



OCTOBER 2022 TO JULY 2024

Men to Be

Young Men's Coaching Project

The Hangleton and Knoll Project and Trust for Developing Communities
in partnership with The Pebble Trust



**The Hangleton
& Knoll Project**
Working for a better community



**Trust for
Developing
Communities**



Independent Evaluation

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Executive summary

The Hangleton and Knoll Project, in partnership with the Trust for Developing Communities, led the successful delivery of the Men to Be programme, funded by The Pebble Trust. Pioneering an innovative youth coaching approach, Men to Be offered intensive, one-to-one coaching and keywork for young men aged 13 to 18, integrated within established community-based youth work. The programme achieved remarkable outcomes and has set a new standard for supporting vulnerable and at-risk young men in deprived communities in Brighton and Hove.

Building on research and learning from prior initiatives like the REBOOT Youth Coaching project and insights into engaging young men with complex needs, Men to Be embedded a relationally based youth coaching model within neighbourhood youth services. The approach was delivered by two highly skilled youth workers, leveraging trust and familiarity within their communities to engage young men over an 18-month period.

The programme drew from the Roca high-risk youth intervention model and incorporated training in the Empowerment Approach, which provided youth coaches with effective tools to meet the diverse needs of participants. Recruitment of participants primarily relied on existing youth networks and relationships, supplemented by outreach in schools and hospital settings. Coaches utilised a flexible and dynamic methodology, engaging young men through home visits, neighbourhood activities, family involvement, and multi-agency collaboration.



Key outcomes

The Men to Be programme achieved transformative results for 24 young men, addressing complex, interrelated challenges often exacerbated by poverty and disadvantage.

Positive outcomes included:

- Reduced substance use risks.
- Improved engagement in education, employment, and training.
- Enhanced family relationships.
- Greater emotional regulation and behaviour management.
- Increased self-esteem and confidence.
- Practical achievements, such as accessing financial support, gaining employment, or joining community resources.
- Enhanced ability to seek and utilise additional support services.
- Reduced social isolation and more stable life circumstances.

These outcomes were corroborated by testimonials from young men and their families, highlighting significant improvements in emotional awareness, decision-making, social skills, and overall quality of life.

Innovative Approach and Key Learnings

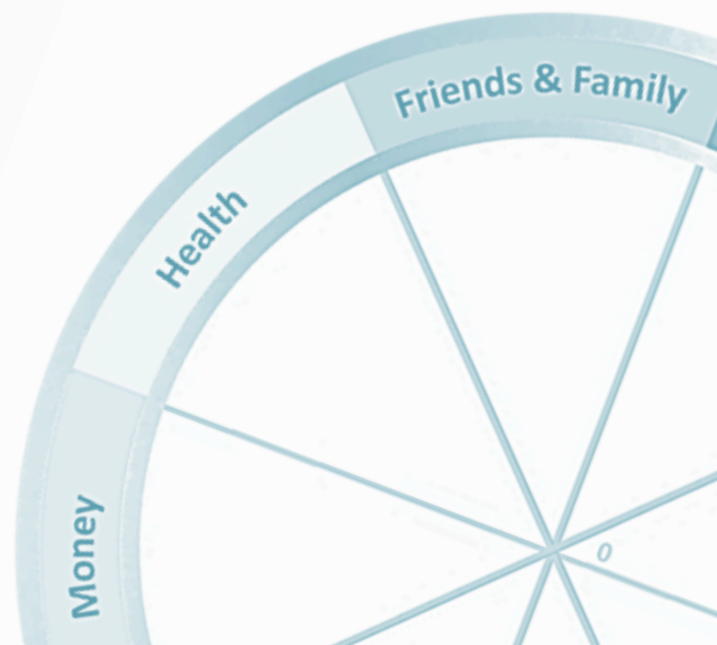
The success of Men to Be stemmed from its pioneering, person-centred approach that tailored support to the individual needs of each young man.

Key learnings include:

- **Readiness to Engage:** Sustainable change was more likely when young men actively sought to address personal challenges.
- **Agility and Responsiveness:** Flexibility in coaching methods allowed youth workers to adapt to evolving needs and circumstances.
- **Relational Foundations:** Building trust and working collaboratively on self-identified issues fostered deeper engagement.
- **Multi-Agency Collaboration:** Effective partnerships with external services enhanced support and long-term outcomes for participants.
- **Family Involvement:** Engagement with parents and families often proved critical in addressing relational dynamics and sustaining progress.

Impact and Legacy

The Hangleton and Knoll Project's leadership in developing and implementing the Men to Be programme demonstrates the power of community-based, relationally focused youth work. By addressing the holistic needs of young men and pioneering a scalable coaching model, the project has not only transformed individual lives but also contributed valuable insights and strategies for future youth work initiatives.



Introduction

1.1 Project outline and rationale

The Men to Be Young Men's Coaching Pilot Project, reflects the Trust for Developing Communities and The Hangleton and Knoll Project's commitment to contribute to furthering practices and interventions with young men locally, building on relationally based youth work, in a neighbourhood community and youth work context, whilst reflecting the recommendations from the A Better Brighton & Hove and The Pebble Trust commissioned Working with Young Men research project (Holmstrom, North, Price and Ravenhill, 2021) into service engagement with young men.

The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities value and recognise the core elements of work with young men as needing to:

- start with young men's lived experience, whatever this might be;
- be based on trust established through consistent professional engagement on young men's terms;
- be trauma informed, recognising the dislocated relationships young men may have experienced;
- be skill based, enhancing young men's ability to take responsibility for relationships, choices and actions
- be ambitious and aspirational, believing young men will succeed in making positive changes.

Men to Be aims build on existing proven good practice and provision, whilst piloting specific individual and group interventions with young men. More specifically, the project prioritises work with young men, predominantly aged between 14-17 years, and with multiple risk factors.

Building on well-established young men's youth groups in deprived communities in the West and East of the city, respectively, the aim of Men to Be is to trial and evidence a wraparound, intensive coaching and keywork service for young men, embedded within community-based youth work, with the goal of changing the course of young men's lives and enabling positive outcomes for them.

It is recognised that structured activities positively engage young men, and over time allow for the creation of important, trusted relationships to develop, but previously The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities have had limited capacity to deliver the blend of extended coaching and mentoring work that we know young men need. Learning from REBOOT Youth Coaching project (Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, 2020) with a similar cohort, it was evidenced that impact from such a model of working is possible.

It is also recognised that a trauma-informed approach is vital, as is the need to engage with the families and services around young men to support them, all of which requires highly skilled Youth Coaches, with capacity, agility and time.

The Men to Be project therefore aims to offer a model with:

- multiple entry points;
- open access to activities;
- targeted detached work where young men street socialise;
- a referral route from schools and other partner organisations; and
- an ability to start in either one-to-one support and step down, or in activities and build up contact.

1.2 Organisational contexts

The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities are local youth work, community development and engagement experts. Working across Brighton and Hove in deprived communities, whose outcomes are poorer than those others enjoy, both organisations take an asset and strengths-based, empowerment approach, seeking to reduce inequalities and maximise life chances for all.

The Hangleton and Knoll Project Youth Team has delivered targeted neighbourhood youth work interventions with young men over the past three decades. This work has been predominantly through detached methods.

Detached youth work is recognised as using:

The principles and practice of informal education to engage young people in a constructive dialogue about their needs, interests, concerns and lifestyles to support them in their personal and social development... the work takes place in the street, but also in parks, cafés, shopping centres, and other spaces young people have chosen to be (NYA/FDYW, 2020).

A Young Men's Group was established in 2021 in response to a group of young men gathering near the local Church and Community Centre, asking for their own space to meet off the street. The Youth Team had access to a small brick-built pavilion in a local park and through a targeted neighbourhood youth work approach with these young men, opened the pavilion every Monday evening for the group.

The young men accessing the weekly space enjoy opportunities to engage in recreational activities of their choice and build relationships with trusted adults. The sessions include a chance to share a meal together within a safe setting, held within expectations and boundaries for membership. Young men use the opportunity to plan positive activities with Youth Workers and have been successful in applying for funding these through the Brighton and Hove City Council's Youth Led Grant Programme and donation from the Rotary District Foundation Grant which have facilitated a young men's group to continue to meet throughout the course of the Men to Be Programme.

In addition, The Hangleton and Knoll Project neighbourhood youth work offer provides open access youth clubs by hiring community spaces, detached and outreach sessions and targeted group work during term time. Holiday activity programmes are offered during the school holidays which include family events, youth sessions and trips.

The Trust for Developing Communities offer neighbourhood-based youth work, rooted in the principles of community development. Today, the Trust for Developing Communities provides multiple youth projects across North, East, and Central Brighton, including award-winning detached youth work, open-access and single-gender group sessions, and specialised 1:1 projects. Programmes are designed to foster a sense of safety, belonging, and purpose among young people, empowering them to make self-directed changes in their lives through non-judgmental professional support.

