

Inspiring

YOUNG ENFIELD

MENTORING TO SUCCEED

Mentoring Report



An illustration of a young man and a young woman. The man, on the left, has dark skin and curly hair, is smiling broadly, and has his arms raised in a celebratory gesture. He is wearing a black t-shirt with a grey alien head logo and green camouflage pants. The woman, on the right, has dark skin and long dark hair, and is smiling. She is wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and light blue pants, with a red sash draped across her chest. She is holding a small orange book. The background is a vibrant red with a large yellow and orange curved shape in the upper right corner.

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Inspiring Young Enfield

Told by Rafique Ullah, Head of Youth Development Service

Inspiring Young Enfield began as a bold, community-driven response to the growing challenges faced by young people across our borough. Backed by the Mayor of London's Young Londoners Fund, we brought together more than twenty projects with one shared aim: to create meaningful alternatives to exclusion, isolation and involvement in crime for young people aged 10 to 21. Working in partnership with schools, voluntary and community organisations, and local residents, we built a model of early help and opportunity centred on care, inclusion and prevention.

Under a clear Theory of Change, IYE focused on measurable progress across wellbeing, education, employment and community connection. Even when the pandemic disrupted our routines, the teams adapted quickly with creativity and dedication. More than 18,000 young people took part, with around 17,000 completing their involvement — three and a half times our initial target. That scale of impact reflects not just the drive of our youth-work staff but also the trust and strength within Enfield's communities.

As our work progressed, a growing number of young people asked for deeper, one-to-one support: someone consistent who could guide them through school, family and personal challenges. These conversations led directly to the creation of the Inspiring Young Enfield Mentoring to Succeed programme, a natural next step in the IYE journey. This new strand brings together trained mentors, community providers and lived-experience practitioners under one shared vision: that every young person in Enfield should know an adult who believes in them and will walk alongside them.

Now Mentoring to Succeed carries forward that legacy, turning our learning into lasting change and helping young people build resilience, ambition and connection across Enfield.



Rafique Ullah

Executive Summary

Told by Yemi Akinfenwa, Inspiring Young Enfield Project Manager

My name is Yemi Akinfenwa, and I have had the privilege of managing the Inspiring Young Enfield: Mentoring to Succeed programme from July 2023 to March 2025. This programme sits within the wider Inspiring Young Enfield project, which I have been developing since 2020 with one clear mission: to connect young people across the borough with real opportunities to grow in confidence, wellbeing, relationships, and future prospects.

In its early stages, IYE worked closely with schools, local providers, families, and community leaders to create a trusted, inclusive platform for young people. As demand for mentoring grew, we recognised the need to scale up. This led to a successful uplift funding bid through the Mayor of London's New Deal for Young People, securing £704,484 to launch a borough-wide structured mentoring offer. Our programme combined the strengths of an internal team and a diverse group of community providers, all guided by the Gerard Egan Skilled Helper Model and the Mayor's Mentoring Quality Framework. Together, we built a mentoring approach rooted in trust, consistency, and the belief that every young person deserves to thrive. Over 1,160 young people engaged, with 919 completing their full journey. Beyond the numbers, we saw improved mental health, stronger relationships, better attendance, and greater self-worth.

What made this programme unique was the people behind it. Mentors drawn from youth work, education, sports, health, and lived experience brought cultural insight and creativity to ensure support felt personal. As demand grew, referrals poured in from schools, youth justice, early help, and social care. The programme is now commissioned locally to continue beyond its initial funding.

In May 2024, mentees and young people shared their stories directly with the GLA, reminding us all why this work matters. With that, I now hand over to my colleague Isra, who will guide you through the journeys that defined this programme.



Yemi Akinfenwa

Key outcomes included:

473

young people reporting improved mental health

343

with improved education/employment outcomes
186 showing reduced risky behaviour

186

showing reduced risky behaviour



The Story of Inspiring Young Enfield Mentoring to Succeed

Introduction: A Story of Growth, Opportunity and Connection

The Inspiring Young Enfield Mentoring to Succeed programme, coordinated by Enfield Council, has been a journey of transformation, for young people, mentors, families, and communities. Running from July 2023 to March 2025, the programme has grown into a powerful force for change, grounded in compassion, community collaboration, and an unwavering belief in young people's potential. The vision was simple yet profound: to provide young people with the support they need to overcome challenges, unlock their potential, and thrive in their communities. With two distinct strands, intensive mentoring and a consortium of external providers, this initiative set out to inspire and empower young people in schools, youth centers, and the broader Enfield community. What followed was not just an intervention, but a journey, a journey of transformation, growth, and change.

Backed by a generous investment of £704,484 from the New Deal for Young People fund (via the Greater London Authority), the programme was born from a bold vision: to ensure every young person who needs a mentor has access to one. With that mandate, we set out to support 720 young people over an 18 month period but exceeded expectations, engaging 1,162 and successfully completing mentoring

with 919. Working closely with local partners and the broader Inspiring Young Enfield Consortium to ensure every mentoring experience was rooted in trust, care, and purpose.

