

A lifeline for care experienced young people and their families

Young people on the InVoice residential

intandem's Impact 2024



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Member of InVoice, intandem's youth forum

About intandem

intandem is Scotland's mentoring programme for children and young people at risk of care or with experience of care.

The majority of young people supported are living in kinship care or are looked after at home and meet their mentor once a week. Mentoring starts between the ages of 8 and 15 years and continues for as long as needed.

Established in 2016, intandem is managed by Inspiring Scotland and delivered by 12 partner charities across 20 local authorities.

12

experienced committed
charity partners

16
months

average mentoring
duration

280

young people
supported last year
(2023/24)

A model built on trust and consistency

intandem focuses on building a trusted relationship with young people, encouraging them to have a voice, understand their rights, and enjoy time away from their home environment.

Mentors and intandem coordinators often help young people make better life choices, improve attendance at school, help manage their home life and advocate for them in a variety of situations.

A trusted relationship is also built with the family and it allows families to access wider support, whether that's emotional support, conflict resolution, or help to find specific support services.



A note from Kayla

I'm part of InVoice, the intandem youth forum and have had a mentor for 17 months now.

I met my mentor Rachel in April 2023. At first it was really awkward because I didn't know her. It took me a few weeks before I fully got to know her and trust her, but now we have been matched for well over a year and have done lots of amazing things together.

One of my favourite places to go with my mentor is a pottery cafe. We get the chance to chat and paint lots of different pottery items, we have been twice and I can't wait to go again. So far I have painted a mug and a bowl which I use every day and keep in my house!

Through the course of being mentored my confidence has improved massively. I talk to a lot more people now and have made more friends because of this.

I'm part of InVoice, the intandem youth forum. I've made friends, input to projects, and was even involved in doing a social media takeover for intandem where we interviewed people at the Who Cares? Scotland Love Rally, it was so much fun! I couldn't have done it without my mentor and intandem coordinator.

This Impact Report will tell you all about intandem and how it's helping young people and their families across Scotland.

Kayla

Mentored by intandem and a member of InVoice youth forum



Improving life chances

intandem mentoring makes a big difference to the children and young people it supports. Research with young people in early 2024 found:

100%



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

99%



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

98%



said having a mentor has supported them to understand their health

95%



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

88%



said having a mentor has helped them become more interested in learning

93%



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

Working with statutory services

intandem works alongside statutory services to ensure young people and their families are supported. With social work hugely under resourced intandem plays a vital role that is highly valued.

"If this service was not in place, then we would have struggled to get the positive outcomes for (the young person)".

Tanya Coffey - Social worker Inverness

I wish there were more mentors available... it really benefits (young people) to have the informal supports which reduce the feeling of pressure that they can sometimes feel when statutory Social Work services are in place."

What intandem means

Hope, age 15, has experience of kinship care and residential care

"All other workers are paid to hang out with you, but a mentor is someone who actually volunteers their own time to spend with you and you end up having a lot of fun with them."

I like going out a lot more now, I used to be quite quiet and stuff before I met my mentor but now I love going out with her. We're always out and go to places like museums and historical places. I love history, so we go somewhere where we learn something new.

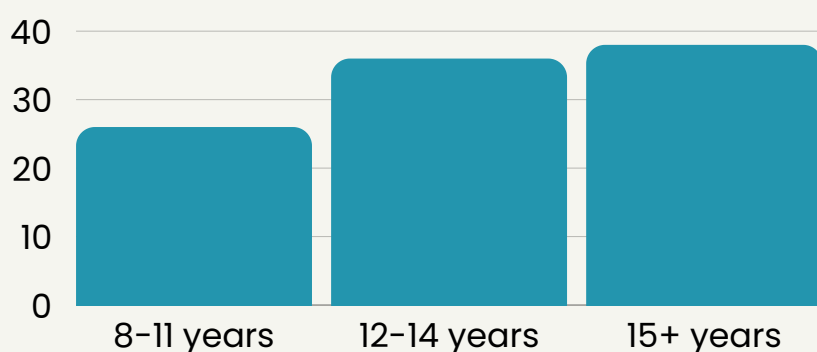
It helps having someone to talk to, I trust my mentor a lot, it's not like she'd go and talk about me behind my back. It feels nice to have someone to talk to who isn't someone pure professional, it's like a friend.