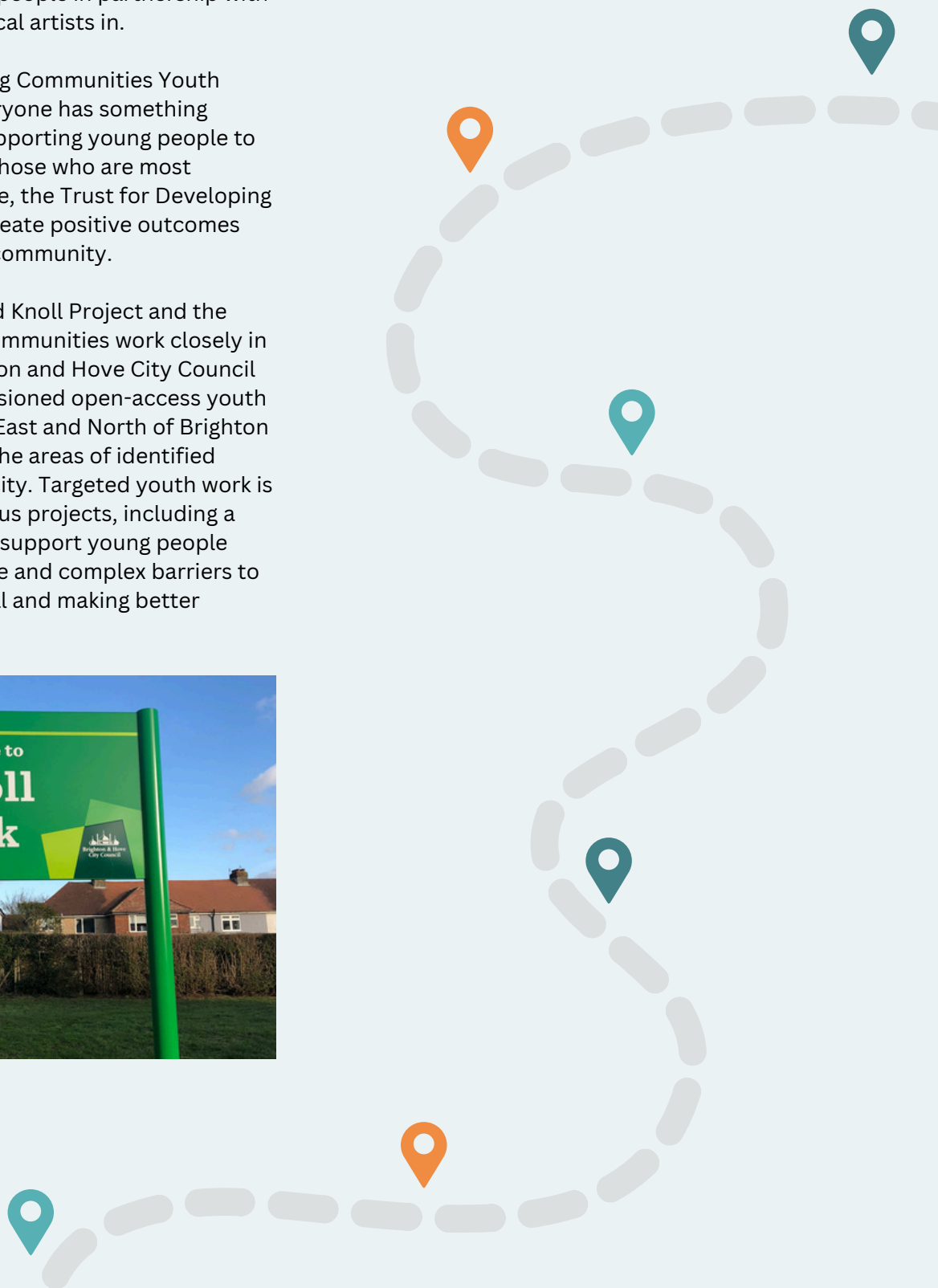
Since 2019, the Trust for Developing Communities has provided MY-G (Moulsecoomb Young Guys), which began when a group of young men engaged in problematic anti-social behaviour requested a space just for themselves. This led to the creation of a dedicated group, offering both 1:1 support and access to local gyms. MY-G has been running ever since.



The importance of Trust for Developing Communities' neighbourhood-rooted coaching was captured in the Trust for Developing Communities' Young Ends[1] documentary, curated by local young people in partnership with Platform B radio and local artists in.

The Trust for Developing Communities Youth Team believes that everyone has something valuable to offer. By supporting young people to participate, especially those who are most excluded and vulnerable, the Trust for Developing Communities aims to create positive outcomes that benefit the entire community.

Both The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities work closely in partnership with Brighton and Hove City Council and deliver the commissioned open-access youth work offer in the West, East and North of Brighton and Hove, covering all the areas of identified deprivation within the city. Targeted youth work is delivered through various projects, including a range of initiatives that support young people who experience multiple and complex barriers to achieving their potential and making better choices in their lives.



[1] <https://www.mixcloud.com/PLATFORMBradio/young-ends-voices-from-the-67-centre/>

1.3 The Men to Be youth coaching model

The Men to Be coaching model is informed by the Roca high risk youth intervention model (Roca, 2024), referenced in the original research study (Holmstrom et al, 2021) which informed The Pebble Trust commissioning brief for Men to Be, and developed as an approach to working with “those who are traumatised, full of distrust, and are trapped in a cycle of violence and poverty” (Roca, 2024). Men to Be seeks to draw upon Roca’s four approaches to changing the lives and criminal trajectories of young people as follows:

Create safety and stability

Weekly, dedicated young men’s spaces are created in their communities, meeting basic needs. The aim is to provide food, shelter and make connections, providing moments of feeling free from harm. Trauma-informed training for the Men to Be Youth Coaches, group workers and other related staff, helps The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities to understand the fundamental needs of the young men engaged in the project.

Teach life-saving skills

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) has been heralded as a critical and effective component to behaviour change in the reduction of risk-taking (Youth Endowment Fund, 2021). CBT informed training enables frontline practitioners to support young men’s ‘slow down’, to disrupt negative cycles and for them to take control of their lives.

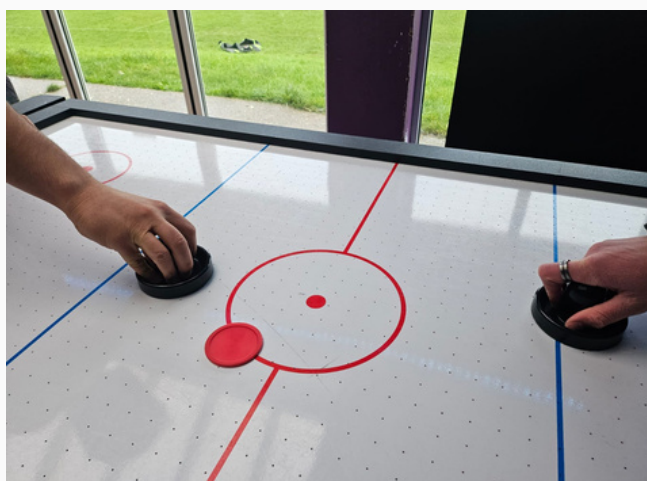


Practical skills, relapse, repeat

The project links with the Brighton and Hove Youth Employment Hub, Youth Employability Service and other training agencies offering employment, education and life skills programmes. Critically, Men to Be aims to be there to support when young men fall back into problematic or harmful behaviours. A non-judgmental approach provides “spaces to change, relapse and change further” (Roca, 2024).

Engage Institutions and systems

The project reaches out to the organisational partners who engage with these young men, including the police, health providers, social and youth justice services and schools. Relationships with these services is fundamental to provision of a ‘wraparound’ service that promote outcomes in the best interest of the young men.



The project commitment has been for each organisation to work with, using a youth coaching model, a minimum of 12 young men over the course of the life of project, knowing that each young man worked with, would provide a unique opportunity to support change and offer organisational learning in developing and refining the M2B model of working.

Staffing wise, the project has been fortunate to be able to draw on a significant level of experience and expertise from within each organisation. Crucially, managers and practitioners were already known to the communities which Men to Be serves, and existing relationships were already established with many of the young men the project subsequently engaged with through the youth coaching model. The project staff includes:



- Helen Baxter (Youth Work Manager)
- Briony Streets (Youth Coach)



- Sue Feighery / Sean O'Older (Youth Work Managers)
- Roman Waters (Youth Coach)

The Youth Coach role outline is presented in Appendix 1.

1.4 Monitoring and evaluation process

The evaluation process which has informed this report has developed through ongoing and regular engagement and discussion with the respective managers at The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities and the Men to Be Youth Coaches.

Whilst models and frames for recording, monitoring and evaluation were developed initially with the project team and drew on recognised examples of good practice, as the work developed, so the recording, monitoring and evaluation processes also evolved and developed.

In monitoring the work of Men to Be on a case basis, the aim has been to develop a framework and responsive ways of working which afforded opportunities to be explicit in respect of the following:

- engagement in the coaching process
- issues/factors explored with the young men
- support provided for the young men
- changing life circumstances / events
- choices and behaviour change
- engagement with other services
- assessment of vulnerability and risk
- impact and other external measures

It was recognised from the outset that such a record keeping framework would be largely dependent upon the Youth Coaches in terms of their diligence and professional judgement in maintaining its completion. It was also considered imperative from the outset, that where possible, the voices of the young men with whom the coaches engaged, would be present in any monitoring and evaluation frame, together with testimony and evidential data from other service providers and significant adults with whom the young men were engaging.