Building the Foundation: The Power of Partnership

Together, under the umbrella of the Mayor of London's Mentoring Quality Framework, we committed to maintaining the highest standards in recruitment, safeguarding, mentor training, matching processes, and impact measurement.

Our approach was grounded in the Gerard Egan Skilled Helper model, a structured but flexible method that encourages mentors to walk alongside young people through three key stages: Exploration, New Understanding, and Action/Goal Setting.

This model provided the scaffolding for meaningful, consistent, and transformational relationships to flourish and was further underpinned by the London Mayor Mentoring quality framework.

Mentors came from all walks of life, youth work, sports education, trauma informed practice, substance misuse services, bringing a richness of experience that reflected the diversity of Enfield itself. Their shared goal? To meet young people where they were, and to walk with them toward brighter futures.

The Impact:

Numbers That Tell a Human Story

By the end of the reporting period, the scale and depth of our reach were clear:

A remarkable 1,162 young people have taken part in the programme, each with their own journey, challenges, and triumphs.

Of those, 919 young people completed the mentoring process, a testament to the strength of the relationships built and the value they found in the experience.

These numbers, however, only begin to tell the story.

We supported a broad cross section of the community, with 653 male and 458 female participants. The most represented age group was 12 to 17, right in the thick of adolescence, often the most critical years for support. Our top age categories included:

12 to 13 years old: 289 participants
14 to 15 years old: 294 participants
16 to 17 years old: 269 participants

Diversity was a defining feature of the programme, with strong engagement across ethnic groups:

White: 364 young people
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: 386
Mixed/Multiple ethnic backgrounds: 126
Asian/Asian British: 51
Other ethnic groups: 188

Meeting Young People Where They Are

From the outset, we were intentional about working with young people who often face multiple barriers to opportunity. The data shows how far reaching this commitment has been:

311 young people at risk of school exclusion
602 from low income households
244 experiencing mental health concerns
403 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
262 in or on the edge of the care system

This wasn't about ticking boxes, it was about recognising the unique pressures these young people face and responding with compassion, creativity, and care.



What Changed: The Outcomes That Mattered Most

Outcomes were not only measured, they were felt. Among the 919 young people who completed mentoring, we saw the following key impacts:

Each of these numbers represents a young person making a different choice, taking a step forward, or simply feeling seen and supported, often for the first time.



473

reported improved
mental health and
wellbeing

399

became more engaged
with local services and
support

236

demonstrated stronger
social emotional
learning skills

343

improved their learning
or work outcomes

149

built better
relationships with
peers and family

186

reduced risky
behaviours

Meeting the Mentors: The Heart of the Programme

The story really begins with the mentors, the unsung heroes who have guided, encouraged, and challenged the young people of Enfield.

Our internal team of intensive 1-2-1 mentors, working directly in schools, youth centers and in the community, were dedicated to supporting young people on a day-to-day basis. They became the constants in the lives of young people who faced uncertainty and adversity.





Jefferson Ocran

Background – Jeff brings a unique and powerful perspective to his mentoring role, having progressed through the youth service himself, from a young person attending youth centres, to now being an experienced and highly valued mentor on our team.

Approach – With a background in sports, Jeff effectively uses physical activity as a tool to engage young people, particularly those who may not respond to more traditional forms of support.

Impact – He is highly adaptable and tailors his mentoring style to meet the individual needs of each young person, demonstrating an ability to connect, motivate, and support positive change. With a background in sports, Jeff effectively uses physical activity as a tool to engage young people, particularly those who may not respond to more traditional forms of support.

However, his approach is by no means one-dimensional; he is highly adaptable and tailors his mentoring style to meet the individual needs of each young person. Whether working with those involved in the youth justice system or young people who may be less engaged with mainstream services, Jeff consistently demonstrates an ability to connect, motivate, and support positive change.



Becca Hill

Background – Becca is known for her compassionate, thoughtful approach and her ability to connect deeply with the young people she supports.

Approach – She often takes a nurturing style of mentoring, creating a safe and supportive environment, particularly for young girls navigating complex pressures such as social media.

Impact – Her ability to build confidence and self-esteem is exceptional, empowering young people to believe in themselves and their potential.

Her ability to build confidence and self-esteem is exceptional, and she consistently empowers young people to believe in themselves and their potential. Becca doesn't just support young people at surface level, she takes a holistic approach, regularly going above and beyond to offer wider support, including working with families, advocating around housing issues, and helping to navigate systems that can often feel overwhelming.



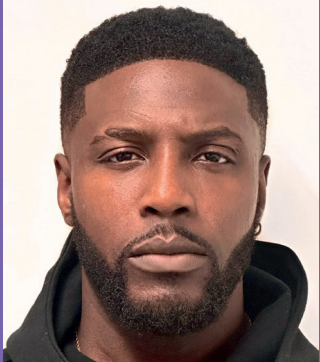
Symeon

Background – Symeon brings both energy and empathy to his mentoring role, with a strong background in sports.

