

## The need for great mentors!

Young people in care and those who come from difficult, abusive or neglectful backgrounds can benefit from experiencing attuned care and a nurturing relationship with a mentor.

A mentor is a calm, accepting steadying influence on the young person, who holds in mind their bigger picture.

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*Many young people who have faced difficulties in their past may go on to struggle with their ability to trust others, they may have difficulties with self-belief, their ability to self-regulate, to have healthy relationships, and to manage their lives.*



- *Mentors can help young people who may have a variety of needs. This can include young people who or may or may not have large problems in their lives.*
- *Mentors can help those who are also in need of support and guidance with aspects of their lives.*
- *Being a mentor involves serving as a guide and support for the young person.*
- *A mentor is a calm, accepting steadying influence on the young person, who holds in mind their bigger picture.*

Young people supported by HYPAR deserve the opportunity to experience positive connections in their lives, receive support and have access to tools and opportunities that will help them toward independence and lead a good life. The way you support a young person may help them to have better self-confidence, improve their ability to self-regulate, develop friendships, improve their academic achievement, and develop connections in their community. Your role may also help young people to increase their interpersonal and daily living skills, gain achievement and engage in good lifestyle choices.



## Mentor essentials

- Define your main approach to mentoring.
- Remain open minded as much as possible when the behaviour of the young person's conflicts with your values.
- Identify your own safety plan, which may include talking with another colleague or your manager. Seek additional advice if you find you need further support with your experiences (e.g. being triggered or experiencing discomfort).
- Reflect on the most enjoyable aspects of your job.
- Awareness of your triggers is essential in terms of identifying entanglement and to look for an alternative way to view the situation or act.

## Key practice areas for successful mentoring:

- **Knowing who you are, maintaining self-awareness.**
- Knowing your practice framework and the basis of your work which gives you direction.
- Enjoying your work and experiencing joy with the young person.
- **Having and maintaining professional boundaries to provide the safe base for the young person.**
- **Keeping in mind an awareness of transference.**
- **Equipping the young person with essential life skills.**
- Engaging in skills practice to promote learning.
- Encouraging the strengths in young people, so they continue with a sense of mastery.
- **Reviewing and planning the processes needed to keep clear goal setting in mind and to make way for positive future results for the young person.**

Think about all of the skills you possess to carry out tasks or engage in your family, work and community life. Think about how important your own mastery of skills is, and how important it is to exercise control and choice over your life. It is likely those same needs bear similarity to the underlying needs of the young person.

Think about how you are going to assist young people to have autonomy, choice and achievement based on having new skills. Identify specific skills development opportunities or goals for the care planning and review process. Discuss and plan the goals with the young person to ensure that they have investment in the outcome.

*Imagine all potential areas of skill you might increase and support with the young person with due to your role!*