

**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE RACE EQUALITY COUNCIL**

**JIGSAW MENTORING PARTNERSHIP  
PROJECT REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**May 2004, amended and finalised September 2004**

**by Race Equality West Midlands**

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## Section One

### The nature of mentoring

- 1.1 In modern management circles, mentoring has come to refer to relationships, usually on a one-to-one basis, aimed at supporting the learning and development of particular employee populations (eg. new recruits, high flyers or individuals from diverse backgrounds) by creating accountability for development and accessibility to developmental relationships. Mentoring programmes vary in specific objectives, degree of structure, number of participants, associated training and education, and monitoring and evaluation methods (see Kram, K.E., 1998).
- 1.2 In the context of the Jigsaw Mentoring project, a mentor is defined as ‘a trusted adviser, friend, teacher, or wise person’, while mentoring is a way of ‘helping individuals reach their potential, develop or regain self-confidence, make the most of their abilities and talents, take control of their lives, and/or increase their personal effectiveness’. The project’s client group is generally of young people aged fifteen or more: students, trainees, employees, parents or adults looking for a new direction, but mostly at a stage prior to full-time employment.
- 1.3 Mentors are usually professional adults of varying ages and social backgrounds successful in their respective occupations, who are prepared to give their services free for the duration of a year. By matching mentor to mentee, the project staff create accountability for mentee development, as well as mentee accessibility to a developmental relationship. Mentors seek to establish a relationship of mutual trust with their mentee and, through planned programmes of meetings and shared activity, to identify and address their mentee’s personal and social developmental needs.
- 1.4 Parsloe and Wray (2000), in their book *Coaching and Mentoring, practical methods to improve learning*, point out that the terms ‘coaching’ and ‘mentoring’, now in popular parlance, have a comparatively recent history and that agreement has not yet been reached on their meanings, which continue to evolve. The term ‘mentoring’ is used in a variety of contexts: in training for the professions (eg. Chartered Engineers), in connection with National Vocational Qualifications, and in preparation for corporate life.
- 1.5 Parsloe and Wray argue that mentoring has become central to a debate about the role played by life-long and vocational learning in accessing and surviving in the world of work and public life, and is now actively promoted by government schemes aimed at helping unemployed young people or single parents into work.
- 1.6 Writing in 2000, Parsloe and Wray describe how:

‘Underperforming school children .... are now being offered the services of at least 1000 full-time paid professional ‘learning mentors’ by the Department for Education and Employment .... The Home

Office is sponsoring mentoring schemes to help people with drug, alcohol, or other potential causes of crime, or re-offending. Mentoring to help tackle the issues of race, gender and cultural diversity is now sponsored by public money and also, increasingly, by employers who recognise that these are issues that can adversely affect their economic performance ....’

- 1.7 They believe that vocational and community mentoring is beginning to have a considerable impact but that it raises questions about what precisely is involved.

‘Is the vocational and community mentor intended to behave simply as a valuable impartial friend and sounding board or should they also possess expert knowledge that they are required to share? .... The answer most often given currently is to ignore the search for a uniform definition and accept what matters is that the *individuals involved in the activity understand clearly what the role means in their particular situation*. Our current research, however, has led us to the conclusion that it is more helpful to treat the emerging ‘community’ mentor as a distinctly different type of mentor and to recognise that the ‘professional and vocational qualification’ mentors have more in common with each other’.

(Parsloe and Wray, 2000, pp.9-10)

- 1.8 In the context of the Jigsaw Mentoring Project, mentors are intended to act as trusted advisers helping mentees to become more personally effective: not to impart specific vocational skills, what Parsloe and Wray term ‘community mentors’.

## **Section Two**

### **Jigsaw Mentoring Project aims and objectives**

2.1 The Jigsaw Mentoring Project aims to:

- increase the skills, confidence and capacity of its mentees in order to improve their quality of life, to empower them to participate in local decision-making affecting them.
- to obtain access to opportunities and thus to become self-reliant members of society.
- raise its mentors' awareness of social exclusion and individual disadvantage, to provide them with opportunities to support less experienced members of society and to help them achieve a wider understanding of mentees' diverse needs.

2.2 Project objectives are to:

- provide customised one-to-one support to individuals who might otherwise be unable to access mainstream provision in East Staffordshire.
- develop life skills, self esteem and confidence.
- create a pool of mentors from the local population who have been successful in their respective professions.
- establish a pool of potential mentees who might benefit from sustained one-to-one advice, guidance and support.
- provide any necessary training to mentors and mentees to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency.
- publicise success and provide information to funders and the Race Equality Council's executive, and to disseminate good practice.

2.3 Since the successful resubmission of the project for a further three years' funding by the Community Fund, objectives have been clarified. The potential mentees are no longer limited to members of the ethnic Asian or Black Caribbean population and now include white young people. The skills referred to are now more precisely referred to as 'life skills'.

## Section Three

### Project history

- 3.1 Following a successful application to the Community Fund for a three-year grant, the Jigsaw Mentoring Project was initiated by East Staffordshire Racial Equality Council (ESREC) in September 2000. After four months of intensive preparatory work involving the recruitment of staff, mentors and mentees, and the development of procedures, systems and training materials, the first group of mentees was taken on for a one-year period from January to December 2001. Further intakes of mentees followed for the periods March 2002 to January 2003, and January 2003 to October 2003. The first three years of Community Fund grant came to an end in August 2003.
- 3.2 ESREC was fortunate to secure a further three-year grant from the Community Fund for the period September 2003 to August 2006. Supported by the new funding, a fourth group of mentees was recruited in February 2004.

