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 **Volunteer**

 **Mentoring Service**

 **Mentor Information Pack**

**Aims & Objectives**

* To contribute to the improvement of outcomes for young people on their journey into adulthood, independent living, employment, training and education.
* To complement and extend the existing work of the Housing Education Team (HET) in relation to young people aged 14 –28 years.
* To give greater recognition and value to the skills, abilities, experience and resilience which young people possess and to mentor these qualities in a positive and growth promoting way.

By providing this service we aim to achieve the following objectives:

* Contribute to an improvement in the self-image, self-esteem and social confidence of these young people and their sense of being able to influence the path their lives are taking.
* Encourage young people to raise their aspirations and better achieve their potential through developing a more accurate understanding of their own strengths and limitations.
* Increase awareness of and the attendance in social, cultural and leisure opportunities available to young people.
* Assist young people to identify, commit to and work towards achievable goals for themselves.
* To provide personal attention and encouragement to help sustain motivation through adversity.
* Reduce the sense of isolation and/or dependence on paid workers by young people who have disengaged with learning through the development of a trusting and supportive adult relationship and encouragement to form and maintain other positive relationships.

 **The Service**

Research into mentoring (Prince’s Trust, 2002) suggests that a mentoring relationship works well, typically at a time of transition (i.e. leaving care/S.E.B.D.School) to increase self-confidence/esteem and personal/interpersonal skills.

Mentoring services can also provide an important bridging service for young people who have disengaged with education and training.

In addition, the use of volunteers to complement the work done by paid staff (in line with the Scottish Executive’s policies on active citizenship) offer’s benefits not only to the young people being mentored, but also the volunteer mentors themselves and the broader community.

A mentor offers a young person a positive relationship and makes the importance of a supportive adult relationship real for them. Additionally, mentoring can connect a young person to the opportunities available to them in the community and provide an opportunity to practice the skills of building positive relationships.

The aim is that mentoring helps the young person to find further opportunities and form other supportive relationships in the informal way that most of us take for granted.

Move On will ensure that both the volunteer mentor and young person are able to use their experiences and ideas to influence the development of the service within the organisation. A person - centred approach provides a clear and more realistic view of the problems and possible solutions, ensuring that any findings and recommendations are relevant to the needs of young people.

Move On is committed to being needs led in all of our service provision. Offering an opportunity for service users to influence and inform the service and to a large extent set the agenda.

**The People Involved**

**Mentors**

When recruiting participants we look for individuals who have a commitment to working with young people and enough dedicated time to guarantee a positive impact on the mentees they will be working with.

Being a mentor with Move On will provide an opportunity to meet new people, develop new skills and improve upon existing ones as well as giving something back to the community. Volunteering is also an excellent way to enhance the CV.

The role of a mentor may be challenging and not always be straight forward. Move On’s 5 week training programme ensures all mentors are fully prepared for all aspects of the role. Participants will have a full understanding of the responsibilities of the mentor, the process of mentoring as well as being fully briefed on working with vulnerable young people.

Continual training and support is available to mentors, including regular meetings with other mentors as well as individual support and supervision sessions with Move On staff.

Full participation in the training and support programme is required, and those involved are expected to participate in a regular and structured manner.

If successful, participants are expected to work within the context of a formal agreement which clarifies their role, behaviour and commitment to the project.

**Young People**

The mentoring service is aimed at young people who are displaying ‘at risk’ signs. These signs may include poor performance at school, truanting, offending, welfare issues, lack of or negative social networks or being bullied. However, this list is not exhaustive.

The service will be specifically targeted at:

* Young people who are who are socially isolated/vulnerable.
* Young people who are unwilling or unable to participate in groups and who would benefit from a more intensive 1: 1 service
* Young people who are looked after at home and looked after and accommodated
* Young carers
* Young people affected by homelessness
* Young people not engaging in training, education or employment

**Volunteer Requirements**

**The Role of the Mentor**

The role of a volunteer mentor is to work with a young person and provide a supportive relationship, setting and achieving realistic goals that the young person has set.

