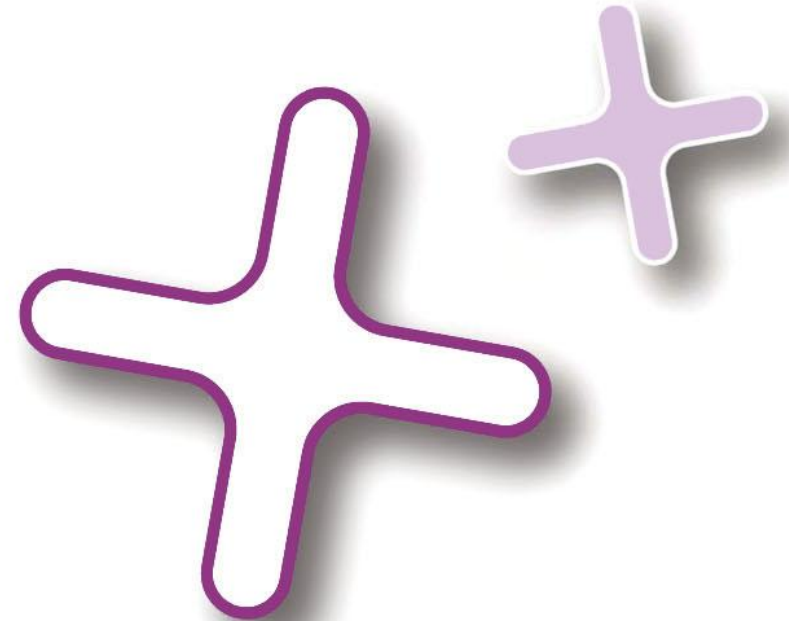
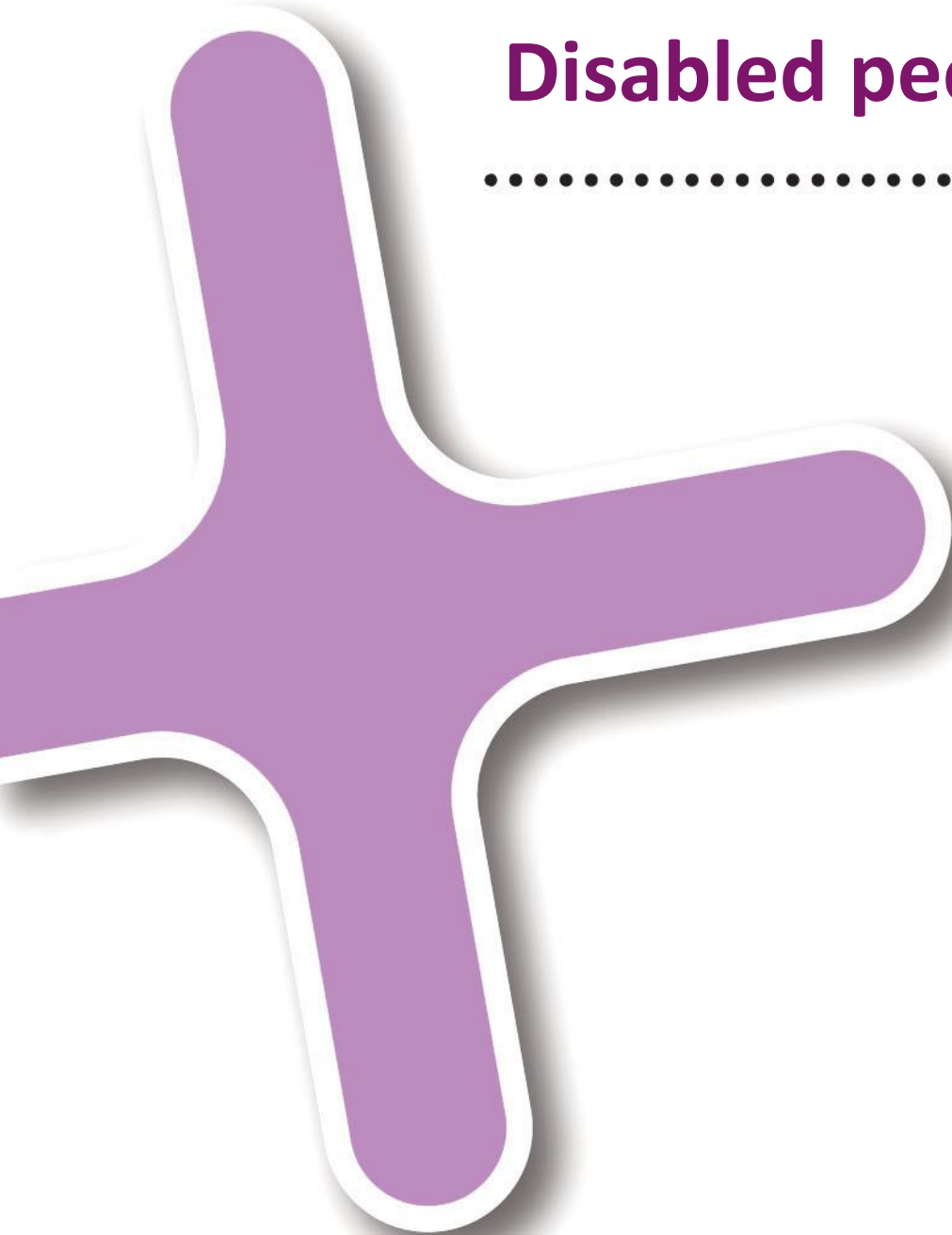


