

# SLF Mentoring Training Summary

16th March 2007

Croydon Supplementary Education Project (CSEP) has received a grant from the Safer London Foundation (SLF) to be spent on the training of Community Mentors to enable them to understand and make positive changes with their Mentees who are at risk of offending or joining gangs

Croydon Currently has one of the highest rates of permanent exclusion in the UK, and the problem is particularly compounded by the high rates of exclusion experienced by BLACK and MINORITY ETHNIC (BME)BOYS. CSEP is very aware of the problem and wish to concentrate on the area of need which is the impending danger of more and more of these young people becoming susceptible to gang initiation and lured into gang culture because of low self esteem and then need for belonging to large groups for perceived safety while they are not in school and have to be on the streets of Croydon during school hours.

CSEP has previously been commissioned by Croydon Council to undertake a Mentoring Project for Disaffected Pupils (PACEMAKERS) over the past three (3) years and we are trying to provide activities, workshops and positive BME Role Models to help mitigate some of the factors that make gang and weapon activity appealing to young and impressionable members of society. CSEP provides direct access to BME Role Models and Mentors. We also provide access to Careers and Further Education advice particularly aimed at channelling disaffected pupils who may have low aspirations, need encouragement and support to help lift them out of their particular situations and life circumstances

The regularity of meetings between Mentors and Mentees will provide a good indication of the project's ability to steer at risk young people away from gang activity, and also to demonstrate how those who may be on the fringe of gang activity if given positive methods to overcome the lure and guided to make steps towards attainment or achievement can reduce the risk of that individual becoming involved in knife crime and gang activity.

## What do we intend to achieve as a result of the funding?

### Aims

- 1) Significantly increase the Capacity of CSEP's Mentoring Project (PACEMAKERS), by sustainably investing the Safer London Foundation Grant into training which will impact on the long term development of the capabilities and effectiveness of BME Community Mentors, particularly aiming to help reduce knife crime and gang activities in Croydon.
- 2) The Funding will also enable CSEP Community Mentors to be better equipped to successfully Mentor young people who are vulnerable and are at risk of becoming first time offenders, and are the highest at risk to become members of local gangs. The Funding will be used to develop a referral system and method of working with the Croydon Youth Offending Team (YOT) to enable them to pass on suitable cases where it has been identified that a positive BME Mentor will help to reduce the risk of refunding and the where possible reduce the risk of the young person becoming involved in gang activity.

### Objectives

#### Project Objective 1: Training for Community Mentors

Providing additional specialist training Community Mentors who have been matched with Mentees with specific techniques and local intelligence to help guide and provide pastoral support to vulnerable young people who are at high risk of becoming involved with knife crime and gang culture. The grant would be used to train existing BME Community Mentors with specific skills to assist them in identifying and dealing with young people engaging in gang activities.

Mentors will receive training to enable them to identify and reduce the risk of vulnerable young people may lured into gang activity

Croydon Supplementary Education Project:  
Safer London Foundation Grant Funding for Mentoring Training 2007

The funding will also help CSEP to offer additional free training to members of the BME community who wish to become Community Mentors and to take the opportunity to engage with young people and make a positive step towards the reduction of gang activity in Croydon. The Funding will also help CSEP to significantly increase the capacity of the Mentoring Project in the long run by attracting new BME Mentors with the offer of this additional training. While also allowing for greater scope for the organisation to help the community.

**Mentors will receive three specific areas of training:**

**How to identify young people at risk of becoming involved in Gang Activity**

Tools and Evaluation Methods to determine if their Mentee is VULNERABLE or AT RISK of joining Gangs e.g. "YOUNGERS"

**How to Help Young people faced with difficult choices**

Models and Methods to help Mentors guide and influence young people away from gang activity.

**Local Intelligence and Facts**

Identify Resources and Models used in inner city projects around the world. Provide relevant reading list of books and websites where possible.

Local Intelligence (guest speaker slot where the Croydon Police or YOT will actually deliver statistics and local intelligence plus insight into the law and how they are tackling the issues)

**Project Objective 2: Improving Links with the Youth Offending Team**

CSEP will engage with the youth offending team, to develop a referral mechanism for young offenders to be engaged in the Mentoring programme. Help to improve the provision for first time offenders who are at risk of becoming involved in gang activity

**Project Objective 3: Targeting Local Schools**

CSEP will use intelligence provided by the Croydon Police Youth Partnership team, to approach schools that are based in areas where gang activity may be on the increase. CSEP will offer the Mentoring services to the Schools, and also directly to the Parents when ever possible.

**Project Objective 4: Raising the Profile of Mentoring**

CSEP will try to promote the use of Community Mentoring as a successful way of dealing with gang activity. The aim will be to improve awareness of the Mentoring Project and attract more positive role models to become Community Mentors and to have them make a greater contribution to their local areas.

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