

Information for DEAL Volunteer Mentors

- Inviting joint decision making with their mentee and parent/s/ carers when appropriate
- Encouraging their mentee to identify what goals they wish to work towards
- Encouraging the development of their mentee's social skills
- Introducing their mentee to new and positive life experiences
- Organising and planning every session and recording what happened
- Providing their mentee with reinforcement of positive changes, however small
- Encouraging responsible behaviour in their mentee
- Encouraging their mentee to practice new and useful skills and behaviour
- Helping their mentee to find solutions to problems
- Showing interest in their mentee's academic and personal progress
- Liaising with their DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME Coordinator for the purposes of supervision and self development

Is any supervision or further training provided?

Mentors will be offered support and supervision through monthly meetings with DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME coordinator to review progress and agree priorities for forthcoming sessions. The supervision meetings also provide an opportunity to review and reflect on the application of the solution-focused approach to bring about change. The aim is for each child to meet the goals set and graduate from the scheme after a year.

Can I claim expenses?

We refund reasonable out of pocket expenses in respect of the work you undertake as a DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME volunteer. Guidelines for reimbursements will be provided within our expenses policy when you start.

How can I get involved?

If you feel that you possess the qualities we seek and are able to make the time commitment, we welcome your involvement. Mentors are both very ordinary and yet extraordinary people. If you are unable to volunteer as a Mentor, we also have other opportunities for you to volunteer your services and expertise. Please contact us and we will be happy to discuss this with you further.

If you wish to volunteer as a mentor please complete the application form and return to us at the address as shown on the front of this leaflet.



This leaflet provides answers to some of the most commonly asked questions by prospective mentors. It also explains how to further Pursue your interest in becoming a volunteer mentor.

DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME

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What does DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME offer?

DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME specialises in the provision of early intervention and prevention for young children and young people at risk of social exclusion and behavioural problems later in life. We are committed to reducing vulnerability and exclusion by targeting 11-17 year old children and young people identified as being at risk.

DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME provides community-based child/young person mentoring programmes. The central element of our work is the mentoring, which is delivered by carefully, selected, screened, trained and supervised volunteers. Our programmes are innovative and designed to achieve lasting change by fostering the development of important life skills.

What kind of children and young people does DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME work with?

The children and young people referred to us are typically the most vulnerable, struggling with difficulties such as conduct problems, poor social skills, concentration problems and difficulties in forming satisfying relationships. Many also experience neglect, home instability and inadequate supervision. We have drawn upon research evidence to identify such children through a clear and fair assessment methodology.

How does the DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME programme work?

Children and Young People are referred to DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME mainly by voluntary and statutory agencies and schools. If the child or young person meets our criteria, we arrange an initial induction meeting to carry out a further assessment with the parents and child or young person. We use this opportunity to explain fully about DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME, answer any questions they may have, and discuss their motivation to participate in the programme. We accept a child or young person only when there is sufficient motivation on the part of the child or young person to participate.

Each child or young person is then matched with a volunteer mentor, taking account of the child's needs, circumstances and interests, and also any other relevant factors pertaining to the child and the mentor. A DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME coordinator will brief the child/family and the mentor about any relevant issues. This will be followed by an introduction meeting facilitated by the scheme coordinator. Mentoring then commences.

The mentor will meet the child or young person on a weekly basis, with each session lasting 1-2 hours. The mentoring relationship usually lasts for one year. The first 3 months form the 'engagement' phase and the last 9 months constitute the 'solution focused' phase. A review meeting takes place at the end of the engagement phase to review progress, identify and agree realistic goals for the next phase, and reinforce strengths and resources that can be built on. Mentors also meet with the DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME coordinator every month for supervision and support.

How are mentors selected?

Once we have received and processed your application, we will contact you with details of interview dates. Prospective mentors are assessed both during training and via an interview. The first step is for you to complete the application and police check forms, and return these to DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME. We also require you to furnish details of two referees and we will take up references when you attend training.

We look for specific personal qualities and values first and foremost, rather than any particular background, experience or training. We also consider your ability and willingness to work enthusiastically within our approach and make the necessary time commitment required. Some personal qualities we look for in a mentor include a sensitive, clear and friendly communication style; ability to get on well with children and young people; enthusiasm, responsibility and excellent listening skills; lots of common sense; a sense of humour; and, consistency, self-motivated and tenacity to see things through.

What do mentors actually do?

What a mentor does depends on the context, individual circumstances, goals agreed during the mentoring relationship, and the interests and personal characteristics that both the mentor and the child bring to the relationship.

Some of the responsibilities and activities mentors undertake with the child or young person will include:

- Committing at least 2 hours a week for direct work with their mentee for one year
- Listening to their mentee's concerns and problems
- Respecting their mentee.
- Having fun
- Establishing a good working relationship with key family members if required
- Enabling the child to understand the consequences of their choices and actions
- Sharing fully with the DEAL VOLUNTEER MENTOR SCHEME coordinator concerns/issues arising from their work
- Ensuring that their mentee is kept safe and never left alone or with a stranger
- Working as part of a team to support their mentee
- Communicating clearly and openly with parent/s about the work being undertaken