The emphasis is to connect a young person with social, cultural and leisure opportunities, and generally provide a mentoring relationship which will develop the young person’s confidence, skills, potential, talent and networks.

You may also support and assistance to help the young person to be able to maintain, re-engage with or seek out new education, training and employment.

**Mentor Criteria**

Mentors can come from all walks of life and there are no specific qualifications or relevant experience required.

Move On hopes to recruit people with potential who are:

* over 18
* interested in and can relate to the issues facing vulnerable young people
* able to attend a one day a week training course for a 5 week period
* interested in sharing their skills/experiences with young people
* able to provide appropriate information and advice
* able to commit a minimum of 1 year to the service
* able to spend on average 1-2 hours per week with a young person

**Selection**

Move On has an open approach to its recruitment of volunteer mentors but we must be satisfied that the volunteer is suitable to work with vulnerable young people. A commitment to both the training programme and the mentoring service is necessary.

We meet participants at least once before training commences. This meeting is to give participants more knowledge of the service and to answer any queries they may have. The meeting will also explore participants’ motivation for undertaking this type of volunteering and to discuss any other volunteering, work experience, hobbies, interests and their availability. References will also be asked for at this time.

An Enhanced Disclosure is also required to identify previous convictions. Volunteers will not automatically be excluded from participating in the mentoring service if they have any convictions. However, we must consider whether accepting this person to volunteer may compromise the safety of the young people.

If potential mentors have any convictions, we will compose a ‘letter of disclosure’; detailing the convictions, the context to the conviction(s) and whether the individual has moved on. This letter, along with the returned disclosure, will be used in determining the suitability of the participant.

The disclosure generally is not returned until after the training has been completed and is out with our control.

**Therefore, acceptance onto the training does not automatically mean acceptance to work with young people**.

We appreciate that this selection procedure may sound a little daunting. However, it is about finding a balance between making things as informal as possible whilst fulfilling all of the necessary child protection procedures due to working with young people under the age of 16.

**Training**

**Training Elements**

 The training will consist of the following components -

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| --- | --- |
| Introduction to mentoring&Move On | Prejudice, Stereotyping& Discrimination |
| Communication, Listening skills and Evaluation Processes | Homelessness and the Care System |
| Boundaries&Personal Safety | Confidentiality &Child Protection |
| Understanding Young People | Mentoring Skills, Processes and Dealing withChallenging Mentoring Situations |
| Reviewing& Evaluating | Beginning & Ending the Mentoring Relationship |

**Other Information**

**Support & Supervision**

On acceptance of becoming a mentor you will be given a 1-1 worker whilst you wait to be matched with a young person as we realise this can be a period of potential vulnerability for mentors. This is to keep you feeling involved and valued as a volunteer mentor with Move On. Once you are in a match you will be encouraged to attend support and supervision sessions with the match coordinator every 2-3 months whilst participating in the service. These meetings allow participants the opportunity to explore any issues arising and feedback on how you feel the relationship is going.

Volunteers are encouraged to identify their own skills and personal qualities through these support and supervision sessions. This will be reviewed at later stages of the programme to asses any new developments; self-discoveries, skills learnt or greater confidence.

**Expenses**

Move On values its volunteers as being central to the work that we do. One of the ways that we can acknowledge this is to pay volunteers expenses. During the training period we will cover any travelling cost as well as childcare and refreshments will be provided.

Move On cover all costs for the activities undertaken by the mentor and mentee as well as providing expenses for meals where required.

Expenses are also given for support and supervision sessions.

**After the Training**

After completing all aspects of the training programme, the group of potential mentors will have sufficient skills to undertake a mentoring relationship. A suitable match will be made subject to returned disclosures.

We ask that all volunteers attend a volunteer development/mentor support evening, roughly every 2-3 months to find out what is happening in the service, offer peer support and to complete further training where appropriate.

