



A YEAR IN REVIEW

Annual Report

2024



No young person should face their future alone.



1,400+
Matches



50,000+
Hours



81%
Graduation

[View our impact](#)

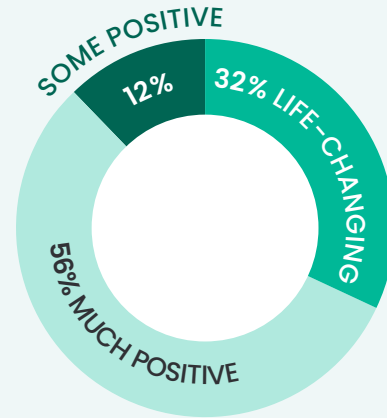
Positive Impact

How much did having a mentor this year positively affect your life?

South Africa



United Kingdom

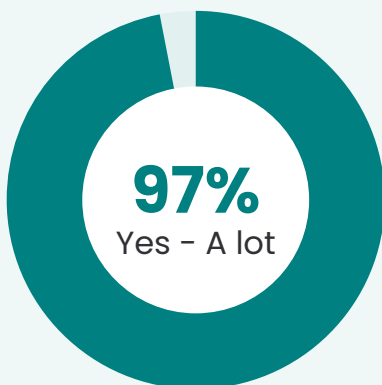


"Absolutely life changing. I barely let institutions around me, only if I trust them, and you guys have been really helpful. It's made me accept who I am, even the negative sides. Thank you so much for being there for me, I really appreciate all that you guys do."

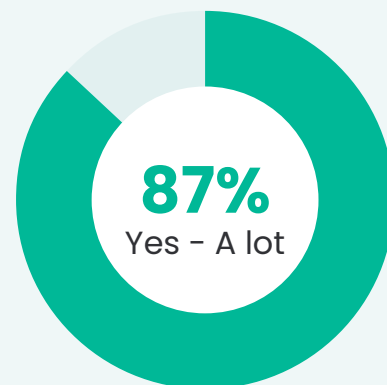
Youth Engagement

Would you recommend SAYes to other young people?

South Africa



United Kingdom



"The people are not like most people. They don't judge you. The staff give such a good energy. Normally we feel like everywhere we go we get dirty looks - SAYes never did that."

Founded in 2008 by Gillian Anderson and Michelle Potter

SAYes Mentoring is a non-profit that offers young people free e-mentorship, matching them with professionally trained and supported volunteer mentors from around the world.

We are very proud to have grown SAYes to serve mentors and mentees from around the world. The impact has been astonishing and this is just the beginning. We hope you will join us in creating lasting social change for yourself and others.



"I left home when I was very young, I was 16 years old. I was fortunate in that I did not have to spend a night on the street, but it was difficult, and I was alone. **I think if I had had somebody guiding me through that period of my life I would have felt a lot more comfortable, and it would have been a lot easier.**"

MICHELLE, FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



"It makes me especially proud knowing that SAYes is truly an international organisation with supporters in every corner of the world."

GILLIAN ANDERSON, FOUNDER

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Key Voices

Message from our UK Programmes Manager

2024 brought transformational growth to SAYes in the UK. I began January personally supporting a handful of matches and training two new Transition Specialists (TS) in anticipation of incoming mentees and mentors. By the time Big Ben was ringing in 2025, I led a lively international team of seven TSs spread across four countries and just as many time zones. Two Mentee Liaisons tipped the UK team into double digits, helping with outreach to our rapidly increasing mentee cohort, which reached 130 by December. What a difference a year makes.

Our exponential growth in the UK was ultimately thanks to our Propel grant, launched in 2023 and funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA), specifically by the Mayor of London's New Deal For Young People (NDYP), a programme supporting 14–24-year-olds facing disadvantage and designed "to increase the quality, quantity and sustainability of mentoring across London." The SAYes NDYP programme was co-funded by the National Citizen Service (NCS), the closure of which was announced in late 2024.

Much of the previous year was spent building relationships with local authorities, statutory organisations and NGOs in London, gaining trust and recognition of the high-quality work we do at SAYes to support young people through accessible, structured, one-to-one e-mentoring. In 2024 we began to see the tangible results of this campaign, as external partners started referring on a regular basis, putting us in touch with 167 young people in need of mentoring over the course of the year, up from 41 introductions in 2023.

We also began to meet young people where they are – on their phones! Our social media adverts informed young Londoners of the benefits of guidance, advocacy and support from our global mentoring pool, and they responded with great enthusiasm, resulting in 307 enquiries in 2024 alone. To meet this welcome youth engagement, we ramped up mentor recruitment, with an online call for mentors issued in May by our ever-helpful co-founder Gillian Anderson (thanks Gillian!), supplemented by marketing campaigns that brought in a whopping 1350 enquiries and 260 completed mentor applications.

This influx of mentees and mentors enabled us to contract an incredible 109 matches funded by the Mayor of London's New Deal For Young People, as well as seven matches on our independently-funded UK Independents programme, focused on 14–32-year-olds with care experience living across the UK. This was an eye-watering 544% increase on the 18 matches contracted in the UK in 2023.

As the year went on, our initial New Deal For Young People matches started to graduate, with mentees completing the SAYes post-programme survey. The exceptional ratings and passionately appreciative comments were a touching reminder of how impactful mentoring can be, with mentees universally reporting positive overall impact, as well as positive impact on making informed choices that impact independence and on healthy practices related to well-being.

2024 saw us consolidating and growing our networks in London, especially within the education sector. We launched partnerships with Addey & Stanhope School in Lewisham and with Achieving for Children Virtual School, who work with young people with care experience in Kingston and Richmond. We presented to teachers charged with engaging young people at risk of school exclusion at Lewisham's Secondary Fair Access Panel, and SAYes ambassadors chatted to students at City & Islington College campuses and presented in assemblies and classrooms across the capital. We met with staff working with young offenders at Wandsworth, Feltham and Cookham Wood prisons, debated with the Lewisham Young Mayor and Young Advisors, had tea and biscuits with Lewisham Refugee & Migrant Network women's group, presented to staff at job centres, tried not to look too old at youth centres, had a dramatic supper with young performers at The Big House Theatre Company, and ate delicious grilled fare with young people at the Lewisham Looked After Children summer BBQ.

It was both thrilling and moving to host our first UK mentee get-togethers in 2024. Soapbox Youth Centre in Islington hosted us for pizza and driving simulations in May, as UK mentees gathered to make new social connections and discuss how to get the most out of mentoring. We had a delightful summer visit to Stepney City Farm in August (highly recommended), where mentees ate vegetables plucked from the vine, discussed the impact of colonialism on plant names, held chickens and cuddled ferrets (surprisingly cute).

I have a few thanks to give. We are eternally grateful for the ongoing dedication of our mentors: we depend entirely on the commitment of volunteers to roll out each individual match. We literally couldn't do it without you, and it's been fascinating to meet endlessly thoughtful, adventurous, and experienced new recruits in interviews, training, and support sessions.

This round up would not be complete if I did not mention those beyond the Greater London Authority whose generous grants and donations make our work possible. Funders like The Astra Foundation, Lloyds Bank Foundation and St. James's Place Charitable Foundation have enabled us to deliver vital core functions that underpin our day-to-day programme delivery. Core operations aren't as fun to write up in an annual report (hours-long discussions on the merits of Sharepoint lists vs. Excel, anyone?) but they are the central cogs that drive all the mechanisms of SAYes Mentoring, and our core funders keep them turning. For this, we thank them. I would also like to spotlight Three mobile, whose Three Reconnected scheme provides SAYes with refurbished smartphones with data-loaded SIM cards to support mentees who do not have access to a suitable device or wi-fi. We know the mentees in receipt of these donated phones are grateful for the technology that facilitates their weekly mentoring videocalls, allowing them to focus on their process of personal growth. And lastly, I want to thank each and every individual who has contributed to our fundraising efforts. Whether you bought a raffle ticket, sent a one-off donation, or signed up as a monthly sustaining donor, your contribution goes towards offering support to a young person who needs it. Together, we enter the era of mentoring.

Fiona Cox

UK Programmes Manager



Message from our **UK Mentee Liaison**

In 2023, summer was underway and I was preparing for the hot weather as a dog walker, planning early starts to get all the many miles in before the heat took over the day. During my preparations, a fabulous face popped up on WhatsApp, asking if I'd like to hear about an exciting new role at SAYes.

Having already had the pleasure and privilege of working with my own mentor under SAYes and benefitting greatly, I was intrigued. After a long chat with the operations top dog, Andrew, I managed to land myself the role as SAYes's first UK Mentee Liaison. I was able to build some fantastic skills whilst working with an amazing, dedicated and inspirational team.

When I had undertaken my mentoring, SAYes was running its pilot programme in the UK with a small number of young people. When Andrew called, I learned SAYes had landed a fully funded opportunity for a large number of young people right here in the UK through the Mayor of London's New Deal for Young People.

I jumped into my role as Mentee Liaison at the beginning of July, right after I celebrated my "Independence Day." One of the reasons I was approached for the Mentee Liaison role, apart from being awesome, is because I'm care experienced. The day I left care happens to be the 4th of July. I started by meeting the team, learning more and more about SAYes and the behind the scenes work that makes the magic of mentoring possible. I was responsible for delivering presentations to all sorts of teams, with a focus on care leavers, to see if they wanted to engage their young people with our fab mentoring programme.

I was able to network and make connections within the social care sector, mental health sector and educational sector and places such as job centres and prisons. I've lost count of the amount of times I shared my story, but it was such a meaningful way to properly show off the amazing things you can achieve as a mentee and I think I really generated a lot of support for SAYes to help build our presence in the UK.

Things were slow at first, but young people started to trickle in and more and more people began enquiring about our programmes. Suddenly there were so many wonderful young people searching for additional support, guidance and advocacy in such a key time in their lives. My role as Mentee Liaison was to get to know them, to train them in their role as a mentee, and help them understand what to expect from our mentorship programme. I also provided on-going support to mentees during their mentorship. Whether it was providing another listening ear if they were struggling, helping them find access to practical support like food banks, linking them with education and employment opportunities or doing regular check-ins, I did my best to provide additional support to complement their mentoring journey.

It took some time for us to establish ourselves, but we were starting from an almost complete blank page. It was hard work building an organisation up in the UK, but I am so proud of the fantastic, youth-focused, mentoring programme we have become. It's crazy to think that we went from barely a dozen mentees and a staff of about 5 when I started to over 100 mentees and a staff of nearly 20 today. Now, in my opinion, we are an organisation that lives up to its formidable reputation internationally, delivering a brilliant mentoring programme for some of society's most vulnerable young people. It's all about quality and I think the work the SAYes team

puts in and the wonderful young people we support speaks volumes.

It has been an absolute privilege to not only observe SAYes become a force for good in the UK, but to be a part of it. Honestly, it's utterly incredible. I developed skills for life, built up my confidence and became an even better version of myself from being part of an incredible team. I feel honoured to be a part of a team, set up by two strong and inspiring women, the talented Gillian Anderson and the magnificent Michelle Potter, that feels like family who want to continue being a fantastic benefit to so many young people.

