



The Answer To Youth Crime In A Nutshell

Since 2011 Ment4 has individually mentored over 180 of Croydon's most vulnerable youth, spending 100 hours on each within holistic programmes, monitored and documented. We find there are no quick fixes and there is no one answer. The following are what we believe are needed:

1. Access to role models to inspire and encourage
2. New possibilities shown, and practical help given to achieve them, in education and employment
3. A second chance for those who have failed according to the system or feel failures
4. Family stability, particularly where there are absent fathers and / or struggling parents
5. Trauma counseling for domestic violence, bereavement and exploitation
6. Mental health support promptly diagnosed and supported
7. Childhood stability of parents, home and education in growing up
8. Positive community that provides a safe, moral and caring environment
9. Positive friends who encourage healthy lifestyles
10. Respect from adults who listen and believe in them
11. Knowing right and wrong, that is culturally relevant
12. Boundaries imposed consistently by authorities
13. Understanding and respecting different cultures
14. Safety on the streets and in the home
15. School support [catching early vulnerability signs at primary level and avoiding exclusion]
16. Community organisations able to signpost families to the right support without stigma – doctors, pre-schools, faith groups, community groups, neighbours
17. Government and Voluntary Sector working closely together as equal partners, properly mapped out and resourced
18. Consistent national and local government policies that put family welfare centrally

Ment4 are seeing that mentoring troubled teenagers helps reduce anti-social behavior and increases positive engagement. However, early intervention is also needed at a young age and support is needed for struggling parents and younger siblings. This needs to be offered in a pro-active, sensitive way, that reaches out to them and supports young people from birth to adulthood. Many of the points above require a full age range response.