Hence, the key evaluation tools employed included:

- utilisation of existing organisational/service monitoring and record keeping processes and frameworks;
- development of bespoke frameworks for recording contact, inputs/intervention and outcomes of meeting with young men;
- regular project management meetings;
- individual meetings (including recorded interviews) with Project Managers and Youth Coaches;
- completion of support logs for each of the 24 young men worked with over the course of the M2B project (see Appendix 2 for an example of a completed support log).

- completion of narrative case studies (see Appendix 3 for an example) to illustrate engagement, intervention, outcome and learning processes;
- and end of project, online 'satisfaction' survey of all 24 young men;
- other solicited feedback and testimonials from the young men themselves and other significant adults in their lives.

In presenting this evaluation report, the intention is that:



the process of the work is captured (see Chapter 2) – how the Men to Be model has evolved and developed;



the impact of the work on young men, their behaviour and life course, is recorded and presented (see Chapter 3);



the learning from the project is considered and recommendations for future work are presented (see Chapter 4).



Engagement with young men

In considering the process of engagement with young men, the project has several, interrelated elements which frame and direct the process of engaging with young men through the Men to Be programme:

- the target age range of the young men;
- the alignment to and relationship of the project to a neighbourhood youth work model;
- the relational, coaching model developed and its ability to flex in response to the needs of the individual young men and their experience, context and needs.

2.1 Initial contracting, referral and needs assessment

The strength of the Men to Be project lies in the existing and developing relationships Briony and Helen (The Hangleton and Knoll Project) and Roman and SeanO (Trust for Developing Communities) have with young men in their respective neighbourhoods.

In describing the work, Briony comments:

“We’re coming from a point of already having a relationship – and I would say that’s slightly different to normal youth work, because you’ve not always got that relationship. So, we’re going in where we have an existing relationship and we’ve already done some youth work with these young people and we’re in their area. We’ve got all of that in place.”

The Men to Be work has sought to build on this though and offers something more, and in particular, work with issues, behaviours, life choices etc, which the young men identify for themselves. For the main part, the offer has been to young men with whom the two services, The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities, are already engaged, and in particular, where the two coaches, Briony and Roman, have established relationships.

As part of the initial project planning, an agreement/consent process and recording framework was developed. This was accompanied by an initial assessment tool. Such assessment tools are not uncommon in targeted services such as the Men to Be project, especially where the intention is to both identify specific areas for exploration and engagement and as an aid to review progress and outcome/impact. Both Briony and Roman experienced some reluctance on the part of the young men with whom they were working initially, to engage with such processes/tools. Indeed, and this is an issue for ‘free association’ youth work more widely, where such contracting and assessment process are sometimes seen as counter to the ethos of a working relationship which is led and directed predominantly by the young men themselves.

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'MenToBe' Youth Coaching Programme Support Log Form

M2B Young person ID:

Start date:

End Date:

Youth Coach:

Manager:

Young person context:

Referral route into M2B?

Risk factors for the young person? (Bullet point and summarise)

Typology of work:

As Roman explains:

“I’ve seen people’s eyes roll when I get out the forms – which is never a good sign. So, yeah (they’re) not super keen on using them ... their experience of this kind of thing is school work and contractual. Some people just can’t sit down like that, so I can’t fill it out with them.”

Understanding the importance of the relational nature of the ‘contract’ between the coach and the individual young men has been key to both Briony’s and Roman’s working practices within the project. For this reason, the methods of recording the process and focus of interactions and interventions, evolved over the course of the project.

As well as engaging with young men with whom Briony and Roman had existing relationships through neighbourhood work and the respective young men’s groups at The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities, both coaches explored possibilities for extending the Men to Be coaching offer to referrals via other contextual and inter-agency routes (in particular, through schools and via health services), with whom both The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities have established working partnerships. These additional referral routes afford collaborative advantage for each sector partner, in reaching and engaging with young men with whom Men to Be might offer something unique.

2.2 Relationship building

The operational 'span' of neighbourhood youth work, at times accommodates an extension to the project's target age range of 14-17 years, both in terms of working with younger, young men (i.e., 13 years), and those beyond the usual age range (18+ years) too, where appropriate.

The project, as a way of working with this predominantly ‘mid teens’ age range, seeks to position the coaching model as a development of relationally based, free association, neighbourhood youth work. Both Briony and Roman are experienced youth workers, working within existing neighbourhood teams and each work with established young men's groups. The Men to Be coaching provision was intended to complement and draw upon these young men's groups in terms of identification and extending invitations to individual young men to engage with the coaching 'offer'.

This age range presents its own challenges in terms of applying a model of practice which is predicated on the young men's ability to identify aspects of their circumstance, behaviour or life course they wish to address or bring about change. Younger adolescent boys and young men may not have yet reached a level of emotional capacity/capability and independent, decisional agency which perhaps the coaching model requires. This is not to say that the model is not applicable or workable with those at the younger end of the targeted age span, but rather the application of the model requires a nuanced positioning which was part of the on-going discussion within project meetings.



2.3 The Changing Chances Empowerment Approach and related tools/models

In its early stages, the Men to Be project team were privileged to draw upon and benefit from training and guidance from Kit Messenger, co-founder of Changing Chances organisation, whose mission is “to improve the life chances of children and young people, especially those who struggle at home, in the classroom, and beyond” (Changing Chances, 2024). Changing Chances’ associated ‘Empowerment Approach’ was selected as it closely aligns with the ethos and vision of M2B and was felt to offer conceptual insight and understanding, as well as practical tools which had the potential for adaptation to youth work and the M2B youth coaching relationship.

Changing Chances’ Empowerment Approach is summarised as:

The Empowerment Approach

The Empowerment Approach is an innovative, research-based approach to support children and young people who are anxious or withdrawn; who struggle with unhelpful and risky behaviour; or who find school a challenge. The approach offers a proven alternative to the traditional control-based methods of managing behaviour.

Practical strategies based on the latest research

The Empowerment Approach is built on what the latest neuroscience tells us about the factors that sit behind behaviour that is unhelpful to the child and to those around them. It is informed by our understanding of neurodiversity and the impact of attachment and trauma on behaviour difficulties. It is underpinned by therapeutic approaches.

The approach also sets out a very practical methodology for addressing children’s difficulties on a day-to-day basis. It is underpinned by strong relationships between adults and young people. Relationships characterised by positive communication; mutual respect and listening to understand the young person’s experience.

Developing skills

The Empowerment Approach supports the development of pro-social skills for all children and young people. It also creates a targeted support structure for young people with high levels of difficulty, including those who:

- Have difficulty keeping to agreed boundaries.
- Demonstrate social, emotional or mental health difficulties which may lead to unwanted behaviours and challenging relationships.
- Experience difficulties in following instructions and regulating emotions.
- Struggle to manage time, organise equipment and get started on tasks.

Young people at the centre

The approach places young people’s self-awareness at its heart. It provides practical strategies and tools to support children to truly understand their difficulties and to move from responses driven by emotion towards positive self-control.

Innovative resources

The Empowerment Approach is supported by innovative tools; specially-designed resources and visual aids. Training participants can access the toolkit of resources for use with children and young people online.



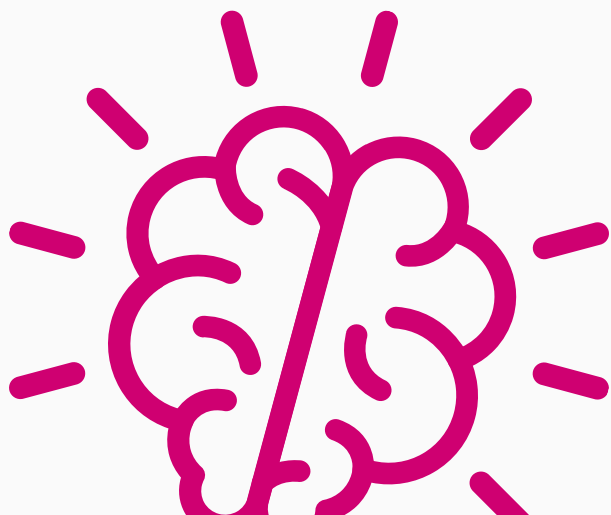
2.4 Coaching and interventions

Both Briony and Roman consistently demonstrated a commitment to and developing understanding of how the coaching model proposed at the core of the Men to Be project, and supported through the ‘Empowerment Approach’ and associated staff training, might be implemented and finessed through engagement with the participating young men.

As Briony explains:

“The training that we did with Kit, I found it really useful when we’re doing the one-to-one sessions ... so there’s definitely something in there about the time allowed and time given and the (way) training Kit’s taken us through on understanding your brain. So, I’ve been trying to adapt the training, bring it to the young person at a point where they’re going to understand it. One phrase that I’ve found has really helped that I have been using that your brain is not there to keep you happy, it is there to keep you alive. And I really like this saying, because it makes it easy for young people to understand. It’s like you know our brain’s job is to make sure that we get through each day. So, it will go into its fight or flight thing if it thinks that it’s being threatened ... and so it’s been really helpful.”