When I was mentored by SAYes I shared my dream to one day become the Prime Minister. If I am ever lucky enough for that to happen, I will owe a portion of that success to my time with SAYes; both as a mentee and the Mentee Liaison. I have learnt so many transferable skills and it has given me such a confidence push, I low key think being Prime Minister might be a possibility. Maybe when I hit 50? I'll be sure to channel my inner Gillian and Michelle, and take note from the leadership of Sir Sadiq Khan and continue to invest in young people and amazing organisations like SAYes.

Jack Smith

UK Mentee Liaison



Our Team

SAYes Org



Michelle Potter
FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
🇬🇧 🇿🇦



Andrew Dellis
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
🇿🇦 🇬🇧



Colleen Pinto
COMMUNICATIONS LEAD
🇬🇧 🇿🇦



Lauren Bright
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT LEAD
🇿🇦 🇬🇧



Bridget Knight
PARTNER PROGRAMMES LEAD
🇿🇦 🇬🇧



Peter Horn
FINANCE MANAGER
🇿🇦 🇬🇧



Fiona Cox
UK PROGRAMMES MANAGER
🇬🇧

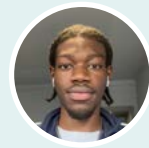


Lois Nienaber
SA PROGRAMMES MANAGER
🇿🇦

UK Mentee Liaisons



Jack Smith
MENTEE LIAISON
🇬🇧



Joshua Woodroffe
MENTEE LIAISON
🇬🇧

SAYes Transition Specialists



Mel Haines
TRANSITION SPECIALIST
🇺🇸



Maria Esposito
TRANSITION SPECIALIST
🇺🇸



Natika Marr
TRANSITION SPECIALIST
🇺🇸



Ana Afloarei
TRANSITION SPECIALIST
🇺🇸



Eytan Nafte
TRANSITION SPECIALIST
🇮🇱



Roxane Holman
TRANSITION SPECIALIST
🇮🇸

SA Mentee Liaisons



Zizopho Quluba
MENTEE LIAISON
🇿🇦



Shameelah Sereo
MENTEE LIAISON & SAYES
PROGRAMMES ADMINISTRATOR
🇿🇦

UK Ambassadors



Chelsea Gyamfi

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Jacob Larsen

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Devalle Webley

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Stella-Quinn Hernandez

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Preet Kaur

SAYES AMBASSADOR



SA Ambassadors



Queen Nolean Witbooi

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Dorcas Kalala

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Chelsea Sandt

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Dimpho Tsoetsi

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Denzel Submba

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Chantel Saliji

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Michel Mukeba

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Dimakatso Rakaki

SAYES AMBASSADOR



Our Culture

Our Values (Being Good Better)

COMMITMENT & CONSISTENCY

The virtue of Integrity

Each of us commits to a specific role for a specific period of time, both for ourselves and for others. The security provided by this commitment is an essential foundation for personal growth and interpersonal collaboration. Consistency between thoughts, words and actions build a predictable world in which we are all empowered to act decisively. We believe in, and action, integrity.

BOUNDARIES & RESPECT

The virtue of Independence

Each of us has the right to think, to make choices and to take actions free from undue influence and coercion. Such freedom is constrained only by the laws of nature and the rights of others, in so far as we currently understand and define them. Rational autonomy/agency is key to independent thought, choice and action; as well as to respectful dialogue and interdependence. We believe in, and action, independence.

TRANSPARENCY & CONFIDENTIALITY

The virtue of Honesty

Each of us commits to authentic communication that is thoroughly transparent (congruent). Relatedly, all discussion takes place with and by the persons involved. Unless there is an objective cause for concern, personal conversations are trustworthy and confidential. We believe in, and action, honesty.

Our Values

(Being Good Better)

EQUALITY & COMPASSION

The virtue of Fairness

Each of us is sensitive to ways in which adversity and inequality affects outlook and opportunity. We bring care and attention not only to structural differences, but also to each person's subjective experience of suffering and/or flourishing. We acknowledge both the uniqueness and the commonality of this subjective experience, and the value of rational compassion in our response. We sensitively and carefully enter the world of others, and act in ways that are objectively supportive. We believe in, and action, fairness.

LEADERSHIP & DIVERSITY

The virtue of Inclusivity

Each of us aspires to create and sustain fully inclusive communities. Wherever adjacent experiences are brought together with genuine humility, there is the promise of deepening and enriching ourselves and each other. This is the promise of diversity that can be realised through inclusive leadership. Leadership through histories, identities and incentives that are each acknowledged and respected. We believe in, and action, inclusivity.

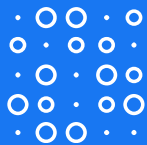
KINDNESS & FORGIVENESS

The virtue of Benevolence

Each of us is motivated by kindness and the generosity of openness and connection. Through sympathetic imagination into the reality of others we find that responsibility makes sense, blame/judgement does not. This moves us morally forward, expanding our circle of concern. We believe in, and action, benevolence.

Our Principles

(Doing Good Better)



NEGLECTED

Does the work address a **neglected, undervalued or overlooked challenge?**

Many attempts to do good are not focused on the most pressing and widespread challenges. Such efforts, based on attention to a personal story or concern, often do not address the known causes of suffering for hundreds of thousands to millions. SAYes is built to target significant challenges that are objectively not receiving commensurate support. We believe attempts to do good should be data-driven and that they should actively seek out challenges that are widespread and regularly overlooked.

“Attention is not the best way to gauge the salience of a challenge”



TRACTABLE

Does the work **reduce the challenge to key components?**

Many attempts to do good do not adequately systemise the challenge they are trying to solve. Such efforts fail to identify, target and sequence the support required to address key causal pathways, and thus fail to make headway or to gather useful feedback. SAYes is built on a model that logically reduces the challenges as we understand them to key components which are manageable and testable. We believe attempts to do good should be driven by a theory of change that predicts and directs impact, while also generating iterative cycles of testing and feedback for course correction.

“Every organisation is a more or less well-formed hypothesis.”



ACCOUNTABLE

Does the work **consider incentives and opportunity costs?**

Many attempts to do good do not consider the cost of short-run sentiment-based support. Such efforts, are not only often inefficient and ineffectual, they may introduce incentives which actually disempower and reinforce inequalities. SAYes is built to capture opportunities to do good better, and to be deeply responsible to those we serve. We believe attempts to do good should be thoughtful and deeply accountable, at every stage, and to every stakeholder.

“Beyond the distraction of success stories.”

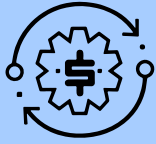


IMPACTFUL

Does the work **produce predicted and measurable impact?**

Many attempts to do good are not driven by evidence or reasoning. Such efforts may feel good momentarily, and express well-meaning intentions, but they are not effective in ways that can be objectively and reliably measured. SAYes is built to bring scientific expertise from the behavioural, brain and social sciences to mentoring. We believe attempts to do good should be evidence-based and that we should test impact in ways that allow us to improve our explanations.

“Good intentions are necessary, but they are not sufficient.”



SUSTAINABLE

Does the work offer **lasting value to partners?**

Many attempts to do good rely solely on donations to address market failures. Such efforts presume 'beneficiaries' and 'programmes' offer value only one-way and thus fail to realise opportunities for sustainability. SAYes is built to create high impact personal and professional growth for both mentors and mentees. We offer value to independent volunteers, to business teams, and to organisations around the world, which allows us to sustain very high levels of professional support. We believe attempts to do good should offer value for value, and that partnerships should be mutually beneficial.

"The life you change for good might be your own."



SCALABLE

Does the work improve **a large number of lives?**

Many attempts to do good don't have reach. Such efforts are either too local and ad hoc or too costly to practically roll out at scale. SAYes is built to positively affect the lives of millions. We believe that everyone should have access to high-quality relational support, regardless of chance differences of background, geography or circumstance.

"Our reach should always exceed our grasp, just not by much."

Enter the Era of Mentorship

Vision & Mission

As we move rapidly through immense civilisational change, there is a deep responsibility to pause and consider one another. If we choose to place mentorship at the heart of human connection, then this moment could create a lasting intergenerational future. To arrive at this future, defined by the flourishing of creativity, compassion and common cause, is to enter the era of mentorship.



BIG HAIRY AUDACIOUS GOAL

To take humanity into an era of mentorship – to end social poverty for good.



OUR VISION

A world where everyone, everywhere benefits from high-quality relational support.



OUR MISSION

To provide free, accessible, world-class mentorship to under-served young people globally.

“At the centre of all global challenges is who we are to each other.”

To realise the promise of a new era and to end social poverty, we must invest in the **architecture of social change** and encourage others to do the same. This involves the intellectual clarity and moral resolve to confront and solve problems impacting a lasting intergenerational future. Our part is to accelerate universal access to high-quality relational support – **through free, accessible, world-class mentorship.**

To extend our **position** we will make strategic advances in three key domains over the next 15 years, namely: **Community, Education, and Knowledge.** These interrelated areas are crucial to the future of SAYes Mentoring.

Three Strategic Goals (over 15 years):



1

THE MOUSEION

Build a global mentorship community

with the intellectual clarity and moral resolve to end social poverty

- We are committed to living a compelling, ethical and wise future, and to meeting, connecting and empowering people who want to do the same.
- We are committed to amplifying youth creativity, to seeding ongoing peer to peer collaboration and building platforms for youth-led initiatives.



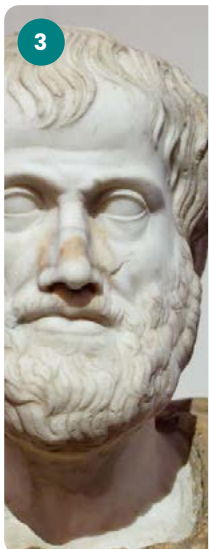
2

THE ACADEMY

Build a world-class mentorship academy

offering excellence in accredited, on demand, and facilitated training instructed mentorship

- We are committed to training hundreds of thousands of mentors, mentees and social change partners, drawing on the very best interdisciplinary content to provide practical, relevant, real-world applications across settings and populations.



3

THE LYCEUM

Build a world-class mentorship library

making tools for behavioural change accessible and freely available

- We are committed to interdisciplinary behavioural and social science, to contributing toward, translating and improving access to ever widening knowledge of human flourishing.
- We are committed to ensuring that scientifically credible content for positive change is youth relevant, easily accessible, and freely available to all.
- We are committed to evaluating our behavioural interventions, in developing ‘good explanations’ for change and the best ways to test and refine them.

Programme Model

The SAYes approach to formal mentoring



The details


SAYes mentors are trained to work respectfully and confidentially, supporting a mentee with their life plan.

