

MAY 2023

intandem

Evaluation 2023



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**I feel more brave. I
try new things. We
are brave, together.**

8-11 year old

Draw a picture of what having a mentor is like...



Young person's response, February 2023

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Chapter 1: Introduction

About this report

This report sets out findings from an evaluation of intandem, Scotland's national mentoring programme for children and young people who are looked after at home or in kinship care.

Inspiring Scotland commissioned Research Scotland to undertake work to demonstrate the impact of the intandem programme.

This evaluation brings together the findings of three phases of work to demonstrate the impact of intandem.

Phase One took place during January and February 2022. It involved reviewing:

- approximately 50 case studies plus wider impact statements and quotes – mainly from 2020 and 2021
- survey data collected from children and young people being mentored through intandem
- evidence collated in wider reports including evaluation, annual and quarterly reports and through film recordings.

Phase Two took place over summer and autumn 2022, and involved light touch support to the intandem team to strengthen evidence about impact, particularly in terms of hearing the voices of children, young people, parents and carers. This resulted in the development of a new logic model for intandem and new tools to measure impact. This included a new system for organisations to use to gather evidence from mentees and mentors about the difference intandem made to them, using both qualitative and quantitative measures. The new logic model is included as Appendix One.

Phase Three took place over spring 2023 and involved:

- 'Evaluation month' took place in February 2023, when mentees and mentors were asked to complete surveys (including quantitative and qualitative information) about the impact of intandem. A total of 86 survey responses were received from mentees and 45 from mentors.
- Conversations with mentor coordinators and mentors, from January to March 2023. This included a portfolio session with most mentor coordinators across Scotland, two in-depth group discussions involving six mentor coordinators, and individual interviews with eight mentors.
- Conversations with children and young people, during April and May 2023. This included 10 children and young people from across Scotland, who took part in individual discussions.
- Seven wider conversations with families and mentors involved in intandem, to complement discussions with children and young people. These aimed to understand the impact of intandem for the whole family and the mentor experience.

About intandem

intandem is Scotland's national mentoring programme for children and young people who are looked after at home. It has been running since 2016. It was developed jointly by Scottish Government and Inspiring Scotland, and is funded by the Scottish Government – and The Robertson Trust since 2022 - and managed by Inspiring Scotland.

intandem was set up in response to the report of the Looked After Children Strategic Implementation Group which recommended establishing a national mentoring scheme specifically for children and young people aged 8 to 14 who are looked after at home¹. The Group recommended a focus on children and young people who are looked after at home because they typically have the poorest outcomes of all looked after children and young people – including lower school attendance and reduced achievement of qualifications at school ².

intandem sits within the context of The Promise, a pledge by the Scottish Government to give children who live in the most challenging circumstances the love and childhood they deserve. The Independent Care Review explored how this could be done, hearing from over 5,500 children, young people and adults who lived in care, their families and people working with children and young people with care experience.

The Promise recognises the value that mentoring can have on children and young people, particularly in the context of educational attainment³.

“ When children talk about wanting to be safe, they talk about having relationships that are real, loving and consistent. That must be the starting point... Friendships and relationships with people in the workforce and wider community are important. These relationships may be where children find the love and care they need.”
The Promise

In 2022, intandem expanded its work to provide mentoring for children living in kinship care arrangements across Scotland, with funding provided by The Robertson Trust.

¹ Developing a National Mentoring Scheme for Looked After Children and Young People, Dr S Elsley, 2013 https://www.celcis.org/application/files/2714/4050/9227/LACSIG_Mentoring_Report-2014-09-02.pdf

² <https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/51538.aspx>

³ <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Promise.pdf>

The intandem model

intandem's core service is delivered by 12 partner organisations, who connect children and young people with volunteer mentors to establish meaningful, supportive and long-lasting relationships. The partner charities were selected through a competitive process and assessed against a set of agreed criteria. The intandem programme currently covers 19 of Scotland's 32 local authority areas.



Each partner employs an intandem co-ordinator, who manages the process of identifying mentors, training mentors, co-ordinating referrals, matching young people with mentors and supervising and managing the process. Inspiring Scotland sets minimum standards for mentor training that partner charities have to meet and provides additional resources and training days on key topics.

intandem's new service for young people in kinship care began in July 2022, funded by The Robertson Trust. This service is delivered by 6 partner organisations working across 9 local authority areas.

intandem also facilitates a Young Person's Forum, called InVoice, supporting children and young people with care experience to speak about what is important to them. For example, InVoice has contributed to relevant policy work and event planning to ensure intandem continues to reflect their views and those of children and young people mentored.

intandem aims

intandem's vision is to support children and young people in care or on the edge of care to have the resilience and confidence to succeed in life. A logic model for intandem was developed in 2017, with a refresh undertaken as part of this evaluation in 2022. This refresh focused on the immediate outcomes for young people around broad themes of:

- relationships and connections
- health and wellbeing
- learning
- skills and aspirations.

Short term outcomes for young people	Long term outcomes for young people
Someone to trust and feel safe with	Stronger connections with other people and the community
Improved relationships with families and friends	
Engagement in new experiences and activities	
Improved understanding of physical and mental health	Improved health and wellbeing
Improved interest in learning	Sustained or improved engagement in learning
	Improved attainment and more positive destinations
Improved clarity about personal goals and how to achieve these	Improved confidence, skills and aspirations for the future

The intandem model also recognises that its approach should contribute to outcomes for mentors, including improved mental health and wellbeing and improved skills and personal development.

intandem operates under common values of openness, aspiration, respect and commitment. These values were developed by the portfolio of funded partner organisations. The approach is based on an approach which:

- is led by the young person - making a voluntary, mutual and tailored match with a positive role model
- connects mentees with volunteers from the local community
- is not time bound - even if the young person is no longer looked after at home
- is relationship-based - focusing on developing consistent, trusting, caring and meaningful relationships
- includes goal setting - identifying goals and opportunities and positively reinforcing achievements, skills and interests.

intandem has invested in training, developing resources, sharing experience and expertise and connecting partners. It was important that the programme which is delivered by different partners was implemented in the same way and reached the same quality standards.

Profile of children and young people

intandem focuses on supporting children who are looked after at home or in kinship care.

Children who are looked after at home are placed under a supervision requirement as part of the Children's Hearing process, but continue to live at home because it is hoped that by providing support to the child and family, the child can be well looked after.

The Promise recognises that Scotland must do all it can to keep children with their families, and that families need more support to stay together and thrive. It highlights that this support should be community based, long term and underpinned by children's rights.

intandem supports children for the long term, even if their circumstances change during the support period. The main source of referrals is social work. The children and young people supported through intandem all have their own strengths, personalities and skills, but can also be dealing with a number of challenges in their lives.

intandem starts working with children and young people when they are aged between 8 and 14. Children and young people are matched with their mentor when they are between 8 and 14 years old. The biggest proportion are aged between 12 and 14 when they are matched. Relationships continue beyond the age of 14, for as long as the young person feels they wish the support to be there.



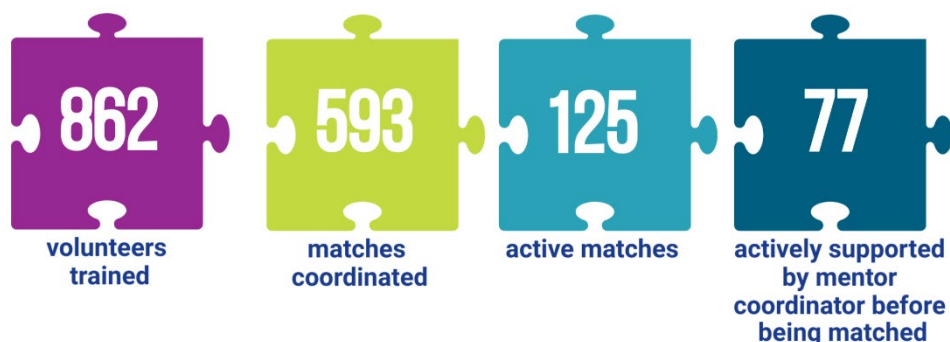
Matches

Children and young people are carefully matched with their mentors. This involves initially building a relationship with the mentor co-ordinator, before being matched with a mentor.

At full capacity, each delivery partner is expected to support a caseload of 18 to 20 children and young people. Different targets were initially set for Action for Children (14), Covey (14) and Quarriers (16) each of whom have a part-time coordinator. At full capacity, the 12 partners can therefore support approximately 206 to 224 children and young people at any one time.

Over 7 years from April 2016 to March 2023, intandem has supported a total of 593 matches (555 for the core service, plus 38 for the new kinship care service). It has an average of 125 matches active at any one time. In addition, some young people are supported by the mentor co-ordinator before being matched (or re-matched if needed).

APRIL 2016 TO MARCH 2023



In the first five years, intandem supported a total of 365 matches with a further 51 actively supported by a mentor coordinator before being matched. Over 2021/22 and 2022/23 it supported a total of 190 matches with a further 26 supported by a mentor coordinator before being matched. A further 38 were supported through the kinship care service.

Within intandem there is a strong focus on stability and long-term support. The average match lasts 18 months.

