

## **CSV menu of opportunities to support children, young people and their families in Southwark**

**Introduction:** CSV is the UK's leading volunteering and learning organisation providing a range of opportunities for almost fifty years. Working closely with partners, including local authority partners, we help deliver services and provide support for people who need it most. We support children in care, young people leaving care, and families with parenting issues. This report briefly outlines our services to these groups and demonstrates how CSV volunteers can offer independent and crucial support, particularly to vulnerable people.

### **1. Parent Mentoring and Volunteers in Child Protection – for families**

**Background:** Established in 2003 CSV has delivered supported families through our Volunteers in Child Protection (ViCP) scheme, matching volunteers with families with children on child protection plans. CSV volunteers provide friendship, advice and support, working closely with Social Services to complement to the services they offer. It's about taking the time to listen to families, acting as a strong role model and giving practical help and support.

ViCP started life as a two-year pilot in Sunderland and the London Borough of Bromley. Our volunteers supported 29 families. Every single child we helped was taken off the Child Protection Register and their files closed. Usually, two thirds of children are back on the register within a year, but ViCP is different. Volunteers keep in touch and keep supporting the family to make sure they stay on track. Currently we have ViCP projects in Bromley, Lewisham, Southend-on-Sea and Coventry. Each project supports approximately 30 families per year.

Parent Mentoring is a new CSV project beginning in April 2011. This project aims to improve the lives of children and young people by offering flexible personalised volunteer support to their parents in eight locations across England. We know that some parents struggle to create homes in which children can thrive and that just having someone to offer a listening ear, encouragement and ideas, can have an enormous impact, particularly when the person volunteers their time and poses no perceived threat to the family. This project will support 200 families in the first year in York, Derby, Coventry, Bristol, Islington, Southwark, Lewisham and Southend.

**Service model:** CSV recruits, selects, interviews and trains people from the local community to become mentor role models who are then matched to families and supervised by CSV staff.

The service model aims to deliver the following outcomes for families.

- Improved parenting confidence
- Improved outcomes for children and their families
- Reduced isolation
- Increased confidence and self-esteem

**Monitoring & evaluation:** The service will be monitored and evaluated using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, facilitated through monthly feedback from volunteers demonstrating progress toward the primary objectives of the service and the individual young person's specific support needs. Regular reviews with each family are undertaken in addition to an end of year evaluation. Progress reports will be disseminated at three month intervals to each referring social worker in addition to quarterly quantitative reports to head of service to demonstrate that referral targets and outcomes are being met.

## **2. Allies – mentoring support for children and young people in care (Independent Visitors)**

**Background:** CSV currently delivers mentoring and befriending support to children and young people in care through our Independent Visitor projects operating in Hounslow, Southwark, Bristol and Derby. We support an average of 200 young people accessing the service each year, with projects managing target through-put of between 10 and 44 matches at any one time in line with their contractual obligations. Each project maintains a volunteer pool of 25% above contract targets to ensure we always have a sufficient number of volunteers available for matching, resulting in an average of 250 volunteers supported by CSV's Independent Visitor projects each year.

**Service model:** CSV recruits, selects, interviews and trains people from the local community to become independent visitors. We aim to recruit volunteers of different ages, gender, cultural backgrounds, religions, sexual orientation, and interests to ensure that young people get the right volunteer for their individual needs.

We offer a bespoke 21 hour training course which all volunteers must complete successfully; subjects covered include child protection, safeguarding, confidentiality and boundaries. Volunteers receive face to face supervision each quarter and phone support each month to make sure they are properly supported throughout their match. We meet each young person and their carer to identify their preference in a volunteer, their interests and aspirations and what they consider are the most important Every Child Matters outcome they wish to achieve.

**Monitoring & evaluation:** All CSV Independent Visitor services place emphasis on ensuring clear and measurable performances targets, which are evidenced through the implementation of achievable milestones and realistic ECM outcomes that match each child or young person's defined personal goals. We monitor and evaluate all aspects of the young person's experience while they are engaged in the project using both qualitative and quantitative methods. We gather baseline information from the referring social worker and from the young person and their carer during the initial assessment meeting. We devised a plan of engagement detailing the primary ECM each young person wishes to achieve. This information forms the basis of the volunteer's priority tasks in supporting their young person during each match visit. Volunteers are required to report progress towards achieving the desired ECM each month using CSV's standardised reporting template. Regular progress reports are sent to the referring social worker on average every three months.

To ensure that we are meeting the needs of every young person referred to the project we seek their feedback on how the match is going at three and six month intervals. We also carry out annual evaluation measured against the ECM framework and apply a 360 degree analysis of progression by securing feedback from social workers, carers, volunteers and more importantly, the young people themselves.

## **3. Transitions to independence – for young people leaving care**

**Background:** Established in 2010 CSV has delivered the Transitions to Independence project in Bristol, Hounslow, Southwark and Derby. The service was created as a direct response to the identified needs facing young people reaching the age of 18 leaving care and consequently having to end their relationships with the independent visitor previously supported by CSV. Fourteen years experience in the field of supporting young people in care has shown CSV that it is through the transitional period to independence when young people most need the support of a befriender; somebody from outside the care system who can offer support in ways that professionals cannot and who will be seen by the young person as an advocate and role model.

This work complements the work of PA's; volunteers can support their caseload of 6 – 12 young people, and provide independent and flexible support on evenings and weekends, too.

In 2010 CSV supported 40 young people in transition and has a target of 90 young people aged 18-21 leaving care, including those age 16 and in independent living accommodation.

**Service model:** CSV recruits, selects, interviews and trains people from the local community to become mentor role models who are then matched to young people leaving care and supervised by CSV staff. The service is open to young people that have previously had an independent visitor through CSV's Allies projects and those who are considered particularly vulnerable referred directly through the local authorities leaving and after care teams.

The service model aims to deliver the following outcomes for young people.

- Improved life skills
- Increased likelihood of secure tenancy
- Reduced isolation
- Increased confidence and self-esteem
- Improved employment / volunteering opportunities /training

For access to the service, young people will be able to engage in the project in three ways: intensive support; on-going support; and group activities, or through a combination of all three phases, subject to their changing needs.

**Monitoring & evaluation:** The service will be monitored and evaluated using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, facilitated through monthly feedback from volunteers demonstrating progress toward the primary objectives of the service and the individual young person's specific support needs. Quarterly reviews with each young person will be undertaken in addition to an end of year evaluation. Progress reports will be disseminated at three month intervals to each referring social worker, in addition to quarterly quantitative reports to head of service to demonstrate that referral targets and outcomes are being met.

**Summary:** We are happy to provide further details on each model and would welcome discussions on how to take this forward. Please contact the following CSV Operations Directors for further details;

Sarah Armstrong  
CSV Operations Director – North  
E: [sarmstrong@csv.org.uk](mailto:sarmstrong@csv.org.uk)  
T: 01274 737 266/ 07974 233 469

Ihona Hirving  
CSV Operations Director – South  
E: [ihirving@csv.org.uk](mailto:ihirving@csv.org.uk)  
T: 0207 643 1397/ 07986 504 580