I think mentors realise they are having an impact on a young person's life and making them feel better by taking them out and doing stuff with them that maybe their family, carers or workers couldn't do. I feel like having that one-on-one time makes a mentor and a mentee feel so much better.



"Honestly, a mentor can make you feel so much better about yourself. There will be one moment that you'll never forget, and you'll always be thankful for that."

Age of young people supported (%)



237

children and young people supported in the six months to September 2024

1,061

volunteers trained
since 2016

13,518

volunteer mentor
hours last year
(2023/24)

£154,646

equivalent value of
volunteer hours
based on National
Living Wage

Berny has been a mentor for 16 months

"Being a mentor is so rewarding. I've been with my young person for around 16 months now and the time we spend together is special."

My young person had recently lost his mum when we started mentoring and he was living in temporary foster care. He was only going to school part-time, and his behaviour was seen as difficult.

During term-time I pick him up from school and in the holidays we sometimes spend a day together having fun.

He's now living in kinship care with his older brother, and he's managed to get back to school full-time.

I have a great relationship with his brother too and recently I wrote a letter in support of them getting a more suitable house because where they were living wasn't appropriate. They are now living in a house with a front and back garden, and he has his own bedroom".

"Seeing his life become more stable and being a part of that is important."



Never more needed: emerging themes

There has never been more need for the support that intandem provides.

Increasing complexity and growing needs of families

intandem responds to the needs of the children and young people who are falling through the net of the wider ecosystem of support. The holes in this net have become bigger with more families in need.

We have seen the level of need increase significantly and the complexity of referrals grow. The Covid pandemic, the cost of living crisis, and the recruitment and retention crisis in social work has undoubtedly changed the demands put on intandem. In many cases we are now the eyes and ears for social workers; pulling case management meetings together to support young people, and we are supporting the whole family, not just young people.

Creating change with kinship families

Kinship care is the first choice where a child cannot remain with their parent. There is a large number of young people living in formal and informal kinship care. However, support around the kinship family is often patchy at best. intandem are driving a movement to encourage better collaboration across-sector to support kinship families.

Positive impact on education

At a time when the education statistics for children with experience of care are really concerning, intandem is having powerful results on their engagement with learning of the young people we support.

**Families
trust us to
help and
often we are
the only
service
available.**

72%

of children who have lived in kinship care **have Additional Support Needs**. This is compared to 31% of the general population

(source: Growing Up in Kinship Care report, CELCIS)

79%

of young people supported **live in postcodes of high levels of deprivation** (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 1 & 2)

86%

of young people said intandem helped them to **manage relationships in school with friends and staff**

Level of complexity and need is growing

The circumstances of the children referred to intandem are growing more complex. The intandem coordinator now has to take an active role alongside the mentor to ensure the needs of the young person and family are met.

"Jill, 13 years old, was referred to intandem by her school due to concerns with her behaviour, lack of engagement with education and chaotic home life. She had been looked after at home, in foster care, and in kinship care with Gran.

Jill self-harms and uses substances to manage her emotions and trauma and she disclosed she was suicidal most of the time and had made an attempt on her life.

In this situation the coordinator supported Jill, exploring counselling and created space for Jill to explore her feelings without fear or judgment. The coordinator also enlisted the support of a mentor who had been with the service for 5 years and had lived experience of similar issues. The mentor is an artist and made Jill a beautifully illustrated self-harm pack that was pictorial and easily understood.

The mentor, previously a teacher, noticed some potential signs of an underlying condition in Jill. With her knowledge and experience she built a positive relationship with Jill and her Gran working with them on topics like anger, coping strategies and understanding behaviour. Jill is now being assessed by CAMHS.

The coordinator and mentor still work closely together to support Jill and Gran. They are communicating more positively as trust builds between them and the home environment is more settled."
intandem coordinator, Quarriers

Who refers young people to intandem?



