



Overview

CyberMentors is a pioneering and unique initiative for young people aged 11-18, designed to tackle bullying and negative behaviour in schools and communities. Cyber Mentors creates an army of young people that helps assists and supports their peers both on and off line.

Launched in March 2009, CyberMentors is already having a huge impact:

- CyberMentors has been implemented in over 250 schools and colleges
- We have trained over 3,950 CyberMentors and over 1,180 Senior CyberMentors

Key Benefits for schools

Schools that are running the programme are reporting a significant reduction in bullying, an increase in good behaviour in school, a reduction in the number of exclusions and a reduction in pupil violence.

- CyberMentors reduces instances of bullying, harassment and anti-social behaviour by an average of 41%

After the implementation of CyberMentors:

- 88% of schools report a positive improvement in school life
- 86% of participating schools have observed an increase in confidence and self esteem of students

The programme in your school

Pupils receive two days intensive face-to-face training from our qualified and experienced and CRB checked development team, giving them the skills and confidence to mentor, help and support each other on issues around bullying, cyber bullying and wellbeing, both offline – in their school or community - as well as online.

Training is for approximately 25 young people between Key Stage 3 and 4. Our development team will travel to the required location, normally your school, where there will need to be computer terminals and internet access for the training to take place.

Each school receives two full day workshops followed by two, 2-hour online supervision group sessions (per year) from Beatbullying counsellors. Each student receives their own training manual for reference and advice, also a limited edition CyberMentors badge that they receive along with their graduation certificate.

The programme is also accredited by ASDAN, helping young people achieve a qualification in mentoring that can be applied towards an award equivalent to a GCSE or AS level.

The CyberMentors website (www.cybermentors.org.uk)

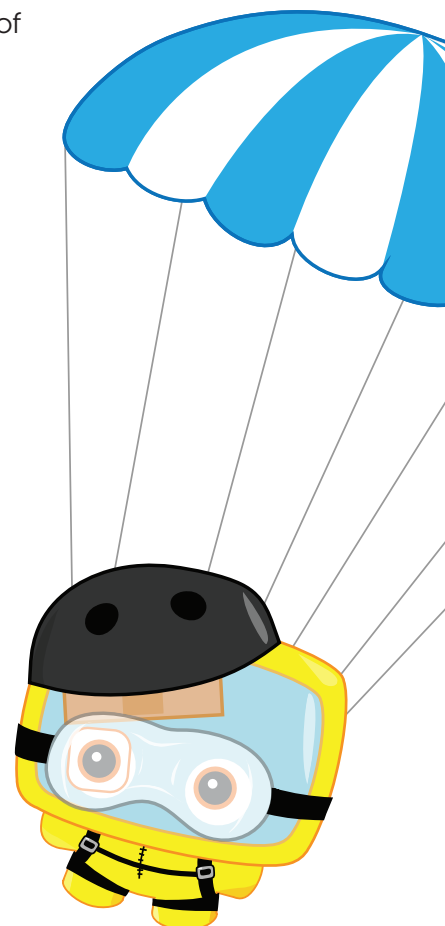
- Enables young people to mentor and support other young people using a safe, social networking site
- Allows 'real time' interaction and support
- The only social networking website to be approved by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)
- Leading child protection software that flags up any predatory or abusive behaviour
- Moderators and BACP-qualified counsellors online between 8am-2am
- Almost 650,000 mentoring interactions since launch show the demand for the service
- Over 90,000 counselling interactions show we have helped thousands of

To find out more about how CyberMentors could support you in further developing structures and processes in your school which create peer support, respect and enhanced behaviour, please contact:

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CyberMentors: Long term impact on pupil behaviour, exclusion and violence in schools

1. Summary

Pupil exclusion, violence and behaviour are significant issues in schools. The results from our research show that CyberMentors does have an impact on such levels. The most common category relates to Incidents of Concern (IoCs). Nearly three quarters (73%) recorded a reduction in the levels of incidents of concern, highlighting the impact of CM with respect to the wider school culture and climate.

