



THE MENTORING PROTOCOL

“Now What?: Preparing and Empowering Youth Leaving Care”



Erasmus+





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Introduction

The present document titled “The Mentoring Protocol” has been developed as part of Output 3 (The Mentoring Component) of the Erasmus+ project titled “Now What?: Preparing and Empowering Youth Leaving Care”.

The Mentoring Protocol is the theoretical basis upon which the mentoring process targeted at children and youth who are about to leave the care system will be developed and implemented. The overall aim of the Now What? project is the development of an integrated approach that will successfully achieve the provision of guidance on effective education, work and living in the community and support and help when the youth face crises that are an inevitable part of their transition from care to adulthood and independence.

The project develops and implements different activities in order to prepare children and youth to leave the care system of their country and enter independent adult life. Such activities include a research phase, when their educational needs are expressed, an educational element, since youth will be trained in specific life skills and empowerment activities, the most important of which is the development of a mentoring relationship between each participating care leaver and an adult. More specifically, the aim of Output 3 is the careful design and structuring of the Mentoring Component of the “Now What?” project. The importance of the Output is paramount, since it will provide care leavers access to an experienced and mature individual, with whom they should develop an individual plan covering essentials – such as accommodation, education, and financial and personal needs. This plan, titled “After Care Plan”, is the final project output and will include a detailed course of action to be taken by each care leaver once they leave the care system and start their independent life as adults.

The present document presents the theoretical background upon which the mentoring process designed for the Now What has been built and includes practical information for the potential mentors participating in the process. It has been developed in English and it will be translated and adapted to the Now What partner languages (Romanian, Greek, Albanian and Portuguese) so as to be implemented in all participating countries accordingly.

The Mentoring Component

Mentoring Theory

Mentoring is a relationship. It is a relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Mentoring is defined as a one-to-one relationship in which an expert or a senior person voluntarily gives time to teach, support, and encourage another. The term mentor came from Greek mythology from the name of an old man who Odysseus left in charge of his home and his son, Telemachus, while he went on a ten-year journey. Mentor helped the boy become a young man and on occasion saved his life. The concept of mentoring relates to emotional support and guidance usually given by a mature individual to a younger person called a protégé or mentee. There is much refining of the definition in the recent literature on mentoring. Mentoring passes on knowledge of subjects, facilitates personal development, encourages wise choices, and helps the mentee to make transitions. In other research it is stated that most of the literature primarily examines mentoring in relation to individual development, with the mentor as a friend, career guide, information source, and intellectual guide.

Mentors are everywhere these days. They are to be found in schools, colleges, places of work, as well as in a variety of projects assisting young people who are variously labelled 'disadvantaged', 'disaffected', 'socially excluded' or 'vulnerable'. The 'Big Idea' of mentoring originated from the United States where the early 'Big Brother, Big Sister' projects were pioneered and where belief in mentoring interventions has continued to fuel their expansion. In part influenced by these developments, mentoring has become a significant component of youth policies around the world, even though it has been subject to little conceptual interrogation or research into its effectiveness.

In the literature, mentoring is used to describe many different types of relationships – there is no simple definition or classification. However, different forms of mentoring have been defined by:

- their origin, whether 'naturally' occurring within families or communities as distinct from 'artificial' or professionally promoted
- the type of mentoring relationship : one-to-one; one-to-group; peer mentoring
- the site of mentoring, for example, whether the mentoring takes place in a school, workplace, project or local community setting.

Beyond these descriptive dimensions, studies have suggested different models or approaches to mentoring. First of all, the purpose of mentoring schemes can be defined on a continuum. This may begin with 'instrumental' or 'engagement mentoring' linked to 'hard' outcomes, such as employment, education or training, or reducing offending behavior, and continue to more 'expressive' mentoring linked to 'soft' outcomes, such as self-esteem and personal development. Secondly, the process of mentoring can be located on a 'service-led' to 'participatory' continuum, identifying the extent to which goals are defined by the mentoring service (or project) or are initiated by, negotiated with and agreed by the mentored young person (the mentee).

Mentoring is an increasingly popular way of providing guidance and support to young people in need. Recent years have seen youth mentoring expand from a relatively small youth intervention (usually for youth from single-parent homes) to a cornerstone youth service that is being implemented in schools, community centers, faith institutions, school-to-work programs, and a wide variety of other youth-serving institutions. While almost any child can benefit from mentoring, those who design and implement mentoring programs also need guidance and support. Running an effective mentoring program is not easy, and there are many nuances and programmatic details that can have a big impact on outcomes for youth. Recent mentoring research even indicates that a short-lived, less-than-positive mentoring relationship (a hallmark of programs that are not well designed) can actually have a negative impact on participating youth. Mentoring is very much worth doing, but it is imperative that programs implement proven, research based best practices if they are to achieve their desired outcomes.

Mentoring has evolved to embrace a wide range of activities in recent years: from being allocated individuals who respond to queries that an individual has and give moral support, to schemes that border on counselling given the complexity of the needs of the mentee.

A sound working definition was offered by Eric Parsloe: 'Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximize their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.' There are particular words and phrases in this quote that draw our attention:

- 'Supporting' and 'encouraging' suggest it is non-directive.
- 'Manage their own learning' suggests that the responsibility for this lies with the mentee.
- 'Maximize potential, develop their skills, improve their performance' identifies the spirit of growth and development.
- 'The person they want to be' clarifies that this is about an individual establishing their own goals with help.

It is important also to recognize what mentoring is not. Mentoring is not counselling, because there is an assumption that the mentees involved in mentoring are well enough to engage in it on the above terms. If a mentee has sufficient emotional difficulties they will either need a trained counsellor to provide them with support in addition to a highly trained mentor, or will simply need counselling. Mentoring isn't coaching either. Mentors do offer some of their life experiences and knowledge to help mentees, but still try not to be directive or to take too much control of the relationship. Coaching typically requires minimal and highly controlled sharing of experience and knowledge. It is important to recognize, however, that the skills involved in mentoring, coaching and counselling have a huge overlap, of which empathy, listening and asking questions are key.

The key principles of being a mentor can be summarised as follows:

- Mentoring should be a structured dialogue where reflection is facilitated by the mentor.
- The mentoring relationship should be based on trust, confidentiality, mutual respect and sensitivity.
- The relationship should be based on agreed boundaries and ground rules that address the power differentials between the mentor and mentee.
- Mentors should seek advice or assistance regarding sustaining and developing the mentoring interaction if needed.
- The mentor should allow the mentee to drive the relationship and encourage them to take increasing responsibility for their own self-reflection and development. There should be no coercion or mentor agenda.
- A mentor should help the mentee identify goals and challenges and set priorities for relevant personal growth.
- Mentors should acknowledge the benefits they gain from the process of mentoring.
- Mentors should seek to use supporting resources that facilitate and sustain the engagement of the mentee.

These principles will be further analyzed in the relevant parts of the present document, where specific description of the role of the mentor and the mentee will be provided, along with further elements which are crucial for the development of a successful mentoring relationship.

General Introduction of the Mentoring Process

Mentoring for youth in care

A positive relationship with a kind, trustworthy adult is an important factor in child and adolescent development. Older youth (ages 16–18) in care are especially likely to be placed in a group home or institution, where they are less apt to form lasting relationships with compassionate, responsible adults who stimulate their emotional and cognitive development and model critical life skills. Mentoring by a caring, well-trained adult can provide children and adolescents in care with adult support to develop the skills they need to make a successful transition to independence. The two people involved in mentoring are the mentor and the mentee, as presented below.

The specific responsibilities of the mentors in the mentor/mentee relationship are to:

1. Establish mentoring agreements that outline the terms of the relationship
2. Communicate with mentees regularly, as established by the mentoring agreement
3. Participate in orientation, training events, and additional mentoring activities.
4. Assist mentees to establish an Individual Development (or After Care) Plan.
5. Provide advice, coaching, and/or feedback to mentees on a regular basis.
6. Provide constructive feedback.
7. Maintain confidentiality within mentoring relationships.
8. Guide the mentee to the completion of the program.
9. The best mentors help develop the insight and self-awareness that assist with integrating professional life, personal concerns and core values.
10. They can share their understanding of personal characteristics for success in the field, important issues facing the profession/occupation, personal rewards and sources of frustration.
11. Encourage mentees to meet their professional and personal goals/objectives.
12. Be accessible and available

Mentor

A mentor is an individual, usually older, always more experienced, who helps and guides another individual's development. This guidance is not done for personal gain. Mentors are people, with whom mentee's can share triumphs, defeats and new ideas, receiving in turn guidance, a nonjudgmental audience and constructive criticism. A mentor is an individual regarded by his or her peers as a role model, has the ability to encourage and motivate others, is willing to share his or her knowledge and experiences, and is respectful of others. A mentor is a critical listener and observer, who asks questions, makes observations and offers suggestions that help a mentee set meet and surpass personal and professional goals. A mentor is an active partner in an ongoing relationship who helps a mentee reach his/her professional, educational, and personal goals. Mentors provide guidance, advice and expertise to less experienced individuals to help them advance their careers, enhance their education, support their employability and build their networks, as well as develop their self-awareness and self-esteem. A mentor is an advocate and a teacher and has a vested interest in the success and accomplishments of the promising developing mentee. Mentoring provides an opportunity to affect the future; mentors transmit a part of themselves to each person they mentor – their ideals, ethics, and professionalism.

Mentee

A "mentee" is the person who receives guidance and support from a successful professional in order to establish and reach his/her personal and professional goals. "Mentees" should think of themselves as apprentices who can benefit from the wisdom of more seasoned individuals.

The most successful mentees are those who are motivated and feel empowered to plan and manage the direction of their life. They take responsibility for their development, learning, personal and professional growth. Further, they come to the mentor/mentee relationship open to coaching, feedback, and guidance from the mentor. The specific responsibilities of the mentee in the mentoring relationship are to:

1. Initiate and communicate expectations regarding the mentoring relationship.
 2. Establish the mentoring agreement that outlines the terms of the relationship.
 3. Collaborate with the mentor to identify competency strengths and weaknesses.
 4. Meet with the mentor on a regular basis (i.e., monthly) or as established by the mentoring agreement.
 5. Participate as an active listener when receiving feedback.
 6. Keep supervisor apprised of participation and progress in the Mentoring Program.
 7. Establish an Individual Development (or After Care) Plan.
 8. Participate in orientation, training events, and additional mentoring activities.
 9. Maintain confidentiality within the mentoring relationship.
- These characteristics and responsibilities of the mentor and the mentee reflect all mentoring relationships, including the ones targeted at youth and especially youth in care.

Different Types of Mentoring

Based on different criteria, mentoring can be divided in different categories. The most common ones are as follows:

Informal mentoring: Informal mentoring is a natural component of relationships that occurs throughout the society, in the workplace, as well as in social, professional, and family activities. Informal mentoring occurs in a relationship between two people where one gains insight, knowledge, wisdom, friendship, and support from the other. Either person may initiate the mentoring relationship, the mentor to help the other, the protégé/ mentee to gain wisdom from a trusted person. Informal mentoring by definition has very little structure or is loosely structured based upon chemistry between two people to be involved in a mentoring relationship. Informal mentoring will sometimes even develop into a long-term friendship.

Formal mentoring: Formal mentoring programs are pervasive. The literature studies formal mentoring, its effectiveness, and many of its aspects. Many people may not have the opportunity to develop a mentoring relationship in an informal way. The organization implementing a formal mentoring program has an investment in all its members and must develop each mentee to the greatest extent possible. This is why formal mentoring programs are developed and operated within organizations. Formal mentoring is structured, is based on specific objectives, is often measured, and brings people together on the basis of compatibility. A formal relationship typically lasts for a specified amount of time and then formally ends (although sometimes a mentoring pair may decide to continue their mentoring relationship informally at that time).

