

# **Peer Support for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Programme**

**PEER MENTOR TRAINING SESSION PLANS  
AGE GROUP: 14+**





Department  
for Education



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**YOUNG**MINDS

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# **PEER MENTOR TRAINING SESSION PLANS**

## **AGE GROUP: 14+**

### **Guidance**

These session plans are accompanied by supporting resources as well as a PowerPoint presentation which can be found online. Each session plan should take one hour to deliver and includes and/or references the following:

- specific guidance
- learning outcomes
- all required resources
- any preparation needed.

### **Creating a safe space, ground rules and signposting**

Mental health is an emotive subject area which can take us back to difficult times and stir up strong feelings. At the start of this session, communicate to your group any available safe spaces in your setting that they can go to. We strongly recommend that you establish ground rules around respectful listening and confidentiality.

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## Session plan 1 – HOW TO BUILD EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR MENTEES

### Guidance

This 1-hour session is focussed on supporting the group to really understand that to be an effective peer mentor you need to be a good listener and that this takes practice.

The session focusses on introducing concepts and then providing opportunity for participants to practice these skills.

### Learning Outcomes

1. Know what a peer mentor is and how they can support other young people.
2. Understand that building a relationship is central to peer support.
3. Begin to practice active listening.

### Resources

Session Plan slides 14+

R 1.1

R 1.2

R 1.3

Please photocopy one copy of R1.1 and R1.2 per pair of young people in your group. You will need one copy of R1.3 per group of three young people.

### Activities

### Time

#### Introduction

5 mins

1. Welcome the group and explain that to become a peer mentor they need to learn about the role and practice certain skills.
2. Explain that this will be done over three sessions.
3. Show slide 2 and explain that the session today will focus on the learning objectives:
  - I know what a peer mentor is and how they can support other young people.
  - I understand that building a relationship is central to peer support.
  - I can begin to practice active listening.

Activities	Time
<p>Activity 1 – <b>EXPLORING WHAT A PEER MENTOR IS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Show slide 3 and ask: <i>What is a peer mentor? What is their role?</i></li><li>2. Make links to other mentors that they may have come across in their setting.</li><li>3. Show slide 4 and read out the definition of a peer mentor</li><li>4. Discuss the difference between a peer mentor and a friend.</li></ol>	5 mins
<p>Activity 2 – <b>INTRODUCING THE MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIP AS CENTRAL TO MENTORING</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ask: <i>Why is it important to get to know your mentees?</i></li><li>2. Facilitate a group discussion and emphasise that the mentor needs to build up a trusting relationship with their mentee before they can really support them.</li><li>3. Ask: <i>How might you get to know your mentee?</i></li><li>4. Show slide 5:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk to them.</li><li>• Be interested – ask them questions.</li><li>• Listen to them carefully.</li></ul></li></ol>	5 mins
<p>Activity 3 – <b>PRACTICING ACTIVE LISTENING</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Show slide 6 and ask: <i>What is active listening?</i></li><li>2. Reveal definition on slide 7: Active listening is paying attention to everything the other person is saying and doing and also focusing on your body language.</li><li>3. Ask someone to volunteer to do an activity with you.</li><li>4. Ask the volunteer to stand/sit next to you and to tell you about what they did last weekend. Whilst they are talking, model good and bad active listening body language.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good–Open body posture with arms by side, sitting up straight and looking at the speaker.</li><li>• Bad–Closed arms, slumped and not looking at the speaker.</li></ul></li><li>5. Get the group into pairs and ask them to label themselves mentor and mentee. Hand out one copy of <b>R 1.1</b> per pair and ask the mentee to read it out loud whilst the mentor demonstrates bad body language.</li></ol>	15 mins

**Activities****Time**

6. Now get them to read it again whilst the mentor demonstrates good body language.
7. Ask the mentee: *How did it feel when someone was showing you that they weren't interested or listening to what you were saying?*
8. Facilitate discussion.

