



WHAT IF YOU COULD CHANGE A LIFE?

Mentor Newsletter February 2026

Dear Mentors,

As we move into March, we want to start by saying **Thank You!** Your time, consistency and commitment continue to make a real difference to the young men we work with, and to us!

This newsletter brings together upcoming programme dates, training opportunities and ways to stay connected, as well as a reminder of the support available to you as mentors.

Key4Life's Impact

In January, we delivered our Violence Reduction Programme in HMP Forest Bank, Manchester to 28 men over 4 days. This focused on unlocking their unresolved anger, sadness, hurt, guilt, and fear with the overall aim of reducing violence, on the prison wings.

In 2025 our Violence Reduction Programme showed a 500% increase in participants capacity to see others perspectives and a 400% rise in positive behaviours.

Post programme, four out of five released are back in work and of those remaining in custody, five or more started formal education or vocational training.

Weekly Drop-In Sessions

Every Friday | 12:00–12:45pm | Microsoft Teams Link: <https://tinyurl.com/bdzaunax>

Our weekly drop-in sessions are open to all mentors and provide a relaxed space to:

● Ask questions, Share experiences, Raise concerns, Stay connected with the wider Key4Life team

CONTACT US:

sarah.petherick@key4life.org.uk

Sarah Petherick: 079449 06098

FOR MORE INFORMATION,

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

<https://key4life.org.uk/mentoring/>

Connect with us!

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Upcoming Meet the Mentor Workshops

London At-Risk Programme:

14th April (TBC) | 12:30–5:00pm

South West Community Programme

12th May | 12:30–5:00pm

We also have sessions in Manchester (June) and London (July)

Please email Sarah.Petherick@Key4Life.org.uk to reserve your place.

Upcoming Mentor Training Dates

Monday 13th April- Orientation

Online, 6pm-7pm

Tuesday 21st April- Meet the Mentor/Mentee

Online, 6pm-7pm

Monday 27th April- Nick-Oakley Smith

Online, 6pm-8pm

Tuesday 5th May- Nick Oakley-Smith

Online, 6pm-8pm

Monday 11th May- Next steps, risk, FAQ's

Online, 6pm-7pm

Important Information & Reminders

- Please continue to inform Key4Life in advance to all meetings with your mentee (including date, time, & location, as well as a short progress update via email/WhatsApp)
- Mentor Manual: <https://key4lifementors.online/> (currently being updated, back soon)
- Donate to Key4Life: <https://www.paypal.com/fundraiser/charity/129217>
- The Key4Life Burger Van: Available for community events and private hire - including parties: <https://key4life.org.uk/foodcell/>
- Spread the word: Please consider recommending Key4Life to:
- ● Your employer ● A local school ● A sports club or community group
- We're always grateful to be considered as a Charity of the Year partner.

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Meet the Mentor

Fabienne



1. What inspired you to become a mentor?

For a long time, I wanted to “do something” connected to the prison world. At the same time, coaching had helped me overcome my personal hurdles. Mentoring with Key4Life felt like a natural way to combine both — contributing to rehabilitation while offering the kind of support that once made a real difference in my own life.

2. Can you share a meaningful moment from your mentoring journey?

When my mentee began earning pocket money and clarifying his future plans, our conversations became more practical — finances, work preparation, life decisions. He started to value having someone who could explain options rather than push him in a specific direction. For me, it was a reminder not to take for granted the knowledge and life skills I’ve accumulated over the years — things I’m not sure I knew at his age.

3. How would you describe your mentoring style, and how has it evolved?

I initially approached mentoring as structured business coaching, focused on goals, expectations and actions. Over time, I’ve become more intuitive — adapting to my mentee’s state of mind from one meeting to the next. Given their age and background, emotions and motivation can fluctuate significantly. I’ve learned not to worry if one day we simply walk in the park and talk about something unrelated. Those moments are not distractions; they are part of building trust and forging a supportive, continuous relationship.

4. What has been the most rewarding part of mentoring?

The most rewarding part has been seeing gradual shifts in confidence and ownership. Change is rarely dramatic, but watching my mentee begin to think ahead and believe his plans are achievable has been fulfilling.

5. What challenges have you encountered?

Mentoring in this context is very different from business mentoring. Although these young men may appear grown-up, they are still developing and sometimes need clearer guidance. Finding the right balance between being supportive and being directive remains an ongoing learning process.

6. What advice would you give to someone new to mentoring?

First, don’t underestimate the impact of simply showing up consistently. Reliability builds trust. Second, resist the urge to “fix” or “save.” Finally, be patient — with the mentee and with yourself. Progress can be slow and non-linear.