One-to-one mentoring: This type of mentoring is the most common one whether on a formal or informal basis. In this traditional model, one mentor is matched with one mentee, and a program manager monitors the match's progress over the course of 6-12 months. Usually, the matches are deliberate; the mentoring program manager pairs two people together based on certain criteria, such as experience, skill sets, goals, personality, and a variety of other factors. Because it's a "familiar" model, people tend to be comfortable with it. This model allows for—and even encourages—the mentor and mentee to develop a personal relationship. The one-on-one nature of the relationship provides the mentee with critical individual support and attention.

Group mentoring: For this type of mentoring, there is one adult (the mentor) for a group of up to four young persons. Group mentoring allows mentees to interact with other participants from similar life experiences. Youth can explore feelings with other youth which normalizes the transition from one stage of their lives to another. Group mentoring also allows for the transmission of information and skill building on relevant topics such as preparing for a job interview, finding housing and improving personal communication, for the case of youth who are going to leave the care system.

Peer mentoring: Peer mentoring is a form of mentoring that usually takes place between a person who has lived through a specific experience (peer mentor) and a person who is new to that experience (the peer mentee). An example would be an experienced student being a peer mentor to a new student, the peer mentee, in a particular subject, or in a new school. Peer mentors are also used for health and lifestyle changes. Peer mentoring provides individuals who have suffered from a specific life experience the chance to learn from those who have recovered, or rehabilitated, following such an experience. Peer mentors provide education, recreation and support opportunities to individuals. The peer mentor may challenge the mentee with new ideas, and encourage the mentee to move beyond the things that are most comfortable. In the case of youth who have experienced the care system, mentors are peers who share their background, act as role models and normalize the experience of transitioning out of care.

E-mentoring: For this type of mentoring, the use of Internet is essential. The mentoring relationship is conducted via the Internet, as an independent program or added component of existing programs. These programs require technology in place that provides a safe and secure environment for communication exchanges, archives all messages and enables the tracking of communications between mentoring pairs. Online mentoring is occasionally compared unfavorably with face to face mentoring. The medium limits the ability to pick up on visual or social clues, makes immediate feedback difficult and can often be seen as impersonal. However, e-mentoring can make participants more willing to offer honest feedback. It is also being embraced more readily by those in business who want to become mentors, as e-mentoring is less time-consuming than face-to-face mentoring.

Reverse mentoring: Reverse mentoring flip-flops the typical mentoring relationship: Rather than an experienced older person taking an inexperienced colleague under his or her wing, the inexperienced (and younger) person acts as the mentor who provides insights into emerging new topics, technology and trends or, simply, a younger perspective. The relationship is often defined as a younger/older paradigm, but some research indicates peer-to-peer mentoring is also referred to as reverse mentoring. Usually, a mentor is expected to be more senior and more experienced than his or her mentee. However, reverse mentoring recognizes that there are skills gaps on both sides, and that each person can address their weaknesses with the help of the other's strengths.

In the case of the Now What mentoring program, due to the existing living circumstances of the youth staying in alternative care institutions, mentoring will be formal, face-to-face and one-to-one. The mentoring will be formal because comparatively for the specific target group the benefits will be more substantial in comparison to informal mentoring which usually takes place in the frame of a family or circle of relatives. Moreover, formal mentoring has established goals and measurable outcomes, also including elements which facilitate its implementation such as the training of mentors, their strategic pairing with mentees and the open access for all. On the other hand, one-to-one mentoring was promoted since it focuses on the individual development of the mentee, it is more personal and less demanding in terms of time dedicated and of scheduling meetings. Furthermore, for the group of care leavers, only one-to-one mentoring can offer the "personal" relationship that is the hallmark of a one-to-one mentoring relationship while minimizing any potential competition which might occur in the group mentoring. Finally, taking advantage of some elements of the peer mentoring, the Now What mentoring program will make efforts to attract and recruit mentors who have experienced the care system as children and/or adolescents so that they share their experiences for the care system to their mentees and act as role models for them.

Mentoring Programmes for Looked After Children and Care Leavers

National, International and European Experience

The field of mentoring has grown substantially over the past two decades generating different types of approaches or models, within a variety of settings and with service to increasingly high risk youth. Although innovation in and expansion of youth mentoring programs are positive trends, it is still imperative that structured mentoring programs are developed and implemented using consistent standards supported by research.

The Now What project has carried out extensive research in order to identify those mentoring programs for youth in care that could serve as good practice examples for the project's mentoring component. Data from initiatives and programs from the participating countries (Portugal, Romania, Albania and Greece) has been gathered and assessed, European projects focusing on mentoring youth in care have been evaluated, and international programs with similar goals and objectives have been sought, in order to transfer good practices in the field in the project, avoid potential barriers and learn from past, successful experiences.

Based on the research, the following programs have been selected as good practice examples, with elements that can be replicated for the Now What project:

1. The Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA). This program is a community mentoring program which matches a volunteer adult mentor to an at-risk child or adolescent to delay or reduce antisocial behaviors; improve academic success, attitudes and behaviors, peer and family relationships; strengthen self-concept; and provide social and cultural enrichment. It matches adult volunteer mentors with an at-risk child, with the expectation that a caring and supportive relationship will develop. Mentors are selected, screened, and matched by BBBSA staff, and staff monitors the relationship and maintains contact with the mentor, child, and parent/guardian throughout the matched relationship. Matches are made based on shared goals and interests of the child and adult volunteer. Mentors are expected to meet with the child at least 3-5 hours per week for a period of 12 months or longer. Ongoing case management by BBBSA staff provides supervision of the relationship, and can provide advice and guidance to the mentor, as well as support and encouragement. The program has been considered as one of the most successful ones in the field of mentoring youth in care and has demonstrated significant results in terms of the educational progress of the youth and their empowerment to build quality relationships.
2. LIFEGUIDES: The LIFEGUIDES program, run by the Foundation for Foster Children, offers 17-23-year olds transitioning out of the foster care system a mentor dedicated to providing social and emotional support. Mentors assist with general life skills training and facilitate the transitions from high school to vocational training, college, or a new job. Through the LIFEGUIDES program, youth who are in out-of-home foster care, extended foster care or those living independently and receiving Post-Secondary Educational Services and Support (PESS), are matched with a supportive community volunteer trained to help them transition to adulthood and independence. The mentor is expected to meet with the mentee at least 1 hour on a weekly basis at the minimum of 12 weeks, hoping to form long-term relationships that last into the mentees' adulthood. After the completion of the 12 weeks, mentors and mentees may choose to mutually continue meeting organically while still receiving support from the Foundation.

3. Mentoring projects under the Prince's Trust Leaving Care Initiative (U.K). All of the projects (around 10) initially adopted a one-to-one mentoring model for young people leaving care at least from age 16 to 21, and two of these projects encompassed peer mentoring in their design. Peer mentors were slightly older care leavers who would guide their young people through the complex process of leaving care and moving to independent living by drawing on their own experiences. At the stage when the projects were set up, mentors were expected to work with young people to produce action plans in the relationships, but this focus changed as the projects developed. Action plans were agreed goals that the young person wanted to work towards with the support of their mentor. The projects all consulted young people before they were matched with a mentor to find out their views and expectations of mentoring.
4. The "Referent" programme (Spain) offers to older youth transitioning out of foster care and at risk of social exclusion (aged 17-23) a volunteer who becomes a mentor for them and supports them in their path to emancipation. Mentors are people aged 30-60 who undertake to provide continuity to the relationship by being a part of their social network after six months of mentor training and support. The volunteers offer the young people multiple kinds of support (emotional, cultural knowledge, communication and social skills, support in studies, job seeking and housing). The project is run by Punt de Referència Association, a non-profit organisation founded in 1997. It has been working to promote full social integration, equal opportunities and improving the quality of life of older young transitioning out of foster care and at risk of social exclusion, mentoring them in their transition process.
5. The Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Project was established in 2014 when funding from Alberta Human Services was provided with the goal of increasing the number of children and youth in care with access to a mentor. The purpose of the project is to foster meaningful relationships between mentors and vulnerable youth. Three established mentoring organizations, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area, and the Red Deer Youth and Volunteer Centre Foundation, joined the project by developing and/ or growing mentoring programming for children and youth in care and participating in a program evaluation. The three sites combined report 339 new matches as of March 2016 made during this pilot, supporting children and youth in forming healthy and enduring mentoring relationships with caring adults while receiving intervention services, throughout transitions and post care.
6. Mentoring and Budding Scheme by the Rees Foundation. This project brings together in a mentoring relationship ex care leavers and youth who are going to leave care. Care leavers interested in becoming a Peer Buddy and or Mentor will be given training. Peer Buddies help reduce isolation and loneliness by developing social connections and Mentors help with CV preparation, looking for employment, education and training and or accompanying them to interviews, advocating with social workers, housing providers, attending midwife sessions, mental health services, providing particle life and social skills.

Policies and Procedures of the Mentoring Component

All programs function under a set of operating rules and principles. Policies and procedures represent the sum total of the decisions, requirements, and activities needed to run any mentoring program. All major program rules and guiding principles should be captured in the mentoring program's official policies and procedures and organized into a document that can be easily accessed by mentors, mentees and the staff related to the design and the implementation of the mentoring intervention. Policies and procedures for a mentoring program can be defined as follows:

Policies

Policies are high-level program statements that embrace the goals of the program and define what is acceptable to ensure program success, the safety of youth in the program, and effective and consistent program operations. Policies are crucial to the program achieving its goals and are mostly developed for program practices that are mandatory and non-negotiable in nature. For example, a policy might address the level of screening all mentors must complete.

Procedures

Procedures are statements that describe how a particular operational function is implemented and managed within the program. Procedures are brief statements that describe the step-by-step process necessary to implement policies and other agency practices. Procedures often include who should carry out tasks and when those tasks are to be done. Examples of mentoring program procedures include the process for conducting background checks, the steps staff follow when matching a mentor and mentee, and the sequential process for closing a match between the mentor and mentee.

Mentoring Policies

The basic policies involved in the Now What? mentoring process are as follows:

Recruitment Policy: The recruitment policy provides clear direction regarding the development, implementation, and review of a mentor recruitment plan. A recruitment plan is critical to obtaining mentors and instrumental to the success of the mentoring program. The recruitment policy indicates how the recruitment plan will be managed as well as the roles and responsibilities of staff and board in doing these activities. This policy serves to ensure that effective recruitment of mentors is continuous and well managed. It should be noted that this is different than your eligibility policy, which simply stipulates the qualifications for participation (for both mentors and mentees).

Inquiry Policy: This policy provides program staff with clear direction on how to handle inquiries from potential mentors and mentees and their care givers, including what initial information to provide them. The inquiry policy has two important functions: ensuring the mentoring program staff provides excellent customer service to potential program participants; and serving as an early screening tool for those participants who wish to continue in the process of becoming a mentor.

Eligibility Policy: An eligibility policy defines the minimum and preferred criteria necessary for a candidate to become a mentor or mentee. Having clear eligibility requirements and a comprehensive set of criteria that each candidate must meet for initial or continued participation helps the mentoring program operate more efficiently with greater consistency and stability. In developing this policy, the mentoring program should carefully define what qualifying criteria, training, and compliance are necessary for mentors and mentees that will ensure the safety of participants and the success of the program.

