

Welcome to the third edition of our quarterly publication, sharing news about Gloucestershire Mentoring Programme.

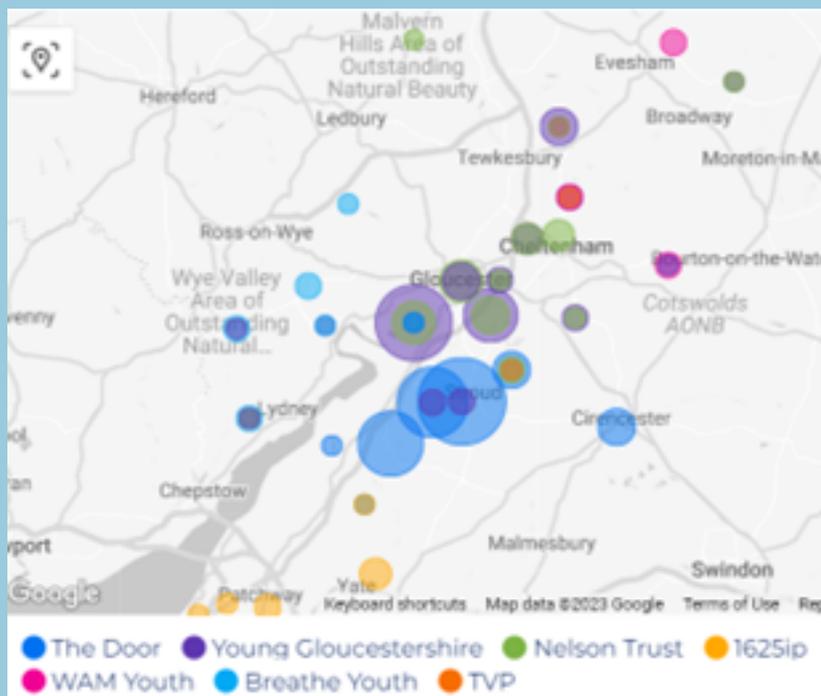
This time we're pleased to be talking about our plans for the future and looking at some of the differences we're making.

Looking to the future:

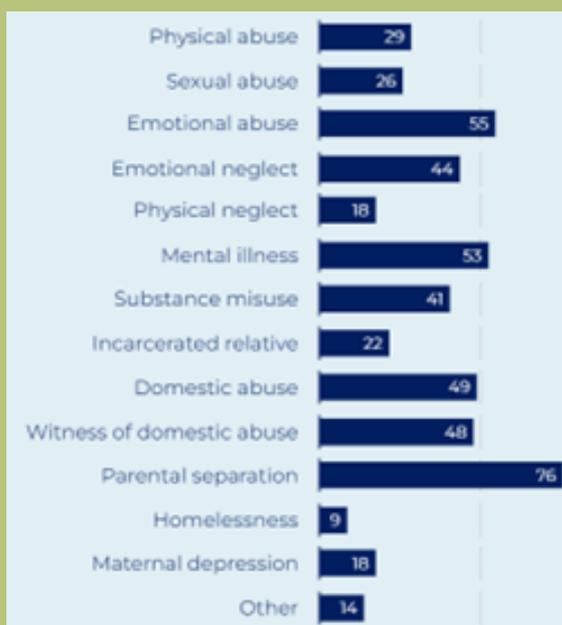
We're delighted our funder, CHK Foundation has granted us additional funding to develop a five year strategy for the Programme. This will take us well beyond the two year pilot and comes with the opportunity to secure an additional year of funding. So, good news all round! Work has already started on the strategy and it should be ready to roll by the end of June.



Where we are working



ACE's Profile of our Mentees



Improving Lives

Elisha Kyne is GMP Programme Manager at The Door. Here, she shares what's involved in supporting young people with more complex needs and some impact evidence.

Our evaluators are doing a good job in helping us understand the profile of the young people on the Programme, and the emerging impact of their involvement. As providers, we've also been on a learning journey in terms of discovering our role in supporting some of these young people in a wider context. And we're in the privileged position of being first to hear some of the personal stories that show the difference the Programme is making.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given our participation criteria, we have a number of high-risk young people on the Programme. Where this is the case, we work in close partnership with social services and other community organisations. In particular, we're able to offer sustained support for young people and their families, often whilst other agencies come and go. This was the case with one of our young people who recently experienced child sexual exploitation. Support agencies stepped in to provide immediate care and ensure a robust safety plan was drawn up but soon had to step back, reducing their support. But, as a funded Programme, we've been able to stick with this young person, offering ongoing help and encouragement.

This is one of many stories we'll be feeding these into the formal evaluation. Here are a few anecdotes that also show the difference we're making:

"Mentoring helps me to get everything out. It has relieved a lot of my stress and we have worked on my sleeping which is much better now. I really trust my mentor and tell them things before I tell anyone else."

"Mentoring is like having a best friend. My mentor isn't there to tell anyone or judge me, so I can rant about home or school without being told off!"

"It's great having someone to talk to outside of my family - it's separate and confidential."

"My mentee has improved so much. They are better able to be proud of themselves and more excited to share things with me now. They have really grown in confidence and are involved in sports, and doing much better at school."

I hope you, like me, find these words encouraging. Let's also remember the people enabling the transformation in young lives - our wonderful volunteer mentors. They initially work with their young person to develop a safe and nurturing relationship and establish a connection. Then walk alongside them, providing consistency, listening to their needs, offering a non-judgemental space to explore things, and helping them to navigate life's challenges. Often, they're the first person their young person talks to about stuff that's going on for them - things like feelings and emotions, blossoming new relationships and issues they'd like to explore, such as their identity and sexuality. They tell us mentoring can be such a privilege, and we're privileged to have them.



How you can help

We are always on the hunt for new mentors - life experience is all you need and we'll provide training and support.

If you know anyone who might be interested, please ask them to give us a call on 01453 756745, signpost them to our website: gloucestershirementoringprogramme.co.uk or social media @GlosMentoring

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