Kit’s training also presented a number of specific tools and exercises and activities which could potentially be employed directly with the young men, but both Roman and Briony found that these were not always applicable to a more informal, conversational coaching model with young men. In particular, both coaches commented on the complexity of attachment, behaviour and neuro-diversity related needs of the young men with whom they are working. Roman comments:



“There’s also been some complexities of neurodiversity – like particularly there’s young people with autism and ADHD, and so some days they might say yes to meeting, but then (they’re) not in a space where we can really ... they don’t want to do anything. I mean I know them and it’s nothing I’m not used to, it’s just ... it means I have to be kind of quick about going ‘okay am I going to try this coaching approach, or are we going to just take it a bit more chilled?’ For example, last week a young person ... I met with him and he’d wanted his mum to come because he was having trouble saying stuff to his mum. And then this was the week after that, and he’d asked for a load of things to happen, which were things that he couldn’t realistically do on his own – like at school, and support with autism. And I brought like the Amaze[2] leaflet to show him, and he was just like completely shut down that day. Before I showed it, like this you know ... eyes really low, tired ... I was like ‘Do you want to do this?’ he was like ‘No’. ‘Shall I send it to your mum?’ ‘Yeah’. It’s yeah difficult with things like that.”

In this way, both Briony and Roman adapted and extended the principle of the training and the coaching model itself, into their existing professional skill and resource set. Both have commented how much they have learnt and continue to learn in the development of this work.



[2] Amaze is a charity that gives information, advice and support to families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Brighton and Hove and Sussex <https://amazesussex.org.uk/>

This aspect of professional learning – for Briony and Roman as individuals, but for the project and existing services and organisations as a whole – cannot be underestimated. Men to Be sought from the outset to develop and refine its work as a focused and enhanced extension to existing provision – both in terms of the time and deepened relationships with some of the hardest to engage and vulnerable young men in their respective communities, but also in terms of a way of working and engaging.

Roman describes this when asked to explain how he works with young men on the project:

I think an easy-going nature probably helps - don't want there to be pressure in the relationship, but like an 'open accountability' is good. I'm trying where possible to remove every ounce of like my old-style language of 'you should do this, that' ... or like sort of directive directions, and just let them talk about it whatever's going on for them, ask them what they think. Because most of them don't want to have their anger issues or you know be drinking 24/7. So, I kind of then lead them on that that from ... I guess there's a persistence as well - but keep showing up until they say 'I don't want to be involved'.

Briony too, describes in detail her M2B practice with a particular young man:

So, I think explaining it like that and sort of saying you know, your actual brain main function ... and you have to override it sometimes in a way ... you need to override what it's telling you sometimes if it's going into this really flighty mode. Because it's gotten James into quite a lot of trouble – with him it's that anger, it's that sense of rejection, and he will often physically lash out.

He does, at some point, just need proper therapy and counselling, he really does ... but I think having that understanding it has just helped him to realise that he's not just like an angry young man, you know it's not just always going to be like that, this is actually something that is in you that is something that you can work with, and that you can kind of rewire and train your brain effectively. So that is definitely a different element to any other youth work I've done before. I've never really sat with a young person and discussed that side of it really.

It cannot be emphasised strongly enough though, that the Men to Be coaching model, informed by the 'Empowerment Approach' training and associated tools, is an enhancement to a pre-existing relational youth work skill set which Briony and Roman each developed to a high level, prior to Men to Be. In this way, the project might be regarded as modelling a 'youth work plus' methodology.

In recording engagement with young men over the course of the Men to Be coaching work, a number of contexts for engagement were considered:

- home visits
- neighbourhood 1:1 work
- city/central 1:1 work
- parent/carer contact/engagement (usually with the young man)
- multi-agency meetings (with or without the young man)
- advocacy work (with or without the young man)

In addition to engagement under the Men to Be youth coaching brief, diversionary activity and attendance at open access youth provision and young men's groups was also noted for each young man (see Appendix 2).



2.5 Endings

The expectation was that each Men to Be youth coaching relationship with individual young men, would be a negotiated one. That an 'agreement' for working together, whilst perhaps not overly formalised, at least was 'contracted' informally; to work together on identified issues in response to contextual life and individual psychosocial need.

In addition, it was anticipated that the working relationship would include a number of individual coaching sessions and other appropriate meetings (see section 2.2) culminating in an agreement to ending the coaching relationship, once the coaching work was felt to have resulted in either identified outcomes and/or personal change, or it was felt that the coaching engagement has gone as far as it might, in terms of 'bearing fruit'.

Some Men to Be relationships indeed, did follow this pattern, whilst others ended abruptly or continued for a longer period of time and in some cases, continue beyond the life of this pilot project.

This agility of the project, flexing responsively to young men's shifting needs and life course development, reflects the wider process of neighbourhood youth work and is a key defining element of Men to Be.



2.6 Use of supervision

Throughout the life of the Men to Be project, the two Youth Coaches, Briony and Roman, received on-going case management supervision and line management supervision through their own respective employer's service structures. This is a feature of much youth work professionally, and is offered in recognition of the demanding nature of youth work practices and relationships, like those reflected in the Men to Be project. Additionally reflective practice was offered through the YMCA DownsLink Group who are recipients of The Pebble Trust funding for a parallel youth coaching/mentoring project working with older young men.



Outputs and outcomes

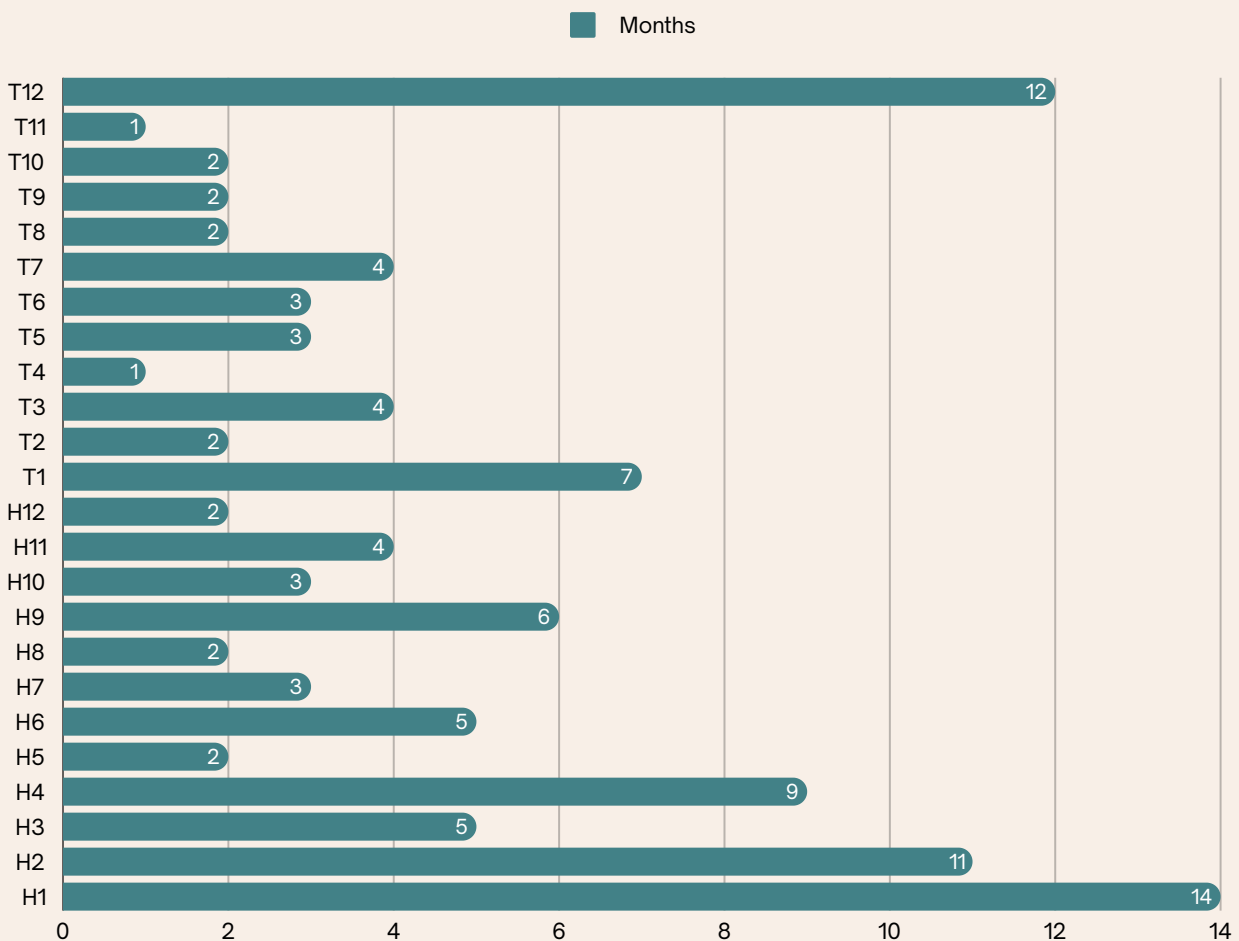
Data collected from coaching support logs (see Appendix 2) completed by the Youth Coaches and collated in tabular form, and from an end of project survey, are presented here summarively and where appropriately graphically, before moving on to a narrative examination and evaluation of the project (see Chapter 4).

