

**Social Services for Children**  
**Family & Adolescent Support Team**  
**Volunteer Mentor Service (VMS)**

***Supporting Young People and Enhancing Their Life Opportunities***

The Volunteer Mentor Service has continued to develop during 2011. Volunteer Support is provided for Children in Need, Looked after Children, Children with Disabilities and Young People who are leaving care. The age range for referral is 13 - 19 (up to 24 if leaving care). The service will accept referrals outside of this age range if we are satisfied that we can safely and appropriately support the child. All referrals for the Volunteer Mentor Service are now made Via Paris. Referrals are accepted if there are volunteers available or likely to be available within the next two months.

In October 2011, the Coordinator's post increased from 18.5 to 30 hours per week. This has decreased the length of time between a referral being allocated to the service and a volunteer being introduced to a young person.

The focus for the business plan for 2012- 2013 is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the service delivered. Our aim is to speed up our processes and create systems that enable us to measure the effectiveness of the intervention. Please refer to Business Plan for details.

Number of young people being supported by a Volunteer (DEC 2011) People looked after – 11)	21 (Young)
Number of young people allocated to VMS awaiting Match (Jan 2012)	4
Number of young people who have had a mentor in 2011	30
Number of 'matches' ended in 2011	9
Of the 21 young people currently being supported;	
3 have had a mentor for over 12months	
5 have had a mentor for 6-12 months	
13 have had a mentor for less than 6 months	
Number of volunteers attached to Volunteer Mentor Service (DEC 2011)	24
Number of volunteers recruited during 2011	14
Number of volunteers who left during 2011	3
Number of combined hours that volunteers contribute to service per week (approx)	40

## **Recruitment of Volunteers**

Recruitment of volunteers is an ongoing process. The opportunity is registered with Flintshire Volunteer Centre and they refer volunteers directly to the project. People can register their interest in volunteering for the project via a volunteering website. Volunteers come from a variety of backgrounds. We receive a high level of interest from people who wish to pursue a career in social care. These individuals are contacting the service direct after recommendation from college tutors. The service has a good record for retaining volunteers. Over 50% of our volunteers have been with the service for over 12 months. During 2011, only 3 volunteers left the service. In two cases, this was as a result of finding full time paid work in a similar field.

## **Volunteer Support & Development**

Volunteers' receive ongoing development through monthly group supervision, 12 weekly individual supervision, appraisal and training. Volunteers are required to participate in 'Safeguarding Children & Young People' training before they can commence their volunteering activity. Volunteers are provided with guidance on procedures and policies and receive one – one induction. A variety of training opportunities are provided to volunteers throughout the year.

## **Role of the Volunteer and Mentoring Process**

Volunteers encourage a young person to think about the goals they want to achieve, they provide information on opportunities available and support and encourage the young person to participate in wider community activities and/or services. Volunteers are encouraged to meet on a weekly basis with the child or young person, particularly in the first stages of the relationship. Volunteers complete a diary sheet to record details of the session.

There is a 12 month time limit to mentoring relationships. This is done to alleviate the risk of dependency on the volunteer. There is still flexibility and some circumstances may warrant an extension. We will consider extending for up to 18 months.

Social activities are organised for all volunteers and young people. During 2011, young people and volunteers have enjoyed a pantomime visit, an outdoor activity day, visit to Chester Zoo, Ten Pin Bowling and Go – Karting. The young people enjoy and appreciate these group events. They also enable the volunteers to bond as a team and provide an informal opportunity for me to observe relationships between young people and mentors.

## **Measuring Outcomes**

Mentoring plans completed at the commencement of Mentoring relationship list outcomes to be achieved. These are reviewed through supervision and review meetings.

Positives outcomes recorded are - Participating in community & leisure activities

Increased confidence and self esteem

Making friends

Finding out about services and support

Keeping or doing better in education

Reducing isolation

Increasing independence from parents

I have recently introduced a review/ satisfaction questionnaire for young people to complete. Out of 9 questionnaires received, 100% of respondents say that they found their mentor helpful and would recommend having a mentor to others. All recorded at least one change their mentor had helped them to make. Additional comments written on the sheets demonstrate that all young people have valued having someone to get to know them, be there and sometimes just listen.

The Outcome Star chart tool is being introduced in mentoring cases. It is hoped that 60% of all mentoring intervention will include an outcome star assessment. Where the tool has been used by young people and mentors, it has helped the young person to focus on what issues are important to them and has helped create measurable action plans.