**Activity 4 – UNDERSTANDING OPEN QUESTIONS**

10 mins

1. Show slide 8 and ask the group if they know the difference between an 'open question' and a 'closed question'. Ask if they can give you an example of either.
2. Share the definitions on slide 9: *Closed questions can be answered with a simple "yes" or "no," whilst open questions require more thought and more than a simple one-word answer.*
3. Ask the CYP to get in pairs and label themselves A and B. Tell A that they should think of a famous person but not tell B who it is.
4. B should ask closed questions to try and find out who the famous person is.
5. Now B should think of famous person and A should use open questions to find out who it is.
6. Bring the group back together and ask who identified the famous person quickest?

**Activity 5 – UNDERSTANDING PARAPHRASING (OPTIONAL)**

5 mins

1. Explain that the last part of active listening that we are going to discuss today is paraphrasing.
2. Show slide 10 and share the definition "paraphrasing is rewording what someone has said, usually making it clearer and showing the person who is speaking that you are listening carefully".
3. Choose one young person to be the mentee and read **R 1.2** out loud.
4. Ask the young people to get in to pairs and discuss how they would paraphrase this script. They can use the sentence starters on slide 11 to help them:
  - In other words...
  - So you are saying that...
  - So you believe that...

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**Activities****Time**

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**Activity 6 – WHAT YOU SHOULDN'T DO AS AN ACTIVE LISTENER**

10 min

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1. Ask CYP to tell you what you shouldn't do when using active listening skills. Make a list of their answers on a board if possible.
  2. Reveal slide 12 and check they have covered all points:
    - Tell the speaker they are wrong to feel that way.
    - Bad active listening body language.
    - Be thinking about what you're going to say next before the person has even finished speaking.
    - Be judgemental/challenging.
    - Put the speaker on the spot/make them feel uncomfortable
    - Interrupt them or finish their sentences for them.
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**Summary Activity 7 – PRACTISING SKILLS**

10 mins

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1. Ask the CYP to get in to groups of three and explain that one is going to be mentor, one mentee and one is observer.
  2. Hand out **R 1.3** to each group. The mentee should discuss the scenario on their card with the mentor, they can make up/add details to make it more realistic if they want to.
  3. The mentor needs to listen. Remind the mentor that they shouldn't give advice but should use active listening skills to help the conversation flow and to help get lots of information from the mentee.
  4. The observer should make a note of when the mentor uses:
    - Good non-verbal communication skills.
    - Open questions.
    - Paraphrasing.
-

## SESSION PLAN 2 – HOW TO PROMOTE CHANGE

### Guidance

Activity 1 focusses on the importance of mentors seeing things from their mentees' perspective. It is important to be mindful that this activity risks bringing up sensitive issues for some CYP.

Activity 2 focusses on supporting the mentors to think through the steps involved in making a change. This will prepare them to then support their mentees to do the same in Activity 3. It introduces a "Change sheet" as a tool to support this process.

Mentors will have a tendency to tell their mentees how to make a change. The key learning objective of this session is that the mentor's role is to support their mentee to make a change in their own way rather than being told what to do.

### Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the importance of seeing things from a mentee's perspective.
2. Understand how change happens.
3. Learn skills which will help the mentor to explore change with their mentees.
4. Understand that the mentor should not tell the mentee what to do.

### Resources

Session Plan slides 14+

R 2.1

R 2.2

R 2.3

R 2.4

Large paper

Coloured pens

Please photocopy one copy of R2.1 per young person, and one copy of R2.2, R2.3 and R2.4 per pair of young people in your group.

### Activities

### Time

Introduction

5 mins

1. Ask CYP if they can remember what they learnt at the last session.
2. Recap using slide 14.
3. Show slide 15 and introduce learning objectives for this session:
  - I understand the importance of seeing things from a mentee's perspective.

## Activities

## Time

- I understand how change happens.
  - I have learnt skills which will help me support my mentee to make positive changes.
  - I understand that as a mentor you should not tell the mentee what to do.
4. Explain that: One of the roles of a peer mentor is to support a mentee to make small positive changes in their life. Change will only happen once a trusting, positive relationship has been established between the mentor and mentee (slide 16).