Cost of service delivery

intandem currently has a budget of £750,000 per year to deliver mentoring to young people who are looked after at home. This includes:

- an average of £51,000 per year to the 12 partner organisations - this funds a volunteer co-ordinator in each charity and contributes to their management time, as well as travel costs and expenses for mentors and mentees
- mentoring activity costs – covering the cost of outings for mentoring meetings
- facilitation of the Young People's Forum
- programme level co-ordination, monitoring, networking, training, evaluation and quality assurance within Inspiring Scotland.

In April 2022, The Robertson Trust awarded intandem £450,000 over three years, to help expand mentoring for children aged 8 to 14 living in kinship care arrangements across Scotland.

In the past, Inspiring Scotland has also secured some match funding to enhance the scope and impact of the Scottish Government intandem programme. In 2019/20 Glasgow City Council provided £128,500 to enable mentoring of 14 children in kinship care arrangements and children's houses. The initiative was focused on mentoring children and young people transitioning back home or whose kinship arrangement was at risk of breakdown. This was delivered by intandem partner Right There (formerly Ypeople) by adding to their existing intandem project with a second co-ordinator.

In 2021/22, an additional £40,000 provided through The Promise Partnership enabled intandem to recruit a Programme Development Officer Intern with lived experience to research the current support available and transition opportunities as young people reach 14 and over.

Wider match funding includes a donation from a high net worth individual who wishes to remain anonymous, £5,000 from Cash for Kids in 2019, £3,000 from the Hugh Stenhouse Foundation in 2020 and £1,000 from Dr Guthrie's Association in 2020.

Chapter 2: Impact on young people

About this chapter

In spring 2023, intandem focused on gathering high quality evidence of the impact it makes. This chapter is based on:

- a survey of mentees in February 2023, which had 86 responses
- a survey of mentors in February 2023, which had 45 responses
- conversations with mentor coordinators (6) and mentors (8)
- conversations with children and young people (10)
- conversations with parents, carers and mentors of young people involved in the evaluation (7).

This chapter also draws on:

- a survey of young people, parents and mentors undertaken in spring 2022, which was part of a wider research project around mentoring
- case study evidence from 2020 and 2021, gathered by mentor coordinators.

The chapter explores impact under the themes of:

Short term outcomes	Long term theme
Someone to trust and feel safe with	Stronger connections with other people and the community
Improved relationships with families and friends	
Engagement in new experiences and activities	
Improved understanding of physical and mental health	Improved health and wellbeing
Improved interest in learning	Sustained or improved engagement in learning
	Improved attainment and more positive destinations
Improved clarity about personal goals and how to achieve these	Improved confidence, skills and aspirations for the future

Headline figures

In February 2023, intandem portfolio members supported 86 young people to give their views on the difference intandem has made to them.

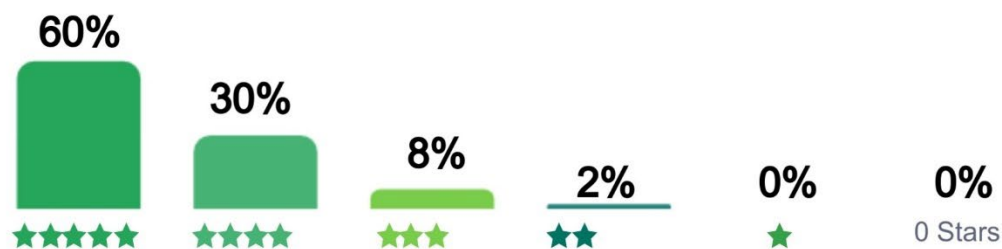
Across all the areas, there were no clear differences in opinion based on the age of the young person, the length of the match or whether they were in kinship care or looked after at home. The analysis is based on the proportion of young people responding with a rating of 3, 4 or 5 stars to each of question.



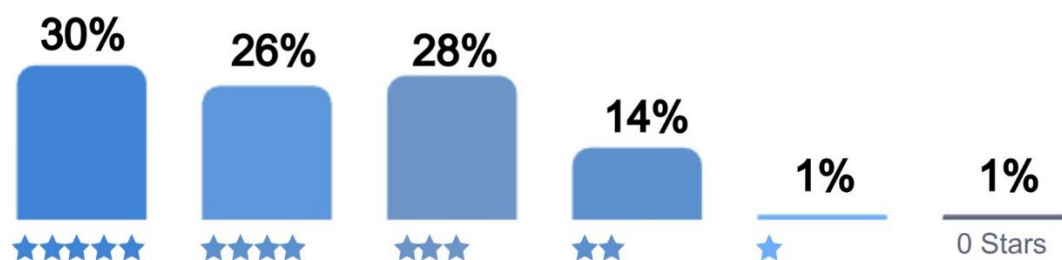
Theme 1 - Trust and relationships

Survey evidence from 2023

98% said having a mentor has given them someone they can trust and feel safe with



84% said having a mentor has supported them to manage their friendships and relationships with family



Qualitative evidence from 2023

Young people talked about the difference that having a mentor made to them and their lives. Many explained the difference that it made having an adult who was there for them, who listened, who was kind and who was their friend.

“He cares, he is kind. He wants to be with me.” **8-11 year old**

“He listens to me and gives me advice and things to think about.”
Aged 15+

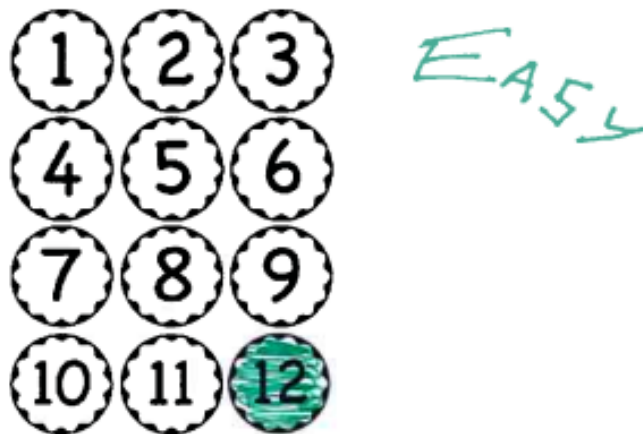
“She listens to things I am interested in.” **8-11 year old**

Through talking, mentors helped young people to process their emotions, understand different situations, and explore their experiences.

“I feel I can speak to him about most things going on in my life.”
Age 15+

“She helps me understand the adult stuff that upsets me. She is the bestest. She is always there for me.” 8-11 year old

How easy is it to talk to your Mentor



Harry

Harry has had a mentor for a couple of months, and so far, has done lots of activities with his mentor. He feels very happy when with his mentor, getting out and about instead of feeling stuck inside all the time.

“I think it’s changing me as I struggle to get outside... I’m excited to go somewhere.”

Harry doesn’t attend school, so being able to get out of the house is very important to him, and his family.

Harry’s mum is pleased that he is getting time to go out and about, without his siblings, and get time with his mentor on his own. Harry’s mentor understands his needs well, and they have regular opportunities to build their relationship. Because Harry is out doing things with his mentor, his family feel they have more to talk about with him. He is also building a more positive relationship with his siblings.

*Name changed to protect identity

Amaya

Amaya got involved in mentoring because of some things that were happening at home. She also wasn't happy at school and sometimes didn't attend. Amaya liked the idea of having someone to talk to in private, without anyone else present.

"Having someone to talk to without anyone else being there."

Amaya and her mentor often do outings which give them the chance to talk.

"We usually go to McDonalds, or swimming, or go for a walk, where we usually go to my Papa's grave as that's usually what I speak to her about."

Amaya's mother highly values the support Amaya has received in grieving for her grandfather, who she was close to. Most weeks they walk to the cemetery and visit his grave, which isn't something his mother felt able to cope with herself.

"Amaya goes out with her mentor every week and she gives her someone to talk to who's not part of the family." Mum

Having a mentor has helped Amaya feel more confident and develop a better relationship with her dad. She talks about this with her mentor a lot, and her mentor helps with listening and practical advice. She is also more active, and getting out of her house most often.

Amaya's mentor encourages her to go to school and she has started going more often. She finds school easier than she used to, but still doesn't really want to go.

"She encourages me to go in (to school) but sometimes I don't. Most of the time I do go in now."

Amaya says without a mentor her life would be more boring.

"You can trust them and have someone to talk to and not be scared they're going to tell anyone."

*Name changed to protect identity

Jon

Jon is 13 and has had a mentor since he was 10. He wanted to get out of the house and have someone to talk to. His family home was busy, and his mum was unwell, resulting in him feeling under a lot of pressure.

Jon goes out with his mentor every week. He really looks forward to seeing his mentor, and feels happy when he is with him. He finds having a mentor good fun and it is an important part of his weekly routine. When he first had his mentor, his mum was very unwell and wouldn't have been able to do any of the activities that Jon does with his mentor – like going on walks, playing football and going to watch football.

Jon talks to his mentor a lot and listens to what his mentor has to say. Jon's mum can see a difference in James through having a mentor, and is grateful that he has someone to speak to about how he is feeling.

“(His mentor) talks to him about school and gives him good advice as well.” Mum

Jon's mum feels the support from the mentor was invaluable. It helped the family through a very tough time, and helped Jon get away from the pressures in the family home. It also gave her the confidence to continue trying to get a diagnosis for Jon's additional support needs. The family has benefited too, with the house being a little quieter for a few hours while Jon is with his mentor – and his mum knows he is safe and having a good time.