Approach – His sports experience provides a natural entry point for engagement, helping to create structure, motivation, and purpose.

Impact – He forms strong, genuine connections that help young people build resilience, develop discipline, and believe in their ability to make positive choices.

Symeon's ability to form strong, genuine connections serve as the foundation for growth and development. Through consistent support and positive role-modelling, he helps young people build resilience, develop discipline, and believe in their ability to make positive choices.



Dele

Background – Dele is an experienced youth worker with years of dedication to supporting young people across various services.

Approach – He combines a calm, consistent approach with a deep understanding of young people's needs.

Impact – His compassionate nature and high standards enabled young people to improve attendance, avoid offending, and build self-confidence.

Dele was highly committed to seeing young people achieve positive outcomes, whether that meant supporting improvements in school attendance, helping them stay away from offending, or simply building their confidence and belief in themselves.

His high standards, compassionate nature, and ability to bring out the best in others made him an invaluable asset to the programme and a powerful role model for the young people he worked with.



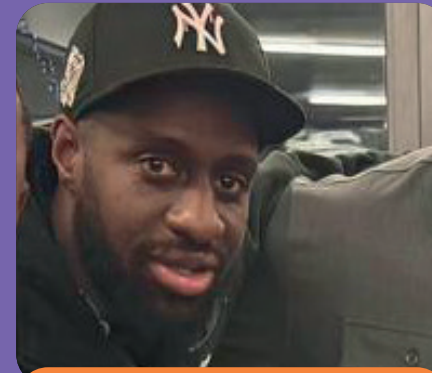
Toniann

Background – Toniann is a dedicated and highly dependable mentor who builds strength and resilience in the young people she supports.

Approach – She works effectively with young people who may face significant barriers to engagement and complex personal circumstances.

Impact – Her consistent presence and high expectations contribute to positive outcomes, including employment and improved school attendance.

What stands out about Toniann is her unwavering commitment to seeing every young person through to the end of the programme. Her consistent presence, encouragement, and high expectations contribute to real, measurable change. Under her guidance, young people have achieved positive outcomes such as securing employment after involvement with the youth justice system, reducing reoffending, and making significant improvements in areas like school attendance and personal development.



Yannick

Background – Yannick brought a wealth of experience in youth work, giving him deep insight into the challenges young people face.

Approach – He builds trusting relationships through compassion and curiosity, using games and group activities to connect and engage.

Impact – Yannick's high energy and approachability made him a favourite among young people, fostering connection and development.

He had a natural gift for building strong, trusting relationships, approaching every young person with compassion, curiosity, and without judgment. Yannick's high energy and competitive spirit made him a favourite among the young people, especially when it came to games and group activities, which he used as a fun and effective way to connect and engage.

And meet me...



Isra

Inspiring young Enfield mentoring coordinator and narrator of the story so far. Reflecting on my role as the coordinator of the mentoring programme, I am proud of the supportive and positive environment we have built together. A key part of my focus has been helping to foster a strong team spirit, prioritising workloads thoughtfully, ensuring mentors felt supported, and creating space for training, development, and personal growth. I have worked closely with the team to maintain a positive culture, where mentors not only felt valued but were able to bring out the best in the young people they supported. It has been a privilege to see the team's passion and commitment flourish and to play a part in shaping the success of the programme.

In May 2024, we formed a steering group of young people, all of whom had been part of the inspiring Young Enfield Mentoring Programme. They collaborated to create a powerful presentation for the Mayor of London's funding team, showcasing their dedication, creativity, and what mentoring had meant to them. Alongside this, they took part in the

creation and scriptwriting of an animation that told the story of two young people in Enfield who, after facing tough challenges, found support through mentoring.

They also participated in a series of workshops focused on healthy relationships, consent, and online safety to name a few. The bond within the group grew stronger, and they developed a deeper connection with their mentors.

What stood out most was how they embraced the opportunity to form genuine friendships. The workshops and activities, like the crazy golf trip, provided space for them to connect on a personal level.

They shared their stories, supported one another through challenges, and celebrated each other's successes. The bonds they built extended beyond just working together, they created a sense of belonging that grew stronger with every new experience. Through the guidance of their mentors and the camaraderie they developed, these young people fostered a positive, inclusive environment where everyone felt valued and heard.