Disabled people

Research summary 4

A list of key findings from research studies and evaluations that show the positive impact of mentoring and befriending



A list of key findings from research studies and evaluations that show the positive impact of mentoring and befriending

Intervention	Research details with main findings <i>The findings below are those that relate to mentoring and befriending only. For complete research findings please read the full studies</i>
Peer mentoring (<i>children and young people aged 9-19</i>)	<p>My school, my family, my life: Telling it like it is</p> <p>A study detailing the experiences of disabled children, young people and their families with a range of impairments and health conditions including Autism/ASD, dyslexia, learning difficulties, physical disabilities, sensory impairment and social/emotional/behavioural difficulties. The aim was to identify key concerns and priorities in relation to their experiences of education (particularly transitions) and draws on the main findings and recommendations from four projects with a focus on case studies of disabled children and young people from a range of mainstream primary and secondary schools, specialist units within schools, colleges of further education and special schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater clarity and communication is needed between key partners in relation to both children’s and parents’ voices in formal SEN or disability-linked procedures. This may be helped by the identification of independent key workers for families with a disabled child. A key worker system and the role of mentoring and peer group support should all be considered by Governments and local authorities as a way to help ensure informed continuity at all levels • Good role models are vital in sustaining aspirations. Schools and community groups need to identify, support and promote such role models. Within schools, this may link with the celebration of successful buddy or support strategies. One specific context for this is the work of school councils involving disabled pupils <p><i>Source:</i> Ann Lewis, Sarah Parsons, Christopher Robertson; Disability Rights Commission, 2007 <i>Sample:</i> Data collection included interviews with the children and young people, classroom observations, interviews with key school personnel and a sub-sample of parents/carers. <i>Report:</i> http://83.137.212.42/SiteArchive/drc_gb/library/research/education/my_school_my_family_my_life.aspx.html</p>



