

HOW TO SET UP A PEER MENTORING PROGRAMME

Teachers and parents/carers play an important role in a young person's success. However, guidance and support from peers who are similar in age can also help them perform better in school.

WHAT IS PEER MENTORING?

Peer mentoring is a relationship between people of the same/similar age. One person from this has more experience in an area (Mentor) and can provide the other person (Mentee) with support, knowledge and/or skills.

WHY PEER MENTORING?

Old-school mentoring works similarly to being in school, with one person being the student (Mentee) and the Mentor being of similar age to a teacher. Peer mentoring is great because it provides a balance of power. This makes the opportunity more empowering for Mentors and Mentees. It can also mean that knowledge relevant to their age group being shared.

WHY IS THIS EFFECTIVE IN SCHOOLS?

Traditional mentoring is more one-way. In peer mentoring, young people working together can allow growth and strengthening of skills for both Mentor and Mentee.

For the Mentee, they gain:

- 1. Knowledge**
Mentee's gain invaluable insight and knowledge they may not be able to gain from other groups and they will be open to receiving advice from peers similar in age.
- 2. Improved Levels of Self-Esteem/Confidence**
Peer mentoring could help a young person build a circle of friends and feel connected to the school community.

Mentors gain:

- 1. Improved Attitudes for Learning**
Developing the skills needed to teach and being more relatable and understood.
- 2. Leadership Skills**
Knowing what it takes to lead and being trustworthy and reliable.
- 3. Empathy**
Needed for positive relationships as it helps young people to understand the views and needs of others.

GETTING STARTED

1. WHO'S RIGHT FOR THIS_

For Mentees: Decide what the aim of the programme is, who could best benefit, timeline and commitments needed to take part in the programme.

For Mentors: Use teachers/counsellors/parents to suggest suitable Mentors. You would want a young person who is positive, helpful and genuine (Anti-Bullying Ambassadors can apply too!)

2. ADVERTISE_

Let your peers know about your new mentoring programme! You will know the best way to do this: posters, leaflets, the school's Facebook/intranet page, etc.

3. TRAIN AND THEN SOME_

Choose a trusted adult/teacher from school who could deliver mentoring training. Training sessions should be delivered in small parts (not the whole day) to fit around the schedules of everyone involved. For example, if you are providing peer support for career skills, get teachers and career advisors

to help provide materials and share knowledge. Training sessions could be in 30 minutes sessions in PSHE lessons, during lunchtime or after school.

Remember that it is important to provide safeguarding training so that young people know what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns, know who is the school's Safeguarding Lead and can confidently signpost to other sources of help if needed.

Tip: Some examples of peer mentoring activities could include e.g. discussion groups, career chats, circle time and S.M.A.R.T plans.

4. BE REALISTIC_

Pupils are not trained psychologists or career advisors and it is important to remember what your school and students can realistically provide in terms of peer support. It is also important to agree the duration of the mentor-mentee relationship, in order to set clear boundaries as to how long the relationship will be and establish what commitment and learning is realistic during this time-frame.

We know from our own mentoring work in schools that it can have transformative results, so get your Anti-Bullying Ambassador team together and discuss your next steps. Good luck!

REFERENCES_

- www.mytutor.co.uk/schoolsblog/2017/10/11/how-peer-mentoring-could-benefit-your-students/
- www.artofmentoring.net/peer-mentoring/
- www.franklinscholars.org/peer-mentoring-in-schools
- www.sec-ed.co.uk/best-practice/building-an-effective-peer-mentoring-scheme-1

We're proud to be the only charity set up in memory of Diana, Princess of Wales, and her belief that young people have the power to change the world. It's a big mission but there are two things within it that we focus our charity's efforts on – young people and change.

Throughout all of our programmes and initiatives, 'change' for and by young people is central, including our anti-bullying work which encourages change in attitudes and behaviours.

We hope you found this resource useful and wish you all the best in your anti-bullying journey. If you would like to help us create more resources and train even more Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, you can make a £5 donation by texting CHANGE 5 to 70470 or visit diana-award.org.uk/donate

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