Screening Policy: A screening policy is a fundamental part of risk management, a cornerstone to the success of the mentoring program. A mentor screening policy establishes a non-negotiable requirement that all applicants must complete prior to being approved for participation in the program. The screening policy provides clear requirements for program staff for how they must screen potential mentors and youth participants.

Training Policy: A training policy defines what training is required for mentors and mentees. A training policy is important because it stipulates that training is mandatory, and a key ingredient of the success of the mentoring relationship and program overall. Without mandatory requirements for mentor and/or mentee training, programs are at a greater risk for having mentoring relationships terminate early or fail.

Matching Policy: A matching policy gives clear direction on how to create a match and what constitutes an acceptable match within the framework of the mentoring program. A matching policy should promote match longevity by specifying the match criteria best utilized to make a successful relationship. It also reduces program risk by clearly stating which types of matches are unacceptable.

Record keeping Policy: A record-keeping policy is important because it provides clear direction to the coordinator on how to document and store records of the screening and matching process and later, of the mentoring process itself. A record-keeping policy helps reduce program liability by ensuring that all information is kept confidential and is treated consistently, and it helps increase program effectiveness by providing a system for efficiently tracking applicants and monitoring matches.

Confidentiality Policy: A confidentiality policy clearly states what information must be kept confidential, who has access to confidential information, how this information will be used for the purposes of your program, how it will be kept confidential, and the limits of this confidentiality. State laws govern accessibility to confidential information, making a confidentiality policy an important part of risk management. This policy is important because it defines the circumstances in which information can be released. It is crucial that all those working with your organization are aware of this policy and strictly adhere to it in order to protect the privacy and rights of all those involved.

Closure Policy: A closure policy provides guidelines to mentors concerning what circumstances lead to ending a mentoring relationship and how to proceed when match closure is necessary. While ending a relationship can be difficult for both the mentor and mentee, it is a fact that happens in almost all mentoring relationships and it needs to be handled with care. A closure policy should also address the issue of future contact beyond the formal match duration.

Mentoring Procedures

Recruitment Procedure: Recruitment is an essential part of any mentoring program, but there are often challenges associated with recruiting mentors. A clearly written recruitment procedure, supported by a mentor job description and written recruitment plan, will provide direction and focus for all recruiting efforts. A recruitment procedure defines how the project goes about recruiting and includes the major activities and tools as well as the process for monitoring the results of effectiveness. Main accompanying tools for the recruitment procedure are the Mentor Job Description and a **Recruitment Plan** (see relevant **Annexes**)

Mentor Screening Procedure: The mentor screening procedure provides the step-by-step process that the program coordinator must follow to determine if a candidate meets the defined criteria for becoming a mentor. In developing this procedure, it is important to consider the mission of the organization coordinating the process, the liabilities and risks posed by not properly screening candidates, and the program's eligibility requirements. Although no screening procedure is completely effective in screening out inappropriate candidates, experience shows that a thorough mentor screening process can significantly minimize program risk. Main accompanying tools for the mentor screening procedure are Mentor's Application Form, Personal References, Mentor Interview, and Mentor Contact Sheet. (see relevant **Annexes**).

Training Procedure: A training procedure is important because it provides staff involved in the mentoring program with clear direction concerning the contents of training and how and when it is to be delivered to participants. Having a formal training outline and curriculum strengthens the program by better and more consistently preparing both mentors and mentees for the match relationship and the subsequent mentoring process. While this procedure will contain some general training expectations, a complete training curriculum and supporting training materials should also be developed and maintained. Finally, it is important to develop a training evaluation process (see relevant **Annex**), so that the training content, activities and methodologies are improved.

Matching Procedure: Creating appropriate matches is crucial both for the success of the individual match and for the overall success of the mentoring program. A matching procedure identifies the process of properly matching mentors and mentees. It should also provide guidelines concerning qualifying criteria and requirements that need to be met before the match is formalized. Individual written contracts should be created and signed by the respective mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian. The individual contracts should clearly and explicitly state what each is agreeing to do and the guidelines each must follow to participate in the program (see relevant **Annexes**).

Record keeping Procedure: The procedure includes the ways and the tools to be implemented during the mentoring process. Each session will be recorded and described by the mentor, using the Mentor's Session Report (see relevant **Annex**). A relevant reporting document will also be used for the supervision meetings between the mentor and his/ her supervisor (see relevant **Annex**). Finally, a separate tool which will list all one-to-one meetings and all communication between these meetings should be developed so that the development of the mentoring process is fully recorded and becomes easy to monitor and evaluate(see relevant **Annex**).

Closure Procedure: A closure procedure outlines the process that the program coordinator should follow for ending a match. The end of a relationship, for whatever reason, can be difficult, especially for the mentee, and special care should be given to make this a smooth transition for the youth. The closure procedure should outline potential circumstances for closure and list the steps needed to effectively close the match in each situation. In all cases, the program coordinator should have formal communication with the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian that the match is formally ending and the role of the program/agency is changing. Each party should be informed verbally and/or in writing that future contact among them is strictly at their own discretion and outside the scope and responsibility of the agency/program. (**Annex**)

Evaluation Procedure: Having a sound evaluation procedure in place is important for ensuring the mentoring program is on track in meeting its goals and mission. Establishing measurable criteria, employing a sound evaluation design, and undertaking objective data collection are key factors in determining the details of the evaluation procedure. (**Annex**)

Stages

Any successful mentoring relationship will move through specific stages. The time spent in each of these stages differs from relationship to relationship, but the progression is, in general terms, uniform. These stages are as follows:

Stage 1: Beginning the relationship

In this stage the mentor and the mentee become acquainted and informally clarify their common interests, shared values and future goals and dreams. Enough time should be dedicated in this first acquaintance, since it will provide the relationship with a good start. In this stage there may be lack of communication, or difficulty in communicating. Mentees may be reluctant to trust mentors, may attempt to manipulate them, or may put their best behavior for their mentor. Mentors, on the other hand, may want to “fix” everything or may allow their preconceptions define who they think their mentee should become. Both people should try to bridge each other’s age, cultural and lifestyle differences as well as finding things in common. At this stage the mentor should be consistent and reliable, should be nonjudgmental and available and should focus on the similarities in personal styles and in expected short- and long-term goals.

Stage 2: Building trust

The mentor and the mentee communicate initial expectations and agree upon some common procedures and expectations as a starting point. According to relevant literature, this stage is also called “the initiation stage”, when the mentor and the mentee set the parameters, discuss and set goals and decide on a plan within a time frame. This stage involves more mutual listening, sharing and confiding in one another. Values will be compared and personal concerns will be expressed. The mentee is more likely to feel confident to share feelings and ideas, and might start to rely on the mentor’s support and validation, possibly to the point of becoming over dependent. At this stage, the mentor should be patient and expect setbacks, should continue to be consistent and reliable and treat the mentee as capable, while he/she should be involved, and yet keep perspective.

Stage 3: Acceptance/ Achievement

At this stage, the mentor and the mentee begin to accomplish the actual purposes of mentoring. During this stage, which is often called “the cultivation stage”, the mentor provides guidance and support, while the mentee makes efforts to improve and develop skills and knowledge. Even though it is likely that at this stage the mentee might start testing the relationship and the boundaries in the relationship, gradually needs become fulfilled, objectives are met and intrinsic growth takes place. The mentor should continue treating the mentee as capable and reaffirm his/her intention to remain in the relationship and make it grow.

Stage 4: Closure

At this stage the mentee will start feeling less dependent on the mentor and might find other sources of support. The final stage of the mentoring relationship is crucial because the mentor and the mentee close their mentoring association and redefine their relationship. The mentee should feel a sense of accomplishment, knowing that he/she is headed in the right direction towards achieving their goals. Because some youth might feel a sense of abandonment at the closure of the relationship, it is important to know that the relationship is changing not because it was unsuccessful but because they have succeeded and it is time for them to pursue goals in a different way. Follow-up should be conducted at this stage.

Recruiting, Training and Matching Mentors

Guiding Principles for effective mentor recruitment

Recruiting is the process by which people to join or participate in a program are found. Recruiting for a program or organization brings people together who share a common goal. For a mentoring program, this means gathering people together who want to make a difference in a young person's life.

A mentoring program cannot do its good work without enough mentors, so there is an obvious need in getting adequate numbers to reach the matches each program is obligated to make. But good recruitment goes beyond numbers. Targeted recruitment—recruitment that is focused on particular attributes—guarantees not only that the program will achieve its benchmarks, but that the types of individuals recruited will also be capable of performing the task. And while many programs use a formal screening process to weed out unsuitable volunteers or applicants, they can also save staff time and program resources by being intentional about who gets recruited in the first place.

What makes a successful mentor recruitment effort is not just the specific strategies. It is also the attitudes, personalities, and diligence behind the effort. While planning and strategies are important, good mentoring recruitment is always in the *doing*, not just the planning. Recruiting mentors is a hands-on, face-to-face endeavor. It's about making personal connections. Because of this, even the best plans can get derailed if program staff members and mentors are not prepared, give up easily, or don't allow adequate time or resources to do the work. Conversely, even an average plan can find great success if the people leading the charge are skilled, motivated, and working together.

Effective mentors' recruitment starts with a good planning phase. Some guiding principles for this stage of the recruitment are:

- Recruitment is an on-going process. Mentors can be found through mainstream activities (such as notices, dissemination activities, etc) but recruitment can happen anytime, anywhere. Mentoring coordinators should be ready to provide information on the mentoring program at any context, so as to attract potential mentors, even when the desired numbers have been reached.
- Everyone (staff and board members, volunteers, community partners) has a role to play. While most recruitment efforts in mentoring programs fall on the shoulders of the mentoring program directors and recruitment coordinators, almost every person related to the program has a role to play in making recruitment effective. Current mentors, board staff, volunteers, educational personnel are among the people who could help attract and recruit mentors effectively.
- Be realistic. One of the biggest mistakes mentoring programs make is overestimating the recruitment success they will have. In reality, many people informed to participate as mentors will not have the time, personality, values, and commitment to serve as a mentor in the program. So goals have to be kept modest and realistic to start with.
- Be creative and flexible. Creativity comes in developing strategies that work for the program's unique circumstances, as far as recruitment is concerned. Recruitment opportunities within other program activities, such as fundraising or dissemination events are numerous. The list of creative, innovative ideas for recruiting mentors is endless, but they are always homegrown and a custom fit to each mentoring program. On the other hand, flexibility is also necessary. Not every idea for recruiting mentors will work. It is possible to shift gears and try new things without scrapping the recruitment plan entirely. When recruitment is tough, the solution is to stay positive, brainstorm some creative new ideas, and mix things up as needed.

- Properly fund and staff recruitment tasks. Recruitment of mentors is labor-intensive. It involves developing print materials, making extensive personal contacts, working out of the office, and participating in different events. But recruitment can be a whole lot easier if it is made make sure that those responsible have sufficient resources for the tasks.
- Preparing for mentor recruitment involves the development of a specific recruitment plan which includes elements such as the desirable profile of the mentor, definition of potential mentors' qualifications and personality traits, the means to attract potential mentors, the information provided to them in order to attract them and activate their interest, and the timeline of recruitment activities. The plan should be clear and flexible and should take into account potential changes and amendments.

