



# intandem

Mentoring Scotland's young people



***"It's given me a new life."***

# intandem is Scotland's mentoring programme for children and young people looked after at home.

In Scotland, there are 3,700 children and young people who are looked after at home, and they have the poorest outcomes of all young people in Scotland.

Children and young people living at home with the support of social work are often referred to as looked after at home. This means a Children's Hearing has decided that a supervision order is needed to help provide the right support to the young person or family. All children in this situation are coping with complex challenges, and would benefit from additional support.

By putting the right support in place for the young person and their family, it is hoped that the problems affecting the child or young person can be resolved and the family can stay together.

intandem is a Scottish Government funded mentoring scheme, offering mentors to children and young people who are looked after at home and aged between 8 and 14 years. It is delivered in 20 local authorities in Scotland, through 13 charities operating as local delivery partners.

There are many reasons a child or young person may be referred to intandem, but the three most common are parental substance misuse, family mental health issues, and domestic violence.

These factors often lead to a more difficult family life, neglect and poor attendance at school. The child or young person may also witness or experience physical, mental or emotional abuse themselves.



## Since November 2016:

**236**  
matches  
made.

**409**  
mentors  
trained.

**352**  
referrals  
received.

**92%**  
of referrals  
come from  
social workers.

**15**  
months is the  
average duration  
of mentor matches.

# "It's a joy to see my mentee engaging and gaining in confidence."



The primary purpose of intandem mentoring is to introduce a trusted adult - not associated with the family or statutory authorities - into the child or young person's life. Together they are able to build a long-term, supportive and trusting relationship.

The child or young person meets their mentor weekly. Regular meetings allow 'matches' to learn new skills, access local community resources, work towards goals and have fun. Our mentees choose to do anything from eating ice cream in the park, to badminton, to ice skating.

Mentors are all volunteers and are recruited from within the local community.

The positive effects of having a mentor are often clear to the child or young person themselves. The benefits are also seen by their family, the mentors, and in the wider community. 83% of mentors said they had noticed improvements in their mentee's confidence.

All of this is despite the often chaotic home environments the children and young people continue to cope with.

The long-term, consistent mentoring relationship supports young people to build resilience and improve their health, wellbeing, and social and community life.

"intandem has helped me to be more confident."

**64%**  
of mentees said they made more friends.

**62%**  
of mentees said their self-esteem improved.

**53%**  
of mentees said their confidence had increased.

**71%**  
of mentors said they learned new skills.

**61%**  
of mentors felt a sense of achievement.



## Why we need intandem:

A quarter<sup>1</sup> of Scotland's looked after children and young people live at home. They face many of the same adversities that all care experienced children do. These are then often compounded by the challenges all young people face, such as transitions between primary and secondary school and social pressures.

There is a well-evidenced link between being in the care system and experiencing social disadvantage and having poorer life outcomes, including in education<sup>3</sup>.

School leavers who are looked after at home have the lowest overall levels of attainment of any demographic in Scotland. Only 11% achieve at least one qualification at level 5 or better. For those in other care settings it is 40%, and for the general population 86%<sup>4</sup>.

While a supervision order is in place, children and their families face the risk of being separated, often whilst dealing with major difficulties including housing, finances, physical and mental health problems, domestic violence and substance misuse.

Social workers have identified many areas in which support under a home supervision order may be improved. Many of the suggestions are offered by the intandem programme such as mentoring, support for the child outwith the home, and greater interaction between agencies<sup>5</sup>.



## How intandem works:

intandem is delivered through a selected portfolio of 13 charities with considerable experience of working with young people.

Each intandem charity employs a coordinator to manage the programme. They are supported by a service manager and the resources within the charity.

All volunteers are screened and PVG-checked. They must also successfully complete the required training before being matched.

Referrals to intandem are primarily from social workers. However, links are being built with health, specifically child and adolescent mental health services, and education to broaden access and uptake.

A full-time coordinator is able to support up to 20 active mentoring relationships.

Achieving maximum uptake requires careful balancing of available trained mentors with eligible referrals. Coordinators must consider both the interests of young people and volunteers, alongside their location and availability. Striking this balance helps establish the best possible match.

intandem builds long-term relationships, so it does not have a set mentoring period or maximum age when mentoring will end.

Children and young people choose when they no longer need a mentor. This means if their home situation changes, mentoring can continue, or if their mentor is unable to continue a new mentor can be found.

**Young adults who face an opportunity gap but have a mentor are 81% more likely to participate in sports or extracurricular activities than those who don't<sup>6</sup>.**

**"Before I thought 'everyone's my enemy', now I think 'everyone's my friend'. It's given me a new life."**



## intandem is unique:



### **intandem is weekly**

Mentors meet with their mentees once a week for a couple of hours, sometimes longer depending on the activity they have planned.



### **intandem volunteers are trained and supported**

Mentors are trained to ensure they are properly equipped to mentor to the best of their ability. They receive training on areas such as child protection and confidentiality, boundaries and responding effectively to those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences.



### **intandem is long-term and open-ended**

intandem mentoring lasts for as long as the young person needs. Our first match is 24 months old and still going!



### **intandem is completely voluntary**

intandem is about the young person's choice. Mentoring is completely voluntary for both mentor and mentee. Young people decide if they want a mentor, and they get to choose their mentor.



### **intandem is about setting goals**

Mentors support their mentees to set the goals that are important to them, whether that's trying new things, improving their school attendance or increasing their self-confidence to use public transport.



### **intandem is community-based**

Mentors are recruited from within the local community so they can help the young person to access local community resources such as leisure centres, parks and cafes.