<b>Duration of recent Jigsaw Mentoring programmes</b>			
<b>Mentee Intake</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Duration (months)</b>
1	Jan 2001	Dec 2001	12
2	March 2002	Jan 2003	11
3	Jan 2003	Oct 2003	10
4	Feb 2004	Oct 2004	9

#### **Information on previous mentee intakes**

##### *First intake, 2001*

- 3.3 In 2001, 47 mentees were taken on, the majority resident in Burton, but some from surrounding areas or with an address in Derby. Three quarters were male, one quarter female. As, at this stage, funding for the project had been allocated on the basis of an application specifying only ethnic African-Caribbean and Asian beneficiaries, the intake consisted respectively of 55% of the former and 45% of the latter. A large majority of mentees was 16 or 17 years old, a few aged 18 to 20, with just one or two older people in their 20s or 30s.
- 3.4 Referrals were mainly from schools and college, in the following numbers and proportions:

<b>Table 2</b>		
<b>Institutions referring mentees in 2001</b>		
<b>2001 intake - school/college</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
De Ferrers High	16	34
Paget High	11	23
Abbot Beyne High	8	17
Burton Further Education College	6	13
Not specified	6	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100</b>

*Second intake, 2002*

3.5 In 2002, there were 56 mentees, all but one resident in Burton. Two thirds were male, one third female, an improvement on the gender imbalance of 2001. Again, beneficiaries were from black and minority ethnic groups, this time recorded in the following ethnic categories:

<b>Table 3</b>		
<b>Ethnicity of 2002 mentee intake</b>		
<b>2002 intake - ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
African Caribbean	10	18
Bangladeshi	3	5
Dual heritage (mixed race)	16	29
Indian	2	4
Pakistani	24	44
Not recorded	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

3.6 Of particular interest is the size of the mixed-race category, second only to the Pakistani.

<b>Table 4</b>		
<b>Age distribution of 2002 mentee intake</b>		
<b>2002 intake - age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
15	24	43
16	16	29
17	5	3
18	3	5
19	1	2
20+	4	7
Not recorded	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100</b>

- 3.7 Nearly three quarters of mentees in 2002 were 15 or 16 years of age, but there was a sprinkling of older people.
- 3.8 Of the schools or college recorded, De Ferrers, Paget, Abbot Beyne and Burton College once more featured prominently, but with the addition of Stretton Brook School.

## Section Four

### The third mentee intake, 2003

- 4.1 Fuller information has been made available for the review of the 2003 intake and mentee programme.
- 4.2 In 2003, 103 mentees were taken on to the programme. A large majority was resident in Burton, Staffordshire, but other mentees came from nearby Branston, Tutbury and Yoxhall, as well as Derby, Melbourne and Swadlincote in Derbyshire. As in 2002, the intake was just under two thirds male (63%) and just over a third female (37%).
- 4.3 Unlike in the previous year, however, in response to self-evident need, steps had been taken to make the mentoring facility available to all sections of the local community. The ethnic breakdown in 2003 was as follows:

<b>Ethnicity of 2003 intake</b>		
<b>2003 intake - ethnicity</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
African Caribbean	21	20
Bangladeshi	1	1
Chinese	1	1
Indian	2	2
Mixed race	21	20
Pakistani	27	26
White	30	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100</b>

- 4.4 Of interest, once again, is the size and proportion of mentees of mixed race, whose presence had not been acknowledged in the first grant application.

<b>Table 6</b>		
<b>Age distribution of 2003 mentee intake</b>		
<b>2002 intake - age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
13	1	1
14	3	3
15	31	30
16	35	34
17	19	18
18	5	5
19	1	1
20+	5	5
Not recorded	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100</b>

4.5 Two thirds of mentees in 2003 were aged 15 or 16, but unlike in 2002, there was a higher proportion of 17 year olds. Given that most mentees were of school age, it was to be expected that most were still attending school. But 7% were attending college, 15% were unemployed, and 3% had full-time jobs. A further 4% had part-time jobs of various kinds.

4.6 There is little ethnic difference in full and part-time employment: 7% of Asian, 8% of black and 8% of white mentees were employed either full-time or part-time. There are no data currently available on the participants' comparative success in gaining employment at the end of the mentoring programme, or as a direct result of the experience.

<b>Table 7</b>		
<b>Institutions referring mentees in 2003</b>		
<b>2001 intake - school/college</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
Abbot Beyne High	22	21
De Ferrers High	22	21
College/university	14	14
Paget High	35	34
Other	6	6
Not specified	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100</b>

- 4.7 Most mentees were referred by local high schools: a third by Paget High, a fifth by Abbot Beyne, and a fifth by De Ferrers.