In a more practical sense, some principles that should be kept in mind for effective recruitment are as follows:

- The specific profile of the potential mentor should be determined. Specific demographic characteristics, personality traits and qualities and participation in certain (job related, religious, recreation, etc) groups are some of the basic categories to describe the future mentor of a specific program. The chart below shows some common *examples*, which could be used for those mentors participating in the NOW WHAT project:

Personal Qualities	Demographics	Groups
Honest	Ages 30–45	University students
Dependable	Men/Women	Doctors
Well-educated	Specific race/ethnicity	Lawyers
Caring	Living on the west side of town	Social workers
Empathetic	College graduate	Local artists and musicians
Professional	Owns vehicle	Psychologists
Religious		Care professionals
Resilient		Teachers
Outgoing		

Moreover, the characteristics of the young people who will participate in the mentoring process as mentees will guide the efforts on specifying skills and characteristics of a potential mentor for the group. Some questions to be answered in this sense are: What mentor “resources” (connections, skills, and beliefs) would help them? What personalities would work best with them? Who in your community could broaden their horizons or meet a specific need? What type of personal background would best apply to those working with your mentees? Finally, issues such as the place where the mentoring activities will take place and the way the mentoring services will be delivered have to be taken into account when designing the profile of the potential mentor for the program.

- A formal job description for mentors should be developed. Developing a job description for mentors solidifies the characteristics and qualifications the program is looking for and provides a useful tool in the recruitment process. There is no “right” way to format a job description, but it should include at least the following categories of information: a statement of purpose, duties and responsibilities, time commitments, qualifications and instructions on how to apply. The job description for the mentors in the Now What project is in **Annex...**
- Broad and targeted information. Potential mentors can be found anywhere. It is important to decide the type, the place and the timing of information provided to potential mentors so that they are sensitized and activated to apply and become mentors. For this purpose printed and electronic media could be used alternatively, while information on the forthcoming recruitment of mentors should be dissemination well in advance (at least two months before the start of the application period).
- Motivation. In order to attract mentors, and more precisely, those mentors who will be fit for the specific group of mentees, some type of motivation should be provided to them. In some cases, motivation is financial, but in other cases, such as the Now What project, motivation can be some form of a *value*: for example, helping people of the same (ethnic, age, religious, etc) group; passing knowledge from one generation to the following; enhancing career options or exploring a new vocational direction; personal enhancement. Motivation should be included in the information provided to attract potential mentors.

- Potential barriers and responses. There are many reasons why individuals may be reluctant to mentor; therefore the recruitment strategies and activities will need to address these. As with the motivations, solutions and responses to these barriers might just consist of broad concepts, language for use in media campaigns, and general points of emphasis. Potential barriers could be the fear that mentoring will be time consuming, or that mentoring is too emotionally involving. These barriers have to be addressed well beforehand so that potential mentors feel at ease to apply and participate.

Moreover, specific tips from best practices in the field have been recorded for the recruitment of mentors for young people who are about to leave care, or who have experiences from the care system. These are addressed to organisations and programs which consider implementing mentoring as an empowerment tool and they can be summarized as follows:

- Avoid negative or stereotypical labelling, when addressing potential mentors. Emphasize that these young people (children and youth in care) are not bad; many have become involved in the system of care because of environmental and social forces outside of their control. Potential volunteers may be 'scared off' by a stereotypical description of a youth receiving such services as "at-risk" or "system involved."
- Emphasize the assets of youth who are in the child welfare/ protection system, especially their social competence, autonomy, and resiliency in the face of challenges. Explain that mentoring can help youth to build on these strengths with the support of trained mentors.
- Consider recruiting mentors with a similar personal background as the youth they will be serving (or perhaps some experience in the helping professions. e.g. teachers, social workers, health workers, police, etc.). Normalizing the youth's experience is critical, so mentors can benefit greatly from personal experience.
- Strive for inclusion in the recruitment plan with proactive outreach and recruitment efforts that deliberately focus on increasing diversity.

Finally, especially for a mentoring program targeting youth in care, or youth who have left care, the mentor screening process is of crucial importance. The screening process has to include the following elements:

- clear acceptance criteria, as well as criteria for disqualifying mentor applicants
- a formal application that includes questions designed to help assess their safety and suitability for mentoring youth in the target population
- an interview which includes questions designed to assess suitability for mentoring youth in care. The intention of the interview is to gather relevant and meaningful information to determine whether to accept the applicant and then, to make the most appropriate match. The characteristics that need to be searched for during the interview with a potential mentor could be motivation, persistence, understanding, stability, consistency, being child-centred, and the ability to develop appropriately close and healthy relationships.
- reference check interviews conducted with adults who know an applicant, ideally both personally and professionally, that include questions to help assess suitability for mentoring the target population. The information obtained from references is critical to developing a full picture of the applicant. The information can either confirm and elaborate on, or dispute the information obtained through the mentor interview. In order to gather as much relevant and meaningful information as possible, questions should be geared to the type of involvement the referee has had in the applicant's life. Questions should be designed to gather important information that will help the interviewer decide if the applicant will be able to follow through on the commitment, be persistent, be comfortable with direction, understand boundaries and engage in a safe, healthy way with a vulnerable youth.
- criminal background check that address things such as: charges/convictions which could potentially affect a young person's safety such as assault or domestic violence, impaired charges, drug charges, weapons charges; charges/convictions which would indicate poor decision-making: theft, mischief, vandalism, etc.

On the other hand, a screening process for the potential mentees can prove to be extremely helpful in the following mentoring process, since it has an impact on the matching process and the training which mentors should receive. Having a face-to-face interview with potential mentees provides mentoring program staff with a tool to allow them to gather appropriate information to determine eligibility, to determine the type of mentoring from which the youth will benefit the most and to make a mentoring match that will be connected and healthy. In addition, it allows for the development of positive rapport with guard-

ians or the child welfare staff in order to facilitate successful match support, for orientation to the program and to mentoring. It additionally allows for solid engagement of the youth in order to clearly understand interest in participation. Assessing and screening youth also assists in gathering information necessary to determine the child's needs and strengths to:

1) match them to an appropriate mentor; and

2) match them to the type of mentoring most likely to address the gap between their needs and strengths, since not every child will benefit from every program.

As for the Now What project, each national team, consisting of an education institution and a care institution, will be responsible for attracting, recruiting and selecting the mentors who will participate in the project. The basic elements of the recruitment policy to be implemented by each national team of project partners are as follows:

- **Information and dissemination:** Dissemination of information on the project will be published in printed and electronic format so that large numbers of potential mentors are reached. Flyers, leaflets, newsletters, mails, telephone calls, uploading information in relevant platforms and sites are the basic tools to attract mentors and activate them to participate. The information disseminated should be brief and well targeted including at least the following data: identity of the project, brief information on the practicalities of the mentoring program (duration, place and frequency of meetings, mentor's duties and responsibilities, characteristics of the target group of young care leavers, mentor's job description), brief profile of the ideal mentor and a motivation statement. The target groups which will be approached through the dissemination process in order to be activated and become mentors for the participating youth in care will be ex-care leavers with a related profile, care professionals such as social workers, youth workers, social pedagogues, psychologists and carers and volunteers with a related profile.
- **Setting up of the "Mentoring Committee":** The mentoring committee will be the body to receive and evaluate all applications, check the relevant documents provided by mentors, and carry out the interviews with the potential mentors. The committee will be consisted of at least three professionals: a social scientist from the care institution, an education professional from the education institution, and a secretary (care or educational personnel). The final decision on the mentors and the mentees to participate will be made by the mentoring committee who will review all applications and decide on the participating mentors and their runner-ups.
- **Development of acceptance and rejection criteria:** A list of criteria will be developed to be applied to each applicant, so that the final acceptance or rejection decision is made by the mentoring committee.
- **Application process:** A brief and inclusive application form will be developed (**see Annex ...**) to be filled in by potential mentors. This application form, apart from the demographic, educational and professional information, will also include questions on the personality of the mentor, so as to attract people with certain traits and characteristics. In quantitative terms, and taking into account that the partnership needs 150 mentors in total for the 150 participating youth/ mentees, the required number of applications will be at least double (300 applications). This will guarantee that enough mentors will be attracted to cater for the different profiles of the mentees, and that the matching of mentors with their mentees will be facilitated.
- **Reference check:** Each applicant mentor will have to provide the names and contact details of three people from his professional and social circle, as references. These people will be contacted by telephone or, whenever possible, in person, to provide their views on the applicant, and verify their integrity as potential mentors.
- **Criminal background check:** Each potential mentors will be asked to provide the relevant official documents which verify that there have been no charges/convictions which could potentially affect a young person's safety such as assault or domestic violence, impaired charges, drug charges, weapons charges; charges/convictions which would indicate poor decision-making: theft, mischief, or vandalism. These documents will be attached in the application form submitted by mentors.
- **Interview:** All potential mentors who have submitted their application will participate in a screening interview. Two people from the Mentoring Committee will interview these mentors: one professional from the care institution and one professional from the education institution per participating country. Interviewers will have a set of questions to be answered during the interview. These questions will mainly focus on issues which are not formally proved by the relevant mentor's documents (degrees, experience, letters of reference, background check) and will investigate personal characteristics such as stability, motivation, persistence, ability to form healthy relationships, etc. (**see Annex ...**). The duration of the interview will be between 20 and 30 minutes.
- **Decisions:** Based on the aforementioned documents and procedures, the Mentoring Committee will conclude on the mentors who will participate in the mentoring process of the Now What project. The Committee will develop a list of the people which have been accepted to become mentors and a list of the runner ups, for potential replacements.

Basic principles for mentors' training

A key aspect of successful mentoring programs is the training provided to both mentors and mentees about the relationship upon which they are about to embark. Training can take two forms: pre-match and ongoing. Pre-match training can help give mentors and mentees an orientation to the organization and what to expect once a match is made. Ongoing training support can educate mentors on how to address difficulties as they arise in the mentor relationship, ideas for activities and information on the organization's policies and procedures. Issues covered by the ongoing training can also be addressed during the supervising meetings as well.

Most of the literature around training within mentoring programs focuses on training for mentors as opposed to mentees. However, mentees can also benefit from training, including both pre-match and ongoing training. Youth should receive an orientation to the mentoring process as well as the supports that are available to them. Mentees bring expectations to the mentoring relationship. Programs can help shape these expectations by providing pre-match training on the role of a mentor. Additionally, mentees should be made aware of the limitations and constraints of the mentoring role, as well as of their shared responsibility for maintaining the relationship by honoring mentor meetings and communicating with their mentor. The preparation of the mentees on the role of the mentor and the mentoring relationship can also happen during the first meetings with their mentors, when he/she explains the nature of the relationship and presents their roles.

Because the relationship between a mentor and young person might seem to be a "natural" connection, mentoring programs sometimes overlook the importance of training. But like anyone stepping into a new role, mentors are more likely to succeed if they participate in useful training sessions that prepare them for what lies ahead. To begin developing their training plans, mentoring programs can ask themselves several key questions:

- What information do mentors need to acquire?
- What skills training do they need?
- How much training should be required? Should there be optional trainings, as well?
- When should the trainings take place? Before the mentor and youth first meet? Early in their relationship? Ongoing throughout their mentoring experience?