"They were able to work around building confidence, self-esteem, trust, feeling heard and valued. Intandem has helped the young people to identify new skills and interests. They always stood in front in helping young people's family's as well by helping them to navigate tough times."

Extending support to the wider family

We often find ourselves providing support to an entire family – by default, rather than by design.

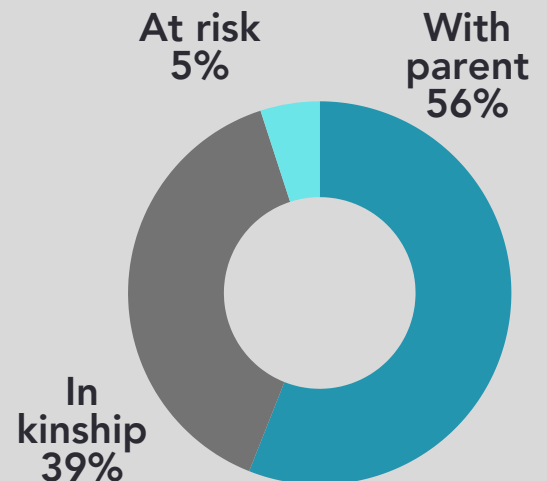
An example is a young boy (aged 11) recently referred to us for mentoring. He is on the autistic spectrum and although extremely bright he was often late for school and experiencing bullying from his peers.

When carrying out the initial home visit & risk assessment for mentoring it was noted that the home was in disarray and very unclean. The mentor noticed significant tension in the home when they were picking up the young person for mentoring. Mum attended a women's group at the YMCA so we understood that although mum wanted to do better, her physical and mental challenges prevented this.

We were quickly able to involve school and other agencies to coordinate support for the whole family from a number of different angles. In terms of pure mentoring effort, our mentor has committed a couple of hours a week but the overall effort put in across the organisation has been much greater."