### **Reasons for referral**

- 4.8 From the claimed and apparent benefits of the mentoring programme, it might be inferred that the facility should be available to, and open for, all suitable persons to make use of, but this was not the case. Young people could avail themselves of the facility through self-referral, or being referred by others, usually by staff at the local schools participating in the scheme.
- 4.9 From the data supplied, reasons for referral were given for 71 per cent of the 2003 intake: for just under a third, no reason was offered. 'Self-referral' was sometimes given by itself as a reason for referral but, on occasion, it was accompanied by a supplementary reason. Just under one quarter of the mentees were recorded as self-referring.
- 4.10 The most frequently occurring reason for referral to the mentoring scheme was for underachievement at school, followed by difficulties of an emotional or behavioural nature. ('Self-referral', while offered as a reason, is an explanation of process, rather than a reason in its own right.) Career development was another important reason offered. Other reasons for referral were lack of self-confidence, motivational issues, and special needs.
- 4.11 In any more detailed examination of the process of referral, it would be important to explore in far more detail how young people learn about the mentoring project, their expectations of it, what institutional sanctions or positive persuasion are involved, and the motivation of those who 'self-refer'. From the reasons offered for referral, however, certain conclusions can be drawn.
- 4.12 The mentoring project serves mainly young people who are underachieving in the education system and/or have emotional, behavioural or motivational problems, special educational needs, or suffer from lack of self-confidence (60% of referrals).
- 4.13 The reasons given for referral place the mentoring scheme very firmly in the educational tradition of remedial and compensatory education projects, and these reasons for referral have to be taken into account when judging the success of the outcomes. In the main, the mentees are young people who have not benefited, or are judged not to have benefited sufficiently, from their ten, eleven, or more, years of compulsory schooling. The scheme may be suitable for all manner of student but, in reality, it is targeted at those falling into the referral categories listed above.

## **Referral agencies**

4.14 A list of eight referral agencies was provided by Jigsaw, and all eight were contacted. Six responded to the questionnaire, while two others claimed, when chased, that completing the questionnaire was not a priority. Agencies responding were:

Schools:        Abbot Beyne  
                      Stretton Brook

Other agencies:        Connexions  
                              Pakistani Centre  
                              Probation  
                              Social Services

4.15 Between them, these six agencies in 2003-04 had referred 36 people to the scheme. Of the six, four said they would refer again in 2004-2005, one said the matter was still under discussion, and one said it would not refer again.

4.16 The main reasons given for referral were as follows:

- poor school attendance
- behaviour problems
- under achievement
- extra support given
- to help young black people with their education and self esteem.

4.17 Referral agencies were asked as to whether the young people referred to the scheme had benefited. Responses were varied, although most agreed that some of those referred had benefited. Other comments were:

- The ones in most need dropped out.
- Benefits are not immediately apparent but emerge gradually.
- There is no benefit. The scheme does not provide added value.

4.18 Referral agencies were then asked how they knew mentees had benefited. The following response were received:

- They participated in and enjoyed the activities.
- They have had a wider social circle of young people and adults opened up to them.
- There have been perceivable improvements in attitude and behaviour.
- Word of mouth, feedback and parents' comments.

4.19 Most referral agency respondents declared themselves satisfied with their experience of the project and made positive comments about the project and project staff, in particular, praising the project manager and project staff.

4.20 Recommendations for improvement were as follows:

- The project needs expanding to help more young people.
- A wider spectrum of mentors should be provided and made accessible to a wider section of non-white mentees.
- More successful ways of recruiting mentors need to be found: there aren't enough at the moment.
- Staff should be better trained to deal with youngsters with learning difficulties.
- Staff should visit schools more often to meet and get to know mentees in their own environment.
- There is room for improvement in the referral of clients on to Connexions.

## **Section Five**

### **Mentors for the third intake of mentees**

- 5.1 The Jigsaw Mentoring Project has 108 mentors on its books, to whom it matches its mentees. From the data supplied for 2003-04, approximately 70 mentors were operating, all matched with a mentee, on a one-to-one basis, except for two instances where a mentor was matched with more than one mentee name.
- 5.2 Mentors were drawn from a wide range of occupants, many from professional and managerial backgrounds. Examples of occupations listed were:
- air hostess
  - commercial manager
  - company director
  - conference manager
  - Connexions officer
  - education manager
  - engineer
  - fire service officer
  - human resources manager
  - insurance broker
  - journalist
  - local authority officer
  - musician
  - police officers of different ranks
  - public relations officer
  - radio presenter
  - sales manager
  - social worker
  - training and development officer.

### **Matching of mentees to mentors**

- 5.3 Just over half (56%) of mentors was male (and 44% female) as compared with the mentee intake of just under two thirds male (63%) and just over a third female (37%). Most mentees were gender-matched with mentors, male to female, the discrepancy in proportion being accommodation by allocating a small number of male mentees to female mentors, but never the other way round. This attempt at gender-matching was a deliberate project policy.
- 5.4 Nearly two thirds of mentors (63%) were white, a quarter (26%) black African and/or Caribbean and one tenth (10%) of Pakistan or Indian origin. Given the history of the project and the ethnic make-up of mentees (30% white, 20% black African and/or Caribbean, and 28% Pakistani or Indian), there could never be a full colour match between the ethnicity of individual mentees and mentors even if it were thought desirable, but the actual relationships indicated

that a somewhat high proportion of ethnic matching had been achieved by accident or design than might have been expected to have occurred randomly.