“They're there, no matter what it is... they're there just to support you.” Mum

*Name changed to protect identity

Evidence from earlier years

Previous case study evidence - from 2020 and 2021 - highlights that through mentoring, children and young people developed strong, consistent bonds with their mentors.

“My mentor is the best because she listens to me and I can tell her anything, even private stuff.” **Young person**

“Knowing I have someone to talk to has helped a lot.” **Young person**

Mentors and professionals working with children and young people emphasised the importance of these relationships, particularly as home circumstances change and young people experience inconsistency in relationships and trust. Mentors

emphasised that for some, the mentor is the only constant relationship in young people's lives.

The case study evidence also provides clear examples of the mentoring relationship helping to keep children and young people safe. This included examples of children and young people talking to their mentor about their experiences, confiding in their mentor and reaching out to ask for support or advice.

The case studies demonstrate that many of the children and young people supported have significant caring responsibilities, for siblings or parents, and have responsibility for tasks including cooking, babysitting, tidying and cleaning. A few face pressures to leave school, work and contribute financially to the home. Mentoring gives the children and young people time to do things for themselves.

Michael

Michael* developed a strong, trusting relationship with his mentor. Social work colleagues noted the positive relationship. At one stage, Michael reached out to his mentor when he was at risk and needed to feel safe when asking social work out of hours for somewhere to stay the night. This highlighted the power of the relationship with the mentor.

*Name changed to protect identity

Finn

Finn* developed a strong relationship with the mentor, increased confidence and was able to talk honestly about experiences. Finn used the mentor as a support to talk through the impact of domestic abuse witnessed at home. The mentor was able to act as a link to the school to update appropriately.

*Name changed to protect identity

Case study evidence highlights the in-depth and sensitive advice provided by mentors - helping children and young people to manage living with parents who had their own challenges, navigated difficult emotions or had a history of neglect. Mentors also helped children and young people to learn how to express their feelings, emotions and point of view. As these skills developed, children and young people strengthened their existing relationships with friends and family and developed trusting relationships with peers.

“He never used to talk about his feelings before. I could tell that he was struggling but he never wanted to talk about it. Since being matched with his mentor he is more confident about expressing how he feels openly.” **Parent**

The case studies also highlight the value the mentoring service brings in terms of providing emotional support to children and young people during times of crisis or change. Many of the children are moving between environments, between different kinship care arrangements, foster care, periods of residential care, and the

mentoring relationship is one of the few constants in children and young people's lives.

“The emotional support (the mentor) provided (the mentee) after the removal of her siblings has been phenomenal.” **Social worker**

Brodie

Brodie* is 10 and got involved in mentoring because of low confidence, social isolation and behavioural issues. He lives with his mum, who has mental health issues and is keen for him to have a positive male role model.

Brodie was matched with a mentor with similar interests. Together, they have taken a range of outdoor trips including taking bike trips, visiting horses, and travelling to parks and beaches. Initially, Brodie was very focused on video games and didn't spend much time outdoors. However now he is keen to be outside, and wants to visit the horses at his mentor's yard every week. Brodie has become more open in his conversations with his mentor, and has begun proactively helping his mum out at home by taking on different tasks. Brodie says he is always excited to go places with his mentor, and they have developed a very close bond.

“You can see straight away that having a male influence has been a benefit... I can tell it really helps him to have someone to talk to who isn't me, or a social worker.” **Parent**

Brodie has also become more confident and imaginative about this future.

“He's starting to have more of an imagination about what he wants to do when he grows up.” **Parent**

*Name changed to protect identity

Andy

Andy* is 9 and has been meeting with his mentor for 16 months. They meet every weekend for a few hours to do a wide range of activities. During lockdown, the mentor provided individualised learning materials to help support home learning while the schools were closed, alongside weekly phone calls. Over time, Andy has grown in confidence, become more talkative and built confidence in his school work.

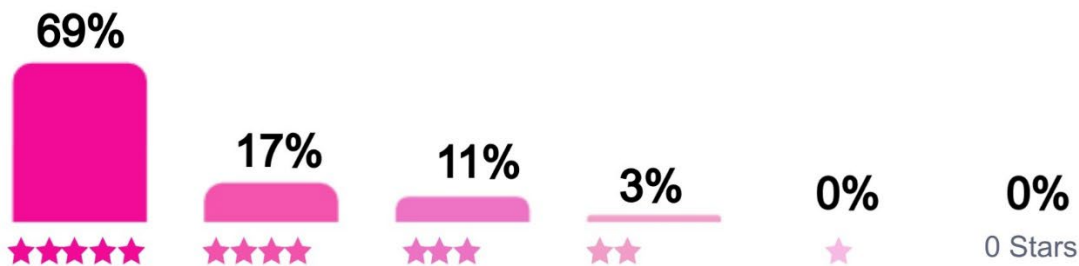
His mentor actively supports him to learn new things, and try new opportunities. Andy has worked with his mentor to learn about nature, finding this a calming and relaxing outlet. He has grown in confidence outdoors, leading the way and exploring. He has also learned about road safety through his mentor, and built up his skills engaging with other young people. He is now comfortable enough to go up to other young people in the park and join in conversations and play games.

*Name changed to protect identity

Theme 2 - New things

Survey evidence from 2023

97% said having a mentor has helped them to try new things and go to new places



Qualitative evidence from 2023

As part of evaluation month in February 2023, young people talked about the new things they had done with their mentor. This included lots of active activities like playing football, going walking, swimming, skating, golfing and going to the park. Young people and mentors also did creative activities and used local services, for example signing up to the local library.

Many talked about trying new foods, cooking and going to cafes or restaurants which they had never been to before. Young people said that they had fun, had something to look forward to and made memories.

“I get excited for the weekend as I don’t normally do anything at weekends, just stay at home and help with my brothers and sister. I get to go out, one to one with someone.” **Age unknown**

“The best thing about working with a mentor is that I have things to look forward to.” **Age 15+**

Through trying new things, young people developed new skills, built their confidence, and realised that they were good at the new things they tried.

“I feel more brave. I try new things. We are brave, together.” **8-11 year old**

“I feel that my confidence has really grown since being mentored...I feel more comfortable in my own skin.” **12-14 year old**

Young people also became more active, getting out and about in their local community.

Some highlighted the importance of a mentor allowing them to try these new opportunities on their own, without siblings or wider family.

“I like having a break from my family and being able to go out and talk and sort my head out.” **12-14 year old**

“My session is time for me and my mentor. I don’t have to share her with my siblings.” **8-11 year old**

Some young people receive support through mentor coordinators initially – as they are matched with their mentor, or while they wait for a mentor to be available. Young people felt that this early support helped them to:

- get out to groups and activities and try new things with their coordinator
- feel more confident and less nervous about getting involved in new things
- get out of the house
- feel better about having to wait for a mentor.

“My confidence is much better and I feel more relaxed in groups.”
No age provided

“It has helped me meet new people who I can talk to, and I feel confident going to groups when they are on.” **No age provided**

Toby

Toby is 14 and has a mentor for three years. He meets his mentor twice a week and they do a wide range of activities. Toby enjoys his time with his mentor, and says he feels good when he is with his mentor.

Over time, Toby has grown in confidence and says he feels more able to make friends. His mum is happy he has someone else to speak to. Toby is also now able to travel independently to meet his mentor – something he wouldn’t have done before. Toby said he wouldn’t have done this without support and encouragement from his mentor.

*Name changed to protect identity

Evidence from earlier years

In many cases, mentors supported children and young people to get outdoors and visit the local area - including visiting local parks and beaches, cycling and walking, eating locally and signing up to new local classes including sports, dance, poetry, art, photography and other interests.

Case study evidence also shows that mentors supported children and young people to develop their confidence and positive attitude, leading to increased engagement

with community activity – including learning, using local facilities and attending after school activities.

“You have encouraged me to do what I do and I’m so grateful I have people I can talk to.” Young person

Case studies from 2020 and 2021 show that intandem helps children and young people to build their confidence, including supporting children and young people to:

- become more confident in social situations
- feel more positive about themselves
- become more resilient

Ian

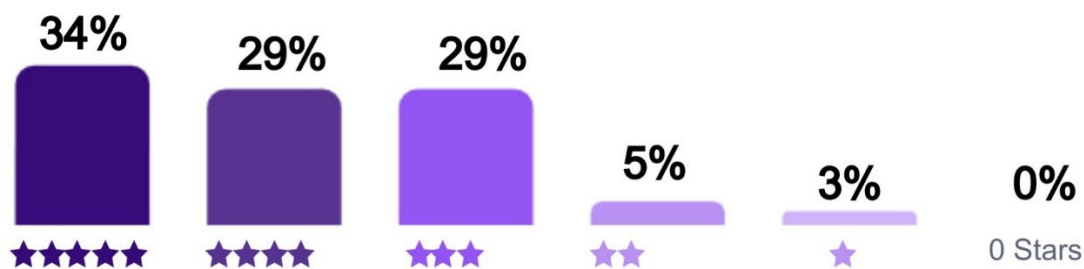
Ian* has grown significantly in confidence and self-esteem through intandem, and has tried new things. He now attends events and group activities which he previously would not have managed. He has tried new activities including boxing, tennis and cycling. Before, Ian was very isolated in his own bedroom, not attending school and living with trauma and domestic violence. His mentor helped Ian build his confidence to leave his bedroom, go out of the house and engage in activities.