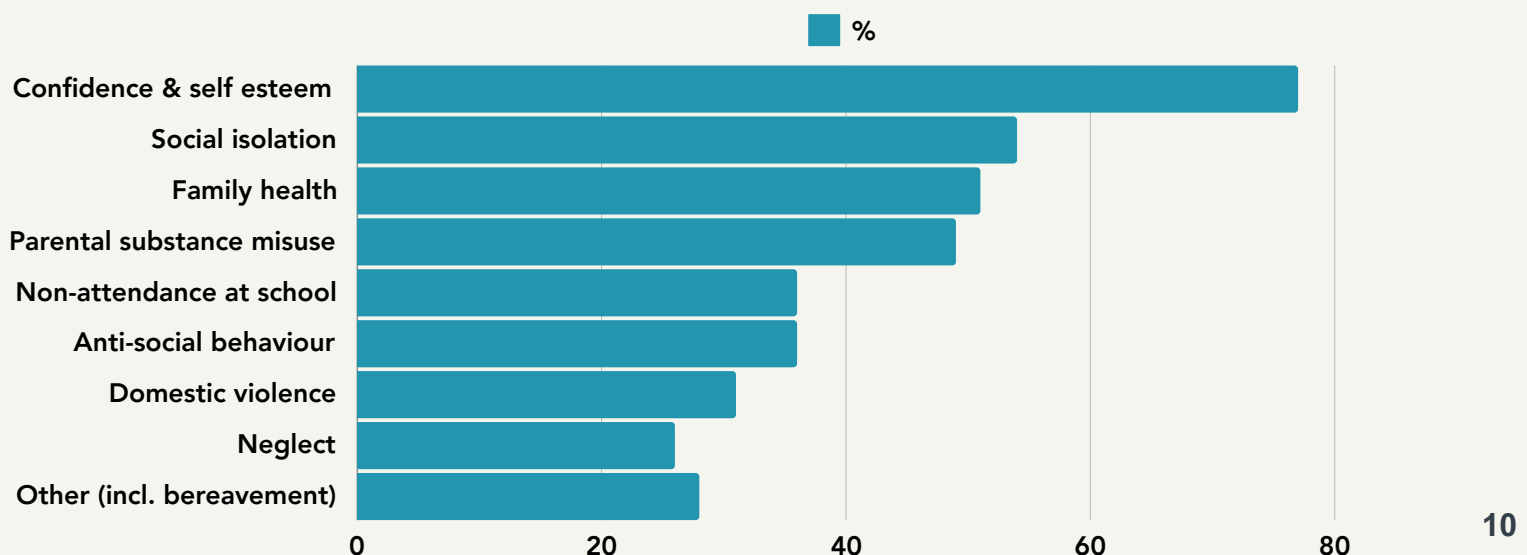
intandem Coordinator, YMCA Edinburgh

Home circumstances



"the overall effort put in across the organisation has been much greater."

Reasons for referral to intandem



Creating change with kinship families

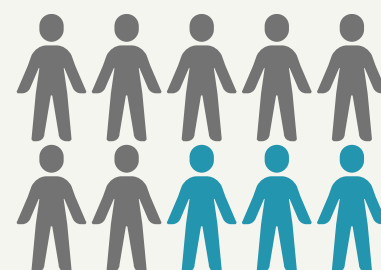
Large numbers of children and young people are living in formal and informal kinship care across Scotland. It has become the first option for social work.

intandem supports young people living in kinship care and we are seeing an increased demand from kinship families and a worrying trend that kinship carers are often in crisis with little or no support.

We took action and organised a cross-sector Kinship Learning & Collaboration Event in April, and a follow-up event in June, bringing together those supporting families in kinship care to improve connectivity and understanding around existing supports.

It's clear there is a real will to improve the ecosystem of support for kinship families and allow their voice to influence change. We are determined to see this happen.

intandem are driving a movement to encourage better cross-sector collaboration to support kinship families.



The proportion of children in care living in kinship care has increased

1 in 8 in 2006

to

1 in 3 in 2023

(source: Growing Up in Kinship Care report, CELCIS)



"Such a disparate picture throughout Scotland in terms of service provision"

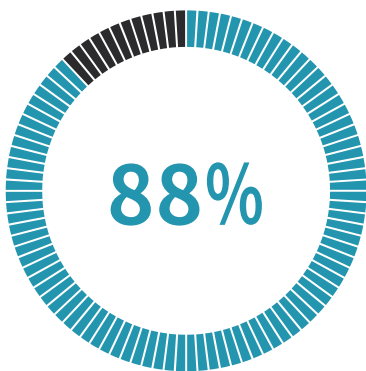
intandem Kinship Learning & Collaboration Event attendee

Positive impact on education

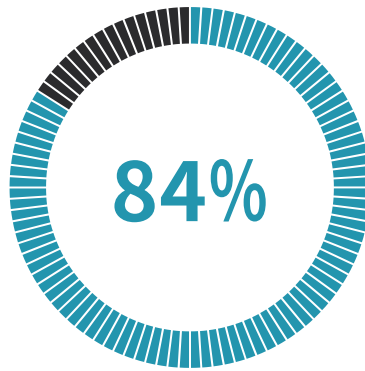
The latest 2022/23 Scottish Government education statistics for children with experience of care are really concerning. In particular the exclusion rate rise, the first time in 12 years, and the gap in many areas between those with care experience and their non-care experienced peers is a trend we must reverse.

intandem believe that with the right support, all children and young people can have an education. Our mentoring programme is having powerful results on education and engagement with learning for the young people we support.

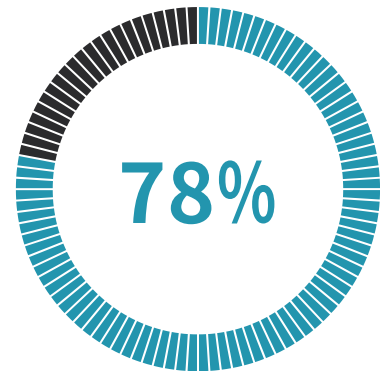
In our recent evaluation, young people told us that having a mentor helped them:



Become more interested in learning



Find more ways of managing emotions in school



Attend school more

"I now attend school three days a week full time, before my mentor it was only until lunchtime every day."

