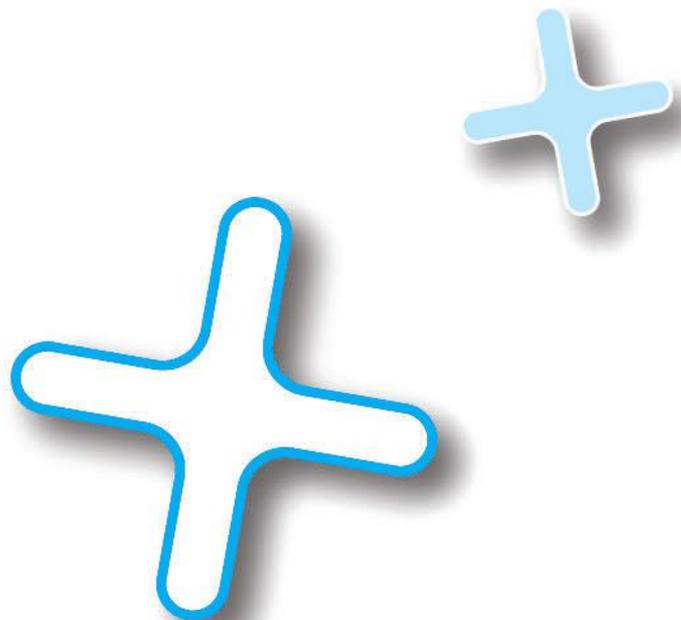


How to find a mentor or befriender

.....
Some suggestions to help you



How to find a mentor or befriender

This information sheet is a useful starting point for anyone interested in finding a mentor or befriender for themselves or for someone they know

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Introduction

Many people can find themselves with limited or no access to support networks – usually family or friends – and with no-one to provide encouragement and guidance to help them through a particularly challenging or difficult time.

This is where it may be appropriate for a volunteer mentor or befriender to step in and support someone. Read our information sheet on ‘What is mentoring and befriending?’ to find out more about mentoring and befriending and how it can support individuals to make changes in their life.

Where to start

1. [Search our online project directory](#) to see if there are any suitable schemes in your locality or region. Once you have located any potentially suitable schemes, contact them direct to find out whether you would be eligible and to find out if they have any referral criteria that you would need to meet.
2. **Contact your local infrastructure organisation** - often called Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) or Voluntary Action – you can get their number from a local library, telephone book or searching the [directory on the NAVCA website](#). Many of them compile a directory or database of local voluntary organisations and can be a useful source.
3. **Your local authority** may also produce a number of online directories and databases listing voluntary organisations offering services to different client groups. Search your council website or give them a call.

National sources of information

The following selection of national organisations may also be able to provide some assistance if you are looking to self-refer to a scheme as they all run mentoring or befriending programmes throughout the UK:



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[Age UK](#): run befriending schemes for older people.

[British Red Cross](#): run a range of mentoring and befriending projects throughout the country.

[MIND](#): works with all ages for better mental health. You can find your local MIND from their website.

[Macmillan](#): supports over 900 independent cancer support groups and organisations giving you an opportunity to talk to people who understand what you are going through. To access these cancer peer support groups contact Macmillan or search their website.

[Princess Royal Trust for Carers](#): can tell you about any local mentoring or befriending schemes they run – including those for young carers.

[National Autistic Society](#): the leading charity for people with autism (including Asperger syndrome) and their families. You find local befriending schemes on their website database.

[Refugee Action](#): a national charity that works with refugees to build new lives in the UK. They run a range of mentoring schemes across England.

[Catch22](#): run mentoring schemes with under-supported young people throughout England. Many of the young people they work with have been involved with the criminal justice system, are in or leaving care, homeless, young parents or facing serious gaps in their education affecting their employment prospects.

[The Prince's Trust](#): supports young people who are unemployed, struggled at school, have been in trouble with the law or in care. They run a number of mentoring schemes including enterprise mentoring to support young people wanting to set up in business.

[Gatemate](#): search for mentoring projects for young people leaving prison.

[SOVA](#) (Supporting Others Through Volunteer Action): is a national volunteer mentoring organisation working with those socially and economically disadvantaged in England and Wales including those in and leaving the care system, the Criminal Justice Sector, young people on youth offending orders, the socially and economically disadvantaged and long-term unemployed, refugees and asylum seekers.

Education sector: many schools, colleges and universities have mentoring and befriending programmes running. You may to enquire or suggest they set one up.

Please let us know of any other sources of information that we can add to this list.

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