

Carers

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Research summary 6

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



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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>
Befriending (Young carers)	<p>Experiences of children and young people caring for a parent with a mental health problem</p> <p>This briefing focuses on the experiences of children and young people under 18 years of age caring for a parent or parents defined as having mental health problems that are ‘serious’ or ‘severe’, and ‘enduring’.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights the potential of befriending support to young carers in providing an opportunity to pursue leisure interests and improve educational achievement • Young carers identify the provision of befriending schemes to provide access to an adult who is not an ‘authority figure’ to enable them to follow an interest or enjoy time outside the home without guilt <p>Source: Diane Roberts, Mim Bernard et al; Research briefing No 24, Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2008 Report: http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/files/briefing24.pdf</p>



<p>Befriending (Carers of people with dementia)</p>	<p>Social networks, befriending and support for family carers of people with dementia A journal article summarising research into a longitudinal study of befriending of carers of people with dementia that looked at the relationship between network type and support from family/friends, voluntary sector befriending and residential/nursing care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends that questions on social networks be incorporated into Carers' assessments to help identify need for social support interventions and to enable the sensitive selection of appropriate types of carer support to be provided <p>Source: Georgina Charlesworth , Fiona Poland & X Tzimoula; <i>Quality in Ageing</i>, June 2007 Sample: Secondary analysis of data from a longitudinal study Abstract: http://www.scie-socialcareonline.org.uk/profile.asp?guid=1f775283-1060-44c4-896b-498fc8898f2a</p>
<p>Befriending (Carers of people with dementia)</p>	<p>Does befriending by trained lay workers improve psychological well-being and quality of life for carers of people with dementia and at what cost? A community based study to determine whether a social support intervention (access to a befriending facilitator in addition to usual care) is effective compared with usual care alone.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only weak evidence of any beneficial effect and recommends further research into befriending interventions for carers <p>Source: G Charlesworth, L Shepstone, E Wilson; Health Technology Assessment, Vol 12, No 4, 2008 Report: http://www.hta.ac.uk/fullmono/mon1204.pdf</p>



<p>Befriending (Carers of people with dementia)</p>	<p>Befriending and Costs of Caring: BECCA Summary Report</p> <p>The Befriending and Costs of Caring Project (BECCA) was commissioned by the Department of Health to find out whether befriending by lay volunteers is a cost effective way of providing support for family carers of people with dementia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The study found that a befriending scheme as set up in the BECCA trial, was not seen to be a cost-effective way to improve wellbeing or quality of life for carers. Alternative ways to organize the service or different approaches could be explored to improve outcomes <p><i>Source:</i> Fiona Poland, 2007 <i>Sample:</i> The project ran from 2002-2006 with over 300 carers in contact with the researchers.</p>
<p>Befriending and mentoring (Carers of young people with cystic fibrosis)</p>	<p>Evaluation of a Community Youth Befriending Programme for Young People with Cystic Fibrosis and their Carers in Lothian</p> <p>Evaluation of The Butterfly Trusts' Cool Friends befriending programme which aimed to relieve stress and boredom, improve self-confidence, enhance general well-being.</p> <p><i>Findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Befriending was seen as a good thing by all parties in the project For young people it offers a fun distraction, impacts positively on their self esteem and helps them raise issues of personal importance. For the more mature young person it provided someone else for them to talk to, and they appreciated being able to take issues to someone outside their own family For parents, befriending helps relieve the burden physically and emotionally and gives them some time out for themselves. They saw the befriender as helping with the 'big questions' and difficult issues about their child's prognosis



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Befrienders themselves saw that activities could broaden young people’s horizons, and the nature of their relationship with young people could foster trust to discuss difficult subjects As yet, the young people’s social networks have not been widened beyond the befriender <p><i>Source:</i> The Queen’s Nursing Institute Scotland / Queen Margaret University, July 2007 <i>Sample:</i> Six befriender/family partnerships were followed for a duration of 18 months; Ten people were interviewed six months into the befriending programme; four hospital and educational personnel were interviewed and three befrienders were interviewed via a focus group <i>Report:</i> www.qmu.ac.uk/hn/nursingresearch/docs/QNIS-Summary.pdf</p>
<p>Mentoring (Carers of a ‘looked after’ child)</p>	<p>Family and Friends Care ‘Family and Friends Care’ is the official term used to denote care of a ‘looked after’ child within the extended family or social network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadly supportive of family and friends care as a viable option and that it could be used more Carers in this study are looking for opportunities to meet with other carers, through mentoring perhaps <p><i>Source:</i> Joan Hunt, Research and Practice Briefings: Children and Families, Issue 16 2008; DCSF <i>Report:</i> www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RBX-03-08.pdf</p>
<p>Befriending (Carers of disabled children)</p>	<p>Still Waiting? Families of disabled children in the UK waiting for short break services A report detailing the number of disabled children and their families not accessing short breaks; the children most likely to wait for services; the children not accessing any services; the benefits to disabled children of increased social opportunities and the benefits to families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2006 survey results suggest that the proportion of children waiting to receive services has reduced – this



	<p>may be due in part to the introduction of direct payments and the fact that some services e.g., sitting and befriending schemes have been contracted out and are no longer run by short break services. However, we do know that the real number of children needing a carer is likely to be much higher than the estimated 3,020 children currently on waiting lists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some other major changes in service provision shown by the survey are that the number of schemes offering befriending has almost halved in the last 5 years from 32% to 17%. At present we do not know why this is. This may be because these services are being contracted out <p><i>Source:</i> Shared Care Network, 2007 <i>Report:</i> www.sharedcarenetwork.org.uk/dynamic/scn17.jsp?highlight=still%20waiting</p>
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June 2009



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