

SPOTLIGHT ON MENTORS

YOUNG GLASGOW TALENT



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"The most rewarding thing is seeing how your involvement can have a direct impact on a young person."

Peter Chua works in Public Engagement and Communications for QuantIC, at the University of Glasgow, and heard about MCR Pathways in the Herald. He previously volunteered as a telephone counsellor but was attracted to mentoring because he wanted to see how he could influence the development of a young person over time in a one-to-one relationship.

What was it like getting ready to be a mentor?

I had previously done counselling courses and training with NSPCC CHILDLINE so I think these skills prepared me to some extent. But of course, you can never be a 100% prepared and I had all sorts of thoughts running through my mind, like what am I going to speak to the young person about? So, there was some level of trepidation mixed with excitement when I was informed that I had been paired with a young person from Springburn Academy.

What changes have you seen in the young person you mentored?

Once we had established trust, I think what was most helpful to my mentee was that I gave her a space to talk about everything that was going on - everything from how things were going in school and in her personal life. My mentee wanted to go to university and I think she kept her focus on this. She was struggling in Maths and Physics so I went out of my way to get additional tutoring support for her. She's also become more responsible balancing studies and taking on part-time work to earn spending money.

How has being a mentor changed or impacted you?

Well, I've learned some of the slang young people use these days, so I don't sound like an old fart! I've also discovered some really interesting young adult fiction authors like Jenny Han, which is good as I can better relate to my own nieces.

More importantly, I think I've developed better listening skills; something which I find lacking in society these days.

What would you say to someone about becoming a mentor?

One hour a week is all it takes to make a difference to you and them.

