

MENTORING MATTERS - ISSUE 15 - DECEMBER 2020

WHAT'S IN THIS NEWSLETTER?

Overcoming Obstacles

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE
THROUGH COVID-19

2020 Milestones

RECENT EVENTS &
ACHIEVEMENTS

Young People Stories

STORIES FROM ACROSS
THE COUNTRY



When we began 2020 and asked our mentors and partners to **be the bridge** for our young people, we could not have imagined how big or important an ask that would be. Now, as we come to the end of the year, we are more thankful than ever for the motivation, commitment and unbelievable resilience we've seen in our mentoring community and our young people.

While we've reached a number of milestones this year, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown overshadows everything. To say 2020 was challenging is an understatement; we've all been in isolation and feared the uncertainty. Our young people, who already face enormous hurdles, were separated from the support of their mentors and school and faced their own challenges with online learning. **But despite this darkness, our community lit a shining light.**

Our MCR family never gave up on our young people. When not able to meet in person, the team worked tirelessly to bring mentoring online and our mentors patiently and resiliently adapted to meeting over video call, voice call or through sending messages. This year, all of our lives were transformed, but what didn't change was the passion of our mentors. We asked you to **be the bridge** and you stepped up in ways that we couldn't have imagined. **Thank you to everyone in the MCR Community. With your help, we can't wait to help even more young people in 2021.**



12 LOCAL
AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIPS



2,500+
YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED



75
SCHOOLS NATIONALLY

Overcoming Obstacles

COMBATING DIGITAL POVERTY

For many young people, a lack of reliable IT equipment and internet connection meant being locked out from their education and support network over lockdown. We launched our **'Get Online'** programme in May to tackle this issue. With funding help from JP Morgan and the Scottish Government, **we were able to deliver 350 laptops** and data hotspots to young people across the country to help with their online learning and keep them connected to their mentors.

[Click here to read more about our coverage in the BBC](#) and [click here watch our video on how we're overcoming the digital divide.](#)



VIRTUAL MENTORING & MOVING PROCESSES ONLINE



Creating and growing relationships remained our focus. We launched virtual mentoring which allowed mentors and young people to keep meeting through Pathways Coordinator facilitated video or voice calls or through sending messages. We moved our on-boarding process - including info sessions, 1:1 conversations, and training - online. We also launched our first-ever Virtual Mentor Forums to continue engaging our mentor community.

Interested in hosting a virtual info session at your place of work? Get in touch by emailing mentor.services@mcrpathways.org

LOCKDOWN SURVEY

To fully understand young people's experiences, we ran our lockdown survey for six weeks over summer 2020. More than 1,000 young people from across the country shared their challenges with home learning, mental well-being struggles and concerns for the future. We shared our Lockdown Report with leaders in education, local and national governments and the third sector to help aid the education recovery plans and represent the voices of our young people.

[Read more about our findings and the full lockdown survey.](#)



Centre for excellence
for Children's Care and Protection

Our second report, which delves deeper into segmentation and exploring the roles of gender, age and care status on young people's experiences of lockdown, was published in CELCIS' Journal of Residential Child Care.

[You can read the full article on our website.](#)

88.8%

of young people's
sleeping patterns
were affected by
lockdown

68.2%

did no school
work during
lockdown

due to
26.7%
having caring
responsibilities

2020 Milestones

SCOTCEN RESEARCH

ScotCen

Social Research that works for society

In January, ScotCen - the Scottish arm of the UK's leading independent social research institute NatCen - published the results of their 3 year analysis on MCR Pathways Mentoring. Using internationally recognised qualitative and quantitative research methods, their report found that mentoring has a transformational impact on young people's education outcomes. This massively affects their life chances. **81.6% of mentored care-experienced pupils left school for college, university or a job**, compared with 56.3% of those who were not mentored. [Read more about the powerful impact of mentoring in the full report.](#)



87.8% achieved one or more SCQF Level 5 qualification(s), **compared with 66.8%** of their non mentored care-experienced peers.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE PARTNERSHIP



In January, Scottish Fire and Rescue became the first emergency services organisation to partner with us as Corporate Parents. For many years, the Fire Service in Glasgow have supported us and encouraged their staff to mentor and we are delighted to formally partner with them now, across the country. [Read more about this story here.](#)

