports activities. - Universal sports activities with other young people as an element of the sport mentoring programme.

Engagement	- Engagement central to success, including taking part, getting more fully involved and developing greater commitment. - Young person interested in sport. - Sport as ‘the glue’, helping to bond the mentoring relationship - Relationship between young person and the mentor is equitable and based on mutual trust, fairness and moral.
Pro-social identity	- Provide constructive opportunities for the young person to enjoy positive interactions with others, develop skills for the future, develop self-confidence and take up roles to develop a pro-social identity such as volunteering or leadership opportunities as part of the programme. - The young person takes a lead in the choice of sports activities - Young person can ‘co-create’ their mentoring journey by making meaningful and positive choices rather than following a pre-defined set of activities. - Consistent relationship between the young person and the mentor which is positive and stable as relationship-based support is essential and, in particular, for work with girls. - Part of a co-ordinated support structure for the young person. The mentor can provide the young person with personal and emotional support, becoming part of their network of trusted adults. - The focus on the young person’s strengths and goals can act as an individualised intervention which offers the young person a customised approach recognising that each young person’s journey to a pro-social identity is unique and personal.



EVALUATION OF SPORT-BASED MENTORING PROGRAMMES

Evidence of the effectiveness of mentoring as an early intervention tool to prevent and reduce youth offending has been generally positive but, in some cases, with mixed results (Bouffard & Bergseth, 2008; Jolliffe & Farnington, 2007). Effects of mentoring on intermediate and long-term outcomes are likely to vary according to the young person, the mentor, characteristics of the programme, the programme structure, delivery and fidelity to the programme design, the quality of the evaluation and the outcomes measured (Dubois et al., 2002; Mitchell Miller et al., 2013).



Positive effects of general mentoring programmes (DuBois et al., 2011), mainly small in scale, have been found in the following areas:

- Improved behaviour and attitudes
- Increased levels of confidence, positive outlook and self-image
- Improved school attendance, academic performance and achievement
- Improved personal skills and relationships with families and peers
- Modest reductions in using alcohol and illicit substances
- Engagement in less deviant criminal behaviour (Eby et al., 2008)

But

- The size of the effect is usually small and sometimes not significant.
- Limited potential with certain groups, with individuals with special needs and in some contexts.
- Improvements might not be maintained especially if mentoring relationships are brief.
- There is some evidence that sport-based mentoring programmes can prevent and reduce youth offending (Gunay & Bacon, 2019). Evidence of outcomes achieved through sport-based mentoring includes:
- Increased positive development including positive attitude towards oneself and a future career (Nichols, 2007).
- Increased emotional well-being, self-confidence and faith in the future (Gunay & Bacon, 2019).
- Some evidence that the mentee's experience of building their relationship with their adult mentor can be transferred to the community (Choi et al., 2015).
- Sense of belonging and identity, physical and mental discipline that can be developed whilst taking part in team sports (Johns et al., 2014).
- Improving sports skills that can lead to greater confidence, connectedness, gaining status in the peer group and extending their relationships with others (Choi et al., 2015).

But

- physical benefits were of limited importance to the young person (Gunay & Bacon, 2019).