While the details of the training will naturally vary depending upon the particular program, the overall goals are generally consistent across programs. Training should:

- Help participants understand the scope and limits of their role as mentors
- Help them develop the skills and attitudes they need to perform well in their role
- Introduce them to the concept of positive youth development
- Provide information about the strengths and vulnerabilities of the children or youth who are in the program
- Provide information about program requirements and supports for mentors
- Answer questions they may have about the mentoring experience
- Build their confidence as they prepare to start working with their mentee

Regarding the content of mentors' training, it should be noted that training for mentors working with children in care, or who have left care, should be more comprehensive than traditional mentoring programs. This should include an initial orientation to the program, which introduces mentors to the program's policies and procedures; special emphasis should be given to the supports available to mentoring pairs, as well as closure procedures in the case of an unsuccessful match. Mentors should also receive an orientation to the national child care system. Moreover, where possible, mentors should be provided with information on their mentee's case history to better understand their specific experiences as well as on the experiences of youth in care so as to understand the emotional, physical, and developmental needs that are unique to youth in care. Education should also be provided on how trauma can affect different forms of development, on the boundaries of the mentoring relationship, how to set limits with youth, and how to respond to inappropriate requests. Finally, mentors training should also include intercultural issues, as many mentors will find themselves in matches with children of a different background as well as issues on warning signs of emotional or behavioral problems and the appropriate procedures should they notice these signs, or encounter any other crisis situation.

In particular, when designing training for mentors of young people who are leaving care, some extra points should be added. Training for mentors working with youth receiving child protection services, particularly those in or leaving care, should be more comprehensive than traditional mentoring programs. The training to be delivered to mentors should include the following elements and content:

- An orientation to governing legislation for the national Child Welfare/ Child Protection Services and its mandates and policies; how to navigate the care system; how the mentoring agency works in relation to this system.
- A clear outline of the role of a mentor for these young people especially in relation to the mentee, his/her biological family and the mentoring program coordinator.
- The unique needs of youth in care and how mentoring can become a vital part of a youth's support network.
- The issues faced by youth who are receiving child protection services. This training will assist mentors in setting realistic expectations for the mentoring relationship, particularly regarding reciprocity in the early stages of the relationship.
- Matters of confidentiality. Mentors should be required to sign a confidentiality agreement. Rules of confidentiality should protect youth from involuntary disclosure about their sexual and/or gender identity, for example.
- Persistence. Mentors should be trained to persist and work through the mentees' initial resistance to trusting adults and forming a mentoring relationship. Mentors should be guided to interpret lack of follow through or communication by the youth as a need for more support.
- Strategies for building a relationship with youth. Mentors must be able to connect with and help transform the youth they are working with. Emphasis should be given to concepts such as clear expression, respect, being non-judgmental, positivity and active listening.
- Incorporation of an Advocacy and Teaching Role. The traditional role mentors play may not be sufficient for mentoring youth in/leaving care. An effective approach when working with higher-risk populations of youth is for the mentor to also serve as an advocate, building a community of support for the youth. Mentors should be taught how to help youth access appropriate resources and programs, how to navigate social service systems (for example, welfare agencies, juvenile justice, foster care) and how to access other environmental resources that may be crucial to bolstering mentors' efforts and reinforcing youth gains. Mentors should be trained on the appropriate boundaries and strategies of operationalizing this new role.
- Trauma. Given that many youth in care have histories of abuse or neglect, it is recommended that mentors be trained in trauma informed care; they must understand the behavioural manifestations of trauma; how that manifests itself in a relationship with an adult the youth doesn't know and may not trust, and learn how to effectively minimize its effects without causing additional trauma.
- Diversity and cultural responsiveness should be a common theme throughout mentors' training. It is not a unit of training; rather it should be a constant theme through the process. Mentoring relationships should support development in a way that reflects both individual and cultural identity, and value diversity.
- Supplement in-person presentations with readings from the many online and print materials available on youth issues. Mentors should be provided with a comprehensive training manual that covers all information provided during training as well as information on community resources.
- Role-plays should be included as part of training. These hypothetical situations give perspective mentors an opportunity to explore various ways of responding to their mentees and test their communication skills.

Some additional issues which need to be included in the mentors' training are conflict resolution, addictions and mental health issues, online safety, cross cultural communication, suicide prevention and adolescent brain development.

The Now What project, after researching the available data on mentoring youth in care, has concluded on the following characteristics regarding the mentor training program (titled "Train-the-Mentor" Seminar):

- *Duration:* The seminar will last for six (6) hours.
- *Participants:* Ten (10) mentors will participate in each seminar. These mentors will be either professionals already working in the care institutions where youth resides, or they will be volunteers already working in the field, having a clear idea and experience on the situation of children in care and care leavers.

- *Aims and objectives:* Each seminar will aim to help care professionals and volunteers understand the scope and limits of their role as mentors, to help mentors develop the skills and attitudes they need to perform effectively in their role, to provide them with information about program policies and requirements, and to provide them with information about the particular needs of the target group, i.e. the care leavers.
- *Trainer:* An experienced trainer of adults will undertake the role of the trainer of mentors. This professional should have relevant experience on the subject (mentoring youth), on the target group (youth in care) and on the project aims, objectives and outputs. The mentoring committee will take the decision on the person(s) who will train the groups of mentors, per national context.
- *Content:* The thematic areas covered during the Train-the-Mentors Seminars are described as follows:
 - Mission, goals and objectives of the program
 - The Rights of the Child
 - Participation of Children – The Lundy Model of Participation
 - Life and Survival After Care
 - The Care Leaving Plan
 - The Mentoring Methodology: Policies and Procedures
 - The Mentoring Contract
 - Confidentiality Policy

The thematic areas have been chosen to address the educational and the professional background of the mentors participating in the training. Therefore, since mentors will be professionals or volunteers already working in the field, information on the situation, the needs and the problems of children and youth in care will not be included in the training. On the other hand, more practical issues, such as the Mentoring Contract and the Confidentiality Policy, will be part of the training, so that participants have a very clear picture of their role, their obligations and their limitations.

- *Tools:* Record keeping tools such as the Participants List supporting the training sessions will be provided to the trainer and shall be kept by the Mentoring Committee. (**Annex.....**). Moreover, provisions will be made to provide mentors with the relevant educational materials in printed or electronic form. These materials include the policies and procedures which will be applied in the mentoring process, the presentation of the Care Leaving Plan and tools which the mentors will have to use so as to record meetings and communication with their mentees.

Principles for successful matching between mentors and mentees

Within any mentoring program, successfully matching and pairing mentors and mentees is critical. It is one of the crucial factors of success of any mentoring program and therefore it should be carefully designed and executed. There are specific steps to be taken and principles to be considered in order to ensure that the matching is successful and that both mentors and mentees are satisfied with their pair. The basic steps and principles are as follows:

- Identification of the purpose of the program. There must be clearly defined objectives and goals for the mentoring program. Without clear purpose, organizations often make assumptions in the matching process, guessing what criteria make sense to match on, as opposed to mapping it to the organizational goals for the program. This can lead to poor matches, dissatisfied participants, low engagement, and ultimately, a waste of time for everyone involved. Understanding the purpose of the program will help establish criteria and determine the type of matching to be used. It will also help formulate the key metrics to be collected in order to know if the program is successful. For example, in regards to the Now What project, the purpose has been clearly defined and it relates to the acquisition of those life skills by young care leavers which are vital for an independent and healthy adult life, away from the care system. Preparing youth to leave care is the ultimate purpose of the mentoring process.
- Determination of the type of matching. Having the program's overall purpose in mind, the next step is to choose what type of matching will be implemented in the program. Today, there are four popular types of matching to consider:
 - a. Self- matching: It enables mentees to find their own mentors. This type of matching gives mentees a say in the process, allowing them to select a particular mentor or submit their top choices. This type of matching is useful for more generalized mentoring and can lead to better satisfaction of participants since they have more of a say in who they get matched with. Statistics show that mentees who pick their own mentor tend to have more successful outcomes.

b. Administration Matching. It empowers program coordinators to create matches on behalf of the participants and is common where an organization or partnership has identified the specific participants and matches it wants in the program.

c. Bulk matching. It permits program coordinators to match a large pool of program participants at the same time. It is a great time saver when the participant pool becomes larger than 200+, making it difficult for spreadsheets and personnel to manage. This reduces administration burden and time commitment. It is often used for a large career mentoring program.

d. Combined Matching. It is a combination of the previously mentioned matching types when one type alone is not diverse enough to fit the needs of a program. In the case of the Now What project this type of matching is proposed, in the sense that on the one hand, mentees will have the opportunity to express their views on the mentors they wish to have while, on the other hand, administration matching will facilitate the process, providing easier coordination and monitoring.

- Creation and development of profiles and criteria. There is no one universal set of matching criteria that will generate ideal pairs for any program. With mentoring, one size doesn't fit all, and each objective will warrant a unique set of criteria. Mentoring participants will bring different competencies, skills, and organizational knowledge to the program. It is important to match mentors and mentees on the right skill traits. To do this, mentors and mentees fill out profile information (**see Annex: Mentor/ Mentee Interest Survey**). Based on the objectives of the program, these profiles, which can be included in the application stage, will contain elements to help create rich matches, such as mentee developmental goals, mentor competencies, function, job and life experiences, topical interests, and educational background. It is also important, participants, especially mentees, to establish what preferences are vital to them in a match. It might be personal background, or skillsets. Robust profiles need to encompass a good range of information in order to make more informed matches, while on the other hand should not be too long. Limiting questions to less than 20 is always a good tip to remember, since matching on too many criteria is at best time-consuming and at worst unfeasible.
- Instructions to mentors and mentees. Both mentors and mentees should be well informed on the mentoring process they are about to embark. This information will clarify steps, obligations, roles, practical issues and goals so that both parties are aware of the benefits they can experience through it. This information can be very useful during the matching process, since both mentors and mentees will have the chance to clarify what they want or expect from their pair and decide accordingly.
- Identification of challenges. During the matching process there is a potential for a few flaws and challenges. They need to be identified during the planning process as well as the best ways these challenges are addressed so as to avoid numerous problems when the mentoring relationship starts running.

Regarding the Now What project, the matching process will be based on the following elements:

- Development of those variables to be considered so that the best matches are achieved. Such variables are:
 - matching mentors with care leavers who have similar life stories
 - matching mentors with care leavers who have similar nationalities (especially in the case of unaccompanied minors)

Other variables and characteristics to be taken into account when making the matches are interests; proximity; availability; age; gender; race; ethnicity; personality; expressed preferences of mentor and mentee; goals; strengths; previous experiences. Although research suggests that matching based on race, ethnicity and socioeconomic factors should be considered, the mentor's qualities and behaviors are the most significant because the mentor has the greatest responsibility for the success of the match.

- Creation of mentor/ mentees profiles asking for specific information upon which the matching will be based. Both mentors and mentees will fill in a profile which contains information, personal characteristics and preferences (**see relevant Annex**). The personality, the traits, the aspirations and the goals of each mentor and each mentee will be reflected in their profiles so that the matching is successful.
- The Mentoring Committee will be responsible for the matching of mentors and their mentees. By using the information provided by the applications and the surveys from both mentors and mentees, the Committee will conclude to the matches. A runner up list of mentors will also be developed so that, in case of problems or barriers in the matching, mentors are replaced.

Providing Supervision and Support

Objectives, benefits and challenges associated with supervising the mentoring process

Because the standard of care is defined by the activity, monitoring should be appropriate to the level of activity involved. Generally, group mentoring requires less monitoring and supervision from a mentoring program coordinator (or Committee) than a one-to-one mentoring relationship does. Monitoring and supporting the match assists to motivate and guide the relationship and is critical to the success of the relationship. As mentoring relationships develop over time, support from program staff can help the mentor adjust to changing developmental needs of the mentee. Furthermore, consistent and frequent monitoring and support helps the match navigate any challenges that arise. Finally, monitoring and support of mentoring relationships is critical for ensuring child safety.