Ian hadn't been to school for almost two years. Through working with his mentor, trying a range of activities outside the home, building confidence and working on goals, Ian has now been able to begin attending school for two hours a week. Ian's mentor and guidance teacher worked together to create a positive and relaxed return to school. Ian has now completed one NAT 3 qualification, is working on a second and has become more confident and relaxed in the school setting. He is starting to think about ways to progress his learning and development. The relationship between Ian and his mentor created a secure platform for Ian to feel comfortable exploring new paths and opportunities.

Theme 3 - Health and wellbeing

Survey evidence from 2023

92% said having a mentor has supported them to understand or manage their health



Qualitative evidence from 2023

Young people felt that their time with their mentor was calm and relaxed. Mentors also helped young people to build a calmer environment in other parts of their lives, including at home and at school.

“My mentor is really helping me by doing worksheets and activities around my emotions.” **8-11 year old**

“I can manage my own feelings in a more positive way.” **Age 15+**

“I am calmer at home” **12-14 year old**

“I don’t stay angry now. I speak about how I feel. I try to be calm, fair.” **8-11 year old**

Young people felt that through their time with their mentor, they learned how to be more independent and less anxious in new situations.

“I get out of the house a lot more and deal with my anxiety.” **Age 15+**

“Meeting with my coordinator has helped me feel less nervous and has helped me go to groups. It has helped with my overall social anxiety.” **No age provided**

How happy do you feel on mentoring days?



How happy do you feel on other days?



Evaluation month 2023, young person's response.

Cara

Cara sees her mentor every week and really looks forward to their time together. They have tried lots of new activities, such as visiting museums, going to the zoo and swimming. She looks forward to their meetings, and feels a lot happier since having a mentor.

“She makes me feel happy in myself.”

Cara has a close bond with her mentor, and thinks of her as a big sister. She has made a close friend who she can trust, can rely on and who will be there for her.

“I’ve gave myself a new friend... It’s someone that I can trust my life with.”

Cara is comfortable talking to her mentor about things that she wouldn’t speak to others about, and trusts that her mentor would always keep her safe. Since talking to her mentor, Cara now feels more confident about sharing how she is feeling with her other support workers – for example if she is struggling with her mental health or self-harming.

“She’s made me realise that not every person is there to hurt me.”

Having a mentor has helped Cara both physically and mentally. She has talked to her mentor about problems with eating, and now feels much more in control of her eating habits.

“It’s made me a lot happier... I was really struggling, mentally, physically... but when I got my mentor she brightens stuff up... it feels like she genuinely takes some of the stress off of my shoulders.”

Cara values having a mentor because someone is giving up their own time to be with her, without being paid to do so. Cara lives in a children’s home and has had a wide range of support workers, all of whom are paid for working with her.

“... with a mentor, they take time out of their own week to volunteer with you, they don’t get paid to be with you... they volunteer, it just makes you feel so much more happy that they’re actually volunteering to come and see you.”

Since meeting with her mentor, Cara has decided she would like to have a career helping other people who have had similar experiences to her. Cara has chatted with her mentor about college and career options for the future.

“Without a mentor I think I’d be lost. I think I’d be lost and unhappy and probably not as confident in myself as I am right now.”

“I think I would say that it’s the best thing I’ve ever done. I mean it’s put me on a kind of course path for my future.”

*Name changed to protect identity

Mentor example: routines and relationships

When I started working with Jess, she was very quiet and always sleeping. She cancelled a lot. But now when I go to pick her up, she's showered and usually eaten something and is ready to go out the door. Every time she's grinning from ear to ear now and she never used to smile. Now she tells people that it's good to have someone to talk to. She's not cancelled once since lockdown

She used to argue with her aunt all the time and probably still does but she has learnt how to express herself without accusing her or shouting at her about it now. When I first started meeting her, she only ever told me about one friend, but she now has a full friendship group.

Evidence from earlier years

Case studies from 2020 and 2021 show that through working with their mentor, many children and young people have seen improvements in their mental health in terms of:

- reduced anxiety
- improved anger management and strategies to manage emotions
- feeling happier and brighter
- feeling more motivated
- talking about loss, trauma and personal feelings
- becoming more patient, kind and empathetic.

“I can do stuff I wasn't able to do two years ago and I'm not as angry. I'm happier now.” **Young person**

“I can spend time with my mentor to keep calm.” **Young person**

“I have learned not to punch people when they are annoying me and I am much more likely to give people and new things a chance now.” **Young person**

“Molly* has such a soft voice, it calms me down as soon as I meet her, she makes all my (uses hands in a circular motion at his stomach) go away and I get happy.” **Young person**

For a few children and young people, talking to their mentor helped them to set goals around accessing support for their mental health.

Some children and young people also began to develop healthier routines and choices, including:

- eating healthier food
- learning how to cook
- adjusting their sleeping pattern
- becoming more active
- attending medical appointments.

In some cases, mentors have encouraged participants to make informed decisions about their health and attended medical appointments with children and young people, helping to explain what was happening.

Carole

Carole* is interested in beauty, cooking, history, walking and theatre. Carole has experience of domestic violence, is at physical risk in the community, is separated from her younger siblings and struggles with her mental health. Her mentor has worked closely with her to help her to make decisions about her own care including writing lists of questions to ask before planning meetings, encouraging her to talk to her pastoral care teacher and think about questions to ask social workers.

Carole now has more of a sense of personal agency over her care plan, and developed her confidence when dealing with professionals involved in her life. At first, Carole found it hard to share goals or make decisions. Now, working with her mentor she is confident enough to make suggestions and map out goals for the future.

“At a recent planning meeting Carole* expressed that she really looks forward to her time with Amanda*. This is the first service that she has been optimistic about.” **Social work**

*Name changed to protect identity

David

David* has been involved with mentoring through intandem for more than three years. Mentoring has provided regular contact with a positive adult role model, who has provided consistency. This has been important as many other adults in David's life have let him down or been lost to him.

"It's helped him be able to trust somebody again and he likes the fact he's with somebody he can rely on." Parent

Together they have explored self-care, healthy friendships, risk-taking, healthy eating and routine. The mentor has also supported him in exploring difficult topics such as self-harming, drinking and smoking.

David feels that the biggest difference having a mentor makes is that he can talk to somebody. He is more aware of his needs and boundaries, and can recognise bullying behaviour from others and talk to his mentor about this.

"I can talk, and instead of having something heavy on ma shoulders ah can talk to someone about it... It's like having another mum."

*Name changed to protect identity

Theme 4 - Learning

Survey evidence from 2023

88% said having a mentor has supported them to become more interested in learning



Qualitative evidence from 2023

Children and young people who are looked after at home face significant barriers to learning, with some of the most challenging educational outcomes of all of Scotland's children. In 2021, the primary reason for referral to intandem for 16% of children and young people was non-attendance at school. Many others struggle to engage with any form of learning.

The survey undertaken in February 2023 showed that most young people felt intandem helped them become more interested in learning. Some felt that they were more confident, which helped them to enjoy school better.

“I believe in myself more now that I have my mentor and I am more confident and chatty and I like school a lot more now too.”
8-11 year old

Some said it was because they had someone to listen to their experiences of school, and help with managing emotions and behaviour at school.

“I am trying better at school, i have a sticker chart which is helping when i feel angry or sad. My mentor encourages me and has gave me different coping strategies to use in and out of school.” **8-11 year old**

“He listens to why I was upset in school.” **8-11 year old**

“I behave better at school.” **No age provided**

A few said their mentor helped with their reading or learning more widely, through visiting different places, reading menus or other information when out and about, or accessing books through the library.

“She helped me sign up to the local library to get some books out.”
No age provided

“When we go out to different places my mentor helps me read the menus so i can improve my reading by myself.” **8 – 11 year old**

A few said their mentor helped them to think about their wider options for learning, like going to college.

Kay

Kay* is currently attending a course at a local college, and doing well. The support that her mentor and mentor coordinator provided played a big part in helping her move into further education. She gained social skills at intandem, and got involved in volunteering, supporting her to feel ready for that next step into higher education.

*Name changed to protect identity

Mentor example: Engaging at school

When I started working with Ben, he'd been getting into a lot of trouble at school, fighting regularly and arguing with his mother at home. His behaviour has really improved.

I've tried to get him outside and active – we've been walking up hills and made campfires on the beach. All the activities are generally a means of starting conversations.

I support Ben by listening to him and not judging, but I encourage him not to get into arguments or fights and make the effort to break past habits.

“He's doing better at school, trying harder.”

“He handles himself better now and doesn't just explode like he used to.”

Ben's confidence is still up and down. He was getting more confident, but is currently experiencing a bit of a dip so I'm trying to encourage him to join groups.

Mentor example: Supporting school attendance

I give Mark a little distance, so he has space to lead the conversation. I don't go looking for information. Discussion happens organically, and we talk about home life, relationships and feelings. It's good to have a space to let off steam about frustrations without being judged or getting into trouble.

