






Insider

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GLASGOW - UK COUNCIL OF THE YEAR 2015



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PEOPLE

MENTORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Craig Menzies, Manager, Macmillan Programme, Glasgow Life, has been an MCR Pathways mentor for two years.

For one hour every week Craig meets with a care-experienced young person in St Andrew's Secondary – to provide a vital, listening, encouraging ear to his young person. Here's what Craig has to say about his involvement:

"I manage a programme which has 107 volunteers. I see them every day, people giving something back and getting a lot out of it. So I was looking for something to volunteer in – then I heard about MCR."

"Glasgow Life and the council have made a big commitment to support MCR. They've also made a big commitment to staff who want to become mentors. I really appreciate that support which allows me to be flexible with my own time to meet my responsibilities as a mentor and at work."

"Being a volunteer mentor is making a difference to the young person that I work with, but it's also supporting my own learning and development."

"For the first session me and my young person just sat and had a bit of a blether. We spoke a bit about football and we support different teams which was a good ice-breaker."

"After maybe four or five weeks, I really started to see a lot of changes in him, particularly around his confidence in talking to me. Now he tells me absolutely everything, which I think demonstrates a real level of trust."

"It's easy to talk about people's strengths, but he recognised quite quickly that things like anger management and his time-keeping were becoming weaknesses. He became focussed on trying to



change some of these things. That was the best thing to see; that's the thing that makes it worth it. You start to see a young person developing that kind of ability to remove themselves from a situation and say 'right, how do I deal with this a wee bit better'."

"I think the most important thing about being a mentor is just being a listening ear; somebody who's not their teacher or their parent – just being on the same level. Obviously I'm not a young person any more but I still remember what my experiences were like at school and the kind of things that are your drivers and challenges at that age."

"If anybody's thinking about being a mentor, or not thinking about it, my recommendation is to just do it! Three of my friends have signed

up. If you were to get the same experience I've had, and you've learned as much as I've learned, then it's a real positive journey – both for you and for the young person. I'd definitely say give it a go!"

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

More young people, like Craig's young person, are asking MCR for help. They need support through secondary school to ensure better educational outcomes and career opportunities.

More information

You can find full details about how to get involved, who your service champion is, what support is available, case studies about staff already involved, and more, on [Connect](#).

To hear what three former MCR pupils have to say about how the mentoring programme visit [Connect](#).

MCR MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO YOU



Becoming a volunteer mentor with MCR can make a huge difference to young vulnerable people. It can also help you develop key skills to help you in your personal and work life.



Becoming a volunteer mentor has many rewards for those staff that become involved. Alongside the knowledge that they are supporting young people, staff are also developing key skills including listening, communicating, time management, negotiation and influencing.

Karen Strachan, Senior HR Officer, said: "Mentoring supports some of the key criteria for career development within the council.

It's something that staff should consider as a means of personal development, and that managers should be actively promoting.

"Many of the skills are aligned with our core competencies, and can be used to support conversations in Performance Coaching reviews as well as competency based interviews for applications for career development. So, being involved can nurture other longer term benefits for your career."



BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

Strathclyde University have also recognised the benefits of mentoring for their own staff development and as a result have committed to allowing 20% of their staff to get involved.

Professor David Hillier, Dean of the University of Strathclyde Business School has recognised that mentoring plays a key role in learning and development opportunities for staff. Professor Hillier said: "Mentoring is very much a two-way approach. It's about what we can do for society, but there's also a positive impact for staff.

"Research shows that the best leaders are those who can empathise with people. The best way to learn to empathise with people is to work with others. Our staff will develop leadership skills which will put them in a good position to develop their own career."

Iain MacRitchie, the founder of MCR Pathways commented: "Growing evidence highlights that volunteers get a huge amount back from the MCR mentoring experience. Mentors develop key listening, relationship building, communication and motivational skills.

"Strathclyde Business School is helping us to demonstrate to other organisations the benefits of supporting the programme.



“Through demonstrating these benefits to organisations, including the council, we’re confident that we can encourage more organisations to get involved which in turn will allow us to reach every disadvantaged young person in the city.”

DEVELOPING YOUR KEY COMPETENCIES

Competencies are the underlying characteristics that lead to higher performance in your job or role. They include qualities, skills, attributes and traits that help you to be successful. Going beyond the traditional focus on academic qualifications, technical ability and experience, they provide a framework for assessing and developing your personal skills and can be developed through opportunities such as the MCR Mentoring Programme.

Karen added: “Mentoring can be as rewarding for staff and the council, as it can for the young person themselves.”

More information

To find out more about MCR Mentoring visit **Connect** where you can also watch a video to hear what pupils have to say about the programme, and read case studies from staff who are already involved.

If you’d like to get involved, speak to your line manager before submitting an application form to MCR Pathways.

See full details of support offered, and how to get involved, on [Connect](#).

WHAT STAFF HAVE TO SAY

Catherine Eadie, MCR mentor who works in the Transforming Glasgow Team has seen an increase in her skills and competence as a result. Catherine said: “Being a



Catherine Eadie

mentor has definitely helped to develop my skills and competencies. I’ve learned to adapt my language and the way I speak to my young person to help us communicate better. I’ve also gained a better understanding and appreciation of the complex issues that face many families and young people in the city which has helped me with the work I’m doing with the tackling poverty team. I also think it’s made me more confident in leading a discussion in meetings and in presenting to others.”

Amanda Paterson, MCR Mentor and Project Officer, Housing and Regeneration Services, DRS.

“I’d thought about becoming a mentor for a while. I decided to get involved after attending an information session which made me realise the real difference that I could make to the life of a young person. I think being a mentor will help me develop, particularly my leadership skills which will help me in my job.

Graeme Kelly, Mentor and Divisional Valuer, City Assessor and Electoral Registration Office, Financial Services.

“The programme definitely allows the development of personal skills in working with the young person.

The sessions can be testing, depending on how the young person is feeling on the day. Being a mentor will help to develop listening, negotiation and empowering skills in order to maintain the interest of the young person. Interacting with a young person is also taking me out of my comfort zone, dealing with situations I’m not used to. What’s essential is the ability to develop a trusting relationship. Being a mentor is a rewarding experience on many levels. I’d definitely recommend others to get involved.”

Gary Dover, Head of Planning and Strategy, Children and Families and North East Sector, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership.

“I started mentoring a young man towards the end of the last school term and I hope to continue into the new school year. MCR provide an excellent induction and support service for people who want to be mentors, with lots of training, information sessions and one-to-one support from the Pathway Co-ordinators.

Gary added: “Anyone with the motivation and interest in helping young people to achieve their aspirations can become a mentor. You don’t need to have any specialist skills or knowledge. Some of the most important factors for success are good listening skills, being non-judgemental and willing to be there for as long as the young person needs you.”

Personal Effectiveness	Providing Excellent Customer Service	Managing Change	Leadership	Delivering Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicating and Influencing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward Thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking Initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicating Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and delivering change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displaying awareness 	