- 5.5 Most white mentees (90%) had white mentors. Of African-Caribbean mentees, slightly more than 50 per cent had African-Caribbean mentors. Of Pakistani and Indian mentees, 44% had a Pakistani or Indian mentor. One quarter of mixed-race mentees had African-Caribbean mentors, the other three quarters white mentors. Unsurprisingly, given the small number of Pakistani and Indian mentees, no whites or African-Caribbean mentees appeared to have a Pakistani or Indian mentor.
- 5.6 The project manager explained that the original proposal had assumed that there were major psychological benefits to be gained for mentees from matching them ethnically to mentors but, from the start, there had been a shortage of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, or Indian mentors.
- 5.7 It was obvious, however, that the project was still grounded to some extent on a theory of the psychological benefit and improved 'self-image' to be gained from linking black and minority ethnic mentees to successful black and minority ethnic mentors or 'role models'. It wasn't clear, however, whether project managers felt that the same theory applied to white or mixed-race youngsters: would they also benefit from being matched with prestigious black or Asian role models, or had their role models to be white to be (more) effective?
- 5.8 No independent psychological evidence had been gathered on the comparative self-images of individuals before they became mentees, or after they had completed the programme.
- 5.9 All mentors had undertaken a training course in mentoring, accredited by the Open College Network.

## **Section Six**

### **Approaches to the evaluation of the Jigsaw Mentoring Project**

- 6.1 The Jigsaw Mentoring Project has been evaluated and reviewed at regular intervals since it took on mentees in January 2001.
- 6.2 The first evaluation was undertaken in September 2001 by UBEST services consultants, using evidence from a documentation review, mentee and mentor questionnaires, and in-depth interviews. The report attempted to evaluate the impact of the Jigsaw Mentoring project on mentors and mentees and set out a series of recommendations under the following headings: aims and objectives, organisational structure, budget, operating policies and procedures, recruitment, selection and induction of mentees, recruitment, selection and training of mentors, matching of mentees to mentors, mentee-mentor relationship, on-going support, and monitoring and evaluation.
- 6.3 Most recommendations have since been acted upon including the proposal that the programme should address the needs of the whole community, not only those of Asian and Black Caribbean young people.
- 6.4 UBEST concluded that there had been improvement in mentees' self-confidence, decision-making skills, and the setting of goals, and that the Jigsaw Mentoring Partnership was providing a dynamic programme evident in the participants' contributions and personal growth.
- 6.5 The second evaluation was completed in December 2002, two years after the start of the Jigsaw Project, by Business and Project Management Services of Atlow, Derbyshire (TMR Court). Information was gathered from project and organisation documentation, questionnaires, structured interviews with mentees and mentors and informal discussions with project and ESREC staff. Recommendations included a set of questions to be addressed by project staff (eg. is the acceptance age range for mentees satisfactory?), the production of a business plan to secure further funding and take the project forward, and the setting up of a strategic planning group to ensure the project's longer-term survival.
- 6.6 Once more, the evaluation was extremely positive, with mentee self-confidence judged to be improving, mentor commitment high, and assessment processes for mentees and mentors working well. It was felt, however, that the one-year life of the mentor/mentee relationship was of insufficient length to satisfy the needs of some of the mentees.
- 6.7 This review by Race Equality West Midlands constitutes the third in a series of evaluations and is not intended merely to reproduce their findings, but to gather and present such data as is available on the success of the project, to suggest how it might better be able to demonstrate the important contribution it is making to the development of young people's skills, confidence and

capacity, and to make the case that it should be supported in the future from mainstream education and training funding sources.

- 6.8 In this context, the evaluation was conceived of not merely as an assessment of mentor and mentee satisfaction and commitment and a test of whether the project was well run, but as an objective appraisal of the extent to which the Jigsaw Mentoring Approach made a difference to the lives and achievement of the mentees for whom it was intended.
- 6.9 The degree of mentee progression, however, is difficult to measure even when performance measures have been agreed upon and the relevant comparative data (before mentoring commences and after it has been completed) have been comprehensively gathered. Ideally, from a research point of view, a control group of similar young people who had not been mentored would have enabled the evaluator, by making a comparison, to judge the added value of the mentoring programme, but this kind of information was simply not available nor obtainable within the financial and time restraints.
- 6.10 While, then, it is accepted that the hard data conclusively to demonstrate the project's worth are not currently in place, the main worth of this exercise is to highlight, in the attendant recommendations, the need for their systematic collection for any future evaluation.

## Section Seven

### The third evaluation exercise

7.1 Drawing on the Adult Learning Inspectorate and Office for Standards in Education's common inspection framework for inspecting post-16 education and training<sup>1</sup>, the current review involved a request for information on the following aspects of the East Staffordshire Jigsaw mentoring Project:

(i) *How will the mentees achieve/progress*

- progress towards fulfilling their goals and potential.
- preparation for participation in the workplace and community.
- progress to relevant further or higher education, training or employment.
- development of key skills and attitude to lifelong learning.
- capacity for working independently and collaboratively.
- regular and punctual attendance.

(ii) *How effective is mentoring?*

- mentors' overall level of knowledge and skills.
- mentors' awareness of what is expected of them: clarity of objective.
- evidence of mentoring skills.
- developing of mentoring plans.
- working relationships with mentees.
- mentees' evaluation of mentoring.
- use of mentoring materials and methods.
- mentees' acquisition of confidence, knowledge, skills, positive attitudes.
- mentees' interest in their work.