<p>Peer mentoring/ buddying/ befriending (<i>children with autism</i>)</p>	<p>B is for bullied: the experiences of children with autism and their families A survey to investigate how bullying affects children with autism and their families and sets out what schools, local authorities and the Government should do to stop bullying and make school make sense for children with autism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaches such as peer mentoring, befriending and buddying schemes, structured pay activities during breaks and circles of friends can be an effective way of supporting children with autism and preventing bullying <p>Source: National Autistic Society, 2006 Sample: 1,400 survey responses from families and interviews with 28 children Report: http://www.autism.org.uk/en-gb/about-autism/autism-library/magazines-articles-and-reports/reports/our-reports/b-is-for-bullied.aspx</p>
<p>Peer mentoring (young disabled people aged 15 to 25 with wide range of impairments)</p>	<p>Our Life, Our Say! A good practice guide to young disabled people’s peer mentoring/support A good practice report based on evaluation of a project designed to support young disabled people making the transition towards adulthood. Draws on the young disabled people’s peer mentoring project based in Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects need to provide a wide range of activities for young disabled people to engage with, such as equality training, drama, one-to-one peer support, volunteering and campaigning Young disabled people need to link with and be supported by other young disabled people because they have a better understanding and close experience of how to challenge the barriers they faced Those who are already taking control and building successful lives, can have opportunities as peer supporters to learn how to support others and to further develop their own knowledge, skills and confidence Most young disabled people involved in the project felt that it had made a huge impact on their lives <p>Quotes:</p>



	<p>“Being together is powerful, understanding the issues, supporting each other” “The group have formed strong bonds that really help peer support” “My world is opening up to me, I can now try to do anything I want”</p> <p>Source: Julie Bethell, Pavilion Publishing, 2003. ISBN: 978 1 84196 055 5 Report: www.jrf.org.uk/node/2175</p>
<p>Peer mentoring (adults / deafblind)</p>	<p>An evaluation of the Sense Deafblind Peer Mentoring Programme A qualitative evaluation of this peer mentoring project set up to provide a core of deafblind people (with Usher Syndrome) to be trained to use their unique life experience to benefit others with acquired deafblindness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The trainee mentors saw the training as increasing their self-awareness as they acquired mentoring skills. As peer mentors, they recognized a growing confidence and ability to relate to others and to understand their own problems in a new perspective. Ongoing supervision was reported as a useful information exchange of each other’s work • Mentees benefited from the programme having solved numerous practical problems by receiving information from their mentor e.g., on accessing benefits, gaining access to college, acquiring computing facilities – advice on mobility and communication issues were noted as particularly helpful • Mentees welcomed the emotional and practical support provided by their Mentor, as they adjusted to particular difficulties such as loss of role as a parent or breadwinner • Mentees also received support on mobility or communication adaptations necessary as a result of worsening vision • Overall, the programme was successful in meeting the needs of those which Usher syndrome <p>Source: Sense, 2002</p>



	<p><i>Sample:</i> Questionnaires completed by 8 mentors and 11 trainees</p>
<p>Peer support (young, BME disabled people)</p>	<p>Something to do – the development of peer support groups for young black and minority ethnic disabled people</p> <p>Explores the development of informal peer support groups to provide emotional and social support for young disabled people of Asian, Caribbean and African origin in the words of the young people themselves. The report looks at the purpose, how the groups formed, what they do, what works with the groups and why, what affects the growth and maintenance of such groups, examples of processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importantly, the groups were a forum for providing emotional and social support. Being able to meet and talk (either verbally or through signing) to others was important, particularly for those young people who lived on their own or had limited communication with their families. One young woman said of her group: "We talk about everything that matters to us." • Some of the benefits of belonging to a peer support group included increasing personal esteem, learning new skills and increasing confidence. Often young people were helped merely by pursuing the aims of the group. For example, the African Caribbean Leisure group enabled the young people to develop independence through a number of leisure and social activities • For the majority of these young people their group provided one of the few opportunities they had to explore their ethnicity. They could find answers about their religion or discuss issues such as discrimination. Some people mentioned the racism they experienced at mainstream disability centres or disability groups and how they felt better attending a group for young black and minority ethnic disabled or Deaf people <p><i>Source:</i> Social Care: Race and Ethnicity Series, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2002. ISBN: 1-86-134319-1 <i>Sample:</i> Young people in five peer support groups <i>Report:</i> www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/jr118-support-young-disabled.pdf</p>



