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Time to transform more young lives in London through mentoring

Children's mentoring programme, Chance UK, is expanding its work into two London boroughs after securing £342,578 of National Lottery funding from the Big Lottery Fund, to support more children aged 5 to twelve years old with behavioural and emotional difficulties.

Drawing on recent research, Chance UK will be working with Dartington Service Design Lab over the next 18 months to transform more young lives in London. This collaboration will enable Chance UK to use cutting edge 'Rapid Cycle Testing' to test, learn and adapt the delivery of their mentoring model.

The funding from the Big Lottery Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK, will enable Chance UK to expand into Camden and Southwark, supporting fifty new children. This will be in conjunction with extensive testing of their mentoring model to ensure it continues to successfully support young people who face disadvantage to increase their opportunities.

Chance UK's approach focuses on building on children's strengths and supporting families to build their capacity and tackle these complex issues in a holistic ways so that improvements shown can be sustained long term. The organisation works in partnership with parents and schools to ensure that the outcomes of the mentoring relationship are sustained post intervention.

Chance UK's mentoring programme uses evidenced-based techniques and develops high quality, strong relationships between children and mentors. All mentors are committed volunteers and selected through thorough recruitment processes to ensure that they have the right skills, qualities and levels of commitment. Prior to their engagement with the children, they undergo intensive, high quality training and are fully supported by Chance UK's experienced programme managers.

Chance UK CEO, Geethika Jayatilaka, has said, "Children experiencing emotional and behavioural problems at a young age can be at risk of a wide range of negative outcomes in adolescence and beyond but we know that the earlier these signs are identified - the better the chance of children getting the help they need and ultimately flourishing.

"We are beginning to see an increasing consensus on the value and importance of early intervention for children who have experienced adverse childhood experiences, but much more still needs to be done. Therefore, the work of Chance UK is vital. "Thanks to National Lottery players, this project will help support work into early intervention to ensure that disadvantaged children are supported at an earlier stage."

This opportunity will mean more young lives in Camden and Southwark can be transformed. It is charities like Chance UK that are championing our young people and making the difference to their lives.

Joe Ferns, UK Funding Director at the Big Lottery Fund, said: "Chance UK's mentoring programme explores new ways of taking early action to help children thrive. We're delighted that National Lottery funding is supporting children, parents and schools to come together to design and improve services that matter to them and their community."

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Notes to editor:

- Background
 - Founded in 1995 by an Islington Police Officer we have been providing mentoring for 23 years
 - Chance UK provides early intervention mentoring for children aged 5-12 with behavioural and emotional difficulties on a one-year structured programme
 - We provide specialist early intervention mentoring using a solution-focused model to support children likely to face disadvantage and increase their opportunities.

- Research shows that children experiencing early onset conduct problems are at increased risk of a range of negative outcomes. Our work helps children to reduce these emotional and behavioural difficulties, build confidence and self-esteem

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- **Big Lottery Fund notes to editors:**

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- Big Lottery Fund uses money raised by National Lottery players to help communities achieve their ambitions. From small, local projects to UK-wide initiatives, its funding brings people together to make a difference to their health, wellbeing and environment. Since June 2004 it has awarded £9 billion to projects that improve the lives of millions of people.

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