(iii) *How is the quality of the mentoring and the experience of the mentees affected by resources?*

- suitability and experience of mentors.
- availability of learning resources.
- safe and healthy environment.
- use of resources to promote learning.
- effects of organisation and management backup.

(iv) *How effective are the assessment and monitoring of mentees' progress and destinations?*

- availability of assessment information.
- how methods are assessed and monitored.
- suitability and adequacy of assessment.

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<sup>1</sup> This was deemed to be the most appropriate document, even though some mentees were under 16 years of age.

- fairness, accuracy and regularity of assessment.
- recording of achievements.
- recording of destinations/outcomes.
- how partner organisations are informed of mentees' progress.
- how mentees themselves, parents and/or employees are informed about mentor's progress.

(v) ***How well does the mentoring programme meet the perceived needs and interests of the mentees?***

- the match between mentees' needs, aspirations and potential and what the programme offers.
- how far the programme meets external requirements and expectations.
- mentees' access to a range of learning and other opportunities.
- the inclusiveness of the programme, ensuring equality of access, opportunity and outcome.
- opportunities for broadening experience and enhancing personal development through the variety of enrichment activities.
- how the programme takes into account community and employer needs.
- how the programme promotes race equality and community cohesion.

(vi) ***How well are the mentees guided and supported?***

- the quality and accessibility of information, advice and guidance to mentees in relation to education and employment opportunities and career progression.
- diagnosis and provision for mentee learning needs.
- access to counselling and specialist support on personal issues.
- sensitivity of guidance and support to race, cultural and gender differences.

(vii) ***How effective are project leadership and management in providing for the needs of mentees?***

- how well leaders and managers set a clear direction and maintained high standards of mentorship.
- how well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled.
- how project management relates to the governance of the organisation.
- how effectively and efficiently resources are deployed.

7.2 The responses received to these questions, the presentation of further available information, and the evaluator's comments are dealt with in turn below.

(i) ***How well do mentees achieve/progress?***

7.3 Mentees are encouraged to work both independently and collaboratively through a variety of workshops covering various aspects of personal development, team building and problem-solving. The workshops are also structured to help the mentees develop a sense of responsibility towards the wider community, and become aware of the consequences of their actions. Mentees are helped to focus on their goals through forward-planning sessions

with their personal mentor and through discussion and advice from the Jigsaw team.

- 7.4 There is plenty of impressionistic evidence that the encouragement, collective workshops and personal planning occur as described and are well received and well thought of by the mentees. No doubt, some mentees develop a greater sense of social responsibility and of the positive and negative consequences of their various actions.
- 7.5 To illustrate and quantify progression, or the likelihood of its occurring, further data are required. For example, it would be useful to know (i) what proportion of those initially referred or self-referred for mentoring was matched with a mentor, (ii) went on to meet regularly with their initially-allocated mentor, (iii) completed the mentoring programme, and (iv) continued after completion to maintain contact with their mentor.
- 7.6 Mentors were asked about their knowledge of why their mentee had been referred to the scheme. Most knew where their mentee had been referred from, but only a minority knew why the mentee had been referred. Those who claimed they were aware of the reason for referral gave explanations, such as:
- excluded from school.
  - general bad behaviour.
  - the mentee felt that he hadn't the same opportunities as everyone else.
  - lacked confidence in their abilities.
- 7.7 From data supplied by the project manager, 114 young people were referred or referred themselves in 2003 to receive mentoring, of which 103 or 90 per cent were matched with a mentor. Of the 103 mentees who embarked on the scheme, 10 per cent failed to attend, or withdrew before completion.
- 7.8 In assessing the programme, it would probably be worth distinguishing between the development of (i) basic life skills and discipline (such as attendance, punctuality, presentability and courtesy), (ii) social skills (such as contribution to discussion or team work) and (iii) basic academic skills (literacy numeracy and IT).
- 7.9 Some measure, however rudimentary, at commencement and at completion, would provide useful supporting evidence of progression. Even a comparison of mentees' goals and ambitions, career or otherwise, at start and finish, might provide stronger support for the assertion that mentees had benefited from their mentoring sessions.
- (ii) *How effective is the mentoring?*
- 7.10 Each mentor, as has already been described, undergoes an Open College Network accredited training programme. Through question and answer at the

end of each session, the mentors' level of understanding about the mentoring process can be determined. In the training sessions, it is made clear through examples what is within the mentors' remit and what would be regarded as beyond its boundaries. Support for mentors is provided, if requested, by members of the Jigsaw team, who keep abreast of current developments in mentoring through attendance at the National Monitoring Network conference and through reading relevant literature.