Investing in People: Training and Growth

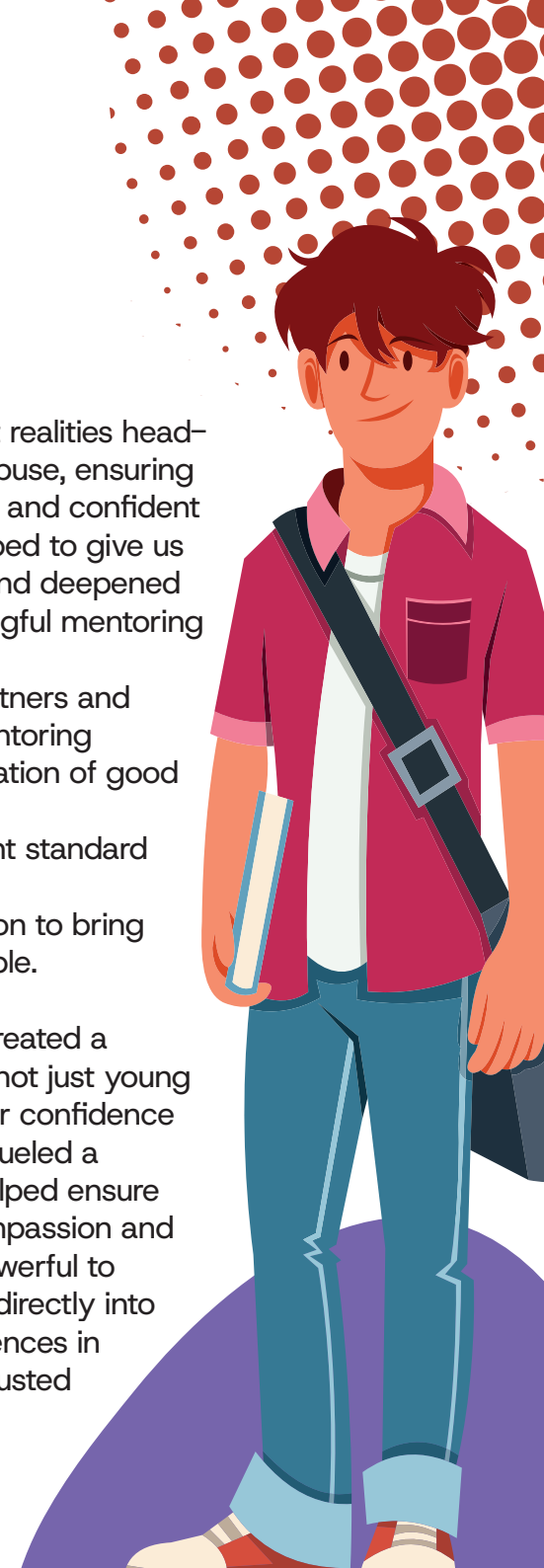
A cornerstone of the mentoring programme's success has been the continuous investment in training and capacity building. From the very beginning, we understood that to truly meet the needs of the young people and families we were working alongside, we needed to deepen our understanding, challenge our assumptions, and equip ourselves with the knowledge to respond meaningfully to complex situations.

Throughout the programme, our internal IYE mentors undertook a wide-ranging and thoughtful programme of training. Sessions on LGBTQ+ inclusion, forced marriage and honour-based violence, and autism awareness helped us navigate some of the often-hidden experiences of young people. Signs of Safety and attachment theory gave us language and tools to ground our work in safety, stability, and connection, while motivational interviewing allowed us to draw out change from within, rather than trying to impose it.

We also faced some of the more difficult realities head-on, with robust training on child sexual abuse, ensuring we were better informed, trauma-aware, and confident in responding appropriately. Training helped to give us insight, built our emotional intelligence, and deepened the empathy that is so central to meaningful mentoring work.

Additionally, the entire consortium of partners and mentors completed the AQA Level 2 Mentoring qualification, embedding a shared foundation of good practice across the programme. This created a consistent standard while still allowing each mentor and organisation to bring their own values and approach to the table.

Collectively, this investment in learning created a ripple effect, empowering us to support not just young people, but their families too, with greater confidence and care. It strengthened us as a team, fueled a culture of reflection and curiosity, and helped ensure that our work was grounded in both compassion and competence. As a coordinator, it was powerful to witness the way this learning translated directly into impact, small shifts that made big differences in the lives of the young people we were trusted to support.



The IYE Mentoring Providers

In parallel, a consortium of nine external mentoring providers also took on a critical role, each bringing their own unique methods, expertise, and experience.

Together, these partners became a network of support, offering tailored solutions for a diverse range of young people. Across Enfield, this vibrant network of organisations came together to shape young futures through tailored mentoring. From boxing rings to theatre stages, basketball courts to hospital wards, each initiative told a story of hope, growth, and transformation.

Oasis Community Hub Hadley

built on existing youth work in Enfield by offering bespoke 1:1, activity-based mentoring over 12 weeks. Trusted adults worked closely with young people to support their personal development, build confidence, and help them set and achieve meaningful goals. Alongside this, open-access youth sessions provided a safe, supportive environment where participants could continue to engage, connect, and grow. Group mentoring played a key role in strengthening peer relationships, enhancing emotional intelligence, and fostering a sense of community.

Throughout the programme, the team actively engaged with 88 young people, with 68 successfully completing the full 12 weeks. This consistent, relationship-based approach created lasting impact and meaningful change in participants' lives.

One young person reflected: *"Having a mentor made a big difference. It gave me someone to talk to who understood me and believed in me. I feel more confident now and know what I want to work towards."*

Work Works Training Solutions

supported young people who were furthest from the job market, offering a structured yet supportive pathway into education, training, and employment. Through accredited training, 1:1 mentoring, and direct links to employers, participants gained valuable qualifications and hands-on experience designed to build confidence and practical skills. Their open-door approach created a welcoming environment where young people felt encouraged to take the next steps toward their goals.