The volunteer development/Support Groups offer volunteers the opportunity to share their experiences as and get to know your fellow mentors. They are generally light hearted, informal affairs aimed at bringing the group together through experience. Refreshments are provided.

Complaints Policy

* If you have a complaint about Move On, you have the right that it will be dealt with fairly and quickly
* A complaint can be about any part of Move On the service, staff, training, sessional workers, volunteers
* If you have a complaint, you should tell a member of staff and submit the issue in written form (a staff member can support you with this)
* This will be passed onto the manager
* The manager will acknowledge your complaint within 5 working days and will then investigate it fully & fairly.
* The complaint will be dealt with formally within 10 working days unless there are circumstances preventing this (The manager will let you know about this.)
* If you are not satisfied with the way it has been dealt with, you can appeal in writing within days. The appeal will be considered by Move On’s Executive Director. This will be decided within 5 Days and the decision will be final.

Person Specification:

What we are looking for in a Mentor

Volunteers come from all walks of life and no specific educational qualifications are required. The Mentoring Service aims to recruit people with potential as well as those with relevant experience or who are driven to help young people reach their full potential.

We are looking for people who can see something of themselves in the following descriptions:

**Personal Qualities:**

* Have the time, enthusiasm and persistence to see through a commitment from start to finish even though it may be challenging at times.
* Able to communicate well, particularly young people and be a good listener.
* Be able to form positive, supportive relationships with others.
* Can relate to the issues and challenges facing young people in today's society.
* Be reliable, consistent and dependable
* Will make use of the opportunity to learn new things and contribute to the learning of others.
* Willing to challenge your own assumptions about things.
* Able to keep confidentialities appropriately.
* Comfortable working on your own, relying on your own initiative and common sense, but also knowing when to seek support.
* Able to put your own needs to the side and focus on another person's needs and situation.
* Have a sense of humour and an ability not to take yourself too seriously.
* Can accept that being challenged by and let down by other people is a natural part of life and will occur in any mentoring relationship.

**Personal Values:**

* An ability to appreciate and value the differences between people.
* Accepting of others for who they are.
* Belief that everyone has the right to opportunities to achieve their potential.
* A respect for others as being of equal worth - you will learn as much from the mentee as they will learn from you.
* Working with hope - being realistic about what can be achieved without becoming cynical.
* A belief that we can make a difference to our own and other people's lives; that no situation is "hopeless".

**Organisational Skills:**

* Able to understand and work to the policies, procedures and practices of Move On.
* Able to meet the limited, but important paperwork requirements of the service.
* Able to organise meetings with mentee over time and monitor whether the arrangements are working.

Task Specification:

What a Mentor will do

Mentors carry out a variety of tasks including:

* **Assisting the young person to establish goals** – both in the long and short term and then plan how to achieve them.
* **Acting as a sounding board** – when the young person has decisions to make with options to choose from and needs to talk them through.
* **Challenging the young person** – to recognise the strengths and abilities that they have and to look at the reasons why they sometimes don’t capitalise on them.
* **Acting as a gateway** – to opportunities, sources of information and other sources of support.
* **Rehearsing situations –** allowing young people to practise and develop key skills for the future.
* **Passing on know-how** – sharing your experience and life-skills when relevant to a young person’s situation.

The actual tasks will vary between mentoring relationships and in any one mentoring relationship over time.

Mentoring relationships go through a number of phases:

**Making a connection – starting to build trust and credibility**

**Assisting the young person in process of identifying goals**

**Monitoring and evaluating progress towards goals**

**Celebrating achievements/managing endings**

There will also be ongoing tasks such as staying in touch with the project, identifying suitable activities as well as rebuilding after a period of non-engagement.

The mentor will be provided with initial training and ongoing training to be able to undertake these tasks. Support and supervision will also be offered on a regular basis, both as a one-to-one and in a group setting.