BUILD BACK BETTER SERIES

Our Founder and Chair, Iain MacRitchie, wrote a series of articles, published exclusively in the Herald, where he outlined his vision of economic recovery that prioritises the voices of our most disadvantaged. In his Build Back Better series, he explores the steps governments need to take to ensure not only robust economic recovery from the 2020 COVID pandemic, but also the creation of a fairer system, where everyone is determined by their potential, not their circumstances. [You can read all the articles on our website.](#)

CARE REVIEW - THE PROMISE & MCR RESPONSE

In February, the Care Review published the most significant piece of research on care-experienced young people and the care system in generations. They interviewed more than 5,500 young people, children and adults from care backgrounds and those working in the sector to understand the systemic challenges and create recommendations for a better system. **MCR Pathways young people were interviewed by both First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and the Care Review team.**



The impact of mentoring was directly highlighted in the Care Review, stating:



“Mentoring has a significant positive impact on children and young people who receive it, with evidence that it can improve educational attainment. Schools must also be supported to encourage and develop mentoring relationships for those who would benefit.”

Read more about how we're committing to uphold & implement The Promise & continue supporting care-experienced young people to reach their potential on [our website](#).

MENTORING EXPANDS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Mentoring is proven to make a transformational impact on education outcomes and life chances. We won't stop until every young person who needs that support receives it. This year, we've made enormous strides to achieving that goal.

In January, Glasgow City Council made mentoring a permanent part of education in the city's schools, [read more about this ground-breaking partnership here](#).

In February, we partnered with Edinburgh City Council to bring mentoring to eight additional schools after a successful two year pilot at Craigmillar Community High School. [Read more about Edinburgh's expansion here](#).

In September, Aberdeen City Council also expanded on their two year pilot at St Machar Academy, bringing mentoring to five more schools in the city. [Read more about mentoring in the Granite city here](#).

In October, we announced **BIG** changes to help us reach **4,000 young people**. Graeme McEwan joined our team as CEO, where he'll work alongside our founder Iain MacRitchie to continue bringing mentoring to even more young people. We also announced our upcoming launches in Inverclyde and Perth & Kinross. [Read more on our plans for the future here](#).

Young People Stories

As we continue to expand mentoring nationally, we love hearing good news stories from all corners of the country. If you have any good news stories or want to share your success, we'd love to hear about them on the Mentor Hub. Below we have showcased a story from each area that celebrates our young people, schools and mentor successes, to read more updates and stories from your area please click below:

[Aberdeen](#) [Aberdeenshire](#) [Clackmannanshire](#) [Edinburgh](#) [Glasgow](#)
[North Ayrshire](#) [Shetland](#) [South Lanarkshire](#) [West Dunbartonshire](#)

ABERDEEN

In Aberdeen, the YAT young team banded together to keep in contact over lockdown. St Machar Academy's Coordinator set weekly challenges for her young people, from riddles to scavenger hunts!

She told us:



“One young person who wasn't able to attend any groups before lockdown has embraced the online engagement.”

ABERDEENSHIRE



We've had so many great stories from our schools in Aberdeenshire! Ashley* always aspired to work in farming and earlier this year took her first steps to making this dream a reality. **She and her mentor visited SRUC Aberdeen Campus open evening where she learned all about the different courses.**

CLACKMANNANSHIRE

Young people in Clackmannanshire are already starting to show signs of growing confidence! At one school, our PC has begun working with a pair of disengaged siblings. Keeping in contact over lockdown was a challenge, **but weekly calls soon paid off and slowly the older pupil began opening up.** Now both siblings are coming in once a week to meet with her (socially distanced) and the **older sibling has now 'officially' joined the programme and decided they want a mentor too!**



EDINBURGH

With 8 new schools in Edinburgh, this has been a year of new beginnings in the city! We've been delighted by the enthusiasm of our new volunteers, who have been signing up in droves even in spite of the pandemic. We now have **nearly 50 mentoring relationships**, with more being matched everyday - including this new pair who just started meeting in Nov.



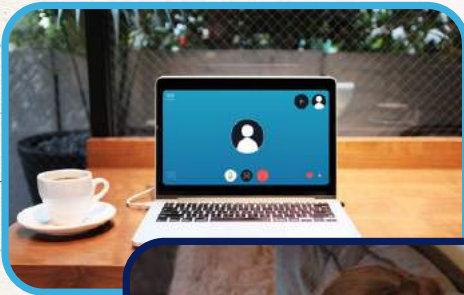
GLASGOW

It's so hard to pick just one story from across our 30 Glasgow schools! Across the city, our fabulous mentors & staff have been supporting young people to be their best, no matter what. One story really captured the power of this support.