- 7.11 The mentor and the mentee develop their own working relationship and mentoring plans, based on the needs of the mentee. Mentees' acquisition of confidence, knowledge, skills and attitudes will this year be assessed through a workshop evaluation form and exit interview.
- 7.12 Data kept on mentors include name, address, sex, ethnicity, profession and place of work. Most mentors on the books of the project are managers and professionals, or in positions of responsibility and public trust. No tabulated data of their overall level of qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience or involvement in providing education, training or human resource management have been made available to the evaluator, but their suitability for mentoring is overwhelmingly confirmed by their preparedness to volunteer their time free of charge for extended periods, their solid championing of their mentees well beyond the call of duty, their sound working relationships with mentees, and the mentees' positive evaluation of the mentoring received. The values that the mentors bring to their work are illustrated by their volunteering and long-term commitment to what at times can be a demanding and stressful exercise.
- 7.13 REWM undertook a sample survey of mentors, selecting just over 25% to question them on their contact with mentees.
- 7.14 Mentors reported that initially they met their mentees on a weekly basis, declining to fortnightly as the year progressed, but frequency of meeting varied greatly. One mentor reported meeting a mentee three times a week during the life of the project, but this was an exception: most mentors reported meeting on a weekly basis (almost in equal proportions), with the least frequent sequence of meetings given as monthly.
- 7.15 Mentors were asked whether their mentees always turned up to meet them on time or as arranged. The majority (60%) reported that they did. Those that reported failure to meet, or lateness, pointed out that the meeting was not always a mentee priority, that mentees forewarned them that they would not attend, or were apologetic when they were late or did not come.
- 7.16 Mentors arranged or participated in various activities with their mentees. The most frequently mentioned are listed in table 8.

<b>Table 8</b>	
<b>Activities arranged by mentors for/with mentees</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Number</b>
Activities arranged by Jigsaw	28
Fundraising for charity	6
Meetings at mentors' place of work	22
Sport/leisure activities	66
Work experience	17
(Mentors often mentioned more than one activity)	

(iii) *How is the quality of the mentoring and the experience of the mentees affected by resources?*

7.17 Much of what has already been said about the suitability and experience of mentors amounts to a positive assessment of mentoring resources. All mentors are subject to a Criminal Records check, and two character references are obtained. Mentors are expected to undergo accredited training.

7.18 The matching process takes into account the experience and skills of the mentor in relation to the needs of the mentee. Social networking between mentors aims to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, skills and experience. The Jigsaw team disseminates relevant information on mentoring and the project itself, and relevant learning resources are made available on site at the Jigsaw base in Burton. The short mentor's handbook provides an excellent introduction to mentoring, the things to do and the things not to do, and says very clearly 'think of your mentee as a person, not a problem'.

7.19 Mentees have access to school and college resources and are encouraged to make use of agencies such as Connexions. The Jigsaw Project staff monitor mentor-mentee relationships on an ongoing basis and act, when required, as advocates for mentees.

7.20 Health and safety are primary considerations in all monitoring arrangements, whether individual and collective. Health and safety are primary considerations in all monitoring arrangements, whether individual and collective. Health and safety guidelines are issues to all mentors at the start of the relationship and there are periodic checks to ensure that they are being adhered to. This is particularly important if mentors arrange for mentees to visit their place of work, or to participate in some element of work experience.

7.21 Currently, it is not easy to evaluate precisely what mentoring or learning resources are required by, or available to mentors or mentees. It might be worth conducting an audit among both mentors and mentees of what they consider to be useful resources, or resources they might wish to see deployed

to improve their work. In addition, it might be helpful to produce a list of existing mentoring resources for all new mentors.

7.22 While there may be a cross-over between resources for mentor use and resources for mentee use, more could be invested in information technology and learning materials to be used and accessed directly by mentees. In consideration of the importance of the mentor/mentee relationship, some investment might be made in improving electronic communications, for example, emailing or text messaging between matched individuals.

(iv) *How effective are the assessment and monitoring of mentees' progress and destinations?*

7.23 Mentees' suitability for the programme is assessed on the basis of the information provided on the school referral form and discussion with teachers and with prospective mentees and parents. Reasons for referral have been summarised for the third intake and are set out in table 8. During the mentoring programme, the agencies that have made referrals (mainly schools) are kept informed on a quarterly basis of the progress on the mentoring programme of those they have referred.

7.24 In an attempt to assess the benefit of the mentoring, mentors were asked whether they believed their mentee had benefited from the contact they had had with them. Overwhelmingly (95%), mentors thought that mentees had benefited. Mentors believed that mentees had benefited from their input in the following ways:

<b>Table 9</b>	
<b>Mentors' perception of the benefit of their input to mentees</b>	
<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Frequency of mention (%)</b>
Assistance with career goals	11
Improved behaviour	11
Improved school work	11
Improved communication skills	5
Greater focus/mentee better orientated	17
Advantage of role model able to give advice beyond immediate circle of friends and family	17
Increased self-confidence	22
Don't know	5

7.25 Mentors also believed that mentees had been changed for the better by the experience, and attributed to the outcomes set out in table 10 to the mentoring input.

<b>Table 10</b>	
<b>Mentors' perception of how mentees had been changed by the mentoring experience</b>	
<b>Changes</b>	<b>Frequency of mention (%)</b>
Secured a job	5
Focused career aspirations	20
Improved study methods	5
Communication skills improved	5
Increased maturity	5
Greater focus/awareness	25
Increase in self-confidence	25
Responsibility assumed for their actions	5
Broadened horizons	5

7.26 All mentors rated the Jigsaw scheme positively, either of value (33%) or of great value (66%). There was no dissent.

7.27 Spontaneous comments received from mentors on the worth of the project were:

- Very beneficial. It bridged the gap between young people and adults.
- Very well run and user-friendly.
- The project is always open to creative ideas and further improvement.
- Has a relaxed and uplifting environment.
- A pity there isn't more funding available so that more people could benefit.

