



ECHO project

An evaluation of Chance UK's early intervention mentoring

Information for parents/carers

Chance UK's mentoring programme is being evaluated to find out more about the impact it has on children's lives. This leaflet explains what the evaluation is and what it will mean for you and your child if you take part.

Why is the evaluation taking place?

The mentoring programme will be evaluated by the Social Research Unit at Dartington to find out the impact it has on children's behaviour, emotions and self-esteem. This will help Chance UK to better understand the effects of the programme, and this evidence is important for the future of the service.

The evaluation will be of national importance. It is part of a project called Realising Ambition which is supporting the most promising programmes, including Chance UK, to help them reach a high standard of evidence about their impact on children's lives.

If Chance UK mentoring is found to be effective it could be used more widely so that more children can benefit.

How will I be involved?

You are a vital part of the evaluation. If you agree to take part, the research team will ask you to answer some short simple questionnaires about your child's behaviour.

First, one of our team will contact you by phone to tell you more about the evaluation and to ask you a questionnaire to help us to assess whether your child might benefit from Chance UK mentoring.

If you are involved in the evaluation we will arrange three short appointments over about 18 months for one of our team to visit you at home and ask you short questionnaires. You will receive a small payment for each home visit.

How does the evaluation work?

Children's behaviour, emotions and self-esteem can change a lot over time as they grow up. We will need to study how much these things change from the beginning to the end of the programme and compare this to normal changes occurring in children who don't receive Chance UK's service.

In the evaluation, called a Randomised Controlled Trial, the children who could benefit from Chance UK mentoring will be randomly placed, like flipping a coin, into two groups:

- **Mentoring group:** children in this group receive the mentoring programme;
- **Non-mentoring (comparison) group:** children in this group will not receive the Chance UK service but they are free to access any other services available.

Changes in children's behaviour will be studied in both groups. At the end of the evaluation, the researchers will compare the difference between the groups. This will show the level of impact of Chance UK's service.

Frequently asked questions

Isn't it unethical to give only some children the mentoring?

No. It is only unethical if it is certain that the children receiving the programme will be better off than those not receiving it. The non-mentoring group children are still entitled to receive any other services. An independent ethics committee will approve the research design.

Why is it random? Can't we choose who goes into each group?

When all of the children meet the same eligibility criteria, random assignment is the fairest way to decide who gets the service. Both groups are equally important to the evaluation.

How much time will it take to complete the questionnaires?

Not long! There will be one short phone call and three home visits with one of the team (each will take about 30 minutes).

Do I receive anything for taking part?

Yes. You will receive a small payment as a thank you for each home visit.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is voluntary (but if you say no, Chance UK can't offer you their service at this time). If your child is eligible we will give you more information about the evaluation before asking if you wish to take part. You'd be able to stop taking part at any time.