Over the course of the programme, the team worked with 134 young people, with 71 successfully completing their training journey. Many participants left with strengthened employability skills, improved confidence, and a clearer sense of their future direction.

One young person shared: *"Before joining, I didn't know where to start. Having someone guide me and help me find opportunities made me believe in myself again. Now I feel ready to work and build a future."*

Wellbeing Connect Services

delivered mentoring programmes focused on developing leadership skills across three key sectors: health and social care, music and entertainment, and food and agriculture. Through the programme, young people explored the connection between personal wellbeing and career development while learning practical tools to lead with awareness, empathy, and confidence. Mentors provided guidance, encouragement, and sector-specific insight, helping participants to set goals and plan for their futures.

Over the course of the programme, 84 young people participated, with 81 successfully completing. This high completion rate demonstrates the programme's effectiveness in engaging young people and supporting them to develop leadership skills that are transferable across life and work.

One young person reflected: *"The programme helped me understand how looking after myself affects my future. My mentor encouraged me to think about my goals and how I want to lead in my career."*

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Edmonton Eagles Boxing Club

mentored young people through structured boxing sessions and motivational workshops designed to build resilience, discipline, and self-belief. Over 12 weeks, each participant followed a personalised development plan tailored to their individual needs and goals, supported every step of the way by dedicated mentors. Through this combination of physical activity and positive role modelling, many young people were able to turn away from negative influences, build confidence, and develop leadership skills. Some participants even went on to collaborate with local police, helping to strengthen trust and foster better community understanding.

Throughout the programme, the club engaged 74 young people, with 63 successfully completing the 12-week journey. Their achievements highlight the power of sport and mentoring to inspire lasting change.

One young person reflected: *“Boxing gave me focus and helped me stay out of trouble. Having someone believe in me made me push myself harder. I feel like I’ve changed a lot and want to keep going.”*

Enfield Scorpions

used basketball as a powerful tool for mentoring, combining sport with personal development to help young people build confidence, discipline, and positive habits. Group sessions introduced participants to the fundamentals of the game, while tailored 1:1 support focused on individual goals and personal growth. With sessions running up to four times a week, the programme provided consistency, structure, and a safe space for young people to thrive. Strong partnerships with local schools ensured the initiative was accessible and reached a wide range of young people across the community.

Throughout the programme, 61 young people took part — and impressively, all 61 completed. This 100% completion rate reflects both the commitment of the participants and the supportive environment created by the coaches and mentors.

One young person shared: *“Being part of the team gave me something to look forward to. I learned new skills, met great people, and my mentor helped me stay focused on school and life outside basketball.”*

Leo Powell

delivered an intensive group mentoring programme designed to support boys in Years 6–8 at a critical stage in their personal and academic development. Over 12 structured sessions, participants explored identity, decision-making, school expectations, and future aspirations. The programme created a safe and supportive environment where young people could express themselves openly, build confidence, and develop positive attitudes towards learning and personal growth.

Each cycle culminated in a structured review with school staff, reinforcing the progress made and ensuring that long-term support plans were in place. By working directly within schools, Leo ensured the mentoring was both accessible and closely aligned with the students’ everyday experiences.

Across the programme, 64 young people took part — and all 64 successfully completed it, reflecting the strong engagement and positive impact of the sessions.

One young person said: *“Talking in the group helped me understand myself more. I feel like I can make better choices now, and it’s good to know there are people who believe in me.”*

The IYE Mentoring Providers

In parallel, a consortium of nine external mentoring providers also took on a critical role, each bringing their own unique methods, expertise, and experience.

Together, these partners became a network of support, offering tailored solutions for a diverse range of young people. Across Enfield, this vibrant network of organisations came together to shape young futures through tailored mentoring. From boxing rings to theatre stages, basketball courts to hospital wards, each initiative told a story of hope, growth, and transformation.

Holler

focused on holistic and creative development, supporting young people to build confidence, self-awareness, and a stronger sense of identity. Over 12 weeks, participants engaged in a mix of 1:1 and group sessions, exploring a wide range of personal and social topics through creative, interactive, and reflective activities. The programme's person-centred approach ensured that each young person felt heard, valued, and supported in their individual journey.

A key highlight of the programme was the celebration of each participant as a "Holler Hero." Every young person received a certificate and trophy in recognition of their growth and achievements, reinforcing their sense of pride and accomplishment.

Across the programme, 72 young people took part, with 59 successfully completing the full 12 weeks. This strong level of engagement reflects the meaningful connections built between mentors and participants.

One young person shared: *"Holler helped me feel more confident about who I am. I liked that they listened to me and celebrated what I achieved. It made me feel proud of myself."*

NHS North Middlesex Hospital

ran a peer mentoring programme designed to empower young people aged 16–19 through structured workshops and real-world mentoring opportunities. Led by a qualified trainer, the workshops focused on developing communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills, helping participants build confidence and a strong sense of responsibility. Upon completion, participants were awarded AQA accreditation, recognising their achievements and newly gained skills.