# intandem supports five key outcomes:

- 1 Children and young people have increased confidence.
- 2 Children and young people have improved self-esteem.
- 3 Children and young people are more engaged with the local community.
- 4 Children and young people have improved social relationships.
- 5 Children and young people experience reduced social isolation.

The children and young people supported by intandem experience significant shifts in their confidence, self-esteem, sociability and school attendance as well as other benefits. Over half of our intandem mentees said they felt their confidence had improved, almost two-thirds said the same about their self-esteem, and 64% said they were more engaged in the community. In a sample of matches with poor school attendance, 76% of mentees improved their attendance.

It is easy to see how improvements in one area can spark improvements in another. Increased self-esteem allows young people to feel more at ease in previously stressful situations such as school. This enables them to spend more time with their peers and develop friendships, which in turn improves self-esteem again.

The benefits are felt beyond the mentee. All of our mentors surveyed felt they had formed a strong and positive relationship with their mentee. Furthermore, intandem offers mentors the opportunity to learn, with 71% of mentors saying they gained new skills. Several mentors have gone on to work with young people as a result of their mentoring experience.

Things also improve for the families of mentees; relationships improve and strengthen, fewer conflicts arise and are better resolved, and parents are given valuable respite and support.

**Students who meet regularly with their mentors are 52% less likely than their peers to miss a day of school and 37% less likely to skip a class<sup>7</sup>.**

**Young people who meet regularly with their mentors are 46% less likely than their peers to start using illegal drugs and 27% less likely to start drinking alcohol<sup>7</sup>.**

<sup>7</sup>Baldwin Grossman et al., 2000

# intandem works:

## For mentees



**"Instead of having something heavy on ma shoulders, ah can talk to someone about it."**  
intandem mentee

**"Mentoring has been amazing and has helped me get the job I am in now."**  
intandem mentor

## For mentors



## And for families



**"We learned how to talk to each other about things."**  
- parent of mentee



# Cost-benefits of mentoring:

The positive changes mentoring brings to a young person's life are also cost effective.

We analysed the costs and benefits of mentoring six young people, looking in-depth at the costs of providing a mentor and the likelihood and associated costs of negative events avoided during the mentoring period. The analysis included making an assessment of how the young person's interaction with public services changed while they were mentored.

We did not include any anticipated future cost savings in later life, such as reduced risk-taking behaviour.



**The combined costs of mentoring six young people were £27.8k and the total costs saved were £76k. This gives an average return of £2.73 for every £1 invested.**

## The most significant benefits and savings are illustrated by Adam's story.

Adam\* is a 9-year-old child on the child protection register due to neglect and other issues at home. Before being mentored, Adam was engaging in unlawful behaviour and activities. Despite being disengaged from the local community, his family were happy for Adam to have a volunteer mentor from one of the intandem charities.

Adam was matched with an intandem mentor in autumn 2017. Adam is now very physically active, visiting local places and trampolining. Without a mentor, he would likely have required a further Child Protection Plan, might well have been arrested and potentially have been placed in accommodation away from his family home.

Adam is now more able to cope with ongoing challenging circumstances and avoid unlawful risky behaviour.

### Costs incurred

Mentoring costs	£2,743
Support at statutory reviews	£ 756
Service support	£1,131

**Total** **£4,630**

### Costs avoided

Multi-agency meetings	£10,058
Social work meetings	£ 619
Arrest	£15,440
Production of Child's Plan	£ 5,743
School exclusion	£ 450
Foster care costs	£ 4,500
CAMHS engagement	£ 3,640

**Total** **£40,450**

*This analysis is based on 14 months of mentoring, however Adam and his mentor continue to meet.*

\* The names in this case study have been changed.

## Case Study:

# "I have grown up a lot since having a mentor."

Callum\* was 14 when he was referred to intandem. He had been on a Compulsory Supervision Order for four years and social work had been involved with his family since he was seven years old. His attendance at school was 0% and he was socially isolated, spending most of his days in bed watching TV or playing games. He had no friends in the community.

During home visits, Callum made it clear to the intandem coordinator that he would not be going to school. With social work's support, the coordinator stressed that having a mentor through intandem was not about trying to get him into school, but that it would be good for him to have an additional positive role model in his life.

Callum was offered a choice of mentors and chose Jenny, who likes dogs and Disney films. For the first few meetings, Callum was worried about going in to places and asked if they could just stay in the car. After two meetings, they progressed to going in to McDonald's and chatting openly about home life, school and challenges Callum faced with his emotions, especially anger.

Jenny and Callum built up a positive relationship, with Callum always ready and waiting for Jenny to pick him up each week.

Callum and his mum confided in Jenny and the coordinator about how they felt about panel meetings and school meetings, with Callum saying he never felt listened to at school. After six months, he asked Jenny to attend a school meeting with him for support - having never attended these meetings previously, despite being invited. With Jenny's support, Callum was able to talk about how he felt about school, his subjects and his teachers at the meeting. It was a very positive meeting and a new part-time timetable was agreed. Callum's school attendance increased to 100% and he was more engaged in class.

The intandem coordinator signposted Callum's mum to services to look at his additional learning needs. A year later, after many appointments and tests, Callum was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome. Callum said: "I'm so happy that I finally know why life is so hard and I'm not just daft."

Callum set himself a number of goals - trying new things, building his confidence by talking with strangers such as shopkeepers, ordering food and drinks for himself, attending school, managing his aggression and taking responsibility for his actions at home and in school.

After meeting for a year and a half, Callum and Jenny mutually agreed that he no longer needed a mentor.

**"I am better at socialising with people and can speak to people... I am motivated to go on courses and learn new things which I wasn't before."**

Callum

**"He is much more open to giving people and things a chance".**

Jenny, Callum's mentor

\* The names in this case study have been changed.

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