Supervision has positive effects on the mentor and as a consequence to the mentoring relationship and the mentee. Some of the positive effects on the mentor, the mentee and the overall mentoring relationship are that:

- It is critical (particularly early in the match) to support the building and sustainability of the relationship
- It enables program staff and the program coordinator to monitor and deal with any safety issues
- It provides feedback from both mentors and mentees about the development, activities and progress of the relationship
- It prevents personal burn-out
- It helps mentors focus on their blind-spot(s)
- It helps mentors discover their own pattern of behavior
- It contributes to the development of skills as a mentor
- It is a quality control process
- It can provide a different angle on an issue
- It increases the capacity of mentors and mentees to deal with and manage conflicts, advice and assistance from program staff, where necessary.

The people who will be responsible for the monitoring, the supervision and the support of the mentoring process are the mentoring program coordinator and the Mentoring Committee. It is important for the mentoring coordinator and the Committee to check on progress, encourage the participants, and make sure the relationship is working. The coordinator is an impeller, liaison, and the administration's representative. The coordinator and the Committee monitor the relationship and help the parties to develop, meet one-on-one with the participants, and publish information to provide mentoring tips, program updates, and spotlights on particular participants or occurrences. It is important that the coordinator and the Committee have a relationship with all the mentees and mentors to head off problems before they become severe. These relationships are not to betray confidences, but to point out problems. Identification of any serious issue needs the coordinator, the Committee, the mentor, and the mentee to be involved in addressing the issue, always in a confidential manner.

Basic elements for the supervision and support (e.g. profile of the supervisor, duration and frequency of the supervising meetings, roles of professionals involved, etc)

The main reasons for providing mentoring supervision are firstly to provide on-going support for mentors - a place to discuss and share their mentoring experiences and as a means to deepen their learning and development as a mentor. Secondly regularly supervision is a great way to ensure consistent engagement with mentors and mentoring activities. Last but not least supervision can ensure that the practice of mentoring remains rooted in the program's purpose and needs.

Supervision and support in mentoring programs is a crucial element which has multiple effects on the overall mentoring process, in regards to its quality and its duration. Certain challenges of how to support mentors at varying stages of development in order to facilitate their ethical practice and ongoing progression as mentors exist. An ongoing supervision has been recognized as very important by all people involved. In summary, mentor supervision involves the following tasks:

- To explore techniques and help with problems
- To provide the opportunity to reflect on own practice
- To support a mentor who feels out of their depth
- To support with ethical issues
- To be available for the mentor as an emotional safety valve
- To ensure the mentor and young person are meeting regularly
- To monitor the quality of the mentor–young person relationship and assess whether it is making progress toward its goals
- To help address problems that might arise between the pair
- To gain feedback regarding how program staff/ coordinator can better support the match.

Some of the most common instances when supervision has to be provided are the following:

- Meetings are not taking place regularly as agreed
- The mentor reports that the young person does not return calls
- The mentor is unsure of appropriate activities to undertake with the young person
- The young person implies that they do not enjoy the activities they are doing with their mentor
- The young person implies that they are not provided with the opportunity to make any decisions
- The mentor is concerned that the young person does not talk during their meetings
- The mentor feels overwhelmed by the young person's problems
- The mentor feels frustrated by a perceived lack of impact on the young person
- The mentor is breaking program ground rules or the Code of Conduct
- The mentor and/or the young person are losing interest in the relationship
- The mentor is overly involved with the young person's family.

The methods to be implemented in order to gather information on the mentoring process so as to facilitate the monitoring and the supervision of the process can be summarized as follows:

- scheduled meetings with mentors and mentees
- methods for collecting on-going feedback (suggestion boxes, mentor supervision sessions)
- written records e.g. meeting logs, action plans which track the mentee's journey (provided this doesn't breach confidentiality)

- input from other stakeholders
- analysis of processes for example, re-matching, early intervention for addressing issues within relationships
- early termination of mentoring relationships
- evidence from support and or supervision sessions with mentors

Due to the negative consequences of mentoring relationships ending prematurely, it is important that mentoring programs for youth in care have a solid monitoring and support structure to assist their mentoring pairs. In different mentoring programs for youth in care, support had some of the following characteristics:

- **Budget:** In some cases, budget was provided to both mentors and mentees (for example to cover transportation and food costs)
- **Group mentoring:** Groups consisted of both mentors and mentees can be established to meet and discuss issues on the mentoring process and the mentoring relationship. Such groups also provide an opportunity for program staff/ coordinator to observe how pairs interact with others, as well as how mentors and mentees relate individually.
- **Mentor peer support groups:** These groups provide a common venue where mentors share difficulties and solve problems with the assistance of program staff/ coordinator
- **Reasonable case loads:** Mentors should not undertake more cases than the ones they can handle, since it will have a negative effect on the quality of the mentoring relationship
- **Communication:** A common monitoring and support mechanism is the communication between the program coordinator with the mentors and the mentees (phone calls, in person meetings, and mentor activity logs). The communication should be frequent in the early stages of the match in case there are any concerns. Moreover, mentors and mentees should be provided with the program coordinator's contact information and office hours, a 24-hour support number to call should issues arise, and crisis hotline numbers.
- **Information resources:** Mentors should have full and easy access to information on resources at a local or national level. Some mentoring programs have suggested that a resource coordinator or directory would be helpful to the mentoring relationship.
- **Plan:** A clear plan for those cases when the young person in care is moved to another care structure/ institution is another means to support the mentoring relationship. Such plan will determine how pairs will reach one another in the event of a move. Programs, based on this plan, should also encourage pairs to be creative and flexible in connecting with one another, such as calling or texting when they are unable to meet in person.

As far as the frequency and the duration of supervision sessions, they are formally contracted and in general, take between 1.0 and 1.5 hours each. The minimum number of sessions taken is 4 (four) and these are spaced depending on the requirements of the Supervision/Mentoring process. The supervisor should have a set of questions to address to the mentors and the mentees, so as to have a clear picture on the development of their mentoring relationship. Some of the questions to facilitate supervision and monitoring are as follows:

- Are the short and longer term objectives being met? This includes individual mentees and those of the programme
- Are things going as expected?
- Are the administrative processes working? Does anything need changed?
- Are the processes and systems useful, relevant and easy to understand by all?
- Are the mentors and mentees relationships working well? Do we know? How do we know?
- Are the challenges and issues raised by mentors and mentees being dealt with in time and effectively?
- Have any further training needs identified? If so what steps have been taken to meet those needs?
- What is working well? What is working less well? What needs to be done differently now and in the future?
- Are all relevant stakeholders being kept up to date with the progress of the project?

- How is the evidence recorded?
- What other sources of evidence can we use to find out how well things are going?
- How is the data analysed and evaluated?
- How do we make sense of the findings?
- How can the findings be used to improve things next time?
- Is there a reliable system for managing and storing confidential documentation?

Based on the answers provided, the supervisor will evaluate the mentoring process and proceed to changes and amendments, if necessary. Similarly, the mentoring supervisor or Committee should arrange meetings with mentees periodically, in order to get their feedback on the mentoring process. During these supervising meetings, the opinion and the feelings of mentees regarding the process will be sought, leaving space for each mentee to express their views on the process, the mentor and the overall organization of the mentoring. Based on the answers of both mentors and mentees, the supervisor and the Committee will take relevant actions which can vary from changing the frequency of meetings to changing the pairs. The decisions will have to be announced to both mentors and mentees, as well as the course of action to be followed.

Mentors' Resources and Services

Tools and Resources for the mentor

See relevant Annexes (e.g. Mentor Job Description, Mentor's Profile, Mentoring Confidentiality Policy, Closure Protocol, Child Protection Policy, etc)

Record keeping documents

See relevant Annexes (e.g. Mentor Contact Sheet, Mentor/ Mentee Contracts, Mentor/ Mentee Interest Survey, Evaluation Sheet for Mentors' Training, Mentor's Session Report, etc)

Dos and don'ts for the mentor

Mentors should:

- **Communicate effectively:** They should sure to communicate and discuss their expectations with the youth in advance. Putting expectations on the table from the outset ensures that there is little room for misunderstandings.
- **Lead by example:** As mentors, they should aim to set a good example for their mentees in all activities.
- **Inspire confidence:** By providing constructive feedback in a timely manner, mentors can help youth in care acquire the tools necessary to lead an independent life with greater confidence.
- **Respect diversity:** Mentors should be aware of differences in ability, gender, culture, or life circumstances that may require special accommodations. It is also important to be aware of campus and local support groups and services that can help mentees in varying situations, as well as being aware of their own limits in dealing with such issues.
- **Be accessible:** Mentors should willing to take the time to get to know their mentees and to build a strong mentoring relationship with them. This includes establishing a mutual respect where both parties respect each other's time, effort, and qualifications.
- **Strive for mutual benefits.** The relationship should be defined from the beginning as mutually beneficial. Each participant has committed to the relationship by choice. Each should openly share his or her goals for the relationship and work collaboratively to help achieve them.
- **Agree on confidentiality.** Maintaining an environment of confidentiality is a critical component in building trust between the participants. Without a mutually understood ability to speak freely as the situation warrants, the relationship is unlikely to reach its full potential.
- **Commit to honesty.** The participants should be willing to candidly share what they expect to gain from the relationship and their vision for getting there. They should be prepared to offer frank feedback as appropriate, even if the feedback is critical.
- **Listen and learn.** Mutual benefit and honesty can only be achieved when both members feel their viewpoints are heard and respected. Mentors, especially, need to remember that the relationship is not primarily about them.
- **Build a working partnership.** Consider structuring a working partnership that includes project consultation or active collaborations rooted in the common ground of shared professional goals. These collaborations can lead to discoveries about each participant's preferred working style, daily obligations, and professional aspirations.
- **Be flexible.** It might help for a mentoring relationship to have defined goals, but the process may be as important—or more so—than the goals.

- Offer constructive criticism. Mentors should be kind but honest, providing their mentees opportunities to improve skills and develop new knowledge.
- Promote independence. They should give their mentees every opportunity to learn by experience

Mentors should not

- Forget that they are responsible for building the mentoring relationship.
- Attempt to solve all mentee's problems. The mentee should learn to resolve issues him/herself, while the mentor should provide the tools to do so. Mentors should not do what the mentees should be doing themselves.
- Act as if they know more than they do. If they do not have the answer to a question the mentee poses, mentors should tell them so. Then, they should do some research to find the correct information.
- Lose critical oversight. They should not allow friendship to shade over into favoritism.
- Stick with a mentoring relationship when they see that it is not working. If they feel their mentee with isn't compatible with them, it may be best to end the relationship

Mentoring contract

Mentorship Contracts or Agreements play a vital part in ensuring that both parties' expectations are realistic and achievable and that each has a similar understanding of the mentorship relationship. Mentorship Contracts could include the following components:

1. Objectives/expectations—why are we doing this? What are the outcomes expected to result from the mentoring relationship?
2. An assurance of confidentiality—define areas that are not appropriate for discussion or disclosure.
3. Roles and responsibilities – agree on the role of the Mentor and the role of the Mentee and responsibilities each party has to the other.
4. Frequency of meetings—the availability of the Mentor and Mentee, length of meetings, and completing assignments.
5. The amount and kind of support—what is needed by the Mentee and what can be provided by the mentor?
6. Conflict resolution – how you will deal with disagreements or what is perceived as resistance?
7. Development plan—how will you plan the development, and how will you track and evaluate it (if appropriate)?
8. Estimated duration—how long should the relationship last, is it short term or longer term?
9. How will my employer support me in my role as a mentor?
10. Each mentoring situation and workplace is different. Generally speaking, employers will support mentors in the following ways: provide support and adequate time needed to fulfill the role of a mentor.
11. Monitor the mentoring process and progress of the mentee.
12. Provide clear separation between the mentoring program and the company's performance management process and not hold the mentor accountable for mentee performance issues.