1 Mentorship

SAYes mentors are trained on best practices for:

- Guidance**
 - Active Listening
 - Perspective Sharing
 - Socratic Questioning
- Advocacy**
 - Motivational Interviewing
 - Scaffolding
 - Championing
- Support**
 - Role Boundaries
 - Authoritative Balance
 - Accessible, Responsive, & Emotionally Engaged

"I never imagined mentoring could be so detailed and specific. The introduction classes online were like doing a university lecture course. They were so rewarding and filled with such care and consideration. It was also an opportunity to learn and work with some amazing mentor trainees—new friends from across the world."

 JOHN KOENSGEN

2 Transition Planning

Mentors support mentees in the development and implementation of a structured and personalised transition plan, through 4 stages over a 9-month programme covering 10 life domains.



SAYes 10 life domains:



1 Education & Learning



6 Social Health



2 Work & Money



7 Emotional Health



3 Home & Family



8 Physical Health



4 Sport & Recreation



9 Cognitive Health



5 Community & Citizenship



10 Identity Health

"I feel very privileged to have a dedicated Transition Specialist. She responds quickly to my messages and any concerns, so I feel supported in my position as mentor and feel like there's no question I couldn't ask her. In our group conversations, my Transition Specialist is an excellent facilitator, getting quickly to the heart of an issue and leaving no stone unturned. She is quick with a smile and a joke, making every call a pleasure."



AISLING HENRARD



③ Tools, tactics & strategies

Prospective mentors and mentees are taught to understand and contextually **apply expertise from interdisciplinary behavioural and social science (including cognitive neuroscience)**, and have access to actionable and personalised tools, tactics and strategies for positive behavioural and perspective change.

SAYes content is delivered in monthly group settings (workgroups, support sessions, and **masterclasses**) as well as in individual appointments with SAYes Transition Specialists.

All content is designed to be used relationally, that is, with a mentor – and to target **multiple levers for behaviour and perspective change.**

Levers for behaviour and perspective change:



“The SAYes Mentor Course is a thoughtful and practical programme that truly prepares you to support a young person. It covers key skills like building trust, active listening, and setting boundaries, with a strong focus on empathy and real-life application. The content is engaging and reflective, making you feel prepared and confident as a mentor. Highly recommended!”

 AMAR ADAM

Custom Programmes

Overview

In 2024, I worked with three corporate partners to deliver mentoring programmes that gave employees hands-on leadership experience while creating genuine social impact for young people. Each partnership was designed to grow the participants on both sides of the relationship.

Our partnership with **Waves for Change** connected SAYes mentors with the organisation's young surf coaches, most in their early twenties. These young people come from disadvantaged backgrounds and spend their days teaching children to surf and build confidence. With the support of their mentors, 12 mentees graduated from the programme, many stepping up into senior roles like Master Trainer, Site Manager and Training Officer.

The **Nike PowerUp Mentoring Programme** gave Nike employees the opportunity to develop their mentoring and leadership skills while supporting underserved youth in South Africa and the UK. Altogether, 33 South African and 14 UK matches graduated. The programme included formal mentor training, interactive workshops, support sessions and masterclasses.

Finally, the **Alternative Prosperity Maharishi Institute & Gold Youth Programme** pilot matched employees with young leaders entering tertiary education. Across five matches, participants met weekly for nine months, completing 133 sessions and celebrating a 100% graduation rate. Some mentees have since joined the SAYes alumni network to continue their journey as changemakers.

These partnerships show what's possible when corporates and NPOs work together with purpose – developing confident employees, empowered young leaders, and stronger communities in the process.

Bridget Knight

Partner Programmes Lead



Business Partners

SAYes is committed to bringing the best social change experience to **business teams across the globe**, and to helping corporate partners improve the impact of their social change investments, tractably, sustainably and at scale.



WE INVEST IN YOUR TEAM'S DEVELOPMENT

Better leaders

The potential of a purpose-driven team is enormous. When people mentor, **they lead with purpose.**

"I feel I am a better manager, more present, aware, and able to ask the right questions. In my personal life, I became someone that listens more and keeps an open mind, without judgement and trying always to understand the other person's point of view."

 HAROLD MANCIYA, PARTNER MARKETING LEAD, EMEA JORDAN BRAND, NETHERLANDS



WE IGNITE PURPOSE IN THE WORKPLACE

Massive employee engagement

Virtual volunteering attracts, retains and empowers top-tier talent.

"Humbling - one of the most profound benefits that I have realised through volunteering is becoming more innovative. Constantly looking for and thinking about different ways to approach situations that I would never have imagined... The SAYes mentor programme keeps me humble, my feet on the ground and reminds me of what is important."

 KEMDRIX BERKELEY, NIKE HEAD COACH, STORE DIRECTOR, SPAIN



WE ENHANCE SOCIAL IMPACT INITIATIVES

Authentic social and community impact

Mentorships **change the world.**

"I am forever grateful and thankful for this life-changing journey. This is by far one of my best and most valuable life experiences thus far. Everyone should experience this if they want to impart benevolence in the world."

 SONJA ERDOGAN, NIKE WOMEN'S MERCH MANAGER, SOUTH AFRICA



CUSTOM PROGRAMME

Alternative Prosperity

The AP e-Mentorship programme aims to improve life outcomes of the mentees, as well as providing inclusive leadership and mentorship skills to the AP Partner Staff. The programme aims to develop resilience, accountability, self-efficacy, and leadership potential.

MENTEE IMPACT

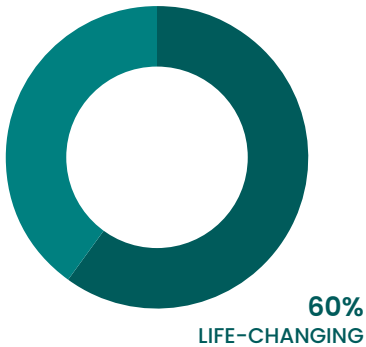
100% said mentoring **positively impacted** their life.

80% said it was **life-changing**.

Independence

100% of mentees reported improved choices related to independence.

40% MUCH POSITIVE



THE TOP IMPACTED INDEPENDENCE DOMAINS



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN



REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN

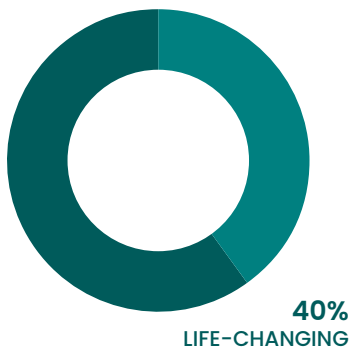


REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN

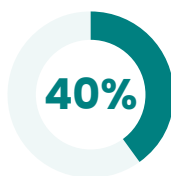
Well-being

100% of mentees reported improved choices related to well-being.

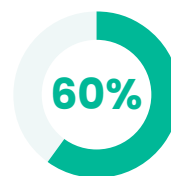
60% MUCH POSITIVE



THE TOP IMPACTED WELL-BEING DOMAINS



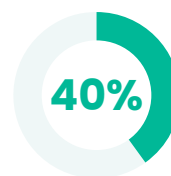
CHOSE THIS DOMAIN



REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN



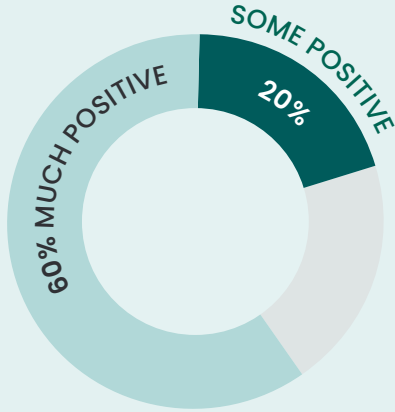
REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN

MENTOR IMPACT

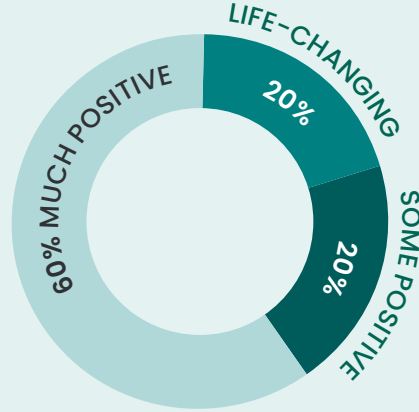
80% said mentoring **positively** impacted their professional life.

100% are now more comfortable navigating diversity.

Professional Growth



Personal Growth



ALTERNATIVE PROSPERITY FEEDBACK

“SAYes has been essential to both my career growth and personal life. Its influence is still having an impact, and I am incredibly appreciative of the good things it has done for me. I’ve become a better communicator, developed a good outlook, and gained confidence thanks to the programme’s ongoing support and direction...I am an improved version of myself.”



Witness
MENTEE

“Having a mentor helped me get into a different mental health place by finding a way to cope. I no longer feel alone, and have gone from feeling hopeless to hopeful.”



Thanduxolo Sandra Khumalo
MENTEE

“For me personally and professionally, I’ve learnt to talk less and listen more.”



Hlengiwe
MENTOR



POWERUP

CUSTOM PROGRAMME

Nike

SAYes thoroughly prepares and supports Nike staff, starting with a fit evaluation to understand if mentoring is the right social activation for them, providing extensive training in advance of the mentoring commencing and via regular touchpoints throughout the programme. Selected mentors attend a 24hr training course, and then connect with their mentee for a 9-month period, once a week on a video call. The programme includes monthly workshops, with notable guest speakers like Cheslin Colbe, support groups, masterclasses and networking events for both mentors and mentees.

MENTEE IMPACT

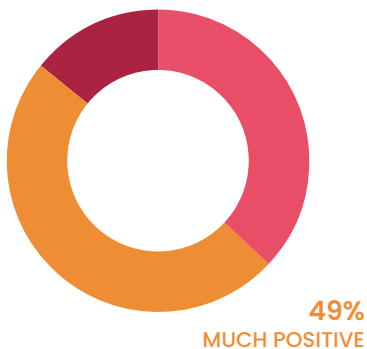
100% said mentoring **positively impacted** their life.

42% said it was **life-changing**.

Independence

100% of mentees reported improved choices related to independence.

14% SOME POSITIVE 37% LIFE-CHANGING



THE TOP IMPACTED INDEPENDENCE DOMAINS



Work & Money



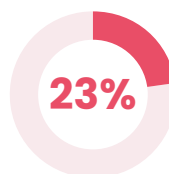
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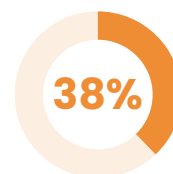
REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN



Education & Learning



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN

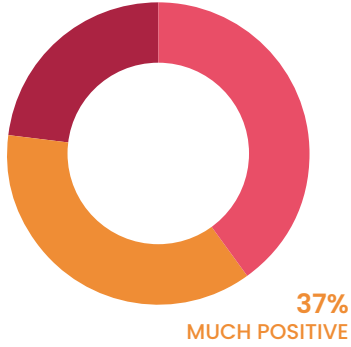


REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN

Well-being

100% of mentees reported improved choices related to well-being.

