



FriendshipWorks

INFORMATION
for
P
arents
&
carers

It is not only possible for one human being
to *make a REAL & LASTING difference* to another,
it is often the *only thing* that ever does.

David Robinson

Chair of the Council on Social Action



Information for parents & carers
Friendship Works

Who are we?

Friendship Works is the oldest youth mentoring charity in the UK. We have over 30 years experience helping children from single-parent families in Camden, Islington and Southwark.

We provide long-term adult volunteer support for children aged between 5-16 who have experienced loss, separation or hardship.

Our service is completely free of charge.

Volunteers take a child on an outing most weekends for at least two years, but many friendships continue beyond this. Outings are simple and can just be going for a cup of tea, to the park or playing football. The most important thing is building a friendship to support your child.

We receive referrals from parents, schools, agencies and other charities. We work closely with schools and agencies to make sure you get the best support possible.

We have a team of experienced caseworkers who talk to families about what they need, recruit and train volunteers, support the friendships with weekly phone calls and regular checks, and give guidance and support to you and your child.



“I wasn’t sure if they could help or where to start, but the caseworker was really friendly, told me more about their services, and talked me through what I needed to do.”

Charlotte, Parent

How do we help?

Yudaya



Yudaya's son has a mentor through Friendship Works. She enjoys seeing the positive change it has made to his life.

"I think that Tim has been an inspiration for Craig. Craig always has a smile on his face when he talks about Tim and the things they have done. It has been good for me to see him happier and more confident. They are such a good match.

"Tim is another positive person in his life – a hard worker who likes to play as well. It is someone Craig can trust so if he has anything on his mind he can talk to Tim, who is very level-headed. He is a really good role model for Craig. It is good for me to know that another adult has my child's interests at heart. I feel I can trust Tim. He is a good buddy to Craig."

Michael

Michael's Mum has health problems and he spends a lot of time helping to care for his brothers. His Mum thought he really needed some time out to enjoy himself.

Spending time with Katie means that he has a few hours each week to get away from his responsibilities.



How does it work?

Get in touch and tell us why your child would benefit from a mentor. There is a form to complete on our website in the 'Refer a child' section.

If you want us to send you a form in the post, or have a question, you can phone us on **020 7485 0900** to talk to a caseworker.

You can ask for a mentor for more than one of your children. You just need to fill out a separate form for each child.

One of our caseworkers will come and see you at home, and you'll come to our office to talk about what your child needs.

Your caseworker will meet your child to discuss what they like doing, new things they might like to try and what kind of friend they are looking for.

After this we will start looking for a mentor. This can happen straight away, or it can sometimes take a bit longer to find the right person. Your caseworker will keep in touch to make sure you know how we're getting on.

Once your child has been matched, they will go on an outing most weekends with their mentor. Your caseworker will have a weekly supervision with the volunteer to give them support and check on their progress.

We will keep in touch with you regularly to make sure everything is going well. We also carry out a formal review after six months and then once a year for as long as the match continues.

Who do we work with?

- We take referrals for children aged 5-16
- Children must be from single-parent families
- Children must live in the Boroughs of Camden or Islington, or attend a school that we work with in Southwark (for information on who we work with in Southwark, please contact our casework team on **020 7485 0900** or look on our website in the 'Refer a child section')
- Both the child and parent must actively want to have a mentor through Friendship Works
- We do not take referrals for children who are in foster care, residential care, or other settings where the Local Authority has assumed responsibility for their care.

Dionne

Dionne's Mum has mental health problems, and the two of them don't get out and about much. Having another adult in Dionne's life helped her to feel supported, and gave her a chance to meet new people and do new things.



Safety first

The safety of the children we support is very important to us. Prospective volunteers have to formally apply to be a mentor and undergo a rigorous interview, reference checks, CRB check, home visit and training before they can be matched with a child.

This way, we know that our volunteers are safe and sensible, and will take good care of your child.

“Friendship Works’ service is as simple as it is effective. Carefully trained and screened volunteers make a long-term commitment to support a child, building a strong relationship, widening horizons and being a positive role model.”

Dr Crispin Day, Head of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services Research Unit at Kings College London, Head of Centre for Parent and Child Support at South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

Get in touch

You can find more information and answers to common questions on our website at **www.friendshipworks.org.uk** or you can call us on **020 7485 0900** to talk to one of our caseworkers.

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