Confidentiality Policy

.....(by each national team).....

Child Protection Policy

.....(by each national team).....

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR MENTORS

General Information

Name	
Surname	
Sex	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Telephone number(s)	
E-mail	
Best method of contact	

Please list your educational attainments

Degree	Educational Institution	Period of Attendance	Specialization	Graduation Date (month- year)

Please list your professional background:

Duration	Organization	Position	Basic Duties

Please list your work or volunteer experiences :

Duration	Organization	Position/ Type of Work	Type of youth (e.g. care leavers, unaccompanied minors, students)	Basic Duties

Have you ever worked with children/ youth in care? YES NO

If yes, please provide information on the organization, the duration and your role:

.....
.....
.....

Please list any special skills, certifications, talents, hobbies or interests (for example related to sports, music, creative pursuits, etc)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Do you hold a current Driver's License? YES NO

Do you own or have access to a car? YES NO

Do you have any health limitation? YES NO

If yes, please explain:

.....

Do you object to our organization running a background/ security check on you? YES NO

Why do you want to become a mentor for youth in care?

.....
.....

What do you hope to get out of the mentoring experience?

.....
.....

Supervision and support: It is recognised that working with young people can be overwhelming and confronting, particularly in a one-on-one relationship in a community environment. Close support, guidance and supervision is not only available to all mentors, but is in fact a requirement of participation in the program. With this in mind, ALL mentors MUST have phone contact with the Program Coordinator at least once per month, in addition to one face-to-face meeting per quarter.

Are you able to commit to the requirements above? YES NO

What types of support do you feel you would need as a volunteer mentor?

.....
.....

Commitment: The mentoring program implemented by the Now What project aims to reflect best practice standards in mentoring. For this reason, you are required to spend a minimum of 12 mentoring sessions, lasting for 1-1.5 hour each, for a duration of at least six months with a young person in this program, plus weekly contact by telephone, if necessary.

Are you able to commit to the requirements above? YES NO

Please describe how you plan to meet this commitment:

.....
.....
.....

Training: Mentors are expected to attend the "Train-The-Mentors" seminar, a 6 hour training session prior to the beginning of the mentoring process, in order to keep skills and knowledge updated. Training will cover topics such as the mentoring methodology, the After Care Plans, and the Mentoring Contract.

Are you able to attend the training? YES NO

Drugs and Alcohol: Are you able to commit that you will not have any contact with a young person whilst you are affected by, or consuming, drugs or alcohol?

YES NO

Are you willing to work with a child who has disabilities? YES NO

Are you willing to work with youth from different ethnic groups than yours? YES NO

Would you prefer to be matched with a young person from a specific ethnicity or gender? YES NO

If yes, list the preferred ethnicities and gender

Have you spent any time in care as a child/ youth? YES NO

If yes, please describe (e.g. duration, institution) :

Days and hours available per week for the mentoring sessions:

Day	Hours
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	

References: Please provide the names and contact details of three people who can act as referees for you. All nominated referees need to have known you for at least 12 months, not be related to you, have regular contact with you, and be able to vouch for you. All references are strictly confidential.

Name:
Surname:
Telephone number:
Relationship:
Best time to call:

Name:
Surname:
Telephone number:
Relationship:
Best time to call:
Name:
Surname:
Telephone number:
Relationship:
Best time to call:

I hereby certify that the aforementioned statements are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I hereby grant the agency permission to verify such answers. I understand that any false statement on this application may be considered as sufficient cause for rejection of this application or for immediate suspension of the practical or volunteer experience.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Terms of Mentorship/Volunteering

1. Attend orientation sessions and mentor training sessions, which will prepare you to work as mentor, and provide ideas and activities.
2. Attend all scheduled staff meetings and trainings.
3. Consent to a mid-year and final evaluation, completed by the program coordinator.
4. Follow all school/ institution/ care organisation and agency policies, rules, and procedures.
5. Be professional at all times.

I agree to all of the conditions stated above and do confirm that I have not, nor am I presently engaged in any activities of a criminal nature. I also grant permission to the program to check with the appropriate authorities (courts, youth agencies, and police, etc.) if necessary, upon matters of record regarding my background or history.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Confidentiality Statement

In normal course of my mentor assignment and responsibilities, I understand that I may have access to or view information regarding youth and children in care. With regard to all such information, I agree to observe the care institution's strict standard of confidentiality. I further agree that knowledge and information of a confidential nature, gained through my involvement with the institution may not be used, distributed or discussed outside of my mentor responsibilities.

I understand and agree that breach of such confidentiality shall subject me to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

I hereby attest that I have read this Confidentiality Statement and agree that my continued mentor service is contingent upon strict adherence to same. I understand, and agree, that I will be discharged, should I violate the institution's standard of strict confidentiality.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ANNEX 2: MENTOR FOR YOUTH IN CARE JOB DESCRIPTION

The Now What? project helps to empower youth in care, to prepare them for adult life, to support them to make positive life choices that enable them to maximize their potential. The mentoring program uses adult mentors to commit to supporting, guiding, and being a friend to a young person for a period of at least six months. By becoming part of the social network of adults and community members who care about the youth, the mentor can help youth develop and reach positive academic, career, and personal goals.

Overview: The mentor serves as a caring adult in the youths' life and is available to listen, validate, and coach their mentee about navigating life and negotiating relationships as a young independent adult.

Mentor Role, Duties and Responsibilities

- Take the lead in supporting a young person through an ongoing, one-on-one relationship
- Serve as a positive role model and friend
- Build the relationship by planning and participating in activities together
- Strive for mutual respect
- Build self-esteem and motivation
- Help set goals and work toward accomplishing them
- Work alongside mentee every second week with additional ad hoc communication via telephone, email and social media as needed
- Co-develop mentorship plan with mentee which includes goals, actions activities can include exploring opportunities for learning, meeting educational or employment goals, defining needed resources etc.
- To be a caring adult to mentee through coaching them appropriately to manage relationships and navigating life as a young adult
- Encourage and support youth to set and meet educational, employment, and community engagement goals
- Facilitate and provide feedback to mentees during each session
- Engage, encourage and conduct goal setting with mentee to successfully complete After Care Plan
- Complete program surveys, evaluations, and other relevant administrative tasks
- Work collaboratively, and in consultation with the Program Coordinator to best inform ongoing engagement with the mentee
- Participate in relevant professional development opportunities
- Participate in supervision, monitoring and evaluation sessions with the coordinator/ supervisor.

Time Commitment

Make a one-year commitment

- Spend a minimum of two to three hours per month one-to-one with a mentee
- Communicate with the mentee weekly
- Attend an initial six hour training session and additional training sessions
- Attend optional mentor/mentee group events, mentor support groups, and program recognition events

Participation Requirements

- Be at least 21 years old
- Be interested in working with young people
- Be willing to adhere to all program policies and procedures
- Be willing to complete the application and screening process
- Be dependable and consistent in meeting the time commitments
- Attend mentor training sessions as prescribed
- Be willing to communicate regularly with project staff, submit activity information, and take constructive feedback regarding mentoring activities
- Have a clean criminal history
- Not use illicit drugs
- Not use alcohol or controlled substances in an inappropriate manner
- Not be currently in treatment for substance abuse and have a non-addictive period of at least five years
- Not be currently in treatment for a mental disorder or hospitalized for such in the past three years

Matching Process

- Matches will be made on the consideration of age, interests, cultural and other identities etc.
- Care will be given to ensure that both mentors and mentee feel comfortable with their match and have opportunities to get to know one another

Desirable Qualities

- Willing, active and reflective listener
- Encouraging and supportive
- Patient and flexible
- Tolerant and respectful of individual and cultural differences

Benefits

- Personal fulfillment through contribution to community and to young individuals
- Satisfaction in helping someone mature, progress, and achieve goals
- Training sessions and group activities
- Personal ongoing support, supervision to help the match succeed
- Mentee/mentor group activities, complimentary tickets to community events, participant recognition events
- Increased skills in working with youth
- Gain new transferable skills and work experience to enhance professional profile
- Increased skills in working with youth
- Meet and interact with new people and receive networking opportunities

Application and Screening Process

- Written application
- Criminal history check: state, child abuse and neglect registry, sexual offender registry
- Personal interview
- Provide three personal references
- Attend six-hour mentor training
- Complete pre-screening process (application, interview, references, assessment, etc)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
Minorities and Women Encouraged To Apply

ANNEX 3: MENTOR CONTACT SHEET

Name	
Surname	
Telephone number	
Mobile telephone number	
e-mail	
Work address	
Home address	
Comments	

ANNEX 4: MENTOR CONTRACT

MENTOR CONTRACT

Name: _____ Date: _____

By choosing to participate in the Now What? Mentoring Program, I agree to:

- Follow all rules and guidelines as outlined by the coordinators, mentor training, program policies and procedures, and this contract
- Be flexible and provide the necessary support and advice to help my mentee succeed
- Engage in the relationship with an open mind
- Make a one-year commitment to being matched with my mentee
- Meet at least three hours per month with my mentee
- Make at least weekly contact with my mentee
- Obtain parent/guardian permission for all meeting times at least three days in advance, if possible
- Be on time for scheduled meetings or call my mentee at least 24 hours beforehand if I am unable to make a meeting
- Submit monthly meeting times and activities to the coordinator, and regularly and openly communicate with the coordinator as requested
- Participate in group activities with my mentee
- Inform the coordinator of any difficulties or areas of concern that may arise in the relationship
- Keep any information that my mentee tells me confidential except when confronted with issues that involve the safety/health/welfare of the mentee or others
- Never be in the presence of my mentee when I have or am consuming alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances
- Participate in a closure process when that time comes
- Notify the coordinator if I have any changes in address, phone number, or employment status
- Attend in-service mentor training sessions
- Accept support from the mentor program coordinator/ supervisor/ evaluator/ other project staff

_____ (please initial) I understand that upon match closure, future contact with my mentee is beyond the scope of the Now What? Mentoring Program and may happen only by the mutual consensus of the mentor, the mentee, and parent/guardian. I agree to follow all the above stipulations of this program as well as any other conditions as instructed by the coordinator at this time or in the future.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ANNEX 5: MENTEE CONTRACT

MENTEE CONTRACT

Name: _____ Date: _____

By choosing to participate in the Now What? Mentoring Program, I agree to:

- Follow all rules and guidelines as outlined by the program coordinator, mentee training, program policies, and this contract
- Have a positive attitude and be respectful of my mentor
- Make a one-year commitment to being matched with my mentor
- Meet at least three hours per month with my mentor
- Make at least weekly contact with my mentor
- Obtain parent/guardian permission for all meeting times at least three days in advance, if possible
- Be on time for scheduled meetings or call my mentor at least 24 hours beforehand if I am unable to make a meeting
- Discuss monthly meeting times and activities with the program coordinator, and regularly and openly communicate with the program coordinator as requested
- Inform the program coordinator of any difficulties or areas of concern that may arise in the relationship
- Participate in a closure process when that time comes
- Notify the program coordinator if I have any changes in address or phone number
- Attend mentee training sessions whenever organized during the mentoring process.