3.1 Analysis across coaching support log data (see Appendix 2)

3.1.1 Length and time spent coaching

Looking across all 24 completed support logs, the span of engagement in time ranges from 1 to 14 months, with an average of 4 to 5 months of 1:1 youth coaching engagement.

Figure 1. Length of engagement (months)



The time spent in 1:1 working with the young men ranges from 2 to 52 hours, with an average of 12 hours spend with each young man, usually (but not always) undertaken alongside more generalised neighbourhood youth work and other diversionary activity.

Very few of the M2B relationships (2) only included 1:1 coaching sessions, and in both these cases the length of contact was relatively short (1 to 2 months). For the most part, the M2B interventions included a combination of 1:1 coaching (24), home visits (6), contact with parents/carers (12), multi-agency meetings (15) and advocacy work (10). The majority (22) also noted other diversionary and socially orientated youth work engagement.

3.1.2 Issues noted and explored



Analysis of issues noted and explored by the Youth Coaches, shows that the most common issues relate to:

- family trauma and breakdown, and related adverse childhood experiences
- neurodiversity
- substance use (predominantly alcohol and cannabis)
- emotional and behavioural regulation
- education, employment and training
- wider mental health issues

The interdependence and compounding of these issues in young men’s lives, especially for those living in areas of poverty and disadvantage, is widely recognised.

Nevertheless, each young man’s experience of these and their ability to both navigate and understand their individual context and affect change in their own lives, means that no one coaching relationship is the same as the next.

3.1.3 Signposting, endings and outcomes

All but one of the M2B ‘cases’ considered here, record a positive outcome for the young man, with the majority also noting either referral and signposting to continued support through other organisations and services, alongside again, in many cases, continued relationship and engagement through neighbourhood youth work.

The range of outcomes recorded is varied, but includes:

- Reduced risk through substance use
- More positive/improved engagement in education, employment and training
- Improved family relationships
- Improved emotional regulation and behaviour management
- Higher self esteem
- Practical achievements (e.g. accessing universal credit; attained CSCS; joining a gym, gaining employment, etc)
- Improved ability to access additional support (CAMHS; ru-ok?; counselling, YES, etc)
- More settled/less turbulent life engagement and experience
- Reduced isolation

3.2 Analysis of end of project satisfaction survey data

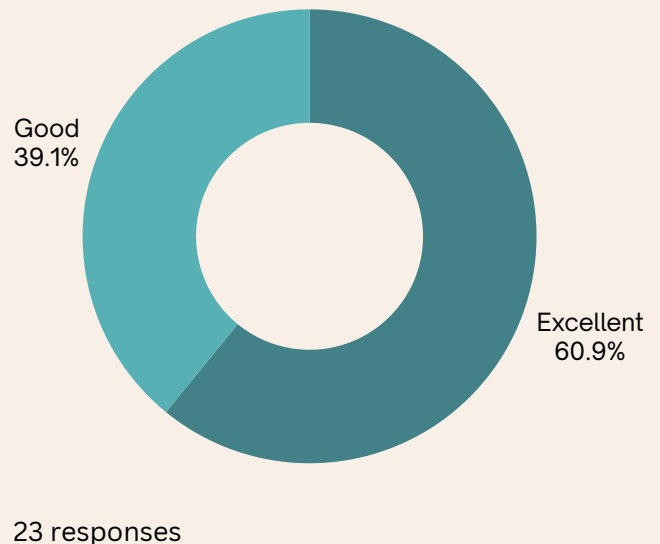
(see Appendix 2)

The following data is summarised from the 23 respondents to the end of project, online survey (July 2024) sent to all 24 young men participating in the Men to Be programme. 23 responses were received.

3.2.1 Overall satisfaction assessment

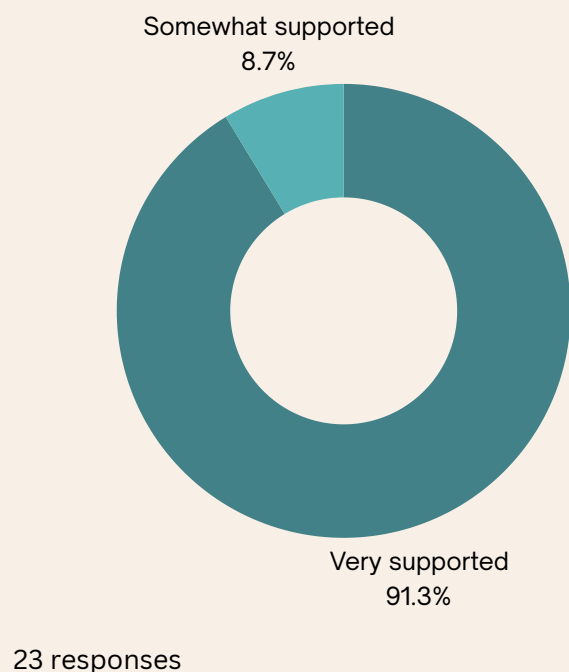
From Figure 1, it can be noted that from 23 responses, 14 (60.9%) rated their experience of the project as a whole as being ‘excellent’, whilst the remaining 9 (39.1%) gave the rating ‘good’, resulting in a 100% positive assessment to the project overall:

Overall, how would you rate your experience with the Men to Be youth coaching programme?



When asked directly, 21 (91.3%) judged their Youth Coach to be ‘very supportive’, with the remaining 2 (8.7%) feeling ‘somewhat supported’:

How supported did you feel by your Youth Coach during the programme?



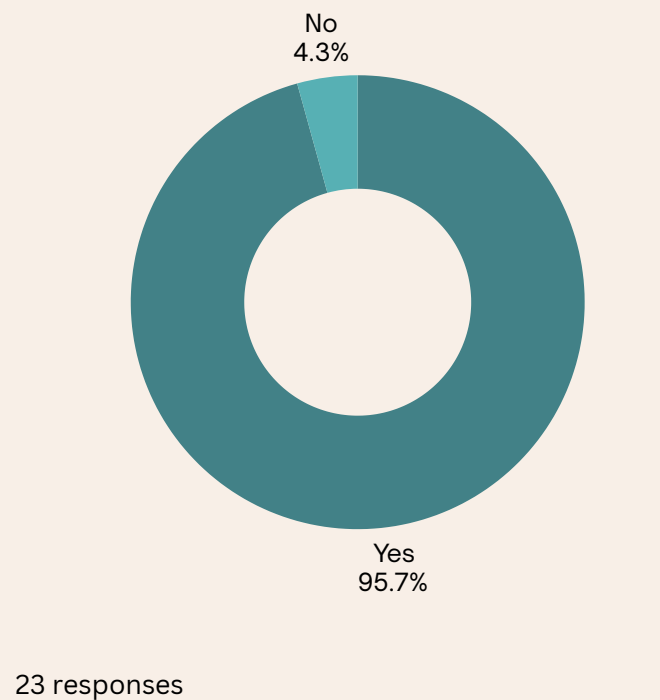
3.2.2 Support received and impact assessment

The young men were invited to expand on the support they received from their Youth Coach and free text responses to this question include:

- They helped me when I was homeless [to] get back on my feet and are still around helping me do more – they are great
- Helped with issues I have
- They always made me feel safe
- Very well and helped a lot
- It was really helpful as Briony gave me easy step by step goals to make it less overwhelming
- My Youth Coach was very clear and concise and helped me throughout the programme, they would provide help when needed and allowed me to put my learning into practice
- I felt supported to be able to do the things I wanted and got support on how to do it and go about college process and managing stress
- Helpful
- I felt very supported because I felt like Roman understands me
- I could hear thoughts telling me to do things, was taking drugs and needed mental health support
- She's so nice and always cared
- Roman listened to what I had to say
- Roman was very helpful with everything and now that I feel a lot more confident and able to do things and how to do them such as revision, speaking to people, working with others etc.
- Every time I would get in a fight, they would stop it
- Helping when someone is not really being themselves
- Roman contacted via message or call to see if I was ok and able to attend, which helped me
- Roman has been brilliant and helped loads and so much support
- Was nice talking to him
- Very helpful and friendly, my son trusted him
- One of them people that you could just trust, and help me out. Every Wednesday we would eat, walk and help me with some difficult stuff
- He's super understanding, gives you the chance to speak - while I felt suicidal
- It was helpful to have someone to talk to

Additionally, when asked to consider the impact of working with the Youth Coach, only one respondent (4.3%) felt that things did not change for the better, with the remaining 22 (95.3%) confirming a positive outcome from engagement with the Men to Be project.

Did things change for the better while you were working with your Youth Coach?



understanding TDC
caring helpful clear
brilliant friendly
nice supported
great confident
concise goals
HKP men to be
better person young men
happy advice safe
improve strategies
copng achieving trust
better results

Free text responses to this question include:

- They help get my CSCS and I got it
- Set a goal to change into a better person
- Yes – to get my own place
- I was finally able to get my ID and join universal credit
- My Youth Coach helped me break down certain tasks that were hindering my progress and this significantly supported me in achieving my goals
- I was able to apply for college and find new coping strategies
- Helped a lot
- I got closer to my goal of better sleep - he introduced me to a sleep tracking app
- They helped me get support with those things, help me slow down and think and took me to the gym to help me feel better
- I was more relaxed and stuff
- Roman helped with revision tips and for my mocks exams I just had these helped a lot as I passed everything but one subject but he told me that it's mocks and don't be mad about your results as you have time to improve so I thank him a lot for that advice
- Wanting to get the right grades for my wanted college
- Can't remember my goals but he did help me over come getting out more and talking up more
- Helped understand things
- No, but I still enjoyed it
- I stopped not wanting to be here anymore, I have been more happy
- Helped me with my stress and I can now chill with my Dad a bit
- Getting grounded less

Finally, when questioned about the focus of the coaching relationship, responses here compare closely to the analyses of issues noted and explored by the Youth Coaches (see 3.1.2).