### Activity 1 – IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING SOMETHING FROM YOUR MENTEE'S PERSPECTIVE

10 mins

1. Explain to the group that a mentor needs to understand how their mentee views things in order to help them make small changes in their life.
2. Ask the CYP to get in to small groups and give each group a large sheet of paper and two different coloured pens.
3. Ask one person in the group to draw the outline of a body (they can draw round someone lying down if the paper is big enough). Then with one colour, they should write round the outside of the body, all the things they think could be going on in the mentee's life (i.e. moving to secondary school, fallen out with a friend, parents arguing, struggling with school work).
4. Once they have written all the things round the outside, they should write on the inside, how the mentee might feel about those things.
5. Bring the group back together and ask them to feedback some of their points.

### Activity 2 – THE STEPS TO MAKING A CHANGE

20 mins

1. Remind the children that one of the roles of a peer mentor is to support a mentee to make a small change in their life.
2. Show slide 17 and ask the CYP to think about something small that they might want to change in their life, they don't need to share this but just think about it by themselves.
3. Give each young person a copy of **R 2.1**
4. Show slide 18 which has an example of a completed Change Sheet.
5. Ask the children to complete the Change Sheet with a change they think a mentee might want to make.
6. Once they have completed all the boxes, remind them they should choose which option they think would be best to help the mentee resolve their problem.
7. Once they have done this, ask:
  - *What problems might the mentee come across if they pick this option?*
  - *Who might be able to help them achieve their goal?*

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**Activities**
**Time**


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**Activity 3 – HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT YOUR MENTEE TO MAKE A CHANGE?**

20 mins

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1. Show slide 19 and talk through the steps to making a change:
    - Understanding the current problem.
    - Why you want to change it?
    - What the options are to make a change?
    - And what help you might need to make this change?
  2. Ask the group to get in to pairs and decide who is going to be mentor and who is going to be mentee.
  3. Hand out **R 2.2** and ask the pairs to pick one scenario to talk through.
  4. Hand out **R 2.3** and **R 2.4** to each pair.
  5. The mentor should help the mentee to complete the change sheet by asking the questions from the Question Bank.
  6. Bring the pairs back together as a group and ask the 'mentees' to share:
    - How it felt when they were able to come up with their own ideas with the support of their mentor.
    - If they were the mentee and the mentor was telling you what to do, how would they feel?
  7. Emphasise that the job of a peer mentor is to support their mentee to come with their own ideas of what and how they want to change, not to tell them what to do.
  8. Show slide 20 and ask why they think this is important, facilitate discussion.
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**Summary**

5 mins

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1. End the session by summarising the learning objectives (slide 21):
    - Importance of understanding the perspective of a mentee.
    - The mentor's role is to support change by asking open questions so that the mentee can come up with their own ideas.
    - The mentor should not tell the mentee what to do.
  2. Ask the CYP if they have any questions before bringing the session to a close.
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## Session plan 3 – Understanding the role and its limitations

### Guidance

The key message of this session is that if CYP have any concern about something their mentee has told them, they must share it with a designated adult.

The nature of the topics discussed in the session can be emotive and it is important that you refer to “Creating a safe space, ground rules and signposting” on the cover sheet.

### Learning Objectives

1. Understand when to keep something private and when to inform an adult.
2. Know how and when to report concerns.
3. Understand the importance of setting up agreements with your mentee and your programme facilitator

### Resources

Session Plan slides 14+

R 3.1

R 3.2

Large paper

Coloured pens

Please photocopy one copy of R3.1 per pair of young people in your group.

Please copy and cut the appropriate number of copies of R3.2 per group (each young person will need one copy of the contract but there are two on the page).

### Activities

### Time

Introduction

5 mins

1. Show slide 23 ask children CYP if they can remember what was discussed at the last session.
2. Recap using slide 24.
3. Show slide 25 and talk through objectives for this session:
  - I understand when I need to keep something private and when I need to inform an adult.
  - I know how and when to report concerns.
  - I understand the importance of setting up contracts with your mentee and your programme facilitator.