EVALUATION CONSIDERATIONS

- An open-ended approach to outcomes for programmes working with young people is more compatible with a Child First approach which rejects the view that young people need to be 'fixed' by using pre-defined outputs and outcomes.
- Evaluation should not be restricted to measuring pre-defined outcomes as progress might take place in areas of young people's lives that are significant for them (Debognies et al., 2019).
- Young people may have aspirations for their engagement in mentoring that do not align with the broader aspirations for the programme (Debognies et al., 2019).
- Young people are often focused on direct outcomes such as fun, learning skills and sportsmanship rather than programme outcomes (Choi et al., 2015).
- An output-focused evaluation often favoured by policymakers can create a performance paradox that distorts the priorities of practitioners and can result in negative outcomes (Lowe, 2013).
- Evaluation often demands proof of change without recognising the intrinsic good of young people having a safe space to spend time with peers and interested adults (Debognies et al., 2019).
- Evaluation can overlook important elements of mentoring such as listening and being present for a young person at a time of crisis which can serve as an inoculation against joining a gang, alcohol, drug abuse, school failure (Reagan-Porras, 2013).
- Evaluations typically lack the longitudinal approach required to evaluate whether a mentoring programme has had an effect on a young person after it has been completed (Rhodes, 2008).
- Fun activities, teaching skills, caretaking and protection, problem-solving and presence in a crisis can be used to form an evaluation tool for young people (Reagan-Porras, 2013).
- Collection of data from children by using questionnaires or traditional interviews should be used with caution as children, like others without power, are wise enough not to reveal information that might be used against them (Waksler, 1996).
- Mixed evaluation results from the same mentoring programmes can arise from how and what evidence is considered (Rhodes, 2008).

APPENDIX A

STANDARDS FOR MENTORING PROGRAMMES

(based on Higley at al., 2016)

STANDARDS FOR THE MENTORING PROGRAMME	CONSIDERATIONS
1. Recruitment of the mentors	A formal process to recruit mentors (although this might result in the inability to recruit a sufficient number of mentors to meet the demands of the programme).
2. Screening of the mentors	- Selection criteria for mentors to include: Self-awareness, emotionally healthy, mature, able to set healthy boundaries, strength-based view of young people, willing and able to invest time and energy for the long-term, DBS check. - Acceptance of a potentially low number of mentors that are finally selected as suitable.
3. Training the mentors	- Formal and continuous training of mentors is indicative of programme performance and goal realisation (Mitchell Miller et al., 2013). - Training on attachment theory to help mentors to overcome the young person's distrust and suspicion and to deal with young people's reactions who are not used to unconditional relationships (Higley at al., 2016). - Training to include: relationship development strategies, relationship stages, active listening, empathy, healthy boundaries, self-awareness, fostering inner discipline, empowering, elements of motivational interviewing, authenticity, dealing with difficulties and conflicts in the context of the mentoring relationship. - Practice the learning from the training in role play.
4. Matching the mentor and the young person	- Need a sense of connection (Sandford, 2015). - Pair mentors and mentees together with similar interests (Rhodes et al, 2002). - Ability of mentors to bridge the culture difference (Liang et al., 2006). - Acceptance of a potentially low number of matched mentors and young people. A higher quality mentoring match is a beneficial trade-off. - Engagement with the mentee's caregivers to approve and support the mentoring relationship.

STANDARDS FOR THE MENTORING PROGRAMME	CONSIDERATIONS
5. The mentoring approach	- The mentor should focus on the assets of the young person i.e. their strengths rather than their deficit i.e. their weaknesses (Liang et al., 2013). - Committed to a long-term relationship with the mentee. - Mentors who were both positive and directive were viewed as most effective.
6. The mentor-mentee relationship	- Long-term approach. - The mentoring relationship should not be laissez-faire or overly prescriptive.
7. Monitoring the mentor/mentee relationship	- Provide structured support to the mentor by regular reviews of the mentor-mentee meeting notes – weekly/ bi-monthly. - Surveys to the young person and their parents at six and twelve months to check the quality of the experience.
8. Supporting the mentor	- Provide mentors with specific skills to increase their effectiveness and feeling of self-fulfilment to avoid potential burnout (Liang et al., 2013). - Recognition of intense emotional involvement (Sulimnai-Aidan, 2019). - Build the relationship between the project staff and the mentor. - Provide regular supervision sessions between the programme manager and the mentor. - Provide team meetings for mentors to share situations and dilemmas so they don't feel that they are alone (Sulimnai-Aidan, 2019).
9. Closure for the mentor and mentee	Put a clear plan into place for the mentor and mentee.

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