I've had conversations with Mark about his school attendance. I offered practical support. For example we arranged a second hand bike to make it easier for him to get to school. I could then gently use the bike as a way of encouraging attendance. Mark also told me about some bullying issues at school, which we then raised through the mentor coordinator.

Kian

Kian* is 12 and has a mentor since he was 8.

Kian feels happy when he is with his mentor. They go bird watching, swimming and to the library. Kian lives with his dad. His dad's health isn't great and having a mentor means that Kian can be out having fun and doing activities.

Kian says that his mentor helps with his imagination. Together they use their imagination to make up stories. Before this, Kian found it hard to express how he was feeling. Kian now feels happier and less worried, and has someone to talk to. Because they do a lot of storytelling together, Kian is considering being an author in the future.

Before having a mentor, Kian says he wasn't very good at making friends. He hoped a mentor would build his confidence. Through the mentor support, Kian has managed to make a lot of friends and he feels much more confident. He says that before he had a mentor, he didn't know how to make friends and he now finds it much easier to speak to people.

"Without a mentor...so I wouldn't feel confident and wouldn't be able to have the friends that I have now." Kian

Kian's mentor has also helped him at school. The mentor and mentor coordinator attend multi-disciplinary meetings at his school, which both Kian and his dad have found very helpful. Kian's mentor is able to suggest things to the school which might help, and both Kian and his dad believe the mentor and coordinator are "in his corner". Kian has become much happier at school because of this support, and his confidence and concentration have improved at school.

"Without a mentor...I think Kian would be a very anxious, unheard boy." Dad

*Name changed to protect identity

Evidence from earlier years

There is good evidence from case studies that mentors are helping children and young people to engage with learning through:

- encouraging attendance at school
- talking with children and young people about situations that they worry about at school
- developing strategies to deal with issues
- supporting children and young people to deal with anxiety
- building confidence to interact with peers
- talking through transitions
- encouraging focus and hard work
- doing homework together
- learning informally on outings – to museums, events, the local community
- attending meetings with children and young people at school
- helping children and young people express their learning needs clearly
- helping children and young people explore different options for learning
- supporting forward thinking and planning for the future.

Within the case studies, there are examples of children and young people who have not attended school or had low attendance levels for several years beginning to engage again with learning.

Liam

Liam is 16 and has been involved in intandem since he was 13. Through the mentoring service, Liam has significantly developed his self-confidence, esteem and worth. At first he said he felt worthless and irrelevant, and had no positive role models at home or as friends.

His attendance at school was initially less than 50%, and most of this time he was in the building but not in a class. The school tried hard to offer alternatives, including one to one support, but Liam was reluctant to attend. Over this time, the mentor worked closely with Liam, taking him on outings, exploring local history, music and chatting.

Liam said to his mentor that he would like to learn but didn't see the point. The mentor mentioned a model of alternative schooling, and this was the first time Liam had shown any interest in education. The school made a referral and following an initial exploration where he was supported by the mentor co-ordinator, he was offered a place at the alternative school. Liam has since attended the alternative school almost every day. He has also made a new friend and is slowly learning to trust others.

*Name changed to protect identity

Grace

Grace* became involved in intandem due to a referral through social work. There were concerns over attendance levels at school, and a negative peer group consisting of older males.

The mentor worked to build a safe environment for Grace, discussing hopes and aspirations for the future. They discussed Grace's strengths and interests and explored different choices and coping mechanisms.

The mentor relationship had been in place for 12 months at the time of this case study. Grace's attendance at school increased from 40% to 90%. Grace managed to obtain qualifications in PE as well as English, maths and crafts. On leaving school, she secured a job in a local hotel over the summer and went on to attend college. She then attended a 1 year introductory course which will support her application for HNC in Sport in the future.

*Name changed to protect identity

Connor

Connor* was 14 when he got involved in intandem. He spoke openly with his mentor about his home life, challenges he faces with emotions and anger, and how he feels about school.

Connor wasn't attending school at all, and spent most of his days in bed watching tv or playing games. After six months, he asked his mentor to come along to a school meeting for support. He'd never attended one of these meetings before although he was always invited. His mentor helped him to talk about how he felt at this meeting, and a new timetable was agreed and put in place. He began attending school, he was more engaged in classes and walked out of classrooms less. He talked to his mentor each week about how he felt about school, and this was fed back through to his mum and guidance teacher. This helped the school to adapt to keep him happier in the school environment.

Connor's attendance increased to 100% on a part time timetable before he left school. He now attends a 16 plus course three days a week, and is gaining new qualifications and skills.

"The best thing about intandem was having someone to talk to who was a good listener but who also gave advice and getting out of the house... I am motivated to go on courses and learn new things which I wasn't before... I have grown up a lot since having my mentor." Young person

Gemma

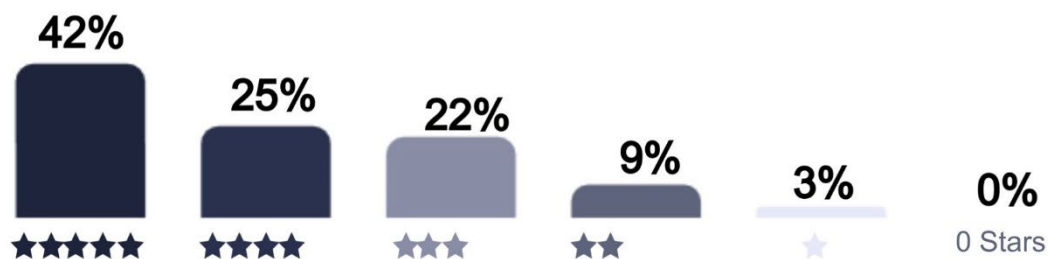
Gemma* was referred through social work as she was not attending school. Her school attendance was at 5%. She experienced anxiety and together, Gemma and her mentor explored what to focus on, developing a good mentoring relationship and supporting personal growth and development. Through mentoring support, alongside school guidance support, Gemma was supported to attend college education on a full time basis, with 80% attendance.

*Name changed to protect identity

Theme 5 - Goals

Survey evidence from 2023

89% said having a mentor has supported them to set clear goals, make plans or take decisions about their life



Qualitative evidence from 2023

The young people supported through intandem are aged between 8 and 14 plus. While young people across all ages helped that their mentor helped them to take decisions about their lives, it was the older age group that commented most on this within the survey responses.

Young people felt that having a mentor helped them to make decisions, assess risks, think about their options, plan their future and think about college and work.

“Having a mentor helps me be able to manage my life better especially when I'm making a choice to stay out of trouble.”
Aged 15+

“He listens to me and gives me advice and things to think about. He has helped me plan my spending and helped me know how to look for work.” **Aged 15+**

A few mentioned that their mentor helped them feel much more positive about their future, bringing excitement and aspiration for the future.

“Now have excitement about future and doing things, going places.”
No age provided

Bruce

Bruce is 13 and has had a mentor since he was 7. He has had 3 different mentors over time. He wanted to have someone to talk to and spend time with.

Bruce and his mentor visit local attractions and go outdoors, walking and on bike rides. He has tried new activities with his mentor that he didn't think he'd enjoy, and found that he enjoys them. Bruce's mum values that the mentor can get him out and active, and do activities that she can't do because of her health issues.

Bruce says he feels able to be himself with his mentor, however he is feeling.

"I've got someone that's there that I can actually talk to, that's not family wise, or working in a school, or a counsellor or anything like that. And its quite fun having chats."

Bruce feels he has someone to talk to, who is there just for him. Bruce's mum is happy that he has the chance to talk to someone outwith the family.

"It keeps me out of trouble basically... Just knowing I've got somebody I can actually depend on and that this keeps me away from shit that I'm not supposed to do."

Without a mentor Bruce thinks his life would be different.

"I'd probably just be outside at this point causing shit...doing stuff that I used to do as a kid, just set fires, go out fighting, maybe even drinking."

He feels he has matured, and doesn't want to do the things he used to do. He enjoys having a mentor he can depend on, speak to and have opportunities to try out new activities with.

*Name changed to protect identity

Brodan

Brodan is 19 and has had a mentor for four years. He was spending a lot of time indoors at home, and mentoring has helped him to get out more and try new things. His mother has medical conditions which mean she can't go outside, so Brodan only really went out if his older brothers took him. He is a keen gamer, and regularly spends a lot of time online.

When Brodan and his mentor first met, Brodan hadn't been out of the home for over a year and was very unused to public situations. Brodan and his mentor started to go to the park, for walks and go out for bubble tea. Gradually Brodan learned how to cope in social situations and unfamiliar places, such as restaurants and cafes.

They have also visited the National Museum of Flight, because Brodan is very interested in military planes. Brodan feels excited when he knows he is meeting his mentor and looks forward to whatever they are going to do that day.

"I know we're going to be doing something great together. There's an excitement to that."

Brodan and his mentor talk a lot, and over time they have got to know each other well. Brodan talks about how he is getting on with his family and his future plans. Brodan's mentor gently supports him to talk and think about a potential future beyond living at home and not working, and moving beyond his current routine. His mentor does not offer definitive advice, but listens to Brodan, acknowledges his feelings and recognises his views. He tries to show empathy and understanding without judgement, and without seeking a specific outcome.

Brodan's mentor feels that the build up of trust through a long term, consistent relationship has been rewarding, and an important achievement for them both.