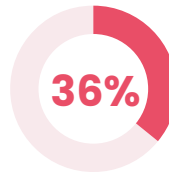
23% SOME POSITIVE 40% LIFE-CHANGING



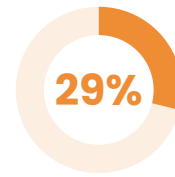
THE TOP IMPACTED WELL-BEING DOMAINS



Emotional Health



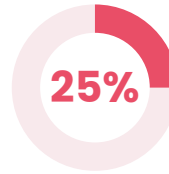
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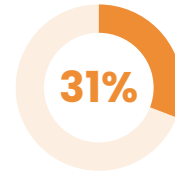
REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN



Social Health



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN



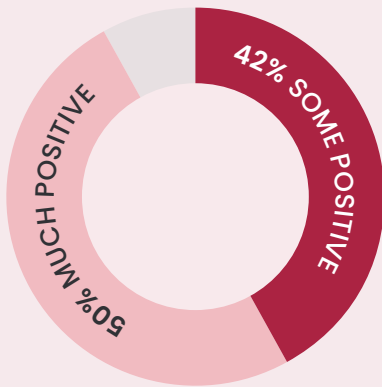
REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN

MENTOR IMPACT

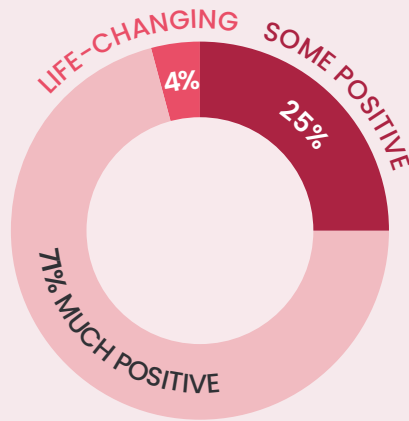
92% said mentoring positively impacted their professional life.

100% are now more comfortable navigating diversity.

Professional Growth



Personal Growth



"I learnt to be true to myself, take responsibility for my actions, I learnt to sit and talk about the uncomfortable conversations and to stop shifting the blame."



Michel Mukeba
MENTEE

"My mentor gave me the space to be comfortable and trusting her. I trust my mentor ... she creates a safe space for me where I can be myself and talk about anything."



Ntokozo Tshabalala
MENTEE

Youth Partners

Improve the impact of the work you do **by connecting your stakeholders (service users, patients, beneficiaries, students, and junior staff) to high-quality mentorships.**



SAYES MENTORING

Waves for Change

The Waves for Change e-Mentoring Programme connects independent volunteer mentors from around the world with young surf therapy coaches interning at Waves for Change.

MENTEE IMPACT

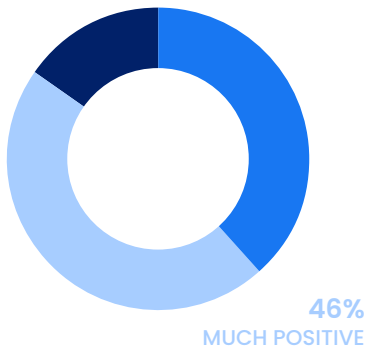
100% said mentoring **positively** impacted their life.

39% said it was **life-changing**.

Independence

100% of mentees reported improved choices related to independence.

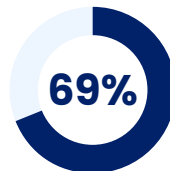
15% SOME POSITIVE 39% LIFE-CHANGING



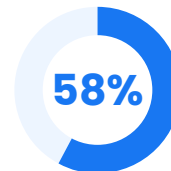
THE TOP IMPACTED INDEPENDENCE DOMAINS



Work & Money



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN



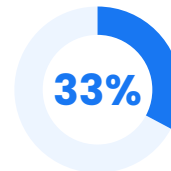
REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN



Education & Learning



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN

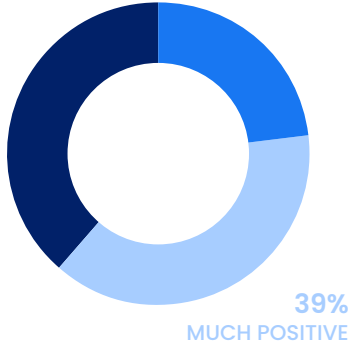


REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN

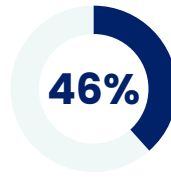
Well-being

100% of mentees reported improved choices related to well-being.

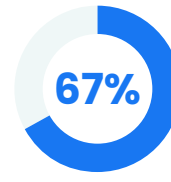
38% SOME POSITIVE 23% LIFE-CHANGING



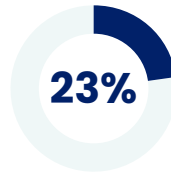
THE TOP IMPACTED WELL-BEING DOMAINS



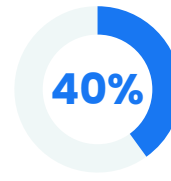
CHOSE THIS DOMAIN



REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN



CHOSE THIS DOMAIN



REPORTED LIFE-CHANGING IMPACT IN THIS DOMAIN

"I have grown in self-confidence and ability to work towards my goals."



Frentiese Davids
MENTEE

"I say to friends, 'Hey guys, you can now join if you want to'. They always talk with admiration about SAYes because that is all I talk about. And they see the change in me, which is persuasion enough for them to want to sign up if the opportunity ever presents itself."



Fletcher Malata
MENTEE

Global Programmes

South Africa Overview

In 2024, SAYes Mentoring continued to support care-experienced young people across South Africa. We worked with five returning Child and Youth Care Centres (CYCC): Durbanville Children's Home, Girls & Boys Town, SOS Children's Villages, St. George's Home for Girls and St. Michael's Youth Centre, and we were excited to welcome a new partner, Home from Home. We also continued our programme for Independents: care-experienced young people who are living on their own and finding their way through different stages of life.

This year, our focus was on strengthening the quality of the programme and ensuring that young people were getting the most out of it. We did this through regular check-ins with our matches, building strong relationships with CYCC partners, meeting with them often, and working closely together to respond to the needs of the young people. As a result, meeting rates were the highest they've ever been, showing how invested and committed our mentees were. One young person, with the support of his mentor, left a gang and became one of the top achievers at his school; a powerful example of what guidance, advocacy and support can achieve.

Alongside mentoring, we ran monthly workshops at all our partner Child and Youth Care Centres. These were led by care-experienced alumni and offered safe, engaging spaces for young people to build confidence, learn practical life skills, and explore the ten SAYes mentoring domains. Over the year, more than 630 young people took part in these workshops, which was a huge step forward in reaching and empowering more youth.

It was also great to see our alumni giving back to their communities and peers. One alumna hosted an online workshop on how to manage citizenship documents for foreign nationals living in South Africa, a session that proved very helpful for many. Alumni also organised events such as beach clean-ups, a career day for both alumni and CYCC residents, and social gatherings to stay connected and support one another. There's a clear sense of pride and community among our alumni who want to make a difference.

Through mentoring and youth engagement, young people are feeling valued, seen, and motivated, while mentors often say they leave the programme inspired.

Both mentees and mentors are gaining new skills, confidence, and knowledge that will stay with them long after the programme ends. 2024 has been a year of growth, commitment, and transformation for everyone involved.

Lois Nienaber

South Africa Programmes Manager



Message from our SA Mentee Liaison

I began my journey with SAYes Mentoring as a mentee in 2013, guided by an incredible mentor who helped me discover my passion for acting and performance art. Her support opened doors for me to study, build a career, and even travel the world – something I never imagined possible.

Mentorship has truly been life-changing, helping me grow emotionally, adapt to new environments, and transition successfully from a Child and Youth Care Centre (CYCC) to independent living.

I later joined SAYes as the Alumni Chairperson and now serve as a Mentee Liaison, overseeing the alumni group and Ambassadors – and I'm also proud to be a mentor myself. My goal is to use my journey and experience to empower and inspire other young people in care and beyond.

The alumni community in our South African programme has grown incredibly, from a few participants in early events to a now vibrant and active group of over 60 participants. Since 2023, our alumni committees have laid a strong foundation, taking ownership of their role and advocating the importance of mentorship and social change. This growth also led to the addition of hiring our Ambassadors, who have built meaningful relationships with young people in care by sharing their stories and leading workshops within the Child and Youth Care Centres.

When we facilitate the workshops, care workers often ask what makes us different and how we get the young people so engaged, and our answer is always the same: mentorship. Having been mentored ourselves and coming from care, we understand the young people's journeys and challenges. This helps them open up and trust us more easily. We are able to relate. We aim to make sure they experience smoother transitions from CYCCs to independent living than we did.

The journey has been rewarding and emotional. Through workshops and one-on-one conversations, many of us have revisited our own stories and recognised the need for continued healing. SAYes has supported us with counselling, and we now encourage young people to speak to their mentors and social workers about their mental health too.

The alumni have also learned the importance of networking, mutual support, and staying connected as a community beyond care. From 2023 to 2024, youth engagement has grown significantly with events like sports days, talent shows and beach clean-ups, which are all organised by the alumni committee. These events not only bring us together but also raise awareness about mentorship and its life-changing impact.

Zizipho Quluba
Mentee Liaison



South Africa Events



SAYes team & Ambassadors at LSEG Cape Town.



AYes alumni & mentees at a financial education workshop put on by Netto Invest.



Zizipho (Mentee Liaison) and Dorcas (SAYes Ambassador) visited Home from Home (one of our CYCC partners) to deliver a transition workshop.



Zizipho and Shameelah (Mentee Liaisons) with presenters at the SAYes Alumni Career Expo for our CYCC partners.



South African alumni lunch gathering.

Match Profile Darryl & Benny

 SOUTH AFRICA



The mentorship journey in a word

“Rewarding”

DARRYL – MENTOR

“Fantastic”

BENNY – MENTEE



“I have seen how crucial it is that young people be allowed to explore their options in a safe space, and this programme allows them to do just that.”

DARRYL – MENTOR
SOUTH AFRICA



“I was surprised that my mentor and transition specialist went the extra mile to help me out. Not many people do that.”

BENNY (25) – MENTEE
SOUTH AFRICA

I think the SAYes mentorship programme is incredible, and I would definitely promote it to anyone thinking of getting involved. There were two things that surprised me about this experience – the first was just how great an impact mentoring can have on the life of the mentee; and the second was how much I learned and grew in areas where I thought I was already very proficient.

I would recommend this experience to anyone who is thinking about becoming a mentee on the SAYes programme – it really is to your benefit, so go for it!

One of the biggest impacts mentoring had on me, was around my future goals. When Darryl and I started looking at goal planning and goal setting, my focus and mindset shifted. Darryl encouraged me to explore more options and to decide exactly which goals I wanted to concentrate on. Based on this, I also began an online course, which really improved my communication and my confidence. Another important change is that I used to over-think everything, and Darryl held me accountable for leaving that bad habit behind.