Evaluation

In this section, an interpretative narrative analysis is taken to evaluating the Men to Be project, considering the impact of the work on the young men, the quality and focus of the in context, meeting the brief of the original funding application and project proposal for piloting innovative work of this nature in response to perceived need, key learning from the project, recommendations and ways forward.

In considering these issues, reference is made to the data considered in Chapter 3 and Appendix 2. In addition, evaluative interviews with the key project staff are drawn upon and where available, direct quotes from young men and from significant adults in their lives, are also included.

4.1 Impact

Assessment of impact by Roman and Briony, the two Youth Coaches closest to the work with the individual young men is summarised earlier (see 3.1.3). This assessment is reflected too in the responses from young men completing the end of project satisfaction survey (see 3.2.2).

The project therefore is judged to have impacted on internalised factors (e.g. reduced anxiety, improved emotional regulation, confidence and self-esteem etc):

“I’ve asked who he could talk to in school if he felt he wanted to hurt himself and he said there is no one in school he trusts. [But] he trusts his friend Adam, and Roman Waters, local youth worker and coach.”

T5’s school counsellor after T5 had disclosed thoughts of self-harm

“Roman was real helpful when I was going through some difficult things, including feeling suicidal and thinking my girlfriend was pregnant. We worked on some stuff together and went for walks. It helped me a lot!”

T10

In addition, relational engagement was also a positive outcome for a number of the young men (e.g. reduced isolation, improved family relationships, more positive/improved engagement in education employment and training and better relational behaviour management etc):

“T2 trusts him [Roman]. He is easy to talk to and T2 and I were both able to open up to him – he just gets it – [his] mental health, autism and anger. It’s good that he can go and express it to someone that gets it, who is working in the local area.”

T2’s sports coach

“Last term I have seen a big change in his personality. He will say ‘morning’, ask for things politely. If he is being silly, just simply by asking how he is will reset his mood. I would say there is a noticeable difference.”

H4’s Math’s teacher

“When I first started seeing H11, he was very defensive if something had happened during a session that he felt there was a chance he could have been blamed for. He often showed up very angry after his day at school (and) would often take part in disruptive. Recently, I have seen a positive changes in H11’s behaviour – he now calmly talks about his day, will support clearing up, (and) is polite and respectful.”

H11’s youth worker

Through such developmental change, improved social capital and ability to access and engage with appropriate support structures and services is likely to improve too (e.g. accessing and engaging with CAMHS; ru-ok?; counselling, YES etc):

“H5 is doing so much better now...he has a lovely new girlfriend and he is coming home when he says. He has done well at school, and they say he is on track to get his GCSE’s. I am still worried that he is smoking but he is getting help for that too.”

H5’s mother

These internalised factors and improved relational engagement and social capital in many cases are likely to impact on positive decision making and life choices (e.g. reduced risk through substance use, healthier lifestyle, a more settled/less turbulent life course etc):

“Thank you for dealing with the threats so quickly and efficiently. Thank you for telling me. I know I can count on you guys. I do worry about him sometimes.”

T1’s parent

“I’ve no doubt that the work you did ... saved his life!”

T4’s Children’s Emergency Department Nurse

When combined with practical achievements (e.g. accessing universal credit; securing accommodation; success in attaining CSCS; gaining employment etc), the positive impact of the youth coaching is made concrete”:

“I feel like especially with H1 he has matured a lot since coming in. He’s a very polite and lovely boy. I feel like he’s a lot less boisterous and generally calmer now since the first time he came in.”

H1’s Foyer worker

“I am feeling a lot more positive about things now – this has really helped me to get things off my chest. I am making plans for my future and for college. I have got a job now and I am saving my money.”

H9

These five interrelated dimensions of – internalised factors, relational engagement, social capital building, positive decision making and life choices, and practical achievements – provide a prism through which the impact of the M2B project may be considered. With some young men, the youth coaching engagement is extensive. The impact, in terms of preventative intervention, in this case in helping a young man to bring about change to avoid a custodial sentence, cannot be underestimated. Briony writes of her work with H1:

H1 has been known to The Hangleton and Knoll Project since he was very young, as he lived opposite where the youth team office is based. I have known H1 since he was 14 and I have been working with him regularly through our Young Men’s Group for the last 3 years.

H1 has had to deal with a significant amount of trauma in his young life, which has left him with anger issues, poor mental health and a lack of protective factors in his life. His mother was receiving end of life care at home and sadly passed away in December 2019. This led to the breakdown of H1’s family, as he fell out with his older sister, who then moved away from Brighton. His younger sister went to live in a YMCA and H1 ended up staying with his older brother, on the sofa for a couple of years. Unfortunately, this relationship then also broke down and H1 was left sofa surfing with various friends for two years.

But H1's sustained engagement on the M2B programme resulted in Briony being able to work with him on many of these issues:

H1 had a court case pending, from an incident last year, that he asked for moral support with. I have spoken to his probation officer and agreed to help where I can, as another professional and trusted adult in H1's life. On the day in Court, H1 had nine people there in support of him including his sister, probation officer, social worker and girlfriend. The judge noted the letters of support from professionals, and he was able to avoid a custodial sentence; instead receiving community service and a suspended sentence.

H1 is now housed in the Sanctuary Foyer in Brighton and will hopefully be able to start looking for work once he has completed his CSCS card, he has done well to keep working towards his goals despite all the barriers he has faced. His overall attitude is positive, and he is doing his best to steer away from negative influences and move forward with his life.

A key element and contributory factor to the success of M2B and its impact on young men's lives was the brokering and facilitation of referral and engagement in specialist support services. Over the course of the project, through engagement with the respective youth coaches, individual young men have accessed and engaged with a range of services including the Brighton & Hove ru-ok? sexual health and substance use service, the YMCA Downslink's e-wellbeing service, other mental health support, as well as engagement with community projects and family mediation which have resulted in a de-escalation of more severe and acute and severe issues. Such referrals and supported engagement are more likely to be successful, when the relational engagement and trust between the young man and the youth coach is more fully developed.

In some cases, the supported brokering and referral is of an occupational training nature. For example, H1 and H12 approached their youth coach, Briony, saying that they wanted to apply to the Camelia Botnar Foundation[3]. Camelia Botnar is a residential skills training college that work with disadvantaged young people to help them to find a positive way forward and gain life changing skills and qualifications. The college teach metalwork, carpentry, mechanics and construction. Their aim is to train young people up and move them on within 3 – 6 months, with a very high success rate.

H1 and H12 visited Camellia Botnar with their youth coach, Briony. Briony reports:

They displayed a mature and responsible attitude while there. We worked on their applications and risk assessments together and both were invited back for an interview for places the metalwork department.

H1 and H12 both impressed the college at interview where they spoke highly of their youth coach, which in turn, prompted Camelia Botnar staff to ask to visit The Hangleton and Knoll Project to see how their services work too. Both H1 and H12 have since been accepted on to programmes by the Camelia Botnar Foundation.



[3] <https://cameliabotnar.com>

4.2 The work in context and meeting the brief of the project proposal

The nature of the youth coaching model employed on the Men to Be project is subtle and has to be considered 'in context' – working with young men, usually known to the Youth Coaches, within a neighbourhood youth work model.

Of her engagement with H4, Briony describes the subtle, agile nature of the person-centred work:

I received a call from H4's mum, who was in tears and very worried about both of her sons. She was asking if I knew of any therapy or help and support that might be available. I mentioned the 1:1 (M2B) coaching programme and said I had a space for both of her sons, if they are happy to engage with it.

I did a home visit and spoke to both H4 and H5 (his older brother) about the programme and offered them separate 1:1 sessions. Mum was very concerned that she was going to 'lose' both of her boys to anti-social behaviour and substance misuse (and) was always keeping them inside the house after school and on weekends. This was creating a very tense atmosphere at home and lead to the brothers fighting a lot, verbally and physically.

Following this, I set up 1:1 sessions once a week at school for H4. We use this time to talk through any problems, to discuss (his) use of language, (his) use of swearing and how he can train himself to be less impulsive with what he shouts out. The Empowerment Approach has been useful here to help H4 to identify what his 'strengths' are and how he can use them to his advantage, instead of getting in to trouble all the time.

I have been working with H4 to establish better boundaries, to help him to understand the sexualized content of what he is saying and what is and isn't appropriate for someone his age. We have been working on rebuilding trust with mum and we have done this by inviting H4 to our weekly table tennis club. It is a small, closed group for young people who are struggling a bit more than others. He attends this once a week and it allows him to burn off energy in a safe place and gets him out of the house and doing something positive.