<p>Mentoring (Dyslexia / prisoners)</p>	<p>Dyslexia and Mentoring in prison (HMP & YOI Chelmsford)</p> <p>The report of a unique mentoring scheme in HMP and YOI in Chelmsford which was aimed at identifying and supporting prisoners with hidden disabilities. The pilot aimed to provide proof of concept for a mentoring approach to teaching dyslexics in prison and elsewhere. The author of the report did initial mentoring and then trained prisoners to mentor other prisoners. Fuller case studies are included in the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96 prisoners were helped through mentoring and individual support with coming to terms with their learning difficulties • 20 prisoners were trained as mentors in a six week course, of whom 9 were still in the prison and actively mentoring at the end of the project. Prisoners trained as mentors gained a step-change in self-awareness, responsibility, confidence and self-image • Mentoring of one prisoner by another – who has a personal understanding of dyslexia - is a powerful tool for advancement of both • The author succeeded in identifying the specific learning problems each man was having but also devised a learning strategy to overcome it. By introducing a mentoring approach her approach has been assimilated into the culture of the prison creating sustainable, long lasting results, cost-effectively • Recommends that the project provides a model of good practice training that should be replicated <p><i>Quotes:</i> “This is the first time I have learnt to spell 100 words I have enjoyed working on the computer with the bigger numbers and I can now write 1 to a million, thank you” “It’s good to talk to someone who understands what its like to be dyslexic”</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Jackie Hewitt-Main, East Mentoring Forum, 2007 in Practical Mentoring (Vol 2) ISBN 0-9551984-1-0 <i>Sample:</i> The project identified 434 prisoners with dyslexic character (53%) – Jackie ran a session for up to 10 prisoners</p>
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	each Wednesday afternoon for a period of six months
Befriending (Deaf young people)	<p>Handing on our experience: Deaf participation with deaf young people and families</p> <p>A report based on a 3 year best value review in deaf education in the UK and Scandinavia. DEX has now developed a Framework for Action where experts on deafness are responsible for the national administration of support services for deaf children. It carried out a feasibility study to target the hard-to-reach groups of deaf young people and parents of deaf children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deaf young people would like information and support from Deaf professionals (to include info on specific topic such as benefits, sexual health, substance misuse), social activities and networks, deaf identity, deaf culture, advocacy e.g., with bullying • Services that parents wanted for their children from Deaf professionals included a Befriending scheme (this was favoured more by parents of those aged 6-16) – report recommends establishment of a befriending scheme utilizing trained Deaf people as part of the workforce <p><i>Source:</i> DEX (Deaf Ex-Mainstreamers Group), 2006; ISBN: 0-9546699-2-4 <i>Sample:</i> Deaf youth club members and parents <i>Report:</i> Copies available from DEX – www.dex.org.uk/feasibility.html</p>
Tele Befriending (people with sight problems)	<p>Tele Befriending research</p> <p>Findings from a user-led evaluation for RNIB Talk and Support which provides Tele Befriending (weekly social groups over the telephone) to groups of six to eight people who meet socially each week on the telephone, facilitated by a trained volunteer. The purpose is to improve the socialization opportunities of those taking part, alleviate the anxiety of being alone and/or with sight problems, and to be able to gain mutual support in order to create strategies for coping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are clear and tangible benefits from being part of a Tele Befriending group. The weekly exchange of humour, advice, and social chit-chat is a positive experience for most participants. Tele befriending is capable of making a significant difference to the lives of many people with sight problems