Match Profile Louise & Aisha

 SOUTH AFRICA



The mentorship journey in a word

“Surprising”

LOUISE - MENTOR

“Game-changing”

AISHA - MENTEE



“I got very lucky for my first time mentoring! #bestmenteeever”

LOUISE - MENTOR
SOUTH AFRICA



“Louise has not only provided guidance and support, but has also empowered me to advocate for myself.”

AISHA (20) - MENTEE
SOUTH AFRICA

For years, I felt the need to commit to a programme or person as part of my own process of giving back, and in 2024, the timing was finally right for me to start mentoring. Initially, I was very unsure about what this mentoring process would be like – I’m happy to say it’s been a very positive experience!

I’ve been completely surprised by just how much I’ve enjoyed this process; how much Aisha and I genuinely enjoy having a laugh with each other. I wasn’t expecting that.

Louise has really emerged as a pillar of support for me. She offers good advice and compassion and it feels like she has a genuine interest in my well-being and my goals in life. With her guidance, I’m becoming more independent and confident. My time management is better and I’ve become more open to collaboration and asking for help when I need it. Having a mentor has been a game-changer. I’ve been amazed by the impact Louise has had on my life. I’ve already accomplished more than I thought possible.

UK Overview

For an overview of the highlights, successes and growth of our UK programmes in 2024, please see the message from our 2024 UK Programmes Manager Fiona Cox on page 5.

UK Recruitment



Fiona (UK Programmes Manager) & Jack (Mentee Liaison) at the London Chimpanzee Sculpture Walk Trail during an outing visiting the London boroughs we work with as part of the New Deal for Young People Propel collaboration.



Chelsea & Tezlym (UK Ambassadors) representing SAYes at the Forest Hill JobCentre Plus.



Fiona & Chelsea visited the Lewisham Young Mayor and Young Advisors, part of Lewisham Council, one of our partners in the Propel collaboration.

School Partnerships



Fiona (UK Programmes Lead) and SAYes Ambassadors Aaliyah and Chelsea with Addey & Stanhope School representative Jake Armstrong. SAYes launched a partnership with Addey & Stanhope in 2024.



Transition Specialist Natika and SAYes Ambassador Chelsea at Addey & Stanhope School.

Alumni Meet-ups



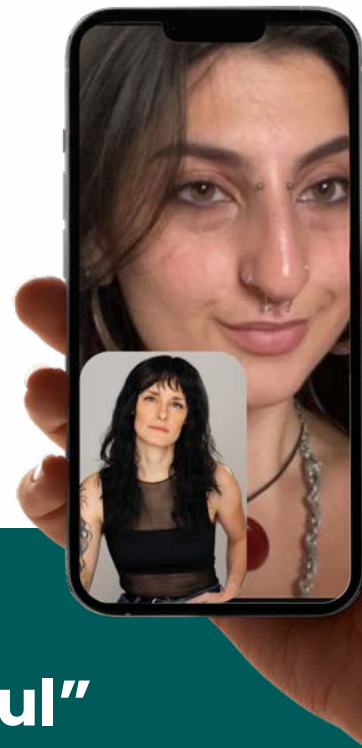
Our first UK alumni meet-up at Soap Box in Islington.



UK alumna, Nhi, at Stepney City Farm in London as part of an alumni meet-up.

Match Profile Jen & Rona

 UNITED KINGDOM



The mentorship journey in a word

“Symbiotic”

JEN – MENTOR

“Insightful”

RONA – MENTEE



“I see this as an opportunity to be to a young person what I would’ve wanted someone to be for me.”

JEN – MENTOR
UNITED KINGDOM

“I feel very fortunate to be able to access this opportunity – not a lot of people get to experience this.”

RONA (20) – MENTEE
UNITED KINGDOM



Why did you become a mentor?

I have had various people mentor me in informal ways and found it really helpful, so I wanted to be able to do that for someone else.

How have you experienced the beginning part of the mentorship?

The training was very helpful, especially in terms of the structure and how the programme works. I have also found everyone at SAYes dedicated, friendly and helpful.

As you go into the second phase, what are you looking forward to?

I’m loving getting to know my mentee, looking forward to getting to know her even more and excited to see how this journey unfolds.

Why did you decide to become a mentee on the SAYes Programme?

I’m quite an anxious person and this seemed like it would be about having someone to talk to, who’s not a friend or a therapist, but somewhere in between.

What are you enjoying so far?

I’m lucky to have been matched with someone in the industry I am in, even though she’s in a different part of the world. I’m enjoying getting to know my mentor and I really look forward to our chat every week. It helps to be able to talk to someone who has experienced the things that I’m heading into – I think that’s really valuable.

Match Profile Asmah & Nhi

 UNITED KINGDOM



The mentorship journey in a word

“A privilege”

ASMAH - MENTOR

“Wholesome”

NHI - MENTEE



“You learn as much about yourself as you do about your mentee, and as much from them as they may learn from you.”

ASMAH - MENTOR
UNITED KINGDOM

“Nine months ago, I didn’t know what I was doing with my life and now I’m setting goals and feeling a lot more content.”

NHI (25) - MENTEE
UNITED KINGDOM



I joined SAYes because I found myself with some extra time. I thought it would be a good opportunity to give back and share some of my experience in a meaningful way.

This has been a most pleasurable and rewarding experience and I would highly recommend to others that they get involved. It’s really exciting to be part of a shared journey with a mentee and an enormous privilege that a young person would allow you into their life in that way.

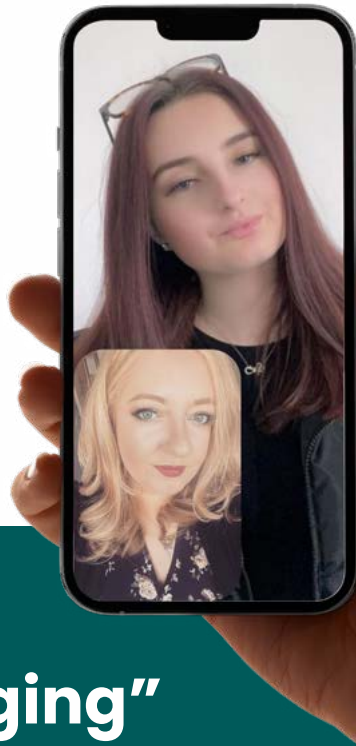
I signed up for the programme because I was going through a transitional period in my life and I wanted guidance. It has been enlightening and educational, but I’ve also felt like it’s been on my own terms, and I haven’t felt pressured in any way.

I also feel like this is the first time I’ve felt safe enough to really focus on what I want out of life and how I want to get there. Just having someone listen and know what’s going on in my life has helped to take a few steps forward. Knowing I have support behind me has allowed me to get out of my comfort zone.

What has surprised me most is how committed I have been to the mentoring process - I don’t think I’ve ever voluntarily committed to anything like this in my life.

Match Profile Charlotte & Ruby

 UNITED KINGDOM



The mentorship journey in a word

“Eye-opening”

CHARLOTTE - MENTOR

“Life-changing”

RUBY - MENTEE



“While challenges exist, the structured yet flexible nature of the SAYes programme makes the relationship a sustainable one and easier to commit to.”

CHARLOTTE - MENTOR
UNITED KINGDOM



“I feel like a new person, and I can’t wait to see what my future holds.”

RUBY (17) - MENTEE
UNITED KINGDOM

Mentorship is a transformative relationship that goes beyond mere knowledge transfer.

Its success hinges on trust, adaptability, and mutual respect, offering lifelong benefits for both mentor and mentee. It also helps the mentor gain fresh perspectives on things, so it can be symbiotic, rather than one-sided.

The experience has been eye opening, in terms of seeing the impact you can have on someone’s outlook on life, just by listening and supporting.

I believe that more people should be mentors.

I have struggled with anxiety since around the age of 13. When my aunt found SAYes, I decided to give it a go and it’s probably the best thing I have ever signed up for!

I’ve always felt judged when I would talk about things that were bothering me, but this experience is allowing me to open up and talk about problems that I have been storing for so long. I don’t feel trapped or like I have a weight on my shoulders anymore. I feel heard and respected - it’s a safe zone where I don’t feel judged.

I’m excited for my future and it feels like everything is starting to come together in my life. I know there will always be challenges to overcome, but thanks to Charlotte I now know how to face them.

Match Profile John & Ben

 UNITED KINGDOM



The mentorship journey in a word

“Never judge a book by its cover”

JOHN – MENTOR

“Truthful”

BEN – MENTEE



“It may sound like a cliché, but mentoring truly fills your soul.”

JOHN – MENTOR
CANADA



“The planning we’re doing helps me to visualise a road map for where I want to be.”

BEN (20) – MENTEE
UNITED KINGDOM

I had no preconceived ideas about what this journey was going to entail when we started six months ago, but so far, it has been incredibly rewarding. What has surprised me most is that it is very much a two-way street, in that I get a lot out of our weekly conversations too. I’m also learning a lot, especially when it comes to the art of active listening.

I wouldn’t say it’s an easy journey – for either mentor or mentee, but it helps to see it as a great adventure that we are on together. The days that we have a wall to climb are almost the most satisfying, because these are the days when I feel like I’m really helping. I am excited to see what our last three months together brings.

Before this experience, I never really had anyone I felt I could fully trust or anyone to talk to consistently. Having John’s support centres me, makes the hurdles seem less terrifying and makes it easier to deal with the little everyday things too.

John has this way of making me feel supported, but at the same time like I’m standing on my own two feet. It’s a great balance and something I’m very grateful for.

What has surprised me most is how a simple change in my mindset has made everything seem less overwhelming. I have been able to put myself out there more and meet a lot of really interesting people – people I would have been terrified of talking to before. This journey has made it easier to be open to new opportunities and improved my overall well-being, including my mental health.

Outcomes

Programme Outcomes Overview

“But the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive” GEORGE ELIOT

What is the impact of a positive adult in your life? For a young person violently familiar with the opposite, or grappling with life in residential care, or unwelcome in a foreign country, or battling with mental health, or alone, or hungry, or homeless – perhaps more than any of us can rightly say.

Here we look at the measurable effect of the work we do at SAYes, with trained volunteers and paid staff, to give young people a defined standard of mentorship support (please see the SAYes programme model on page 19). Consistent with the principle of effectiveness, we predict in advance the nature of impact due to our formal mentorship model. This scientific approach allows us to test what works and what doesn't, to adjust our support and training, and to ensure we remain responsive to the changing needs and aspirations of the young people we serve.

For mentees, we predict individual level improvements in social mobility – that is in life outcomes such as educational attainment, employment, and mental health. Relatedly we predict improvements in the quality and consistency of decision-making and healthy practices, qualities that we know underlie sustainable change. To measure these outcomes we employ a post programme survey consisting of self-report rating scales¹, community level indicators, and open-ended qualitative feedback (see separate UK and SA reports for qualitative analysis).