For some young men engaging on the M2B programme, the impact and change process is interrupted. Sadly, this is not uncommon in such work. Roman describes such an example of this in his work with T4:

T4 (...) had moved to Brighton with his family after experiencing weaponised violence and anti-social behaviour in areas across Sussex. He has Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, issues with consuming alcohol, occasional use of pharmaceutical and illicit substances, making risky decisions, not being in education or employment since 9 years old, poor mental health, a high number of police investigations, Child Protection level social work and being rated as being of 'high-risk' of exploitation, among other adverse childhood experiences.

T4 came to notice of the Trust for Developing Communities through our work in the Emergency Department at the Royal Alex Children's Hospital. He spoke of how he wanted his life to be different and feeling caught in a pattern of poor mental health, little to do and problematic alcohol use.

This case was cut short when Children's Services unexpectedly moved the family out of Brighton. However, in the time we worked together, we managed to get to a place where T4 didn't want to drink to regulate his mental health and was choosing other ways of coping. We advocated for cognitive assessments, child protection plans, and his statutory right to education – all of which were undertaken while working with him. T4 showed great promise in growing to be able to understand the gravity of his situation, assess his own needs, and engage with other professionals who wished to help him.

4.3 Key learning

The learning from the M2B project experience has largely been rich and rewarding.

4.3.1 Factors for success

The project has clearly demonstrated a number of factors and interdependent elements which combine to foster success in the work and are more likely to result in positive impact and outcomes for the young men engaged in such youth coaching.

Readiness to engage

Fundamental to potential successful impact is the young man's readiness to engage. Those young men who could identify aspects of their personal life circumstances or their emotional/behavioural regulation or neurodiversity needs which they wished to manage or affect change, are more likely to sustain meaningful engagement with their Youth Coach.

Person-centred

A person-centred approach adopted by the Youth Coach (and which is congruent with youth work more broadly) is more likely to foster enhanced, relational engagement with young men on their terms, working on self-identified issues, rather than on any mandated, service led agenda.

Agility of coaching

The M2B youth coaching model has been shown to be more effective when the Youth Coach has had the capacity and availability to work responsively with young men, adopting the range of youth coaching strategies and interventions (see section 2.4) according to changing circumstance and need. Similarly, the agility of the Youth Coach to utilise the range of Empowerment Approach knowledge, tools and strategies available, is also important.

Multi-agency working

A strength of the M2B youth coaching model has been to be able to engage effectively with other agencies and services, negotiating inter-disciplinary responses, including advocacy and signposting and referring on, especially towards the end of the youth coaching period of engagement.

Parental and family engagement

A feature of several of the M2B youth coaching cases, either involved parental referrals or the focus of the young man's exploration, process and learning involved family relationships and relational interactions. For these reasons, the experience, confidence and ability of the Youth Coach to work dynamically within parental and family contexts, is important for the success and potential impact of the M2B project.

4.3.2 Challenges of record keeping

Developing a responsive and easy to manage process of record keeping, which captured the process of working with the young men, chartered both the changing issues for exploration and engagement and the facets of intervention etc adopted by the Youth Coach, and which recorded and evaluated progress/outcomes achieved, was a challenge throughout the project.

Having reached the end of the project, the support log framework (see Appendix 2) does now offer some potential for developing a project record keeping system for future such youth coaching models of working.

4.3.3 Challenges of testimonials and incorporating young men's voices

A further challenge for the project (and which subsequent youth coaching projects might consider) would be to how best to develop the inclusion of young men's voices and testimonials from significant adults and professional staff, in project 'case' records.

Where captured these have been powerful and affirming indicators of success and positive outcome. However, care must be taken that this drive towards recording direct experience and testimonials does not distort the process of engagement with young men.

4.4 Recommendations and ways forward

There is powerful and compelling evidence arising from the Men to Be project to support applications for further funding for future provision of such neighbourhood-based youth coaching work.

There is potential for working with Changing Chances to refine the Empowerment Approach for youth coaching and other youth work and informal education contexts.

Dissemination of the learning and success of the Men to Be project and the model of youth coaching developed should be prioritised.

The continued importance to establishing and maintaining key professional partnership links has been highlighted by the Men to Be project and whilst it is acknowledged that such a commitment is not always easy to sustain, the value of it in working collaboratively to support young people's needs is immense.

Consideration of collective or groups processes to both provide restorative and educative aspects supervision (Proctor, 2008) should be explored for any future such youth coaching provision.

4.5 Closing comments

The flexibly responsive and relational element of the Men to Be project, integrated within a neighbourhood youth work model, is at the heart of the project's success. Even though the defined project has now concluded, the work between the coaches and others at the Trust for Developing Communities and The Hangleton and Knoll Project working in similar ways continues.

The work exemplified within the Men to Be youth coaching model, not only draws on and reflects elements of the ROCA (2024) model but is also aligned to the core belief cycle (Sullivan, 2021) and other similar models such as the behavior cycle (Andrew, 2020) – models which help us understand the relationship between experiences, beliefs, thoughts, feelings and behaviour/actions.

In conclusion, it is important to recognise the commitment of:

- The Pebble Trust for their generosity in funding Men to Be and their willingness to support opportunities for change in young people's lives
- The Hangleton and Knoll Project and the Trust for Developing Communities to take such innovative steps in developing their neighbourhood youth and community work provision in meeting the needs of vulnerable and at-risk young men
- the two youth coaches, Briony and Roman, who both showed so much trust and passion for the work and their belief in young men's capacity to change

- the 24 young men who took steps in their own lives towards learning and becoming and realising their potential, often in the face of adversity and diminished life chances

Affirming her appreciation of the project's commitment, T4's mum commented:

“Many people say they’ll do something for T4 but don’t - we really appreciate what you’re doing for him. He really needs this.”

And finally, to return the relational impact of the youth coaching model, Roman writes with insight in his case study report of his work with T8.

T8 seemed to really enjoy and feel elevated by the M2B coaching sessions, finding new ways to articulate himself. Whilst the timekeeping and finding his own way was challenging, they were important to him and he never forgot a session. As his comfort and trust grew, he began to smile more and make jokes during the sessions, as well as tell his story, talking about suggestions and choices. He decided that we’d work on what anger felt like for him and how he could manage it, and was fully engaged in wanting to change his expression of anger.

We used a thermometer illustration to map what different levels of anger looked like for him, and kept track of what levels he hit during the week and when. We discussed guilt-free anger, that it just might not always be suitable for the moment. Before this, T8 had expressed how he, at times, felt ashamed about feeling so angry before and would stop him being open about it. T8 shared that his dad shows anger in the same way, which is something he doesn’t like and makes other’s question their safety.

This case demonstrated a number of positive impacts. T8 showed great promise in managing his anger and emotional responses. He reported feeling less angry and less guilty about his anger, and had no moments of uncontrollable anger in weeks 4-6.

Acknowledgements

Gratitude and appreciation is given to all of the following for their participation and contribution to the success of the Men to Be project:

Each young person on the Men to Be programme who trusted their Youth Coach enough, to share their story, change their circumstances, and to step into a supportive journey through youth coaching.

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Ann Tizzard (Manager, St Richards Community Centre), for providing ongoing emotional and practical support to our group of young men and for donating fishing equipment to them.

Author

The processes of leading the Men to Be project evaluation and co-ordinating and compiling this report were undertaken by **Dr Mark Price**[4], working in close collaboration with **Helen Baxter** Youth Work and Project Manager from The Hangleton and Knoll Project.

[4] Mark was a member of the Working with Young Men innovative practitioners and trainers' group and was the designer of the 'Man's World' board game. Mark was also the founding course leader of the professionally recognised accredited BA(Hons) Youth Work at the University of Brighton and is now Associate Professor of Education and St Mary's University, London and Honorary Fellow at the Centre for Creative-Relational Inquiry, University of Edinburgh.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Youth Coach role outline

Appendix 2: Support log example

Appendix 3: Case study summary

Appendix 1:

The Youth Coach role outline

The purpose of youth coaching is to work with a young person to embark on a transformational life enriching experience giving them the confidence to realise their potential. We work together to devise strategies to achieve their goals and ambitions in any areas of life they identify. Based on a universal model of coaching, the life change could be in any areas of life; family and friends, significant other, fun and recreation, health, money, personal growth, physical environment, education / career.

The Youth Coach understands the complexities of transition between childhood and adulthood acknowledging every young person can respond to natural changes in adolescence in different ways according to their circumstance like taking risks, self-harm, repressing their emotions or acting out.

Youth coaching helps by providing a safe avenue to support the young person through a set of values and practice that is relational and needs based and underpinned cognitive-behavioural and solution focused theory and approaches. These practices are applied a range of tools, methods and processes such as an empowerment tool kit, motivational interviewing, journaling, games, music, art, sport and any activities recognising the uniqueness of the individual identifying what works best for them.

Youth coaching seeks to inspire change through motivation, reveal hidden talent and potential, encourage personal development, self-discovery, self-care, challenge limiting beliefs, explore and challenge unhelpful ways of thinking and behaviours, identify goals for self-improvement, teach life and social skills and empower the young person to break free from being stuck in life-limiting cycles.

