



Youth Mentoring as a Support for Young People in CAMHS

Youth summary

Dr Charlotte Silke
Dr Bernadine Brady



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY



ciste na
gcuntas díomhaoin
the dormant
accounts fund

Big Brother Big Sister
Programme



This research explored the experiences of young people taking part in Foróige's Big Brother Big Sister (BBBS) mentoring programme

Type of Mentoring Relationships Formed

Young people formed strong, positive friendships with their mentors and described these relationships in 3 ways:

Friendly

[Mentor's] just like a big sister to her. Looks out for her, offers her advice as much as she could, and helps her out with things

– Parent

Trusting

I have very bad anxiety and slightly bad mental health so it is quite nice to kind of have that company and companion who I can tell my worries to

– Youth

Empathic

When they meet with the young person they are fully present you know... they really try and get into their space, stand in their shoes and understand what's going on with them

– BBBS Staff

BBBS-CAMHS Partnership

Young people liked that it was:

- Voluntary
- Not Formal

... I went on a Zoom to see about it and I thought it was really, really cool. I thought if I could have someone bigger to you know to talk to who might have some experience with this or just to hang out with you know

– Youth

They also enjoyed having an adult friend outside the family

It's good to have someone who isn't in my normal social circle to talk to. Gives me a new look at how life actually is ... My friends are on the exact same level as me so it's good talking to someone who is like past that and still able to look back on it

– Youth

Benefits for young people

Improves friendships and ability to talk to others

I was able to make more friends in secondary school, like that. I've had a lot of friends like in school now; he definitely helped me with that like, making friends and stuff
– Youth

Stronger sense of self

... helps them to build on their own sense of identity and who they are as an individual person, away from their family
– CAMHS Staff

Improves wellbeing and mood

I'd be in quite happy form for a couple of days [afterwards]
– Youth

Helps with confidence

It made me more confident; I never used to like to talk to people about how I felt
– Youth

Improves ability to do things independently

It was lovely for [mentee], she (mentor) didn't push her or pressure her but she encouraged her and now [young person] can actually go and she can pay and ask for something herself you know. So that's a huge step for [mentee]
– Parent

Improves ability to cope with challenges

... Like if I was struggling with school or anything like that, I could tell her about it. We sort of work through it together. It was great; I sort of found someone who is outside the family who I was able to talk to
– Youth

Improves engagement

I think that the skills that they build on through the mentoring programme ... transfer to school, into their friendships, making new friendships, getting more confidence, taking up a new activity, sticking at that activity...
– CAMHS Staff

Who Participated in the Research?

40 people, who were involved in the Big Brother Big Sister Mentoring Programme in December 2021, took part in the research.

10 Mentors

10 Young People

10 Parents/Guardians

5 BBBS Programme Staff

5 CAMHS Staff