In what follows we present outcomes from our 2024 programmes in South Africa and the United Kingdom. We contracted **228 new matches** (and managed 262 matches throughout the year) – recording impressive **293% year-on-year growth**. We report, once again, exceptional impact across both regions and groups. While researchers cannot capture the full depth of impact, we remain encouraged, as we urge you to be, by the measurable difference we have made this year. When young people are empowered, and people and institutions are meaningfully connected across chance differences of background, geography and circumstance, we give ourselves the best chance of creating authentic social change. Systemically, we see this impact in changes in the culture, policies and practices affecting young people through the many forms of life, institutions and services they fall within (e.g., children's homes, families, schools, universities, businesses). This is the everyday meliorist work of mentorship.

For, again from Eliot, “the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully, a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs”. We extend our gratitude to each of you working toward the growing good of the world.

Dr. Andrew Dellis
Operations Director

¹ Ratings are ordinal – ‘life changing’, ‘much positive impact’, ‘some positive impact’, ‘no positive impact’.

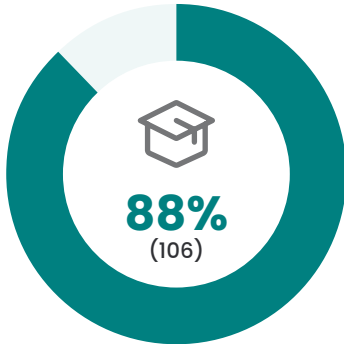


South Africa Outcomes

120 matches.

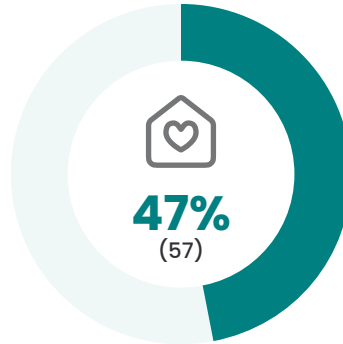
98 new matches.

145% increase from matches contracted in 2023.



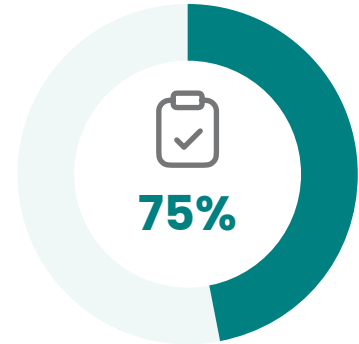
Graduated

Mentorship programmes span 9 months (39 weeks). 65% of scheduled weekly meetings must be completed in order to graduate.



Care-experienced

Support was provided to mentees living in a children's home or adjusting to life after exiting care.



Attendance Rate

Weekly attendance rate (sessions >45 mins)

Our South African programmes included:

Custom programmes

BUSINESS PARTNER

Nike PowerUp

Programme for sports for development coaches in SA & UK

35 new matches

YOUTH SECTOR PARTNER

Waves for Change

Programme for surf therapy coaches in South Africa

15 new matches

Core programmes

Children's Homes

IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Durbanville Children's Home, Girls & Boys Town, Home from Home, SOS Children's Villages, St. George's Home for Girls, St. Michael's Youth Centre

24 new matches

Care-experienced

YOUNG ADULTS

Programme supporting young adults as they adjust to life after leaving the care of a children's home.

24 new matches

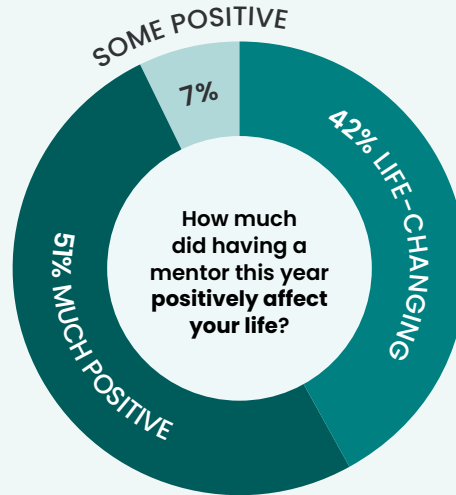
"Before joining SAYes, I had lost hope and felt like I had no control over my life... However, having a mentor changed everything."

Impact on Life Outcomes (SA)

For the current report we surveyed 74 of the 85 graduating mentees.²

100%
said mentoring
positively impacted
their life.

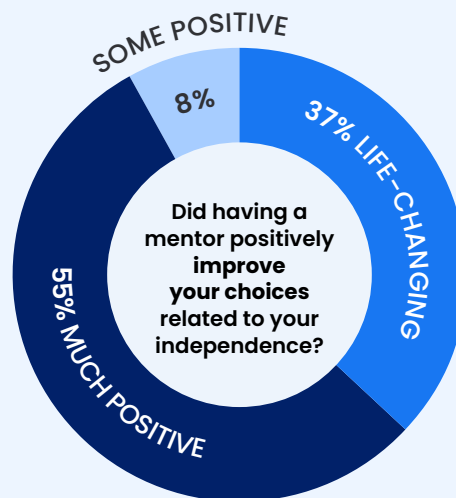
Positive Impact on Life



"When I started my new school I felt insecure and joined this gang at school. The gang started stabbing and hitting other kids. My mentor helped me move away from the gang and realise that I had so much more to live for. I am now hanging out with smart friends who are kind. I see a better future for myself. My report card has also changed so much for the better. I am getting top grades where I used to fail."

100%
of mentees thought
that having a mentor
positively improved
their choices related
to independence.

Choices Related to Independence



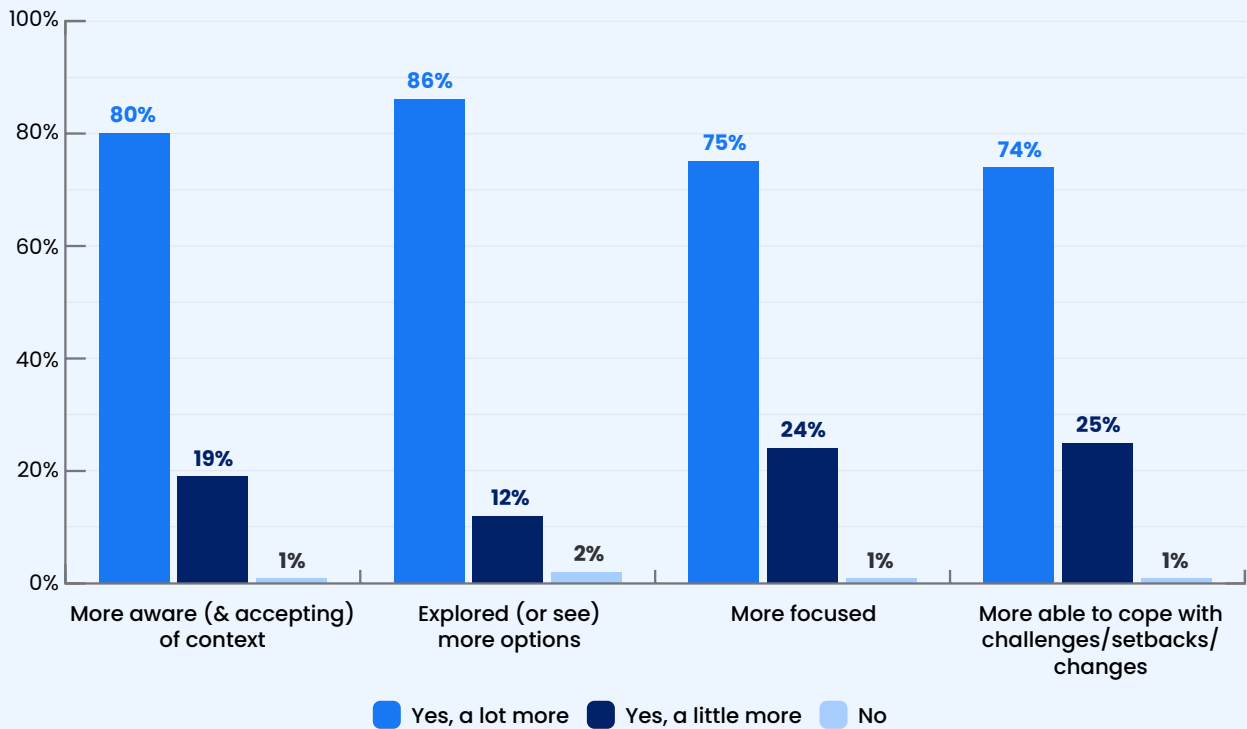
"My mentor helped me see how my choices affect my life."

² For matches active in 2024 but graduating before July please see the 2023 SAYes Outcomes Report.

Positive Impact on Aspects of Decision-Making

Mentees were asked how their decision-making improved with respect to independence, both in a ranking format and by noting examples of improved decision-making across each independence domain. SAYes trains mentors to work on different stages of decision-making with their mentees – raising consciousness, exploring options, getting a focused plan, and then adjusting and revising to feedback/set-backs.

When it comes to factors affecting independence do you feel that you are now...



“I already have a plan for my future... but I can see more options and what is possible – the importance of having a plan B.”

“It changed my perspective on mentorships as a whole. It really helped me with goal setting and knowing how to pivot and not be stuck on an outcome but more a process.”

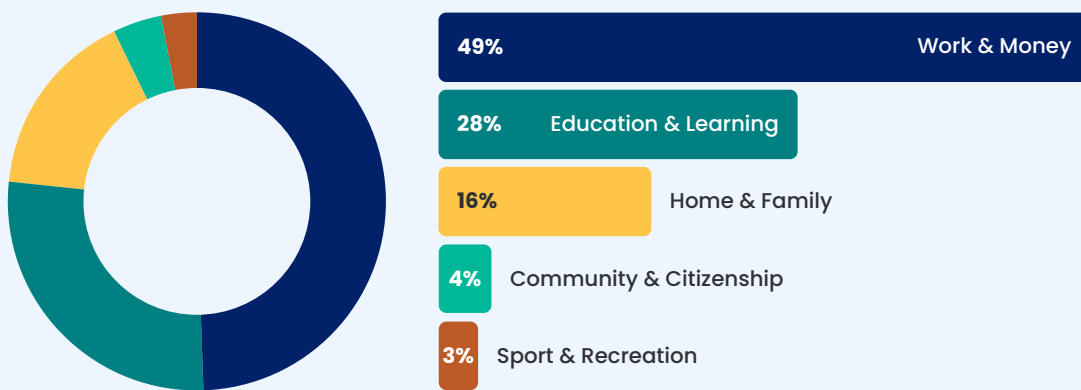
Area of Most Impact (Independence)

The sense of deliberate and focused decision-making (agency) in one’s life is an unmistakable sign of the impact of good mentoring, and is emphasised in the SAYes support role (an accessible, responsive, and emotional available approach combined with a balance of demand and responsiveness and clear boundaries). Likewise, mentor role-modelling of honest authentic conversations, working constructively with feedback, and proactive problem solving of process over outcome are at the core of improved coping with setbacks and challenges. Improved contextual self-awareness (and self-acceptance) is heavily indexed in the SAYes approach to guidance, while expanding the base of options

explored in various life domains is essential to creative mentoring, and is the core of SAYes’s approach to advocacy in strengthening motivation and a commitment to change (scaffolding and building affordances).