The coaching relationship and intervention model puts the young person at the centre to enable them to discuss difficult challenges, understand themselves better, manage stress, build confidence, develop self-worth, see their world through a fresh perspective and provide guidance for their future. The Youth Coach offers impartial, non-judgemental trustworthy support that aims to enable the young person to find their voice and speak confidentially and freely about anything.

Appendix 2:

Support log example

M2B young person ID:	H2
Start date:	16th May 2023
End date:	8th April 2024
Youth coach:	Briony Streets
Manager:	Helen Baxter

Context:

Referral route into M2B?

The young person is a member of The Hangleton and Knoll Project youth club and attended a residential with youth workers and Youth Coach in April. On the journey there, I overheard a conversation between H2 and other young people that raised quite a few 'red flags' and I decided to approach him and let him know I had overheard some worrying things and would he like to have some 1-to-1 support to talk these things through and find help to deal with them.

Issues/needs/risk factors for the young person?

Neurodiversity

H2 has been awaiting a CAHMS assessment for ADHD and Autism but has been on the list for a long time and still faces a further wait. I do believe that H2 shows signs of neurodiversity so this is something we have discussed and it has helped him to better understand his thinking and behaviour and we have been able to apply some CBT techniques to help him with managing this in the meantime. I have also sought out further training in order to provide his dad with a toolkit to help manage their relationship.

Estranged relationship with mother

H2 has a difficult relationship with mum and I supported with a social services intervention in Summer 2023, where H2 was asked to choose whether he wanted to live with his mum or dad. He chose to stay with dad and this has had an impact on his relationship with his mum.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

H2 was physically assaulted by a family members partner when he was 2 years old and he has some PTSD from this event. He has been offered counselling by his school which he is taking up and starting soon.

Bullying

H2 has been a victim of bullying at School A and therefore he wanted to move schools at the end of summer term in 2023. I supported this process and he was successfully moved to School B where he is doing much better, so far.

Typology of work

	Sessions/meetings	Total time (hrs)
Home visits	8	8
Neighbourhood provision 1:1 YP sessions	13	13
City provision 1:1 YP sessions		
Parent/Carer sessions/calls	4	4
Multi-agency meetings	3	3
Other YW / diversionary activity	30	50
Mediation/advocacy meetings	1	1

Descriptions of the work that took place in the following:

Home visits

- I carried out 1:1 work with H2 at both his mum's and dad's house when he was taken out of school due to the bullying issue, and while he was waiting to transfer schools.
- We would discuss how he was progressing with school work and I would encourage him to keep attending youth clubs when he could

1:1 YP sessions

- After H2 had transferred schools in September 2023, we have been meeting weekly at School B

Multi-agency meetings

- Supported a meeting at School A with teachers and dad present to discuss the bullying that H2 was going through and to discuss the next best steps. The conclusion was it would be in his best interest to move schools
- I supported a meeting with social services and the police, following an intervention made with mum and dad over the summer which resulted in H2 deciding to live with dad

YW sessions / diversionary activities

- H2 has been away with youth club on a residential to an outdoor activity centre and lots of trips over summer 2023, including Thorpe Park and bowling
- H2 will also be participating in our Easter holiday programme this year and will be coming bowling with us

Signposting / referrals made

- Referral was made to Front Door for Families in Summer 2023 following conversations with H2's mum and concerns that she had. These were investigated by social services and the outcome was that there were no concerns and H2 chose to live with dad

Risk / harm reduction interventions

- I have supported H2 to participate in weekly football sessions with Kicks – Brighton & Hove Albion. He has also joined the Hangleton Rangers local football team
- Football is a really important activity for H2 to continue with and he is a great team player, always helping the other players and the coaches and happy to go in any position

Identifiable outcomes

- Education – supported school transfer due to bullying issues
- Housing – supported social services process of choosing to stay with father
- Advocacy / letters of support – supported family with social services referral
- Other – football team trials

Young person testimony

Professional / family member testimony

Closure support plan / after care options:

- Young person has been referred for counselling at School B
- Young person has joined local football team and continues to participate in The Hangleton and Knoll Project youth clubs and activities
- Young person is on the waitlist for CAMHS assessment

Youth Coach's assessment of circumstances for the young person now:

It has been really lovely to work with H2, he is a very bright and upbeat young man and can be very reflective. I have noticed that his relationship with dad has got better, and they are finding better ways to communicate and work out issues, other than arguing and having restrictions put in place.

H2 is committed to his football team and attending Kicks and Youth Club sessions and he is excited to come on trips with us over Easter.

H2 is settled at his new school and has made new friends and got a glowing school report at Parents' evening recently., He has started to rebuild his relationship with mum and is seeing his younger siblings more often.

Appendix 3:

Case study example - T8

Introduction

T8 is a young man in living primarily in Moulescoomb, Brighton and was aged 13, nearly 14, when we started our coaching relationship. T8's parents are separated due to domestic abuse and problematic alcohol use, so T8 has a distant relationship with his dad.

T8 had been to the 67 Centre youth sessions multiple times before after being brought by his older sister, but hadn't been coming for about six months when we began working together. Although he was known by our youth work team from the local community and school.

T8 faced multiple risk factors, including recent bereavement, adverse childhood experiences, witnessing domestic violence, problematic behaviours from an early age, low personal resilience, high risk-taking, aggressive behaviour in the home, boredom, low self-control, family breakdown, and living in an area affected by high-crime and child poverty.

He also experienced isolation from peers, has been the aggressor in dysregulated child-to-parent violence, and had a long-term pending ADD or ASC diagnosis. Due to struggles with anger, confidence, communication, isolation, anxiety, and his family dynamic he was brought to hospital for mental health support, where the Trust for Developing Communities reconnected with him, and invited him to take part in the M2B coaching programme. T8 accepted, with his mum commenting that it would help him to be understood and seen by a trusted adult male, and he set goals focused on regulating his anger and establishing routines to stay calm.

We worked on understanding his somatic responses to anger, his family's responses, and methods to maintain and regain calm at times of heightened emotion.

Engagement

T8 was initially quiet when we started our work together, and in some ways presented younger than his years. He found time-keeping and finding his own way to appointments a challenge, three occasions committing to a time and then arrive 30-40 minutes early.

At the start T8 wanted to work on getting his parents to stop smoking, which he let me know via text. He then showed some introspection on our next meeting, where he stated himself that goal may not work, as he wouldn't be likely be able to action it.

This all showed how T8 experienced anxiety, which we tried to alleviate by encouraging communication to set expectations, and continually seeking to make him feel like he had directive ownership of our sessions via conversation and encouraging him to make choices; something that he hadn't experienced in his family context.

T8 seemed to really enjoy and feel elevated by the coaching sessions, finding new ways to articulate himself. Whilst the timekeeping and finding his own way was challenging, they were important to him and he never forgot a session. As his comfort and trust grew, he began to smile more and make jokes during the sessions, as well as tell his story, talking about suggestions and choices.

He decided that we'd work on what anger felt like for him and how he could manage it, and was fully engaged in wanting to change his expression of anger. We used a thermometer illustration to map what different levels of anger looked like for him, and kept track of what levels he hit during the week and when. We explored Polyvagal Theory, paralleled with MATES house[5] to understand anger, anatomical reactions and how to 'come back into the room'. We discussed guilt-free anger, that it just might not always be suitable for the moment. Before this, T8 had expressed how he, at times, felt ashamed about feeling so angry before and would stop him being open about it. T8 shared that his dad shows anger in the same way, which is something he doesn't like and makes other's question their safety.

Unfortunately, I was unable to collaborate with his family as they didn't answer my calls or messages, despite the original enthusiasm. This proved challenging in presenting alternative opinions and reinforcing the work that we were doing.

Outcomes and Impact

This case demonstrated a number of positive impacts. T8 showed great promise in managing his anger and emotional responses. He reported feeling less angry and less guilty about his anger, and had no moments of uncontrollable anger in weeks 4 to 6. T8 spent more time out of the house and participated more in youth sessions at the 67 Centre. He consented to being put in contact with ChatHealth, E-motion, and E-Wellbeing to ensure continued support for his emotional and mental health needs, but he did seem skeptical about engaging with these. T8 expressed appreciation for the work done, stating he enjoyed the sessions and was feeling sad that they were over.

Ending and Evaluation

It was a privilege to work with T8 and genuinely believe he's made significant progress in his emotional regulation. I think the nature of 1 to 1 work best suited his personality as opposed to group work, as it built tangible trust with adults in order to voice & choose his progress, and then build relationships with other young people.

I am concerned however that these changes are not going to be supported at home or in school. Whilst he has made differences in his life already, I'm not sure if there was enough time to embed a different way of thinking and establishing consistent efforts in managing his emotions. My concerns would be alleviated if there were a longer delivery period; more contact with his primary caregiver, him having a therapeutic space to discuss past challenges and having a more established social network. I am hopeful that the work we began helped him to know that purposeful trust in professionals served him well.



[5] matesprogram.com.au [to be checked with SeanO]

understanding TDC
caring helpful *clear*
brilliant friendly
nice supported
great confident
concise goals
HKP *men to be*
better person *young men*
happy advice *safe*
improve *strategies*
coping achieving *trust*
better *results*

Men to Be

Young Men's Coaching Project

End of project evaluation