To extend the impact of the programme, mentoring placements were arranged where trained peer mentors worked directly with younger students. In partnership with schools, Reading Mentors supported 11–13-year-olds to build confidence and improve literacy through regular reading sessions. Acting as positive role models and consistent listeners, mentors helped young people boost comprehension, increase self-esteem, and nurture a genuine love of reading.

In total, 29 young people started the programme, with 19 successfully completing. Those who participated developed transferable skills and made a tangible difference to the lives of younger students.

One young person reflected: *"Being a mentor made me feel proud of what I could do. It helped me speak up more and seeing the younger students improve made me feel like I was making a difference."*

Chickenshed Theatre

delivered personalised Mentoring Intervention Programmes carefully tailored to meet each young person's individual needs. Drawing on an inclusive, arts-based model, mentors with lived experience offered 1:1 sessions, enrichment projects, and access to professional counselling. This creative and compassionate approach provided a safe space for young people to reflect, express themselves, and build the confidence needed to re-engage with learning and take positive steps toward meaningful futures.

The combination of creative arts and structured mentoring proved highly effective, helping participants strengthen their emotional resilience, communication skills, and self-belief.

Across the programme, 65 young people took part — and all 65 completed. This 100% completion rate is a testament to the strong relationships built between mentors and participants, as well as the inclusive environment fostered by the team.

One young person shared: *"Chickenshed made me feel like I mattered. Talking to my mentor and being part of something creative helped me believe in myself again."*

The Young People's Journey: Case Studies



Meet – Young person 1

When YP1 first began the Inspiring Young Enfield mentoring programme, his life felt uncertain, with few clear paths ahead. He was out of education, training, employment, and his curfew further restricted his activities. Together, his mentor and YP1 decided to start with a simple but vital change, establishing a basic routine. It wasn't easy at first, but by focusing on waking up early and planning his day, YP1 began to develop some structure, setting the stage for healthier habits to follow.

One of the first major steps YP1 took was completing a motor mechanics course. Initially unsure about what the future held, he found himself drawn to hands-on work and soon discovered a real passion for it. By the end of the course, YP1 was talking about how much he enjoyed it and how he was learning similar skills at Hertford Regional College. This was a turning point, YP1 was starting to realise that he could build a future with real, tangible skills.

After the course, his mentor encouraged him to look for further opportunities, leading to an assessment at North London Garage.

Although he didn't pass, it didn't feel like a failure. Instead, it opened a new door for YP1 to return once he had completed his English and Maths qualifications, which became part of his long-term goals.

Along the way, something remarkable happened. During the summer, YP1 was nominated for an Ignite Award, and he won. The award wasn't just about his achievements; it recognised YP1's leadership and the positive impact he had on others throughout the programme and within the steering group. It was a testament to his growth, both as an individual and as someone who could inspire those around him.

However, the journey wasn't without setbacks. When the search for work became frustrating, YP1, feeling disheartened, briefly slipped back into old habits, making choices that weren't in line with his new goals. This period was tough, but it underscored the emotional and psychological challenges YP1 was facing. It was a reminder that even when progress is made, the road can still have its bumps.

But YP1 didn't let that define him. A new opportunity came in the form of two weeks' work experience as a fashion workshop assistant. This time, YP1 approached it with a renewed sense of focus. He showed leadership, took the initiative, and worked proactively. It was clear that he had the potential to thrive when he channeled his energy in the right direction.

Now, YP1 is at a crossroads, with several options before him. His mentor helped him apply for an entry-level engineering course at Southgate College. Alternatively, there are opportunities for him to secure an apprenticeship or employment with Maximus. He's already in contact with a representative from the organisation who is supporting him in obtaining his CSCS construction card. This qualification could open doors for YP1 in the construction industry, offering yet another pathway for his future.

Looking back, it's clear that the mentoring journey has been pivotal in shaping the choices YP1 has made. With guidance, he's taken significant steps toward a better future. Today, YP1 has multiple paths before him, whether it's further education, an apprenticeship, or a career in construction. The future is in his hands, and the growth he has shown so far proves he has the motivation and resilience to succeed.

Now, the next step is his to take. With the opportunities that lie ahead, YP1 is well-equipped to continue building the future he's worked so hard to create.

The Young People's Journey: Case Studies

Meet – Young person 2

When YP2 first joined the mentoring programme, she was struggling to manage her behaviour in school. Staying motivated and focused during lessons was a daily challenge, and her confidence was low, largely because she hadn't yet been able to identify her own strengths. Underneath this was a young person trying to understand and manage big emotions, often overwhelmed in stressful situations and unsure of how to respond. She also expressed a strong desire to build better relationships, both at home and with her peers, but didn't yet feel she had the tools or confidence to do so. YP2 wanted help learning how to set healthy boundaries, deal with conflict constructively, and find the courage to open herself up to new friendships.

