



POLICY - INCIDENT DISCLOSURE

Ment4 mentors are contracted to provide support for their young people. They report to agencies that only have legal responsibility for that young person, but the mentors have no legal responsibility themselves. This is why it is essential as a mentor, to liaise with the agencies and work together as a team, to support and guide the young person. In addition, it is an obligation for mentors to pass on necessary relevant information to those with legal responsibilities, so that they, the agencies, carry out what is required at law.

Mentors would need to share relevant information required when working with the young person, such as when completing weekly reports and fulfilling any legal necessary disclosures concerning legal or safety concerns of the young person. However, most importantly, mentors should respect the young person's request to keep certain information confidential, only if the mentors feel the information given does not show they could be in dangerous/harmful situations.

Mentors must avoid being in a situation where they promise a young person to hold confidential information that may be required to be shared with other relevant multi agencies, where necessary. This is why it is essential for mentors to communicate to the young person that certain information may need to be shared. If you ever feel like you are uncomfortable with what you are being told and are being pressured to keep it confidential, a good example of a response for this would be *"I understand you want me to keep the information you just told me between me and you, but because I am your mentor I have a responsibility to keep you safe, therefore I would need to share relevant information to others to help keep you safe. However, I can come/be with you to reveal this information that you have just told me (to the relevant agency) and hope that makes you feel more comfortable"* OR you can stop the conversation entirely. This would keep you safe as it will avoid any accusation that may be commented against you.

Mentors must outline the boundaries that are in place between mentors and young people. They must also remain aware that due to the experiences these young people may have had, manipulative behavior may be a common trait, in which they may use to pressure mentors to keep the important information disclosed. For example, they may say things similar too *"You are the only person in my life that understands me"*. Always remember, when there is any doubt over what should be disclosed, you should always address this within the team by having a discussion, where the final decision should liaise upon the managers.

Disclosure

Ment4 is contracted by various agencies. Our legal relationship requires us to tell agencies any information that is relevant to the aim of the mentoring programme. In addition to this, we have a wide range of 9 holistic goals, that can include behaviour, family, crime, substance misuse, gangs, education and social issues.

If the information includes crime or threat to their physical wellbeing, then it must be decided by the team whether to go through the contracting agency or direct to the legal authorities.

Following government guidelines. You must report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Panel within 5 working days, especially if a child dies or is seriously harmed in your area. This applies to children outside England who are normally resident in your area as well. For looked-after children, notify us of their death regardless of abuse or neglect suspicion. Additionally, report incidents to your Local Safeguarding Children Board or local safeguarding partners within 5 working days of becoming aware of the incident.

Facts vs Suspicions

If you have suspicions of a reportable situation only, it is best to talk with Ment4 managers before disclosing it to outside agencies.

Reporting

Where there is a legal responsibility (or probable liability) to disclose information:

- 1). It must immediately be reported verbally to Ment4 managers.
- 2). It should also be noted down by the mentor at that time, to ensure accuracy of recalling facts.
- 3). On the same day of the occurrence, the details should be put in writing in an Incident Report, with all information of the times/dates and ensure that it is sent to Ment4 managers, for an ongoing decision on following action. Email is the best form, as it can be dated and would be seen as a written account.

Note: Any written report sent outside Ment4 must be agreed with Ment4 managers, as such documents can be used in a court of law and need particular care in who has access to what we say.

Crime

Any information regarding crime must be reported to the Police. This can include: theft, assault, trespass, possession of drugs, anti-social behaviour, illegal acts, etc.

Note: Be careful about giving witness statements that could be used in court, as it may be appropriate sometimes to refuse to give a written or signed statement that could be used by prosecution lawyers to make mentors look like they are acting against the young person (Ment4 have had legal advice regarding this).

Threat Or Actual Injury Including Psychological Harm

This must be reported to the police immediately. Suspicions may be held back until more information is gained. Social Services must also be informed of soon after.

Missing Persons

If a young person goes missing for more than a night, they must be reported to the Missing Persons Unit at the local police station by the parents. Social Services should be informed if this continues.

Domestic Violence

Evidence of potential DV, like bruising, must be reported to police and social services immediately. Suspensions may be held back until more information is gained.

MASH – For Urgent Safety Reporting 020 8726 6400

Croydon Council's Early Intervention Support Services (includes YOS, SSD and others), advise that the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be contacted where there is an immediate new threat of danger to a young person. If out of hours or more appropriate, call the police on 999.

General Rule

Always make it clear to the young person that there are some things you have to disclose, and you will tell them when that happens. At the same time, show you value trust and confidentiality.

Most importantly, if you are in any doubt about what to do, talk to Ment4 managers.

Signed: *Luke Peters, Senior Operations Lead, Ment4*

A small, square image showing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature appears to be 'L Peters'.

This document was created in July 2014 and updated January 2025.