7.28 Despite this attempt at assessing benefit, there is no formal way of assessing mentees' progress during the course of the mentoring programme, although a record of mentees' regular contact with, and attendance at meetings with, mentors at agreed times over a period of months might provide a useful, if basic, performance measure. Since the evaluation exercise began, steps have been put in place to record the outcomes of the mentoring programme and destinations of mentees.

7.29 Measures of progress might usefully be related to the original reasons for referral. Thus, if a mentee were to be referred for underachievement, evidence of greater-than-expected achievement would be relevant, whereas if s/he were

to be referred for lack of motivation or truancy, evidence of regular attendance would need to be highlighted.

7.30 Many of the comments made in paragraph 7.7 are pertinent to this section too. If the programme is to conclusively demonstrate its worth, Jigsaw mentoring staff will need to invest far greater effort in gathering evidence of individual mentee progress.

7.31 The advantages of mentoring could also be revealed by simultaneously examining the comparative performance of a control group of non-participants with similar characteristics to the mentees, although the ethics of such an exercise would need careful consideration.

(v) ***How well does the mentoring programme meet the perceived needs and interests of the mentees?***

7.32 Jigsaw staff make much of the fact that the mentoring programme is ‘mentee-led’ and is constructed around the needs of the mentees. The mentees are expected to agree to participate and, indeed, some of them are classed as ‘self-referrals’.

7.33 Equality of opportunity, ethnicity and cultural background are taken into account at all stages of the mentoring process and consideration is given to the desirability, or otherwise, of allocating ethnically or culturally-matched mentors. The programme places great store on creating mutual respect between participants and seeks to promote cultural awareness and community cohesion.

7.34 Workshops are also arranged to address mentee need. Social activities, residential courses and workshops with external trainers are organised and form part of the total programme. Mentees record high levels of satisfaction with the social activities and residential courses.

7.35 Jigsaw staff work closely with colleagues at Burton College, in Connexions, and other relevant agencies, to provide a seamless personal development service for mentees.

7.36 Further audit work should be undertaken to establish in more detail how the mentees perceive the Jigsaw Mentoring programme, what they seek to obtain from it and what they feel their needs to be. While this process is, to some extent, accommodated in the friendly, open and democratic way in which the project operates, such are the reasons for referral, that this information might not always be easy to ascertain.

(vi) ***How well are the mentees guided and supported?***

7.37 Guidance and support relating to the Jigsaw scheme is best thought of in four stages: (i) pre-mentoring referral, (ii) mentee-mentor matching, (iii) the ongoing mentoring process, and (iv) preparation for mentee autonomy and independence. There is a recognition by the Jigsaw team of the varying

personnel involved and the different skills and techniques required at each stage of the process.

- 7.38 Stage (i) is mainly initiated by school staff working in partnership with the Jigsaw team, using the specially designed referral forms and agreed referral criteria. Stage (ii) is undertaken by the Jigsaw team, operating to a set of guidelines for successfully matching mentee to an appropriate mentor. Responsibility for stage (iii) rests with the trained mentor, supported and advised by the Jigsaw team, while stage (iv) involves Jigsaw staff and mentors preparing mentees carefully for their life beyond the project.
- 7.39 Currently, there is little direct information on which to evaluate the quality of the guidance and support given to mentees, but judging by the levels of retention reported, the regular contact maintained, and mentee expression of satisfaction, the guidance and support is appreciated to such an extent that stage (iv), cutting the umbilical cord with the project, has proved more difficult than expected. (Hence, the recommendation in one evaluation report that consideration be given to extending the arrangements for some mentees for a further year!)
- 7.40 The success of the mentoring experience, however, must surely be judged on the degree of autonomy and independence achieved by the mentee. Emphatically, the project is not about creating a long-term dependency relationship. One measure of quality of guidance and support received must rest in the successful conclusion of stage (iv).
- (viii) *How effective are project leadership and management in providing for the needs of mentees?*
- 7.41 The evaluator was impressed by what he saw of the management of the Jigsaw project. Financial, human resource, project, quality assurance and diversity management systems were all in place and functioning efficiently at every visit. All requests for information were politely and promptly met.
- 7.42 Mentors were asked whether they felt that they had been given sufficient support in their mentoring role by the Jigsaw project team. All but one confirmed that they had.
- 7.43 Mentors spontaneously volunteered the following comments about Jigsaw staff:
- The project staff are always ready to assist.
  - The project manager is able and committed.
  - The project manager runs the project perfectly.
- 7.44 Jigsaw staff were purposive in their work and related warmly to one another and to the visitors frequenting the office, many of them mentors or mentees.

There was self-evident enthusiasm for the objectives of the project and an eagerness to provide only the very best service for the mentees.