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result, people described feeling more confident, less isolated and not so lonely • 80% of people in the study said being part of a group made a positive difference to their lives, particularly in terms of the emotional and practical support telebefriending offered • 60% of people said they had made new friends and perceived a genuine quality to the relationships being established which had a positive effect on how they felt about themselves • Group members mentioned in particular, the benefits of getting support and learning from people who also had sight problems • 60% said they felt more positive about their sight difficulties as a result of being part of a group <p><i>Quotes:</i> “How can I put it into words..... I live for it” “I feel different now, it’s given me more confidence. I’m doing things I’d stopped doing before. I’m doing the ironing now. I can’t see it, but that doesn’t matter! I missed all that” “I get up when I get wake up, sleep when I get tired. There is not much structure to may day. My life is simple now. A phone call can affect whether I eat today and whether I don’t sleep all day. My interventions are simple, small. They affect whether I sink into depression or get up and do something”</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Alex Saunders, February 2004 <i>Summary:</i> www.nrib.org/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public_TBeval.hcsp?printPage=1</p>
<p>Befriending (learning difficulties)</p>	<p>Befriending: More than just finding friends? Summary of research findings This research focused on the views of workers, users, befrienders and carers at seven befriending schemes for children and adults with learning difficulties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most schemes were unable to meet the demand for befrienders



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most effective method of recruiting new befrienders was word of mouth • Each scheme had different approach to the procedure for assessing volunteers • Matching befrienders/befriendees was usually done on basis of befriender's preferences and interests • All but one of the befriendees thought their befriender was a good friend • Many befriendees and their families felt let down and disappointed at the end of a befriending partnership • Many befrienders seemed to get a lot themselves from being a befriender <p><i>Source:</i> Pauline Heslop, Carol Robinson; <i>Befriending: more than just finding friends</i>; Shared Care Network, 2004 <i>Sample:</i> Interviews held with 15 workers; 34 people with learning difficulties; 42 befrienders; 46 parent carers <i>Report:</i> Available from Barnardos Child Care Publications. ISBN: 1-874291-17</p>
<p>Befriending (independent living)</p>	<p>Low intensity support services: a systematic literature review A literature review looking at the effectiveness of low intensity support services in enabling people to live independently in ordinary housing and covered service for all groups of people with support needs. It looked at low level support in three areas: housing/tenancy support; direct practical support; emotional/social support (befriending services included here).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many users felt their overall sense of wellbeing – including self-esteem, confidence and attitude to life had improved through involvement with the service • A striking finding was the way that users consistently valued the support of a worker or volunteer, often in preference to other more formal service interventions such as social work



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Befriending and other services designed specifically to promote social networks sometimes had a low take-up • Befriending is highlighted as a service that could impact on health • Overall the body of research evidence on the effectiveness of low intensity support services was poorly developed and a higher priority needs to be placed on developing more robust ways of assessing their effectiveness <p>Source: Deborah Quilgars; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000 Sample: Literature review of 41 studies Report: www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/socialcare/640.asp</p>
<p>Befriending (Autism) Greece</p>	<p>Developing pilot befriending schemes for people with Autism Spectrum Disorders in a region of Greece: lessons from practice</p> <p>A journal article discusses the development of two pilot befriending schemes for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Greece set up to improve the quality of life of people living with ASDs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The schemes are able to provide consultation to other agencies planning to establish befriending schemes in Greece • Parents wished befrienders could offer their time for a long period (preferably for more than a year) • Respecting the needs of people with ASDs for a stable routine meant that the topic was covered in volunteer support meetings to look at the consequences of abrupt endings and disruption • Future planning of the schemes needs to incorporate discussions with parents for handling their communication with befrienders and voicing their expectations at beginning of the programme • Parents revealed that nearly all of them were satisfied with the befrienders



- Overall, befriending seems to have the potential to support individuals with life-long disabilities and their families as well as offer insight and pleasure to both sides

Source: Mavropoulou, Sophia; Child and Adolescent Mental Health, Vol 12 (3), 2007, p138-142

Link to details: <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/bpl/camh/2007/00000012/00000003/art00007>

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