



## YOUTH START MENTORING PROJECT INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER MENTORS

*"Being mentored can keep me on track and it's a great way to have your voice heard".*

### What is Youth Start?

The Youth Start mentoring project is supported by a wide range of funders. It operates across all south London boroughs, working with young people aged 10-17 who are at risk.

### Who are My Voice London?

My Voice London is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. Our role is to promote, develop, and support links between education and business for mutual benefit. Programmes are designed to enable young people to be effectively prepared for adult and working life. We now have specially funded programmes that work across south London, and Youth Start is one of those.

### What do mentors do?

*"I like talking to my mentor because it helps me to resolve some issues that I'm dealing with right now."*

The Youth Start mentoring project offers 10 – 17 year olds one to one mentoring to help them to identify the issues that put them at risk, and to develop strategies that help them to cope.

Mentors can help young people to:

- improve their attendance
- raise their self-esteem
- help them to re-engage in learning
- help with problems inside and out of school or college.

*"My mentor is helping me to build up my self-confidence".*

Mentors will discuss with students their interests, aspirations and progress at school or college. They will encourage students to apply themselves to maximise their achievements. They will also share with students some aspects of their own life.

*"I have listened to what my mentor has said and I have calmed down more and argue less".*

Mentors will give brief feedback to the mentoring team about their sessions with mentees for the team to be able to monitor the mentoring relationship.

### What kind of volunteers are you looking for?

Mentors may or may not have had experience of working with young people but they have all been teenagers once and they would remember what that is like.

*"I can talk to someone like a friend but I know that they can be confidential also."*

We are looking for people who have successfully made the transition between school and further education, training, and/or work.

If you can:

- Demonstrate through your own education and career history the value of learning and achieving
- Demonstrate how you came to understand the relevance of learning to adult life
- Help students to see what they can learn from your life for their own present and future

Then this is the volunteering opportunity for you!

Please contact Topé, Mary or Terri or Victoria on 020 8545 2131, or at My Voice London, Omega Works, 17 Rodney Place, London SW19 2LQ. e-mail:

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This is an equal opportunities initiative and students will be targeted on the basis of their requirements. This is a multi ethnic project and we are seeking a diverse group of mentors to support students. The application procedure includes ethnic monitoring.

### **What commitment will I have to make?**

Mentors will make a commitment to one to one mentoring for one hour per week for a year during term time. Mentors will be fully trained and briefed prior to their first introduction to the students.

### **What support will you give to me?**

- Mentors will be selected after an interview, two satisfactory references, and checked by the Criminal Record Bureau. Please note that due to the nature of working with children and young people we are unable to recruit volunteers who have had a criminal record.
- Free training will be given in Mentoring and Child Protection.
- Mentors will be given a Mentoring Handbook and a copy of My Voice London's Child Protection Policy.
- Full support and line management will be given to mentors and mentees by the mentoring team.
- My Voice London will provide a full briefing for all mentors to enable them to fulfil their role.
- Schools/colleges will provide a member of the senior management team who will be responsible for managing the project in the school, including liaising with mentors and teachers/tutors; and provide a

first line of support for mentors in schools/colleges.

- My Voice London will organise regular networking and support meetings for mentors to discuss their role with the team and fellow mentors.

Where possible, students and mentors will be matched according to common interest areas, but this is unlikely to be achievable in every case.

### **Does mentoring work?**

*"I have sorted out things with my Dad so that our relationship is much better and my school life has improved".*

Yes! Our results show that 100% of young people supported remained in school/college; and that 87% of young people were reported as using successful coping strategies. We continue to evaluate the project every year, and your input to this will be vital.

*"I have a different approach to my family. Also, my attitude has changed and I do not take everything for granted and I try to make the most of everything".*

We are committed to achieving the highest quality because we believe that young people deserve the very best. We are an Approved Provider under the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation quality award programme. We have also achieved the Investors in People standard and our assessor said that My Voice London "has developed a culture of continual development and change where innovation and thinking outside of the box is welcome – a supportive, can do culture."

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