In addition, just under a third (31%) of pupil exclusions related to bullying has been reduced as a result of Beatbullying's intervention – CyberMentors. Extrapolation – scaling up BBs CM project given that there are a total of 5,840 permanent and fixed period exclusions related to bullying¹ – we could potentially reduce exclusions related to bullying by 1,810. Furthermore, just under third (31%) of exclusions more generally (e.g., persistent or disruptive behaviour) have been reduced as a result of the implementation of CyberMentors. Given that there were 391,950 permanent and fixed period exclusions in 2007/08 (ibid), we could potentially reduce exclusions by more than 100,000 incidents if CM was introduced into every school in the UK (n=121,504).

4 out of every 10 schools indicate a reduction in pupil violence. Extrapolating these findings, given there was a total of 72,610 exclusions related to pupil violence (ibid) and considering that we could potentially save one in four of these, we could effectively reduce exclusions related to violence by 29,044.

The time point of the intervention and the subsequent embedding of the programme allow us to shed light on the impact of CM. There is a clear correlation between the impact and embedding of the programme over 4 quarterly time points. In other words, the longer CM is embedded in schools the more likely there is a significant reduction in the levels of pupil exclusion and violence.

2. Methodology

The University of Sussex and Beatbullying commissioned and jointly designed a seven question survey to measure the long term impact of the CyberMentors Peer Mentoring Scheme with respect to pupil behaviour, exclusion and violence. The questionnaire itself was drawn up in consultation with our Independent Evaluator, Dr Robin Banerjee, from the University of Sussex, who also peer reviewed the research. Dr Banerjee, who has extensive experience in undertaking research in educational settings, opted to adopt a subjective measure related to perceptions of reduction (scale= no reduction, some reduction and substantial reduction), in addition to an open section allowing respondents to provide any specific quantitative evidence (where possible), such as specific reductions in pupil exclusions.

¹ Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) 'Permanent and Fixed Period Exclusions from Schools and Exclusion Appeals in England 2007/08', Statistical First Release Report (SFR), 30 July 2009

The questionnaire covers five broad categories with respect to any measurable decrease/increase in the following areas:

- (a) Incidents of Concern (IoCs)
- (b) Levels of pupil violence
- (c) Pupil exclusions related to bullying (victims and bullies/perpetrators)
- (d) Pupil exclusion more generally
- (e) Pupil absence (e.g., levels of truancy).

The schools were selected using a random probability sampling technique, thus ensuring objectivity, and further allowing generalised findings to emerge to the wider sample of schools. Out of the total 155 schools with CyberMentors (CM) peer mentoring schemes, a sample of 60 schools was identified. The survey was completed on Monday July 12 and remained open until the evening of Monday July 19 (one week). A total of 26 lead/nominated BB contacts completed the survey (1 out of every 6 CM Mentoring Schemes), each of whom have extensive contact with the young people working with Beatbullying.

Headline Findings

- **Duration of the programme and subsequent embedding**

Out of the 26 schools who responded to the survey (1 out of every 6 schools), just under a quarter (23%) had CyberMentors set up for a minimum of three months or less (n=6), 15 per cent had CM set up for six months (n=4), two tenths (19%) had CM set up for nine months (n=5), and just under half (46%) had CM set up for twelve months or more (n=12). This is useful in delineating the impact of CyberMentors over four quarterly time points. In sum, schools working with BB for a minimum of three months or less record fewer reductions in the incidences of pupil behaviour, exclusion and violence.

- **Three quarters of schools indicate a reduction in the levels of Incidents of Concern (IoCs)**

The most common category highlighting a significant reduction is related to Incidents of Concern. Nearly three quarters (73%) of the schools responding to the survey indicate a reduction in recorded IoCs (15 per cent 'substantial reduction' and 58 per cent 'some reduction' – remaining 12 per cent 'no reduction').