Mentees work on transition plans organised by domain. When asked at the end of the programme cycle about impact by domain, mentees thought the area where having a mentor most improved their independence was Work & Money (49%), followed by Education & Learning (28%) and Home & Family (16%). These have consistently been reported as the top selected independence domains for several years with Work & Money the top ranked domain (over Education & Learning) for the past two years. 4% of mentees selected Community & Citizenship, with 3% selecting Sport & Recreation as the biggest impact area in independence.

In which area do you think having a mentor most positively improved your independence?



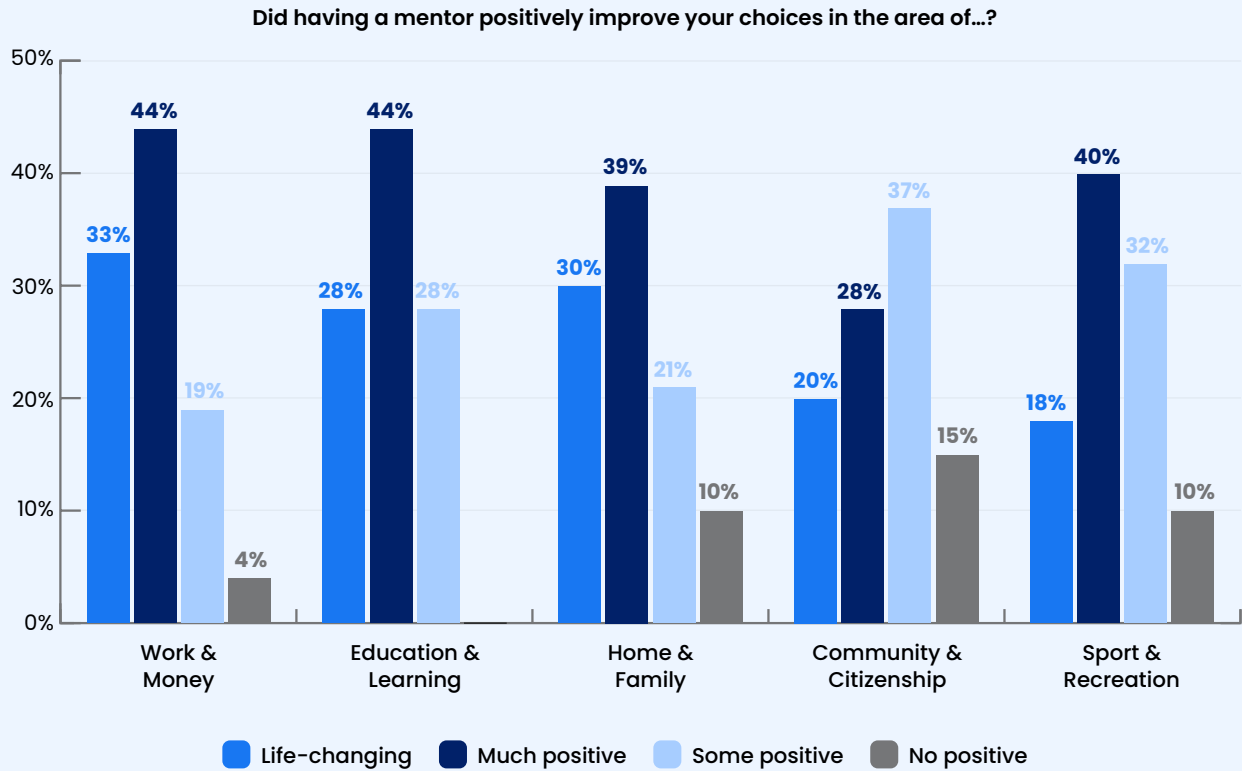
“I managed to start a business – storing mango fruit and add spices and serve with bread.”

“I moved out of my family home and went to start my own little life. My mentor helped me with my budget prior to moving out and eventually I did and that is such a proud moment because its the first step into independence.”

“I have started my grade 12 again so I can complete it because of my mentorship. I now know what I want to do with my future. My view on money has changed and I am being more deliberate to save.”

Positive Impact on Choices in Independence Domains

Within each independence domain mentees also rate the extent of impact. We're confident mentee ratings reflect the impact of the mentoring as young people experience it, and pleased to report once again exceptional impact ratings across all independence domains.



"I had given up pursuing the degree that I had started in Education before mentorship. The Dr helped me revisit this and helped me see how to approach this degree in a new way. This is something I want to complete and I now have a way of doing it."

"I used to be so behind with my school work but with just a few sessions with my mentor I was able to pick myself up and catch up. My mentor is also studying so we would talk about our studies and that helped."

"I now know the importance of my education so I will be looking into how to be able to complete school."

Healthy Practices Impact

100%

of mentees thought that having a mentor positively improved their practices related to well-being.

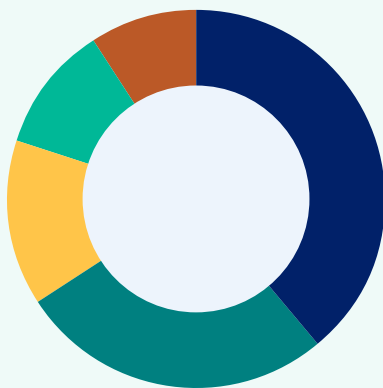


"I get angry quite a lot... Since being with SAYes I have not been in any physical fights."

"Communicating with others. I now intentionally speak to others. I set challenges to speak to a new person at least once a week. I also work on my anger- I walk away when angry and once calm I can assess the situation."

Area of Most Impact (Well-Being)

In which area do you think having a mentor most positively improved your well-being?



39% Emotional Health

27% Social Health

14% Identity Health

11% Cognitive Health

9% Physical Health

"When it comes to well being there are various options - and people to reach out to - I am focused on support I need. I can handle set backs and am fine to try again when mistakes are made."

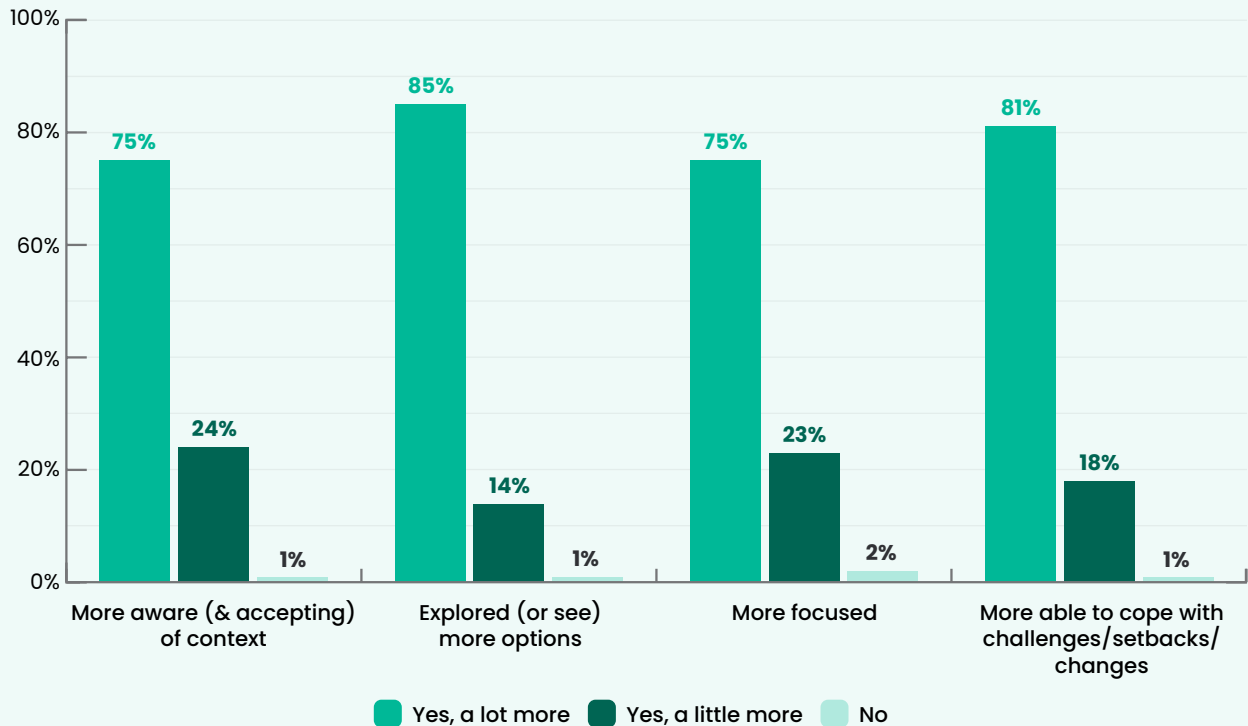
"I used to be impulsive and be angry when things didn't go according to plan. My problem used to be with flexibility and adjusting to change. I've now learnt to be flexible and see reachable moments and opportunities for different approaches. I'm learning to embrace change better."

Positive Impact on Aspects of Healthy Practices

Mentees are also asked how their healthy practices improved with respect to well-being, both in a ranking format and by noting examples of healthy practices across each well-being domain.

98% of mentees reported positive impact across all aspects of healthy practices.

When it comes to factors affecting well-being do you feel that you are now...



"I no longer go to cutting myself as the first answer – I have managed to look at myself more positively."

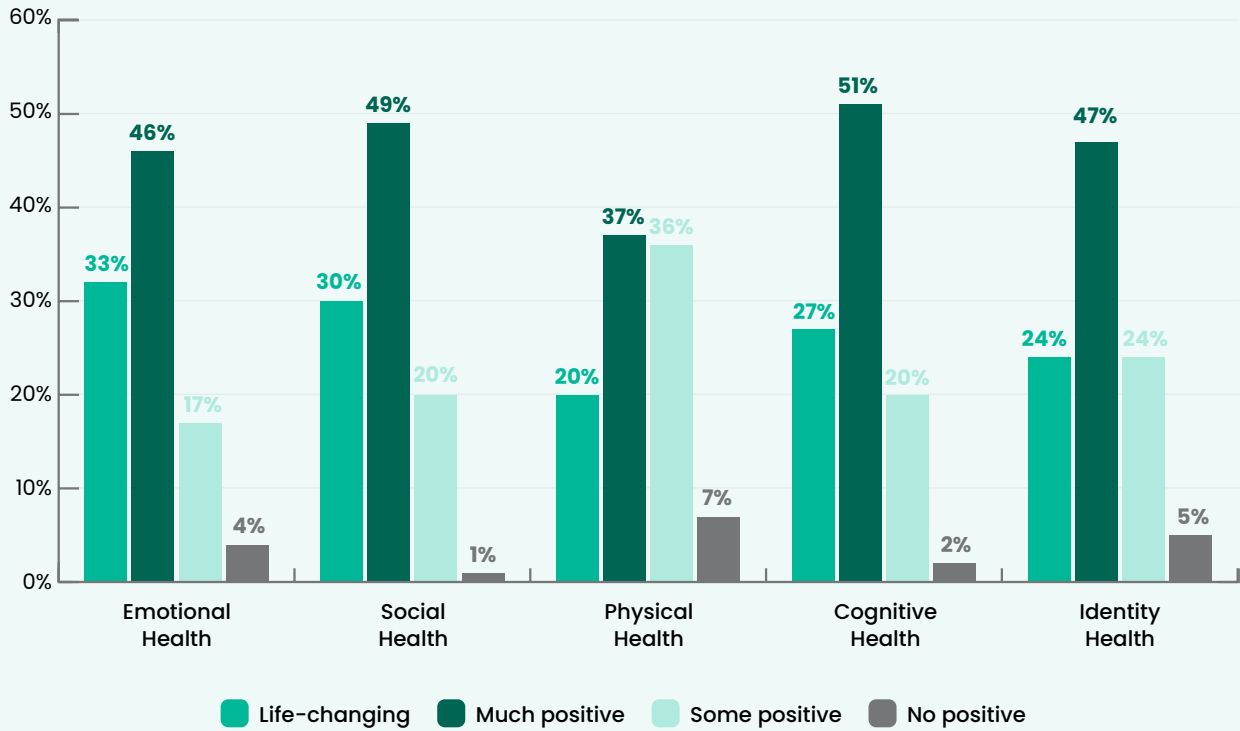
"Emotionally – before, I was closed off, distrusting, angry and non communicative. I began to journal. It made me more emotionally intelligent. when I get angry, I now go outside and calm myself down. My mother noticed this and commented on it the other day. "

Positive Impact on Practices in Well-being Domains

Within each well-being domain mentees also rate the extent of impact.