From the beginning of our mentoring sessions, it was clear that the foundation of our work would be trust. YP2 had often felt overlooked or misunderstood in the past, so our first priority was creating a space where she could feel safe, heard, and valued. As she began to open up, I gained a deeper understanding of her experiences, and together we were able to identify strategies that would support her goals.

One of the key areas we worked on was setting and maintaining healthy boundaries. Through regular conversations and practical exercises, YP2 began to explore what she needed from her relationships and how to express those needs clearly and assertively. Gradually, she started to notice a shift, not only in how others responded to her but in how she viewed herself.

We also focused heavily on emotional regulation. I introduced YP2 to mindfulness techniques, grounding strategies, and the importance of stepping back from triggering situations. Over time, she began using these tools to manage her responses more effectively. The explosive

confrontations she had once struggled with, particularly at school and with friends, became less frequent. Instead, she started responding more thoughtfully and with greater awareness of how her actions affected others.

Beyond one-to-one sessions, YP2 also stepped out of her comfort zone socially. She began attending group events like bowling and roller-skating, which provided low-pressure opportunities to meet new people and practice the skills we'd been working on. It wasn't always easy for her, but she took each experience in stride and gradually grew more confident in unfamiliar settings.

The changes in YP2 over the course of the programme have been both significant and inspiring. One of the most notable shifts has been in how she handles conflict. At home, her family has commented on how much calmer and more reflective she has become. She's also developed a stronger sense of accountability—recognising when things go wrong and taking responsibility for her part in them. This has had a positive ripple effect on her school life and personal relationships.

What's perhaps most telling is that even after her case formally closed, YP2 has continued to reach out when facing challenges. The mentoring relationship we built has given her a reliable support system and a sense of security that she can still draw upon. Her willingness to stay connected speaks volumes about the trust we established and the lasting impact the programme has had on her journey.



Understanding the “Distance Travelled” Assessment Tool

At the heart of any mentoring journey lies a simple question: what has changed for the young person? To answer that meaningfully, we introduced the IYE Distance Travelled Assessment, a structured, person-centered tool designed to capture the small but significant shifts that mentoring can inspire.

Each young person, upon joining the programme, worked alongside their mentor to reflect on key areas of their life. These included wellbeing, school or work, family, relationships, confidence, future aspirations, and more. They identified two to three “Focus Areas” most relevant to their circumstances and used a 1 to 5 scale to score their starting point in each. A score of 1 indicated a low sense of confidence or stability in that area, while a score of 5 reflected strong wellbeing, engagement, or satisfaction.

Over the course of the mentoring journey, young people revisited these same areas and reflected again. The difference between their starting and finishing scores was calculated as their “distance travelled”, offering a tangible and visual insight into their progress. More importantly, it gave young people an opportunity to recognise and reflect on their personal growth, often for the first time in a structured way.

This process was never about measuring perfection. It was about giving young people a simple language to describe complex journeys. Many found the experience empowering, and mentors reported that young people would often express surprise at how far they had come. Sometimes just seeing the improvement on paper gave them the confidence boost they needed.

Real Stories Behind the Numbers

A 15-year-old girl of mixed heritage began her mentoring journey with significant challenges around friendships, school, and wellbeing. Her emotional wellbeing was initially at the lowest point of the scale, scoring just 1 out of 5. Her relationships with friends were fragile, and her school engagement was inconsistent. Over time, with dedicated support, her scores improved substantially. Her wellbeing rose to 4 out of 5, and her school engagement to 3 out of 5, marking a total distance travelled of 2.33 points across her chosen focus areas. This shift reflected her growing confidence, stronger routines, and better peer connections.

Another young woman, aged 18, of Black African Caribbean heritage, came into the programme with a complicated home life and anxiety around her future. Her starting score in the area of “My family” was 1, indicating significant distress and disconnection. With consistent guidance and a nurturing mentor relationship, she built trust, improved communication at home, and ultimately rated this area as 5 out of 5. Overall, her average distance travelled across wellbeing, family, and education was an impressive 3.33 points, reflecting a complete transformation in how she saw herself and her future.

A 16-year-old Caribbean girl also stood out. She began mentoring with low school attendance, limited friendships, and heightened emotional challenges. Her initial score for friendships was 1, and her school/work engagement was just 1 out of 5. By the end of the programme, her school engagement had climbed to 5, and she reported modest but meaningful progress in her friendships. Her total distance travelled was 2.0 points, signalling a steady and sustainable shift in mindset, routine, and confidence.



A Mirror and a Map

Across the programme, the Distance Travelled Assessment helped to uncover progress that might have otherwise gone unnoticed. For some young people, success meant waking up each day with a plan. For others, it was the courage to talk in a group, manage emotions, or believe they could succeed in school or work.

By gathering this data, we were able to build a picture not just of where young people started, but how far they had come. Each score captured a chapter in their story. But behind every number was a relationship, one built on trust, consistency, and care.

In a system often focused on attendance or attainment, the Distance Travelled Assessment offered something different. It served as a mirror to reflect on growth, and a map to guide what comes next.