A young person, who attended the National Theatre of Scotland, said:



"I enjoyed getting to work with other people and the whole thing, really. I learned that sometimes you need to step out of your comfort zone and just go for it! The main thing I've taken from today is that I would still want to be an actor."



Over **2,000 young people across Scotland** took part in **virtual mentoring** to keep in touch when they couldn't meet in person, helping to keep relationships strong. We've had an amazing uptake of virtual mentoring **in Glasgow, with all 30 schools** supporting the programme. The difference it has made to our young people is undeniable:

"The MCR programme has helped me more than I could ever imagine, I've had so much support off not only my mentor but my Pathways Coordinator as well. Even if it's just having a little chat once a week to see how I'm feeling. It's made such a difference to my last year at school and also made me learn a lot about myself."

NORTH AYRSHIRE

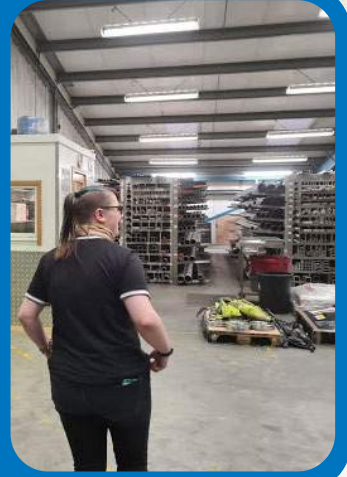


When one of North Ayrshire's school leavers was preparing her college applications, she shared with her Pastoral Care teacher that she now has the belief in herself that she can go anywhere.

The young person said that while she knew her Pastoral Care teacher was there for her; it was only after having a mentor dedicated 100% to her that she really began to realise this. The teacher was very emotional about this because it showed the power of that outside person - a mentor - reiterating everything a school does, but from a voluntary basis.

SHETLAND

Mentoring and the MCR Pathways programme have only just started working in Shetland, but in this short time our team has already begun helping young people find their passions and building relationships in the area. Ocean Kinetics, an engineering company with many clients within Shetland and Aberdeen, opened up their doors to a few of our STEM minded young people to introduce them to a career in the field.



SOUTH LANARKSHIRE

Mentoring has been having a big impact in South Lanarkshire over the past few years. One young person, Yasime, had this to share about her mentor:

“James is really easy to talk to, he doesn’t speak to me like an adult speaking to a child, it’s like I’m equal to him. I enjoy coming to see him and he has made me look at things differently, I am thinking more about what I want to do and my future because he told me about where he came from and he was just like me and he still made something of himself.”



WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

Back in January, the YWDT team took part in a Positive Post-it Note Project for **The Random Acts of Kindness Day**. S1 and S2 young people wrote positive affirmations and challenges for other young people to complete, like holding a door open for someone or leaving a cheery note on their favourite teacher’s door.

The young people also hid some post-it notes in books around the library for other young people to find when they are selecting a book.



Coming Soon in 2021

We have so many things that we can't wait to share with you in the new year from brand new partnerships, our goals for 2021, developments and reaching more young people than ever!

NEW PARTNERSHIPS

"I'm pleased to inform Parliament that the allocation and distribution of the 30 million pounds to fund local partnership activity that will support around 8,000 thousand young people... Funding will also be available to support additional opportunities delivered by the third sector including formal volunteering, new funding for in-school mentoring offered by MCR Pathways... and it will also support work to incentivise graduate internships."

Fiona Hyslop MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture.

DYW

Developing the Young Workforce



NEW DEVELOPMENTS

We'll be unveiling a new mentor matching system!

About Your Passions

We would like to know about your interests. Shared interests are a fantastic thing to kickstart a mentoring relationship, so please answer as honestly as possible. Please select up to 5 interests in the following section and rank them depending on the level of your interest.

If you have no interest in a hobby or subject, please leave that part blank.

Sports and Gaming
Please answer for up to 5 interests in this section

	Mild Interest	Medium Interest	Strong Interest
Football	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rugby	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hockey	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other team sports	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Table tennis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



And refreshing the Hub & My Mentor Journey systems!

NEW GOALS

With your support, we hope to reach 4,000 young people by the end of this school year! As highlighted in the Care Review's Promise, we want to make mentoring a right for all care-experienced young people. Look out for ways to share our campaign in the New Year!



Independent Care Review



We love sharing our young people's successes and hearing your mentoring stories!

Please keep sharing your favourite mentoring moments on your Mentor Hub. **Make sure you are following us on social media so you don't miss any of our good news stories from around the country.**

