

## Quick Guide to Mentoring for Parents & Guardians

Lifespace Trust is a Registered Charity (No. 1122170), working with young people aged 9-19 who are facing difficult circumstances. Our mentoring work was established in 2004, and continues to be nationally approved through the Mentoring & Befriending Foundation.

### Why is mentoring offered to a young person?

- ✓ Facing a difficult situation or going through a big change in their lives
- ✓ A chance for them to gather their thoughts
- ✓ Tackle specific issues that interfere with their achievement and wellbeing
- ✓ Develop strategies to understand and manage their emotions and reactions
- ✓ Enjoy a regular safe place with a positive and competent adult
- ✓ A chance to talk, unload, ask questions
- ✓ Notice what is going well, and why
- ✓ Learn about decision making, goal setting, prioritising, organising...

### What is mentoring? What isn't it?

What <b>isn't</b> mentoring?	What <b>is</b> mentoring?
<i>It is NOT...</i>	<i>It is...</i>
Therapy Counselling (e.g. for bereavement, abuse etc.) A new fad Befriending (mainly for reducing social isolation) Tutoring or teaching (e.g. specific academic subjects) Professional Special Educational Need support* A one off event A quick fix for problems A substitute for medical or psychological intervention  *We do mentor many young people with Special Educational Needs alongside their other specialist support	<b>Personalised support</b> <b>A regular safe place</b> <b>A chance for the young person to talk about what matters to them</b> <b>About encouragement and personal development</b> <b>Developing resilience amid difficulties</b> <b>Tackling problems together</b> <b>Confidential</b> (unless at risk of harm) <b>An ongoing and proven process with regular check-up points</b> <b>About promoting safe and positive choices</b> <b>Having a purpose to meeting</b> <b>Having goals or hopes to work towards</b> <b>Signposting to other help and resources</b> (in-person, online, written materials)

### Who are our mentors?

- From the local community, mostly volunteers
- With relevant experience, appropriate values, and a clear commitment to assisting young people
- You can see more about all our mentors on the 'Mentors' tab on our website [www.lifespace.org.uk](http://www.lifespace.org.uk)

### All our mentors are:

- ✓ **DBS checked** – Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly known as CRB)
- ✓ **Interviewed in person** by two members of the Lifespace team
- ✓ **Supported by professional references**
- ✓ **Properly trained** – both initially through Oasis College (NVQ Level 3) as well as continuing learning and development all year round; including safeguarding practice
- ✓ **Individually supervised** by highly trained and qualified persons (NVQ Level 7)
- ✓ **Familiar with our Code of Ethics and Data Protection process**

## How does it work?

Once a 1:1 Mentoring Request Form has been completed (via our website in the GET HELP section) and submitted to us:

- A personal introduction between mentor and young person takes place by arrangement (usually in the context where mentoring will take place, e.g. at school, College, community setting; very rarely in the young person's home and only in exceptional circumstances)
- The mentoring venue will be a safe quiet place ("be overseen but not overheard" is our motto)
- Agreed at a regular time (if in school, with flexible arrangements to not miss the same school subjects too often)
- Usually a weekly session (30-60 minutes) for initially up to 3 months, can continue beyond this if appropriate
- An agreement about how the young person prefers to learn/engage (e.g. visual resources, hands on exercises)
- The mentor will work towards the intended outcomes which are expressed on the 1:1 Mentoring Request Form (e.g. reduce anxiety, manage stress more effectively, strengthen communication skills)

## How can *you* help?

1. Encourage your child to attend their mentoring appointments. It is for them and their benefit. (In many schools, reminder slips are handed to the young person on the day of their mentoring session).
2. Talk through with your child anything that concerns them, or contact us directly if there is something we can clarify or help with – we are here to make the process as smooth and as effective as possible.
3. Respect their confidentiality (nearly all our mentors are parents, involved in fostering, Grandparents etc. – so we understand the tough role parenting can be!) – they may not want to talk about their mentoring
4. If you have any concerns or questions, and the mentoring request for your child came via their school/college (including through CAF) then please contact them. If the request came to us directly from yourself, please speak to us directly.

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