"He told me he'd learnt to trust again, which was nice to hear." Mentor

Brodan feels that his mentor really played the role of a father figure, and "brought him up". He feels his mentor has helped make him a better person, and learn how to approach situations.

"We met when I was like 14, so I can say that he's brought me up well. I don't have much of a father figure to be honest... He's still teaching me stuff, which is really good."

*Name changed to protect identity

Alex

Alex is 18 and has had a mentor since he was 12. Alex has a very difficult home life and was lonely, anxious and nervous when he started meeting his mentor. As he got to know his mentor, she became his closest friend. He always felt safe when he was with her.

“Without a mentor I would be lost.”

His mentor has also helped him to overcome his isolation and anxiety and to be able to speak to others, to some extent. Mentoring gave him the confidence to build some friendships which are meaningful and very important to him.

Alex learned a lot through his mentor. He learned how to travel on public transport and is now confident enough to travel on this own. He tried new activities with his mentor, and feels less afraid to try new things. He learned how to camp, how to cook outdoors and how to ride a bike. He grew to have a love for the outdoors.

Alex’s mentor helped him with his school work, and he describes this support as “invaluable”. When he was struggling, she spent extra time with him, and helped him to get through school.

As he got older his mentor supported him with college applications. He wasn’t sure where to start with this and nobody at home could help him. His mentor helped him to think about what he wanted to do, and think about his options. Alex doesn’t think he would have been able to get into college without a mentor. Before he had a mentor, Alex felt hopeless, but having a mentor opened up his mind to new opportunities and possibilities and he is now on a path to a career in his chosen field.

“It’s impacted on my life choices a lot.”

Mentoring has also made a significant difference to Alex’s wellbeing. It gave him a break from a difficult and hostile home environment and made him feel better and more able to cope.

“Growing up in a family where there was a lot of abuse, it was difficult for me to even find happiness a lot of the time, having that break away with my mentor was incredibly helpful.”

Alex’s mentor also supported the family more widely through bringing food from her allotment and baked bread, cakes and biscuits for the family when they were struggling and didn’t have enough food.

“Having a mentor was life changing for me, because I think if I didn’t have it, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”

*Name changed to protect identity

Evidence from previous years

Case studies from 2020 and 2021 show that intandem helps children and young people to set goals and think about their future, including supporting children and young people to:

- become more confident in their decision making
- become more confident about their future
- develop a positive attitude
- increase their aspirations for themselves
- engage more in discussions
- become more assertive
- become more involved in decisions.

Esme

Esme* was referred to intandem to help her to focus on staying safe, including managing substance misuse, as well as building emotional regulation and improving the relationship with her parents. The mentor meets with Esme once a week, using a strength based approach, focusing on strengths, positive attributes and future goals.

Esme said she had worked a lot on managing her emotions before, but nothing worked. She worked with the mentor to explore her thoughts and try various ways to manage her emotions in a positive way. Esme and her mentor explored the building blocks of self-esteem and resilience. Through this support, Esme built more of a sense of security within her family home, through having clearer rules, limits and boundaries.

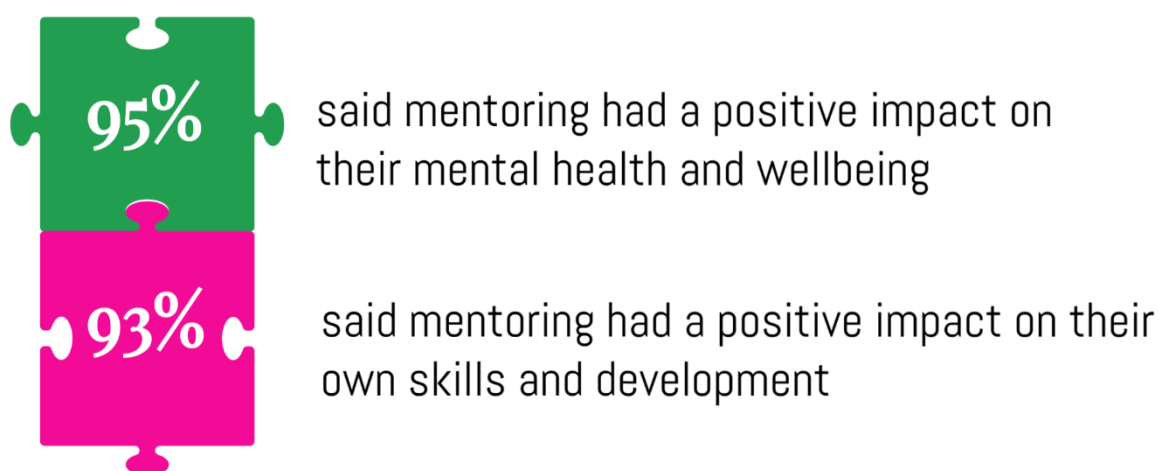
Esme is in her eighth month of mentoring, and is now exploring her engagement with education, her attendance and setting achievable goals for the future.

*Name changed to protect identity

Chapter 3: Impact on mentors

About this chapter

In February and March 2023, 45 mentors gave their views on the difference intandem has made to them.



The analysis is based on the proportion of young people responding with a rating of 3, 4 or 5 stars to each of question.

Mental health and wellbeing

The survey

36 mentors answered the question about the impact of mentoring on their mental health and wellbeing. 95% said that there had been a positive impact (rating the impact between 3 and 5).

The number of responses was reasonably small, so it is important to take care comparing groups. However, the impact was generally rated slightly higher for 25 to 24 year olds than other age groups.

Qualitative evidence

We spoke with eight mentors in-depth about their experience. These mentors had become involved in intandem for lots of different reasons. Most often, mentors wanted to make a difference and support children and young people. Some were quite reluctant to talk about what they gained from mentoring, as their focus was largely on the young person.

Many mentors we spoke with said that they fully enjoyed their time with their mentee. Mentors talked of mentoring creating a new, special and long lasting relationship in their lives.

“Because we’ve known each other for so long we’ve got a very good, strong relationship.” **Mentor**

“It’s good fun. We get on really well and we have a laugh.” **Mentor**

“It’s fun. She lightens my day and she’s got great one-liners!” **Mentor**

A few mentors talked about how mentoring helped them with their mental health and motivation.

“We do things that I wouldn’t normally do, so it gets me up and motivated and doing stuff every weekend which I wouldn’t usually do.” **Mentor**

A few said that they felt better when putting another person’s wellbeing first, and doing something worthwhile and valuable.

“During Covid my depression and anxiety got really bad, so it took me a while to get back out again. Initially I didn’t want to do it, but I had to do it, so it got me moving again. When I know I have to do something for someone else it helps with my motivation. I’ll do for someone else something I wouldn’t necessarily do for myself.” **Mentor**

“I could be in the absolute worst mood ever, but if I know I’m meeting my young person that night it’s like ‘game face on, put your own stuff to the side.’” **Mentor**

However, mentors emphasised that they enjoyed their time with their mentee overall, not just because they found it rewarding.

“You feel good afterwards. It’s not necessarily just ‘I feel good because I’m helping someone else.’ I feel good because I’ve had a nice time and enjoyed her company.” **Mentor**

Skills

The survey

40 mentors answered the question about the impact of mentoring on their skills and development.

93% said that there had been a positive impact (rating the impact between 3 and 5).

The number of responses was reasonably small, so it is important to take care comparing groups. However, the impact was generally rated slightly higher for the 35 to 54 age group than other age groups. It was also slightly higher for students and those looking for work, compared with those in work and retired.

Qualitative evidence

Most of the mentors we spoke with said that they developed skills around talking to young people and learning how young people's minds work. Some said they learned a lot about the importance of patience, small steps and taking your time.

“I've learnt you need to explain things in a way which really fits the person you're explaining to. You have to consider their thoughts, their feelings, the terminology you're using.” **Mentor**

This helped some mentors to feel more confident that they could support others.

“It's given me that confidence to know I can be there for someone and that they can come to me...She can open up and speak to me so it's maybe made me look at myself in a different light.” **Mentor**

A few mentors also said that they learned skills from young people such as technology skills.

“I am learning skills from this young person – she's amazing.” **Mentor**

Example

One mentor we spoke with got involved in intandem as part of a wider career change. He felt that volunteering would give him relevant experience and training. He enjoyed it so much and found it so rewarding that he applied for a job with the host charity and was successful.

Chapter 4: Ingredients of success

What works

Young people were generally very happy with the mentoring service. Young people felt it was fun, and getting to spend time with their mentor was the absolute best thing about the service. Young people enjoyed getting out of the house, building a relationship, trying new things, going new places and having someone to talk to who they trust and who listens.

“Spending time with my mentor is good for me.” **Age 15+**

“She is fab!!! I like planning what we will do. We laugh lots, lots!”
8-11 year old

“Spending time with my mentor is something I really look forward to every week, going out and doing fun activities and having somebody to talk to that I can trust.” **8-11 year old, kinship**

“We are good friends.” **Age 15+**

Evidence from evaluation reports, case studies and discussion with mentors and mentor coordinators highlights that the intandem approach is underpinned by:

- **Relationships:** The relationships with mentors are long term, consistent and not time-bound. Building a trusting relationship means that children and young people have someone they can turn to when they need them. For some, the relationship with the mentor is the most consistent adult relationship they have.