- 7.45 Great store is placed on treating each mentee as an individual, of equal worth to everyone else involved in the project. As the mentor handbook urges, a mentee should be thought of as a person, not a problem. This respect for the mentee was followed through consistently.
- 7.46 All mentees on the project have their own individual mentor who acts as advocate and champion for them. Each mentee has the same access to social activities, residential workshops, staff time and quality of mentoring.
- 7.47 Prejudice and discrimination are not tolerated and if instances arise they are dealt with, with efforts made to get at the roots of the problem. Community cohesion is promoted sensitively, through cross-cultural matching and the representation of all Burton's major ethnic groups on the programme.
- 7.48 Core funding does not cover the cost of additional support activities which play an essential part in developing the mentoring relationship. As a consequence, additional funding has constantly to be sought to maintain these activities. Each funding stream is intended to sustain a particular part of the Jigsaw Mentoring Programme and can only be used for the purpose for which it was given. Current funding arrangements have set limits to the scope and development of the mentoring initiative.
- 7.49 Mentors were asked whether they had any suggestions for improving the project. The following comments were selected as being the most salient.
- Employers should value the importance of mentoring more by allowing mentees to visit mentors' place of work.
  - More information should be provided to mentors on the background of their mentee.
  - Progress checks should be made more regularly, with greater levels of contact between project, mentor and mentee.
  - Jigsaw should organise more events of greater variety for the mentees.
  - It would be beneficial to have smaller groups on trips organised by Jigsaw.
  - The service should be publicised more widely so young people in desperate need of support are made aware of the service and encouraged to make contact.

## **Summary**

- 7.50 The project is popular with mentees and mentors alike and well thought of by all those associated with it: the schools, other public authorities, the local communities, minority ethnic groups, race equality council members, and

parents. While the achievement and progression of mentees can safely be assumed, there is ample scope for developing more formal means of measuring improvement in the performance of mentees and of the success of the project.

- 7.51 Mentors are expected to undertake an accredited training programme and most of them have done so. Most mentors are managers and professionals and/or in positions of responsibility and public trust. They are volunteers who give their time freely. Further systematic data need to be collected, however, on the effectiveness of their input.
- 7.52 The Jigsaw Mentoring team are able to provide resources for both mentors and mentees. Mentees also have access to the resources of other agencies. More systematic listing and dissemination of the mentoring resources available to both mentors and mentees would usefully augment existing facilities.
- 7.53 Mentees' suitability for the programme is assessed on the basis of the information provided on the school referral form and discussion with teachers, mentees and their parents. Further measures need to be put in place to monitor and assess mentees' progress and destinations.
- 7.54 Mentees record high levels of satisfaction with the mentoring programme. The ethnicity and cultural background of mentees is taken into account. Further audit work should be undertaken to establish in more detail how the mentees perceive the Jigsaw Mentoring programme, what they seek to obtain from it, and what they feel their needs to be.
- 7.55 Mentees are given guidance and support at four stages: pre-mentoring referral, mentee-mentor matching, the ongoing mentoring process and preparation for autonomy and independence. While, circumstantially, guidance and support seem to be excellent, there is little direct evidence on which to evaluate their quality.
- 7.56 Project leadership and management were effective and efficient in providing for mentee need. Mentees are treated equally. Any manifestation of prejudice or discrimination is firmly addressed. Funding for the project comes with conditions which have to be met at the same time as having to prioritise the needs of the mentees.

## **Section Eight**

### **Recommendations**

- 8.1 To gather ethnic monitoring data on mentees and mentors, using the standard CRE-recommended ethnic monitoring categories, and to present this in tabulated form that can be readily accessed by funders, managers, the general public, project evaluators, mentors and mentees.
- 8.2 To compile aggregated management information on reasons for referrals, institutions making referrals, reasons for non-referral, project retention rates, and progression by age, gender and ethnicity.
- 8.3 To put into place systems for gathering information on mentees at induction and completion to measure and demonstrate individual achievement and progression and the value added by the mentoring programme.
- 8.4 When attempting to measure progression, to distinguish between improvements in (i) basic life skills, (ii) basic social skills and (iii) basic academic skills, and to compare the project's contribution to each of these.
- 8.5 To provide aggregated tabulated management information on mentors' qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience and involvement in providing education, training or human resource management.
- 8.6 To provide a more detailed description of the principles and process employed (i) in referral of individuals selected as suitable for mentoring and (ii) when matching mentors to mentees.
- 8.7 To include health and safety guidelines in the Jigsaw Mentoring Partnership pack (or handbook) for mentors.
- 8.8 To conduct an audit of both mentors and mentees as to what resources they think might contribute to the mentoring relationship, or to the mentee's personal development, to include information technology and electronic communications.
- 8.9 To compile a list of the local agencies and sources of support and resources which mentees might easily access.
- 8.10 To produce aggregated tabulated management information on mentor-mentee contact, attendance and/or time keeping.
- 8.11 To consider relating measures of progression to primary reasons for referral in order to demonstrate improvement in initial performance.
- 8.12 To undertake a regular on-going audit of how mentees perceive the mentoring programme, what they seek to gain from it, and what they feel their needs to be.

- 8.13 To clarify and restate the Jigsaw project's policy on gender and ethnic matching of mentee to mentor.
- 8.14 To produce a comprehensive account of the different techniques and skills that are utilised at the four stages of the mentoring process: pre-mentoring referral, mentee-mentor matching, the ongoing mentoring process, and preparation for autonomy and independence.
- 8.15 To produce comprehensive data on the post-mentoring destinations of the mentees.
- 8.16 To increase the resources available for, and to devote more staff time to, the monitoring of mentee progression and the production of project information for evidence-based decision-making.

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