### **Budget Projection 2012- 2013**

The budget for the past 12 months has adequately supported the service. In the coming year, the cost of reimbursing volunteers for mileage will rise. This is due to the increase in the number of volunteers and the increased regularity of mentoring sessions. The impact of these increased costs will be lessened by the reduction in the mileage paid from 0.65p per mile to 0.45p per mile. It is difficult to accurately assess actual mileage costs as some of our volunteers do not submit them. There will also be further cost increases for expenses incurred during mentoring sessions. This is as a result of the increase in mentoring sessions. Volunteers are asked to keep expenses from mentoring sessions to £20 per month. A number of mentoring relationships incur very little cost, whilst others are using the money to pay for their entrance to sports & leisure activities and refreshments. My budget also pays for group activities and training by external providers.

Average mileage per month £25 x 25 volunteers x 12 months	7,500
Mentoring session expenses. £20 x 25 x 12 months	6,000
Mileage claim plus client activity expenses	Sub Total
	13,500
Based on past experience, we could estimate a 20% deduction for non claims, times when mentors are not matched and where mentoring sessions do not take place regularly. This deduction reduces the sub total to	
	10,800
Group activities	1,200
Training	1,000
Miscellaneous printing/ resources	500
Total	13, 500

These projected costs would see an increase of 25% to the VMS budget.

### Volunteer Mentor Service (VMS) Business Plan 2012 – 2013

Objective	Tasks	Person responsible	Timescales	Comments
Recruit and retain pool of 25 volunteers.	Ongoing and swift recruitment. Appropriate support & training available. Maintain referral process from FLVC.	Andrea and new admin	Ongoing during 2012 – 2013	To increase flexibility and capacity of service. Revisit when designated Admin support is recruited.
Monitor & evaluate the service against performance standards and young people's outcomes.	To establish database for measuring outcomes. Information provided from reviews /reports/ outcome star.	Alice, Andrea & Gary Greenhough	April 12	Good measurements to inform future practice  Provide information to referrer  Evaluate value for money
Manage VMS Budget to comply with financial requirements whilst maintaining support to Young people and Volunteers.	Monitor expenses & expenditure.  Monitor budget information from corporate finance on a monthly basis.  Prepare costings, taking into account predictive increases in volunteer expenses.	Peter, Andy, Alice & Andrea  Andrea	Ongoing  February 12	       To enable appropriate funding to be available 2012-2013.
Increase understanding of volunteer role and responsibility.	Produce and distribute Volunteer Guidance, Forms, Outcome Star Charts and policies on memory stick	Andrea	Distribute May 12	To ensure quality and consistency across the service

<p>Further develop the inclusion of VMS procedures on PARIS business system.</p>	<p>Mentoring Plan on PARIS with outcome options to link referral to plan.</p> <p>Supervision on Paris</p> <p>Review to be linked to PARIS.</p> <p>Separate VMS casenotes and referral section from FAST</p> <p>.</p>	<p>Andy, Alice, Andrea, business systems team.</p>	<p>March 12</p>	<p>Improve efficiency and effectiveness of service</p>
<p>Provide developmental opportunity for volunteers.</p>	<p>Designated Volunteers to complete 12 week reviews on cases open to other volunteers.</p> <p>Identify appropriate cases and frequency.</p> <p>Produce and agree paperwork for volunteers</p> <p>Provide training, support, supervision to volunteers undertaking the role.</p> <p>VMS coordinator to complete final review and reviews if concerns arise.</p> <p>Identified volunteers to help plan and organise VMS</p>	<p>Alice, Andrea,</p>	<p>May 12</p>	<p>To increase capacity of VMS workload</p> <p>To attract and retain motivated volunteers</p> <p>To improve effectiveness of review process</p>

	events.			
To create job role for new VMS admin Post.	Data input. General administrative activities, typing, phone calls, mileage & expense forms. Collating 'handbook' onto CD. Minutes of group supervision.	Andrea,new admin	Ongoing	Improve efficiency and effectiveness of the service.
Produce young person friendly information	Revisit young person's leaflet.	Andrea	April 12	Ensure it meets the needs of young people.
Collate and promote supportive and motivating resources and tools.	Share resources through team meetings and supervision.	Andrea	Ongoing	To improve effectiveness of mentoring support Offer practical support and tools to volunteers to increase confidence.
Research and share good practice around volunteering mentoring and legislation.	Network with Flintshire Local Volunteer Centre, Mentoring & Befriending Foundation and other voluntary & government organisations. Monitor articles & research on Community care Informs. Increase knowledge of other support / voluntary services.	Andrea & Alice	Ongoing	Contributes to continuous improvement  Promote positive working relationship with voluntary sector.