Mentoring Trends

As we walked alongside the young people of Enfield through our mentoring journey, a powerful story began to unfold, one not just of struggle, but of resilience, growth, and transformation. The patterns we observed were more than just trends; they were lived experiences, each highlighting the challenges these young people face and the vital role our mentors play in guiding them through.

One of the most striking themes was the quiet but persistent shadow of low self-esteem. Time and again, we met young people who doubted their worth, struggling to find their voice both at home and among their peers. For many, walking into a new environment was daunting. But through patient, consistent mentoring, we began to see flickers of confidence. Slowly, they started to believe in themselves, speak up, and take up space in the world.

Another recurring thread was the number of young people referred to us with Special Educational Needs, whether it was autism, ADHD, or global developmental delay. Each of these young individuals brought with them unique perspectives and challenges. It became clear that to support them fully, our mentors needed more than compassion; they needed specialised tools and training. With tailored approaches, we could better help these mentees unlock their potential, on their terms and at their pace.

Mental health, too, has become an ever-pressing concern. We've witnessed a rise in young people grappling with anxiety, depression, and even suicide ideation, often with little to no immediate access to professional services due to long waiting lists. For some, our mentoring sessions became

their only safe space. Here, they could talk, cry, or simply be. And for many, that space made all the difference.

Family life often played a complex role in their stories. We encountered young people caught in the turbulence of difficult or fractured relationships at home, situations that left them emotionally worn and withdrawn. Our mentors stepped in as bridges, helping open up communication between young people and their families, advocating for their needs, and offering stability where it was lacking. In doing so, we weren't just mentoring individuals; we were supporting entire family ecosystems.

We also saw how these personal challenges spilled into school life. Education, for many, became a background concern as they juggled emotional turmoil. Disengagement, poor performance, and even truancy followed. But with a mentor's encouragement and belief in their potential, some began to reimagine their futures, as students, as professionals, and as individuals with a purpose.

Social connections were another hurdle. Many young people found it hard to trust or relate to their peers, often due to past experiences of bullying or rejection. Through mentoring, they began to develop the tools to communicate, form friendships, and rediscover a sense of belonging.

The IYE mentoring programme isn't just a service, it's a lifeline. Every interaction, every breakthrough, and every quiet moment of connection helps us better understand and respond to the evolving needs of young people in Enfield. By listening deeply and acting thoughtfully, we are not only supporting them in the now, we are helping shape who they will become.

Challenges



Managing Expectations in the Face of Demand

As word of the programme spread and trust deepened within schools, communities and services, demand for mentoring soared. This was a testament to the quality of the work but it also brought a very human challenge.

At times, our waiting list grew longer than we would have liked. Managing expectations for referrers, families and young people became a delicate balance: keeping hope alive while being transparent about capacity. It was never easy to explain delays to a young person in need or to a parent desperate for support.

We did our best to communicate with honesty and care, while advocating for additional capacity wherever we could.



Supporting Mentors to Hold Complex Solutions

Our mentors were extraordinarily skilled, compassionate, and often deeply connected to the communities they served. But they were also human.

Many were holding space for young people with complex trauma, difficult family dynamics, or emerging mental health concerns.

While our training and supervision were strong, there were moments when the emotional load was heavy.

Ensuring that our mentors felt supported, protected from burnout, and confident in their practice was vital and something we continue to reflect on and strengthen.



Embedding Consistency Across a Diverse Consortium

Working with nine delivery partners was one of our greatest strengths, it brought richness, reach and innovation.

But it also meant coordinating systems, expectations, and communication across very different organisations.

Embedding shared standards while respecting the uniqueness of each partner took time, relationship-building, and a strong shared purpose.

We embraced learning together, welcoming feedback and adapting as a collective.

Conclusion and next steps



Mentoring to Succeed has become a vital strand of support for young people in Enfield, building on the foundation of Inspiring Young Enfield. Our aim remains clear: every young person should have access to a trusted adult who believes in them, listens, and helps them grow.

We are delivering the mentoring offer through the Council's Youth Development Service, with ongoing funding from the Violence Reduction Unit. This secure support allows us to accept referrals from a wide range of pathways — including the Youth Justice Service, Early Help, Social Care and other active plans.

We are in the process of bringing together statutory and community partners, identifying and training mentors, assembling resources, and developing a consistent mentoring framework. We are designing safe matching processes, and putting in place robust supervision and

ongoing training, so that mentoring is both reliable and skilful.

Going forward, we will continue to track outcomes in areas such as wellbeing, decision-making, school or work engagement, resilience, and reductions in risky or offending behaviour. We will refine our matching, mentor support, safeguarding, and reporting processes to ensure quality and trust remain central to what we do.

We plan to strengthen our links with family support, Early Help, youth justice diversion, and social care, increasing awareness and access where need is greatest. We will also look to scale mentoring capacity to reach more under-served areas.

Mentoring is central to Enfield's prevention and early help offer. By providing consistent, caring support, it helps young people build stronger relationships, grow confidence, reduce risk, and pursue positive futures.



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