“It's this different adult, who's not going to let you down, not going to judge you in any way, but is going to listen objectively.” **Mentor coordinator**

“He knows he can trust that I'm going to be there. I wouldn't want to let him down.” **Mentor**

- **Volunteering:** The approach is voluntary and is about choice. Children and young people decide if they want a mentor. They are in control and have the

choice. The mentors volunteering their time also helps to build the relationship. Children and young people are often interested in why someone would want to help and not be paid for it, as many people in their lives are paid professionals. Mentor coordinators highlighted that young people value the voluntary nature of the role and are pleased that mentors are there because they want to be. This can be a boost and positive affirmation for young people.

“It makes me feel good as she is not just there for a job, and she wants to do it. It’s a lot better knowing that she is a volunteer... it’s good cause you want to talk to them, and they want to talk back to you.” **Young person, intandem research project**

- **Child-centered approaches:** Each match is tailored to the individual and focuses on the goals and aspirations of each young person. Mentors support mentees to set goals that are important to them, while having fun. The support from the mentor is for the child, their own special time, outwith the family.

“We’re planning stuff to do in the summer already...”
Young person

- **Flexibility:** The relationship lasts for as long as the young person needs. There is flexibility in the duration of the relationship, and the outcomes the young person works towards. Mentor coordinators felt this led to intandem feeling quite different to other services, with less pressure and feeling genuinely young person led.

“You can make it your own, which is really nice for the child and the mentor.” **Mentor coordinator**

“The beauty of intandem is that you don’t have an end date. You’re not fighting the clock.” **Mentor coordinator**

- **Community based activity:** Mentors are recruited from the local community so that they can connect and help the young person find out about local services and activities, and have the confidence to use them. This helps to develop sustainable, realistic activities.

“The mentoring takes them into a different world and they see what can be out there and think maybe they can achieve it.”
Mentor coordinator

“The intandem project is effective and fruitful. Young people who are disadvantaged through a plethora of circumstances get a chance to be loved, valued and encouraged to become young men and women Scotland would be proud of.” **Partner**

In delivering support, mentors have learned:

- listen to children and young people and don't make assumptions
- focus on the positive as children and young people all have strengths and skills
- little acts make a big difference and things that seem small can greatly help to build trust and relationships
- build on interests and focus on the young person's interests, shared interests with the mentor, or new passions developed from new experiences
- take time to build the relationships and start small, be gentle and build over time
- establish boundaries early on and make clear you are not there to criticize or tell the young person what to do
- be consistent and reliable, to provide stability for the young person
- find a safe space to meet – many met in familiar venues at first, and then retained the connection with known and trusted spaces, even as they moved to more activity out and about in the community.

“Never any judgement between us, I feel I could talk to her about anything.” **Young person**

“(intandem) worked gently and steadily with her and instantly built great rapport and trust.” **Teacher**

Mentors were very positive about the support and training provided through intandem.

Many mentors and mentor coordinators mentioned the importance of pairing mentors and mentees well. Mentor coordinators spent a lot of time matching mentors and mentees carefully, and mentors valued the careful matching and introduction process. Mentors were also happy with the training and support provided, and pleased that they didn't have too much administration to undertake, and could focus their time on the relationship with the young person.

“A lot of work goes into matching the young person up with their mentor. They go out of their way.” **Mentor**

“The support I've received as a volunteer has been second to none. I've done loads of other voluntary jobs and this one is unique.” **Mentor**


“intandem has proved that it does not always take a whole lot to change a life, but with dedicated and measured personal care and good listening, futures that were closed are now wide open.” **Partner**

Challenges

Most young people felt that nothing could be better about the mentoring service.


A few said they might have liked a mentor at a younger age, to have access to a mentor more quickly or to have time to see their mentor more often. Mentor coordinators said that this was a big part of their role, through recruiting, training and supervising volunteer mentors and carefully matching them with young people. Recruitment was an ongoing part of the role, with coordinators trying different approaches to attract suitable mentors.

Mentor coordinators said they worked very hard to recruit and retain mentors, because of the impact on mentees.

 It always plays on my mind, that there are young people waiting.”
Mentor coordinator

Mentor coordinators said that it might be helpful to have more promotion of intandem at national level, with some centralised marketing and recruitment support to help improve the flow of volunteers to the programme. Coordinators felt that this could build on the strong assets of the Scottish Government funding the programme, and intandem having a clear link to The Promise. Some felt this would also help other agencies to understand the supportive role that intandem can play.

Mentors and mentor coordinators emphasised that the role of a volunteer mentor was a big commitment, and quite different to other volunteering roles. Some highlighted that often mentors felt able to support one young person, but could not continue once the relationship ended – because of the time, effort and emotions involved.

 intandem mentoring, being open-ended, is a huge ask.” **Mentor coordinator**

A few young people said that they would like more money to be able to do more activities, or more opportunities to do things at different times including the weekends. Mentors talked about the balance of wanting to do what young people choose, but also supporting people to budget, plan and make use of free or low cost activities to spend time together.

Other challenges identified through evaluation and case study evidence include:

- **Chaotic lives:** All the children and young people that intandem works with have strengths and skills, and at the same time can often have chaotic and complicated lives. This can make it hard for mentors and mentees to identify suitable times to meet.
- **Parental support:** Mentoring worked best when the family supported the process. In a few cases, parents presented a barrier and tried to stop matches or meetings. Mentors had to be very careful not to upset parents and cause more conflict in the home environment. A few mentors involved in the evaluation felt that it could be a little challenging communicating with parents, rather than directly with young people. Although mentors understood the rationale for this, it at times caused some practical frustrations.

Mentor coordinators also reflected on this, feeling that they can be drawn into providing wider support for families than their roles encompass, which should be dealt with by other agencies. Coordinators felt that it was important that the mentor's relationship was with the mentee only – and they don't enter the family home or support the parents too closely, as this could result in conflicts of interest.

“I think most mentor coordinators would probably agree that we end up doing more family support than we really should be doing.”
Mentor coordinator

- **Gender of mentors:** Children and young people often needed a positive male or female role model. Most mentors (75%) are female, and some projects found it hard to recruit male volunteers and were not always able to meet requests for male mentors.

A few mentors also suggested that in the future it would be good to have some more group activities for mentors and mentees. One mentioned that it was difficult when their mentee moved a large distance, greatly increasing the travel time involved to visit them.

Finally, a few mentor coordinators wondered if the focus on supporting young people on compulsory supervision orders should be reviewed, as these seemed to be used less, meaning that there may be scope to support other young people in need of mentoring. intandem took this forward during 2022/23, based on feedback from young people, families and coordinators. For 2023/23, a wider scope and criteria has been agreed which should allow more young people to access an intandem mentor, through providing support to young people who are subject to a compulsory supervision order (or at risk of being so), living at home or in kinship arrangements.

Chapter 5: Exploration

Summary of evidence

It is clear that intandem has a positive impact on the young people it works with. Because of intandem, young people have strong, trusting relationships with a positive adult in their lives. Young people try new things and develop skills which are useful across their lives.

98% said having a mentor gave them someone to trust and feel safe with	Having someone to talk to who cares and listens.
	Staying safer and building resilience through reaching out, asking for support and advice and accessing help.
	Support with transitions, sense of stability.
	Reducing isolation
97% said having a mentor has helped them to try new things and go new places	Developing life skills.
	Having fun, being brave and building confidence.
92% said having a mentor helped them to better understand their health	Improved mental health, reduced anxiety, talking about feelings, happier and calmer.
	Enhanced routines and choices, eating healthier, improved sleeping, more active, managing health.
	Managing emotions and feelings.
	Accessing support around health and wellbeing
	Dealing with loss, trauma and grief.
88% said having a mentor helped them to set goals, make plans or take decisions about their lives	Making better choices and better assessing risk.
	Planning for the future and understanding options.
	Having things to look forward to.
88% said having a mentor had helped them become more interested in learning	Supporting young people to express learning needs and explore different options for learning.
	Encouraging and improving attendance at school, exploring concerns and developing strategies.
	Helping to create time and space for homework.
	Helping with wider options such as alternative schooling or college.
84% said having a mentor had helped them to better manage friendships and family relationships	Better conflict management, improved understanding of feelings.

Almost all mentors (95%) highlighted that their own mental health improved, through feeling worthwhile and valuable, building strong relationships and having fun with the young people they support. Almost all mentors (93%) also developed their skills in terms of communicating with and supporting young people.

Quality of evidence

In 2022/23, intandem introduced and piloted a new approach to measuring the impact of its work. Overall, this approach has produced strong and clear evidence about the difference intandem makes, focused in on the intended outcomes of the service which were agreed by funders and delivery partners during 2022.

There is very good evidence from the 'evaluation month' in February 2023 in terms of the standard survey for young people. Going forward, it would be useful to:

- continue to encourage the inclusion of qualitative information alongside the standard survey – this began in February and March 23, but could be strengthened on an ongoing basis to build up the bank of qualitative evidence
- consider tweaking the wording of the outcome around health and wellbeing – young people show clear evidence of mentoring having a positive impact on their mental and physical health, not just on their understanding of their health
- hold a follow up 'evaluation month' in February 2024, to ensure consistent information is gathered from young people at a key point in time each year
- consider particular probe questions each year – for example in 2023 there was more qualitative evidence about trust, relationships and health and wellbeing, and in 2024 it may be useful to have a focus on impact on learning and goals.

