



These case studies explore the positive outcomes of our 16 week mentoring and entrepreneurship programme for child A and B.

### **Case Study 1**

Child A is a 15 year old boy who was on a child protection plan when we initially began our engagement with him and his mother. The Local Authority had sought our services due to child A being out of education due to displays of aggressive and threatening behaviours, frequent missing episodes, increasing risks of exploitation and lack of parental control.

As part of his support network, child A was matched with a mentor who would provide him with a consistent and supportive relationship that would enhance his well-being, increase his aspirations and personal development and support him in engaging with his education. Child A however became a looked after child within 2 weeks of engaging with his mentor due to increased missing episodes that escalated the challenging dynamics within the home. This resulted in his mother making a decision that she could no longer manage his care as she lived in fear of him. Child's A's mother and older sibling shared their thoughts, feelings, challenges and decisions with the mentor and family advocate. They asked for the team to advocate for them and support them in expressing their experiences with the local authority.

Child A experienced feelings of anger, resentment, abandonment and sadness throughout his transition into the care system. The mentor maintained his visits despite child A being placed out of borough and became a familiar face and reliable source of emotional support during this difficult time. The mentor actively listened to child's A's concerns, validated his feelings and advocated for him during times when he struggled to regularise his emotions which impacted his ability to articulate his feelings.

Child A further leaned on his mentor for guidance when he faced difficult situations as he had grown to trust and respected his opinion and identified him as someone who had stuck by him. This emotional support helped Child A build resilience, improved his self-esteem, and enabled him to develop healthier coping mechanisms.

Through the mentoring relationship, Child A had the opportunity to explore his interests and set personal goals. Initially Child A struggled to engage due to him being removed from his mother's care and being subject to court proceedings so the mentor focused on supporting him to understand the decisions that were being made and the consequences of some of his actions. The mentor continued to work in partnership with the placement and Child's A's mother to ensure that the support was holistic with everyone working in the best interest of Child A.



The mentor discovered that Child A loved water during the time spent with him as he shared that he had grown up by water in his country of origin. The mentor supported Child A in signing up for swimming sessions in the local sports centre which was great in getting him active and engaged in an activity that occupied his time, as he still had no school placement. The mentor introduced child A to the gym as a means of using it as an outlet for his anger and aggression. Child A developed a passion for the gym and was encouraged to pursue the possibility of becoming a personal trainer. The mentor played a vital role in bridging the gap caused by the lack of education engagement by providing academic guidance and encouragement as child A had lost his motivation to learn and was behind his peers. He supported child A in looking for an online course, supported him to engage with his practical work as well as engaging with a tutor who was supporting in other core subjects.

Child A experienced feelings of isolation and struggled to develop positive social relationships due to being in a residential placement where he was the only young person. The mentor recognized the importance of social integration for Child A's overall well-being and advocated for regular activities. He further utilised his time with him to support him in registering with a new GP, taught him how to budget, write a shopping list, assisted in completing his shopping in a supermarket that would allow for him to get the most out of his budget and spent time making meals with him at his placement. Through the mentors guidance and support, child A gradually improved his social skills, and gained a sense of self worth and belonging.

## **Case Study 2**

Child B is a 17 year old young male who was referred by the Local Authority's exploitation team due to concerns of him engaging in criminal behaviours, associating with individuals known to the police and NEET.

As part of his support network and taking into consideration that he would soon be 18 years old, child B was matched with a mentor who had a criminal background in his teenage years, had faced the consequences for his actions and managed to positively turn his life around. We felt that this was a suitable match as the mentor could understand what the pull factors were, provide realistic insight into the impact and consequences of engaging in criminal activities and support the young person in navigating the environment and relationships with the individuals he was connected with in a safe manner.



The mentor was able to provide tailored support and guidance to Child B as a result of having faced similar challenges which helped in building an empathetic, trusting relationship in which Child B was open to listen to someone with lived experiences. He explored how child B could deal with peer pressure, overcoming challenges he was facing at home, developing coping mechanisms, setting realistic goals for himself and helping him build a positive network of individuals who could assist in his personal development.

The mentor explored Child B's passion and discussed his ideas and aspirations for the future. This process allowed for the mentor to discover that Child B was interested in starting his own fashion brand and was very keen to engage in something that he was good at. He designed a logo and printed some samples of his designs which was a great confidence boost for him and got him motivated.

Child B was supported into securing a part-time job in a retail shop which was a great outcome for developing his skills, getting ready for the work world, reduced the amount of idle time he had and provided him the opportunity to make money legally. The mentor used this opportunity to meet with Child B after work so they could carry out some market research that would feed into his own brand, as he worked in a shopping centre. Child B took on more hours as he was a proud young man who did not want to ask his parents for financial support but wanted to fund his own business. By the end of our engagement Child B was working for the majority of the week, had developed a positive work ethic and had decided he wanted to explore going to college to study to be an electrician. The mentor supported him with finding out the relevant information, looking for the right course and completing his application.

Child B's engagement with peers of concern was no longer an issue as he immersed himself into his work, his weekly meetings with his mentor and studying to pass his driving theory test, which again he was supported with. He was encouraged to spend more quality time with his father as the relationship was estranged which was supported by initiatives such as providing them with football tickets to watch a game in Wembley Stadium which was a great opportunity for them to break the ice and bond.

The mentors served as a positive role model for both child A and child B, demonstrating healthy relationships, effective communication, and problem-solving skills. They guided and supported both child A and B in the decision-making processes and taught them essential life skills, such as budgeting, time management,



and conflict resolution. They both greatly benefited from these practical skills, which empowered them to navigate everyday challenges with increased confidence and independence.

Through the consistent support, guidance, and positive role modelling provided by the mentors, Child A and B experienced emotional support, personal development, educational support, social integration, and the acquisition of life skills. These benefits not only enhanced their well-being but also improved their prospects for a brighter future.

The partnership work that the mentors were able to do with the children, their families and other professionals and agencies was key in the success of the possessive progression of these young people. Mentors attended CIN, CP, LAC reviews, PEP's and strategy meetings to keep them abreast on matters concerning the child/young person's progression so that they could engage and support them in a meaningful way and advocate for their needs.