_____ (please initial) I understand that upon match closure, future contact with my mentor is beyond the scope of the New Insights Mentoring Program and can happen only by the mutual consensus of the mentor, the mentee, and my parent/guardian. I agree to follow all the above stipulations of this program as well as any other conditions as instructed by the program coordinator at this time or in the future.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ANNEX 6: MENTORING CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Date Policy Accepted ___/___/___

Date Policy Amended ___/___/___

It is the policy of the Now What? Mentoring Program to protect the confidentiality of mentors, mentees and their caregiver(s). Now What? Mentoring Program files/records, which include personal, confidential information gained from mentors, mentees and care givers, are considered property of the Now What? Mentoring Program and are not available for review by anyone other than Now What? Mentoring Program staff.

The Now What? Mentoring Program requires the following from staff and mentors:

- Program staff will only share information about mentors, mentees, and their families with the program coordinator
- All prospective mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians should be informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality by Now What? Mentoring Program staff.
- Mentors are required to keep information about their mentee and their caregiver(s) confidential.

Limits of Confidentiality

Information from mentor and mentee records may be shared with individuals or organizations under the following conditions:

- Information may be shared with other participants, individuals, or organizations only upon receipt of signed “release” forms from mentors, mentees, and/or caregivers.
- Program staff and volunteers are mandatory reporters and as such must disclose information about abuse/neglect of a child or information indicating that a mentor or mentee intends to harm self or others.
- If program staff members receive information at any point in the match process that a mentor is using illegal substances, there is a criminal history of any kind, or is inappropriately using alcohol or other controlled substances, the information may be shared with the program coordinator
- Information is typically shared among key parties (prospective mentor, mentee, caregivers) when a match is considered. However, the full identity of the prospective match, including names, addresses, and statuses are shared only after the involved parties have met and agreed to be formally matched. Each party shall have the right to refuse the proposed match based on the anonymous information provided to them. The information to be shared may include: age, sex, race, religion, interests, hobbies, employment, marriage or family status, sexual preference, living situation, reasons for applying to the program, match criteria, etc.

ANNEX 7: MENTOR'S SESSION REPORT

MENTOR'S SESSION REPORT / REPORTING LOG

To be filled in after every mentoring session:

Name of the mentor:	
Name of the mentee:	
Date:	
Number of session:	
Duration of session:	
Main themes covered	
Issues to return to	
Main learning points for the mentor	
Main learning points for the mentee	
Action points for the mentor	
Action points for the mentee	
Concerns or further comments	
Date of next session:	

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ANNEX 8: MENTORING CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

MENTORING CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

For a mentoring relationship to develop, both the mentor and mentee must feel that discussions of private issues or problems are being handled with discretion. The purpose of this agreement is to protect both the mentor and mentee from a breach in confidentiality during the mentoring process.

I, _____, agree to keep confidential the specifics of my discussions with my mentor/mentee, unless given permission to share this information with others. I am also encouraged to discuss any concerns I have about my mentoring experience with the Mentoring Program Coordinator(s). The Mentoring Program Coordinator will maintain confidentiality unless a breach of confidentiality is necessary to maintain someone's personal safety.

I understand that a copy of this agreement will be given to my mentee/mentor and I will also receive a copy of his or her signed agreement.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ANNEX 9: MENTOR PROFILE

The following table presents the basic characteristics of the potential mentor for the Now What project. These characteristics can be used as criteria of acceptance or rejection of a potential mentor:

Age	Not relevant
Nationality	Not relevant, even though it would be desirable to have mentors of the same nationalities as the mentees.
Sex	Not relevant. The mentee's preference should be taken into consideration.
Education	Graduate of humanistic studies (psychology, social work, education, etc). Other degrees are also accepted as long as the potential mentor has participated in some type of social education
Profession	Preferable a social scientist (psychologist, social worker, trainer, educator, etc). Other professions are also welcome, especially if this is the wish of the mentees. These professionals can be part of the care institution personnel or they can be volunteers who have also participated in training regarding the institution and the group of young people it serves.
Availability	<p>Potential mentors should be available and flexible regarding the face-to-face meetings they will have with their mentees. They should also be available for telephone or mail communication with their mentees, at least once a week.</p> <p>Mentors should also declare their availability for meetings with the program supervisor, training meetings, evaluation meetings and potential social events to participate with their mentees.</p>
Personal interests	There is no specific list of interests or recreation activities for the potential mentor. However, an active interest in sports, music, games, the environment, or social issues are welcome. Any other specific interest should depend on the wishes of the mentees.
Personality traits/ characteristics	<p>The following list includes some of the basic characteristics for a mentor for young care leavers. The list is not exhaustive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sociable • reliable • positive • active listener • patient • persistent • non judgmental • flexible • creative • respectful • with a sense of humor • trustworthy • sensitive • responsible • honest • caring
Experience in mentoring	Desirable
Experience in working with/ supporting youth and children	Desirable
Experience in mentoring youth and children in care	Desirable

ANNEX 10: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS

This is the template to be used for interviewing potential mentors. The document will be filled in by the interviewers, i.e. the mentoring committee.

Applicant Name:
Interviewers:
Date:

1. Why do you want to become a mentor for young care leavers?
2. Why do you think you can help a youth by mentoring? (if not answered in question #1)
3. What do you think are your strengths?
4. How about your weaknesses?
5. What type of child would you like to be matched with?
6. Will you be able to fulfill the commitments of the program – hours per month with weekly contact for one year?
7. What was your own childhood like?
8. Have you ever abused or molested a youth?
9. Have you ever been arrested? If so, when and for what?
10. Do you currently use any alcohol, drugs, or tobacco?
11. Have you ever undergone treatment for alcohol or substance abuse?

12. Have you ever been treated or hospitalized for a mental condition?

13. Do you have any experience working with children? If so, how will it help you in working with your mentee?

14. What challenges do you think young people face today that they need help with the most?

15. Mentoring a young person is a big responsibility and can change the lives of both the mentor and the mentee. What do you hope to gain from the experience and what do you hope the mentee gains from the relationship?

16. What are some of the biggest problems in the world or in your community that concern you?

17. What types of activities would you do with a mentee?

18. Who else might be present at any given time when you are with your mentee?

19. What hobbies or interests do you have?

20. At this point, clarify any questions of concern that arose from the written application.

21. Do you have any questions about the program?

Interviewers comments:
.....
.....
.....

Accepted

Rejected

ANNEX 11: MENTOR INTEREST SURVEY

Mentor Interest Survey

Name: _____ Date: _____

Please complete all the following. This survey will help the Now What project know more about you and your interests and help us find a good match for you.

What are the most convenient times for you to meet with your mentee? Please check all that apply.

Weekdays Lunchtime After school Evenings Weekends Other

Please indicate age group(s) you are interested in working with:

Age: 11-14 15-18 19-21 Ethnicity: _____

Do you speak any languages other than English? If so, which languages?

Would you be willing to work with a child who has disabilities? If so, please specify disabilities you would be willing to work with. _____

What are some favorite things you like to do with other people?

What are your favorite subjects to read about?

What is your job and how did you choose this field?

What is one goal you have set for the future?

If you could learn something new, what would it be?

What person do you most admire and why?

Describe your ideal Saturday.

Please check all activities you are interested in:

Biking Camping Science Cooking Library Football Basketball Television
 Hiking Boating Music Sports Yoga Cinema Theater Styling
 Golf Swimming Gardening Parks Skateboard Cooking Writing
 Fishing Animals/Pets Painting/Photos Board Games Shopping

List any other areas of special interest:

Specific preferences for your mentee:

ANNEX 12: MENTEE INTEREST SURVEY

Mentee Interest Survey

(To Be Completed by Youth)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Please complete all the following. This survey will help the Now What project know more about you and your interests and help us find a good match for you.

What are the most convenient times for you to meet with your mentor? Please check all that apply.

Weekdays Lunchtime After school Evenings Weekends Other

Do you speak any languages other than English? If so, which languages?

What are some favorite things you like to do with other people?

What are your favorite subjects in school?

If you could learn about a job/career, what would it be?

What are your favorite subjects to read about?

What is one goal you have set for the future?

If you could learn something new, what would it be?

What person do you most admire and why?

Describe your ideal Saturday:

Please check all activities you are interested in:

Biking Camping Science Cooking Library Football Basketball Television

Hiking Boating Music Sports Yoga Cinema Theater Styling

Golf Swimming Gardening Parks Skateboard Cooking Writing

Fishing Animals/Pets Painting/Photos Board Games Shopping

List any other areas of special interest:

Specific preferences for your mentor:

ANNEX 14: EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING

Evaluation Sheet for trainees

Name: _____ Date: _____

Please evaluate the training you participated. For Part 1 your answers will be on the scale between 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). For Part 2 you will be asked to write down your answers and comments to the relevant questions.

Part 1.

Please provide your answers to the following questions/ statements, by ticking the box:

1. I am satisfied with the overall organization of the training.

1	2	3	4	5

2. I am satisfied with the duration of the training

1	2	3	4	5

3. I am satisfied with the content of the training.

1	2	3	4	5

4. I am satisfied with the knowledge, skills and competences of the trainer.

1	2	3	4	5

5. I am satisfied with the educational materials of the training.

1	2	3	4	5

6. I fully understand my role as a mentor for youth in care.

1	2	3	4	5

7. I feel prepared to undertake the role of the mentor for youth in care.

1	2	3	4	5

8. The duration of the training was efficient.

1	2	3	4	5

9. I am satisfied with the infrastructure of the training.

1	2	3	4	5

10. The preparation of the training was satisfactory.

1	2	3	4	5

Part 2.

Please, provide your answer to the following questions:

11. What was the most important thing you learned during the training?

12. Which are your suggestions to improve the training?

13. Describe your overall training experience:

14. Which other thematic fields would you like to be trained in?

Annex 15: Closure protocol

Mentoring relationships ideally end both in an anticipated way, and it is critical to have a way with dealing with it. The Now What project has created closure protocol, since it is essential that the mentoring coordinator facilitate closing the match in a way that affirms the contributions of the mentor and mentee, allowing both individuals the opportunity to assess the experience.

According to the closing protocol, the steps to be taken for the closing of the mentoring relationship are as follows:

1. The mentor coordinator facilitates closing the match in a way that affirms the contributions of the mentor and mentee, allowing both individuals the opportunity to assess the experience.
2. The mentoring coordinator conducts the exit interview (see below)
3. At the last meeting, the mentor and mentee should discuss memories of fun times they've had together and participate in a special activity (for example, the mentor/mentee make cards or letters for each other and exchange them).

Exit Interview for Mentors

Please use the following questions as a baseline for your exit interview. Include any additional questions you believe relate to your program.

1. What was the reason for ending the mentoring relationship?
2. Are there any additional resources or support that the program could provide to allow the match to continue?
3. How would you rate your experience in the mentoring program?
4. What was your favorite moment during your mentoring relationship?
5. How has the mentoring relationship been meaningful/beneficial?
6. Do you plan to continue in the mentoring program?
7. Do you wish to be matched again with the same mentee?
8. Have you felt support from the mentoring program staff?
9. In what ways could the mentoring program improve to better support you?

Exit Interview for Mentees

Please use the following questions as a baseline for your exit interview. Include any additional questions you believe relates to your program.

1. What was the reason for ending the mentoring relationship?
2. How would you rate your experience in the mentoring program?
3. How has your relationship with your mentor been beneficial?
4. What was one of your favorite memories of your mentoring relationship?
5. Do you plan to continue in the mentoring program?
6. Do you wish to be matched again with the same mentor?
7. In what ways could the mentoring program improve to make it a better experience for you?