Young person, 10 years old



A focus on adding value

As part of Inspiring Scotland, intandem proactively supports 12 partner charities to increase and improve their impact. We seek diversified funding to ensure they can support more young people and their families, and we offer tailored development support.



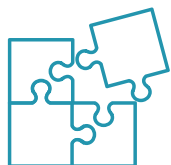
National Approach

We bring people and organisations together from across the country to build a national approach.



Expert Portfolio

Our partners bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise. We share these valuable insights with funders and decision-makers.



Knowledge sharing

We encourage sharing expertise, generating new ideas and promote better ways of working.



Voice & Participation

InVoice, our youth forum, influence intandem as a programme and wider issues including responses to Scottish Government consultations.

"I sit on quite a few different strategic funding groups and would say the intandem portfolio is the strongest. A wide range of Third Sector organisations have come together with the support of Inspiring Scotland to affect positive change for children and families by working in an open and honest joined up way."

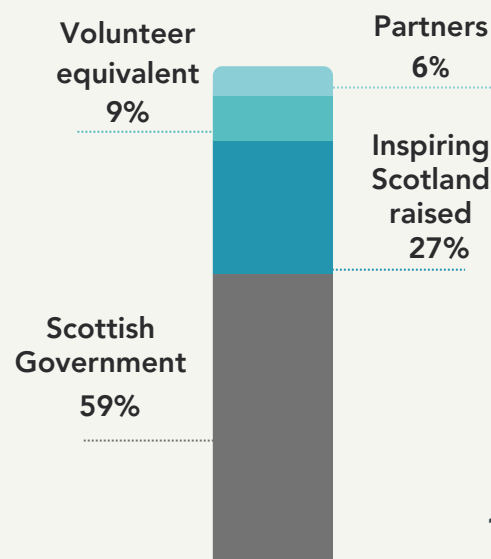
intandem partner organisation

Inspiring Scotland facilitates an environment of communication and continuous learning. Staff are dedicated to offering support and connecting us to other partners to skill share and support each other.

We make money go further

Inspiring Scotland actively seeks to raise funds from all sectors to ensure we do more to help children and families. In 2023/24, Inspiring Scotland built on Scottish Government funding for intandem via trusts, foundations and investments from individuals.

intandem's partner organisations, alongside training and supporting our amazing volunteer mentors, also support the programme through direct fundraising and subsidies such as in kind donations for activity costs.



Looking to the future

intandem can be life changing for children and young people with experience of care, and a much-needed lifeline for their family.

The landscape has changed considerably since intandem launched in 2016. We, and our partners, have continued to evolve and adapt to meet the needs of our children and families. Despite intandem's impact much more support is needed.

Young people and their families are facing unprecedented challenges following Covid and the cost of living crisis. A quarter of children in Scotland are living in poverty, there is a growing concern over the mental health of our young people, and the latest education statistics for children with experience of care are particularly worrying.



Against the backdrop of a recruitment and retention crisis in social work, and funding cuts, there is a real risk of things getting worse rather than better for our children and young people in Scotland.

At Inspiring Scotland our vision is for a Scotland where everyone lives a happy and healthy life free from poverty or disadvantage and this is needed more than ever.

intandem is bucking the trend. It's making a difference to young people's engagement with learning, to their physical health and wellbeing, and their personal ambitions.

I am so proud of what intandem has achieved – we have built our army of volunteer mentors; engaged new funding streams; expanded into new geographies, and pivoted our model to support children living in kinship care arrangements. At the same time we are working alongside statutory services to ensure families have the support they need.

We continue to push for change and better outcomes for children and young people across Scotland. We call on others, across all sectors to join us and our amazing partners to ensure all children can live a happy and healthy life free of poverty or disadvantage. My thanks to our 12 intandem partners, our investors and all who support the promise. Together we can make a difference.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Celia'.

Celia Tennant
Chief Executive, Inspiring Scotland

The portfolio of charities



MOVE ON



:TCA

**Right
There**

befriend a child



intandem is part of Scotland's commitment to keeping the promise.

intandem becomes part of the scaffolding of support around a young person and their family to enable them to overcome difficulties.





Member of InVoice, intandem's youth forum



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Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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