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**Activities**
**Time**


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**Activity 1 – EXPLORING CONFIDENTIALITY AND SAFEGUARDING**

5 mins

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1. Show slide 26 and ask:
    - *Do you know what confidentiality means?*
  2. Show slide 27 with definition and ask: *Why is it important to keep some things confidential in your relationship with your mentee?*
  3. Facilitate discussion and explain:
    - In order to form a trusting relationship, most things the mentee tells you need to be kept confidential.
    - Think of how you feel when you have asked a friend to keep something you tell them private but instead they share it with others.
  4. Ask:
    - *Can you keep everything your mentee tells you confidential?*
    - *When might you need to tell someone?*
    - *Who might you need to tell?*
  5. Emphasise that:
    - *In order to maintain trust with your mentee most information they tell you must be kept confidential, if there is ANYTHING which makes you feel concerned about your mentee or other people you must tell the programme facilitator (or another designated adult).*
    - *You must explain to your mentee at the beginning of the programme that if they tell you something which concerns you, you will share this with the programme facilitator. This agreement or contract will be explored in more detail later in the session.*
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**Activity 2 – EXPLORING SAFEGUARDING IN MORE DETAIL**

15 mins

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1. Ask: *What type of things might your mentee say that would cause you concern?*
  2. Suggest that below are a few examples:
    - Mentee being bullied.
    - Mentee not eating breakfast.
    - Mentee feeling scared at home or school.
  3. Ask the group if they can think of other examples.
  4. Ask: *How might it make you feel if a mentee told you one of these things?* Then show slide 28.

## Activities

## Time

5. Explain that:
  - *Feeling worried or concerned by anything a mentee tells you is an important sign that you must share this information with the programme facilitator before the end of the day.*
6. Ask the CYP: *What do you do if you are not sure of something you have been told by your mentee can be kept private or if you need to tell the facilitator?*
7. Explain: *If you are not sure, you must always discuss with the programme facilitator. There will also be regular meetings with your facilitator when you can discuss concerns. This is called supervision.*
8. Make sure all CYP are clear that if they have any concerns about their mentee they know who the designated adult is to inform and know that they must do this on the same day. Add the names of your setting's Safeguarding Leads to slide 29.

### Activity 3 – SAFEGUARDING EXAMPLE

15 mins

1. Split the CYP in to small groups and hand out a copy of **R 3.1** and a highlighter to each group.
2. Read the **R 3.1** out loud to the whole group.
3. Ask each group to highlight the parts of the text that make them feel worried.
4. Show slide 30 and ask them to discuss with each other:
  - What might they say to the mentee at the time?*
  - Will they promise to keep it confidential?*
  - What will they do after mentoring session is finished?*
5. Feedback as a group and emphasise:
  - That the mentor should use active listening skills i.e. "this sounds like a really tough time for you."
  - Tell Sean that you can't promise to keep it confidential and you will need to speak to an adult about what to do.
  - Raise it straight away with the facilitator or another designated member of staff.
6. Ask: *How do you think your mentee might feel about this? (scared, worried, betrayed). What can you do to ensure you still maintain a trusting relationship with your mentee?*
7. Suggest the following:
  - Refer to the contract with your mentee which we will be coming back to shortly.

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**Activities**
**Time**

- Ask the mentee if they would like to come with you to talk to the adult.
  - Empathise.
  - Discuss with the facilitator what the next step is for you and your mentee.
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**Activity 4 – ESTABLISHING AN AGREEMENT/CONTRACT BETWEEN THE MENTOR AND THE PROGRAMME LEAD ADULT**

15 mins

1. Explain to the CYP:
    - *As you are almost ready to start mentoring, it is important that we think about our (yours and my) roles in the programme.*
    - *To do this, we need to work together; you need to do your bit and I need to do my bit.*
  2. Show slide 31 with contract agreement and talk through the agreement and clarify any queries.
  3. Ask: *Who else might you need to make a contract/agreement with?*
  4. Hand out one copy of **R 3.2** per young person and check they understand it all.
  5. Explain that they will need to go through this contract with their mentees when they first meet, and both sign it. They can agree additional points with their mentee and add these to add to the document.
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**Summary**

5 mins

1. Explain:
    - CYP are now ready to be mentors having completed the three training sessions.
  2. Summarise: over the three sessions the CYP have learnt:
    - How to get to know your mentee using active listening.
    - How to support your mentee to make small positive changes.
    - How to get support when your mentee brings up something of concern.
  3. Outline the next steps for starting the programme in your setting including plans for supervision.
  4. Ask if they have any questions before bringing the session to a close.
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