“Incidents logged on the County Behaviour Log reduced, certainly amongst younger years” Lead Behaviour Professional at a school in Central Bedfordshire

“Information from Heads of Year and Pupil Welfare suggest that serious IoCs have reduced, but due to a better awareness we are now dealing with more 'minor' incidents than before.” Key Stage 4 Pupil Support Coordinator in Cambridge talking about the impact of CM

“The numbers of students who are referred to the cybermentors do not need further intervention.” Pastoral Support Officer at a school in Bedfordshire

“Students report [an] increase in the number of incidents they are resolving for themselves through peer mentoring scheme.” Deputy Head Teacher at a school in Warwickshire

“Jan to July 2009, 19 incidents of 'Cyber Bullying' requiring letters being sent to parents – Jan to July 2010, 1 incident of 'Cyber Bullying' required a letter being sent to parents. April 2010 100% of pupils surveyed (583 pupils) said they know how to respond if Cyber Bullying incident.” Head of ICT at a school in the Midlands

- **4 out of 10 schools indicate a reduction in the levels of pupil violence**

4 out of 10 schools indicate a reduction in the levels of pupil violence, and for 8 per cent this reduction was substantial. These statistics need to be weighed against the levels of violence more generally. In some instances, schools indicate a very low level of violence:

“This is a school where very little violence takes place” Assistant Head Teacher at a school in Cambridge

The following quotations highlight the impact of CM with respect to pupil violence:

“Number of students who have reported bullying has reduced” Head of Citizenship at a school in Kent

“6.3% improvement of control of bullying as reported in the annual Kirkland Rowell Survey” Senior Tutor at a school in West Sussex

“Number of 'hits' on the school BullyButton has dropped by 50% this school year. Reported incidents are down by approximately 20%” Senior Learning Mentor from a school in Doncaster

“Students are now fully up to date with mediation so numbers of bullying has dropped as they know we are on top of it.” Teacher and Mediation Coordinator at a school in Kent

- **Just under a third of pupil exclusions related to bullying (victims and perpetrators) have been reduced as a result of Beatbullying's intervention**

Just under a third (31%) of pupil exclusions related to bullying has been reduced as a result of CM, and for 12 per cent this reduction was 'substantial'.

The following quotes highlight the impact of CM:

“number of permanent exclusions is zero and short term exclusions reduced by 15%” Student Support Worker talking about the impact of CM

“Exclusions have fallen overall this year as a result of several school based strategies, one of which is an increase in the peer mentoring programme.”

“Only 1 exclusion this year”

“Our fixed terms have not been related to bullying. No permanents.”

In light of these findings, we can be confident in attributing the reductions in violence and exclusions to Beatbullying’s interventions.

- **Just under a third of exclusions in general have been reduced as a result of the CyberMentors intervention**

Just under a third of general pupil exclusions (e.g., persistent disruptive behaviour) have been recorded as result of Beatbullying’s CM Peer Mentoring Scheme, and for 12 per cent this reduction was ‘substantial’

“I do not have any quantitative evidence for this but I am aware that some students have not been excluded on the condition that they engage in conflict resolution and Beatbullying training. One such example is of a student who had issues with anger management and was close to being excluded from College. The student volunteered to be trained as a Senior Cyber Mentor. This helped the student confront their issues and the training gave them a second chance to make a positive difference. Throughout the year the student spoke to classes about bullying and now wants to go into a social care profession.” Student Union Coordinator at a school in London

“Figures show a slight increase in fixed period exclusions. This is because pupils are more confident in speaking out against bullies, and so our ‘detection rate’ has gone up. We feel that this is a good thing in the first year as it shows a growing confidence and a feeling amongst pupils that they do not have to put up with bullying. We hope that the next stage of the process will show that bullying is reduced altogether.”

“A large drop in bullying, as pupils now go to mediation right away.” Mediation Coordinator at a school in Kent

- **Just over a quarter (27%) of pupil absence has been reduced as a result of Beatbullying’s intervention**

Over a quarter (27%) indicated ‘some reduction’ or ‘substantial reduction’ in the levels of pupil absence (23 and 4 per cent respectively).

“Students have been truanting less” Head of Citizenship and PSHE Coordinator at a school in Kent