The follow up individual conversations with evaluators provided more in-depth information on mentee and family experiences. It would be useful to explore whether mentors and mentor coordinators could be supported to gather this depth of information, or whether a repeat small bank of around 10 interviews should be undertaken by Inspiring Scotland or researchers to complement evaluation month evidence.

Learning

Overall, young people are very happy with the intandem service. It works well as it is strongly focused on a relationship based approach, is volunteer led, is child centred and flexible. Mentors are positive about the experience, and the support and training provided.

Everyone involved emphasised the importance of the matching process, between mentors and mentees. Recruiting and matching volunteers and young people is a key aspect of the mentor coordinator role. It was recognised that the role of a volunteer mentor was a big commitment, and some felt it would be helpful to have more national coordination or awareness raising around intandem and recruitment of volunteers.

intandem mentors work with families with complex and chaotic lives, and mentors and mentor coordinators emphasised that it was important for mentors to focus support on the young person, rather than the wider family. In some cases, wider support was available for families through the partner organisations, but it was recognised that this was not the main role of the mentor.

Social return on investment

This section explores the evidence available about the social value of the immediate outcomes achieved by intandem. The social value of outcomes is explored at a high level, setting out the main outcomes achieved, the likely prevalence of these (based on estimates) and the potential value of these outcomes.

A social return on investment analysis involves exploring:

- Inputs - what resources were needed to deliver the programme
- Beneficiaries - how many people benefited from the programme
- Outcomes - what difference did the programme make in the short term
- Value - how much were these outcomes worth
- Attribution - to what extent did the programme contribute to the outcomes.

The social return on investment analysis includes exploration of benefits both to mentees and mentors.

Inputs

intandem works with some of the most at risk children and young people in Scotland. It supports children and young people to develop their confidence, relationships and self-esteem, having a positive knock on effect on health and wellbeing, home life, learning and aspirations. The group intandem works with is very specific, and the cost of delivering the service reflects this.

Until 2022/23, the budget for intandem was approximately £750,000 a year. With new funding received in 22/23, intandem currently has a budget of approximately £900,000 per year to deliver mentoring to young people who are looked after at home or in kinship care. This includes funding from Scottish Government and The Robertson Trust.

Total inputs over the past seven years have been estimated at £5.4 million.

Beneficiaries

Over 7 years, intandem has supported 593 matches. At any one time, there are approximately 125 active matches within intandem. Each match lasts on average 18 months. For more detail on beneficiaries, please refer to Chapter One (Matches section).

Short term outcomes

There is good evidence that intandem has made a difference to young people's lives in terms of each of the intended short term outcome areas within the logic model.

Theme	Evidence	Number over 7 years (593)	Annual estimate (125)
Trust Consistent relationship with trusted adult	98% said having a mentor gave them someone to trust and feel safe with	581	123
New things More engagement with community / reduced isolation	97% said having a mentor had helped them to try new things and go new places	575	121
Relationships Improved relationships with parents and friends/ more friends	84% said having a mentor had helped them to better manage friendships and family relationships	498	105
Learning Increased attendance and engagement in learning	88% said having a mentor had helped them become more interested in learning	522	110
Health Improved mental health and wellbeing	92% said having a mentor had helped them to better understand their health	546	115
Goals Aspiration for the future	88% said having a mentor had helped them to set goals, make plans or take decisions about their lives	522	110

There is also good evidence that mentors improve their health and wellbeing and skills. However, mentors were clear that the main reason for volunteering was to support young people, and that the outcomes for themselves were secondary.

Personal outcomes for mentors	Evidence	Number over 7 years (862)	Annual estimate (125)
Health Improved mental health and wellbeing	95%	819	119
Skills Communication and listening skills	93%	802	116

Value

When exploring value, it is important to note that SROI explores an estimated value of outcomes, to society, to individuals and communities. It can be based on 'willingness to pay' - how much individuals would pay to achieve these outcomes - or estimates of how much it costs to deal with issues within public sector systems. Importantly, SROI analysis does not mean these costs are 'saved' or prevented, but rather is a way of putting a financial value on societal outcomes.

Short term outcomes	Proxy value	Evidence
Trust Consistent relationship with trusted adult	£1,134/ year	Volunteering hours @ Living Wage £10.90/ hr/ 2 hrs per week/ over 12 months
New things More engagement with community / reduced isolation	£3,537/ year	Value of regular participation in mild exercise/ activity – from TNL introduction to SROI
New things Improved confidence/ self esteem	£1,240	A course to build psychological resilience and self esteem costs £1,240 for 20 sessions
Relationships Improved relationships with parents and friends/ more friends	£7,532	HACT (2014) Social Value Bank Valuation - Connection to family research
Learning Increased attendance and engagement in learning	£2,086	Value of building learning and employability skills , Chowdry and Fitzsimons (2016) Cost of Late Interventions, p.15-16
Health Improved mental health and wellbeing	£284/ year	Department for Communities and Local Government's Troubled Families Unit's SROI found the financial value of reducing young people suffering from mental health issues was £271 per year ¹ . In 2019 it updated this value to £284.
Goals Aspiration for the future	£800	Cost of a block of 10 personalised life coach sessions
Skills Communication and listening	£200	Costs of an active listening course

Initial Value and Duration of Outcomes

Using the numbers and outcomes explored above, the initial value of the intandem outcomes over 7 years can be explored.

Theme	Number over 7 years (593)	Proxy value	Length of outcome	Value	Total
Trust Consistent relationship with trusted adult	581	£1,134/ year	2 years	£2,268	£1,317,708
New things More engagement with community / reduced isolation	575	£3,537/ year	2 years	£7,074	£4,067,550
Increased confidence/ self esteem	575	£1,240	2 years	£2,480	£1,426,000
Relationships Improved relationships with parents and friends/ more friends	498	£7,532	One off – includes lifetime gains	£7,532	£3,750,936
Learning Increased attendance and engagement in learning	522	£2,086	One off – includes lifetime gains	£2,086	£1,088,892
Health Young people improve mental health	546	£284/ year	2 years	£568	£310,128
Mentors improve mental health	819	£284/year	2 years	£568	£465,192
Goals Aspiration for the future	522	£800	2 years	£1,600	£835,200
Skills Communicating and listening	802	£200	2 years	£400	£320,800
Total					£13,582,406

We have assumed that the outcomes gained last an average of 2 years. The way the proxy values for improvements in relationships and learning have been calculated includes benefits over time, and so these have been included as a one off figure.

Deadweight, displacement and attribution

- **Deadweight** - We do not believe that it is likely any of these benefits would have been created anyway, without the intervention of intandem.
- **Displacement** - We do not believe that the activities of intandem are at the expense of any other individuals or organisations, so are not displacing other positive outcomes.
- **Attribution** – The SROI has focused on areas where there is a clear link and attribution between intandem mentoring and the outcome achieved. We have therefore left the attribution level at 100% - assuming it was intandem and not other services that achieved these positive outcomes for individuals.

SROI summary

The total value of the short term outcomes generated by intandem over 7 years has been calculated at approximately £13.5 million. The cost of running the service over 7 years is approximately £5.4 million. For every **£1** invested in intandem, the social return is approximately **£2.52**.

This SROI focuses on the positive, short term outcomes which have been brought about through intandem. It does not explore the possible value to the wider system, through exploring the outcomes which may have been avoided through mentoring – for example reduced involvement in the criminal justice system or reduced use of foster care or residential care. It is not possible at this stage to evidence the extent to which these outcomes have been avoided through intandem, and the extent to which any change can be attributed to intandem. If there is an impact on these outcomes, it is likely that this impact is due to intandem mentoring as well as many other sources of support for the young people and children involved.

The potential avoided social costs of not providing children and young people in care with the right support have been explored and costed at length by The Independent Care Review and its Follow the Money Report⁴. The human cost of not getting the right support is borne by the individual – for example in terms of higher rates of anxiety, addiction, homelessness and lower qualifications and earnings. The cost to the system is also high - in addition to £942 million invested in the current care system annually, Scotland also invests approximately £875 million a year in meeting the needs care experienced people have as a result of the care system failing them. This is significant for the statutory services which are then required, often throughout a lifetime.

⁴ <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Follow-the-money.pdf>

Appendix One – Logic Model

Key activities	Short term outcomes	Longer term outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring relationships between young people and volunteer mentors • Promotion, recruitment and matching • Training, support and supervision to mentors • Review and support to mentees, including at transition stages • Transition and exit support (when and where appropriate) 	<p>Young people experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having someone they trust and feel safe with, to turn to for support if they need it • Improved understanding of physical and mental health • Improved engagement in new experiences and activities • Improved relationships with families and friends • Improved clarity about their personal goals and how to achieve these • Improved interest in learning in the future (either informal or formal learning) 	<p>For young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved health and wellbeing • Improved confidence, skills and aspirations for the future • Stronger connections with other people and their community • Sustained or improved engagement in learning • Improved attainment and more positive destinations
		<p>For mentors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved mental health and wellbeing • Improved skills and personal development