93% positive impact was achieved across all domains.

Did having a mentor positively improve your practices in the area of...?



"I have become aware of my emotions and have accepted them and learning how to deal with them. Especially towards certain family members. I have learnt to forgive my dad. My mum died this last year and I felt lost. I can now know there is a way for me in life. I can choose a better life."

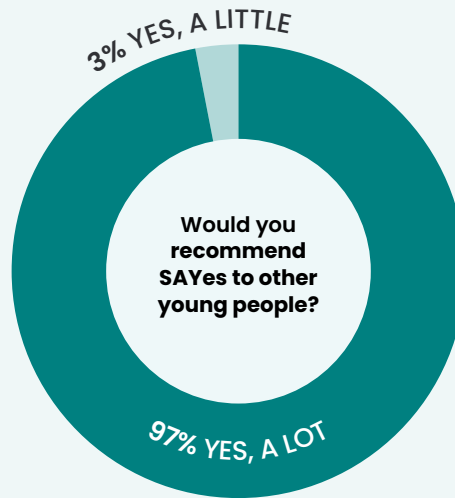
"I started interacting with my peers more and being more aware of the people around me. The impact has been big, I enjoy interacting with people now."

Impression of SAYes (SA)

100%

of mentees would recommend SAYes mentoring to other young people.

Recommend SAYes Mentoring

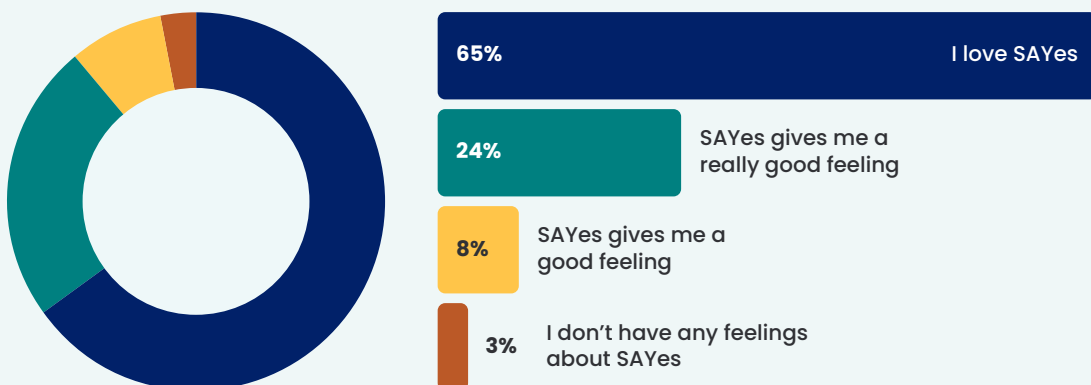


"The programme on its own is exceptional. A platform where I can speak to someone... Someone is listening; I could just be myself."

"SAYes is the best. Sometimes I didn't know what to do in my life and had really negative thoughts. Since being with SAYes I am having such positive thoughts and getting to know myself better."

Feelings About SAYes

Which score below best describes your feelings about SAYes?



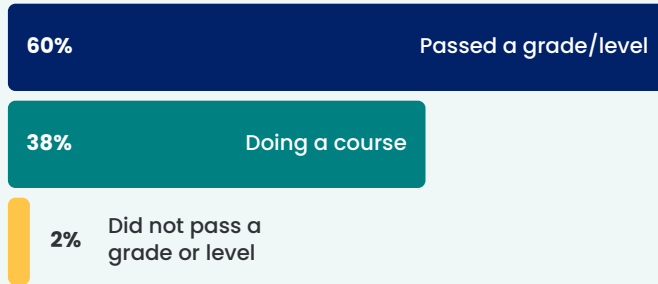
"The people are not like most people. They don't judge you. The staff give such a good energy. Normally we feel like everywhere we go we get dirty looks- SAYes never did that."

"It helped many people, including myself to reach my goals. I am doing things now that I used to procrastinate about. I am working harder now and not scared of hard work."

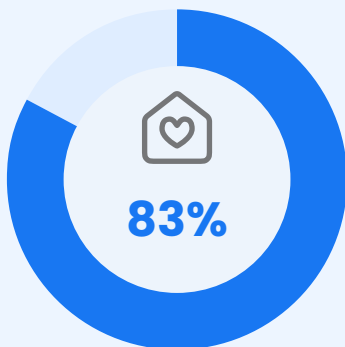
Community Indicators (SA)

While community indicators are not as strong at predicting long-term life outcomes as process variables (such as decision-making quality and consistent healthy practices), we include them here to provide a complete overview.

Education

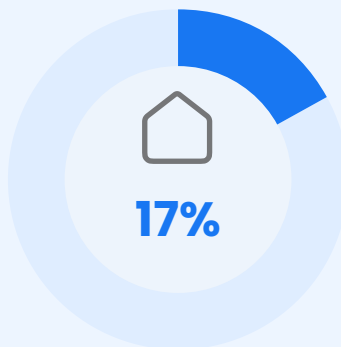


Accommodation



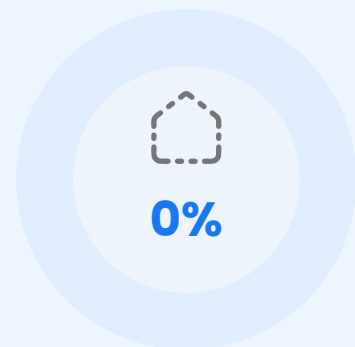
Stable

Living in a place and I know I can stay here for a while



Unstable

Living in a place but unsure how long I can stay here



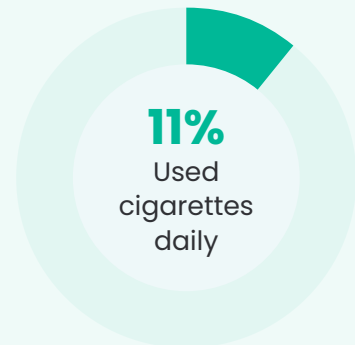
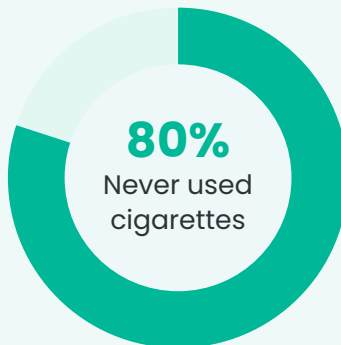
Homeless

None are currently homeless

Pregnancy



Cigarettes



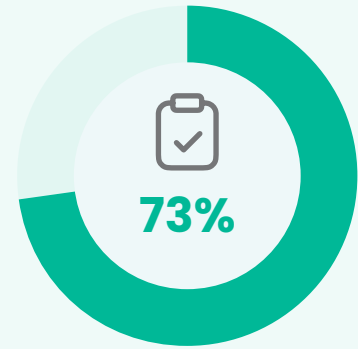
Work



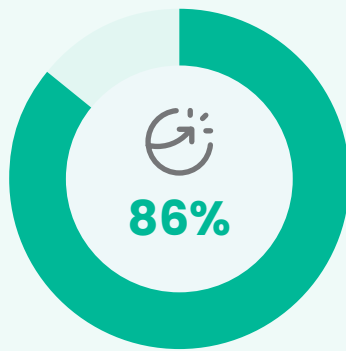
of all mentees were
employed
during the mentorship



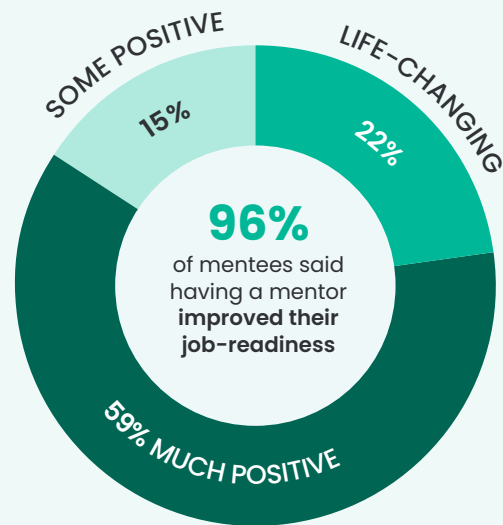
of all mentees gained
work experience
due to the mentorship



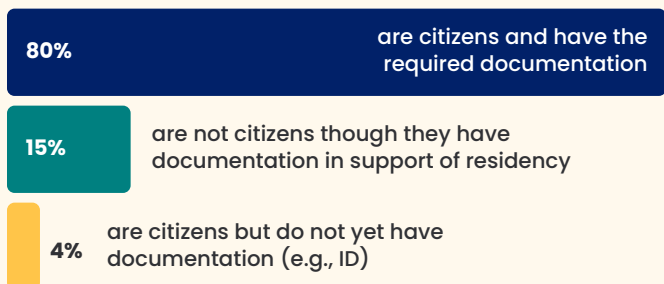
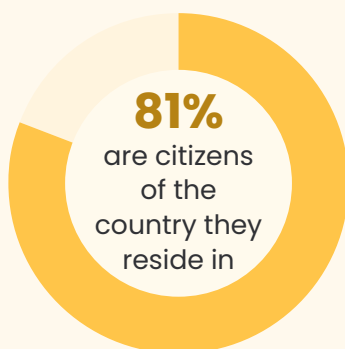
of mentees not in
education or employment
applied for a job
during the mentorship



of mentees reported gaining/improving
work-related transferable skills
due to the mentorship



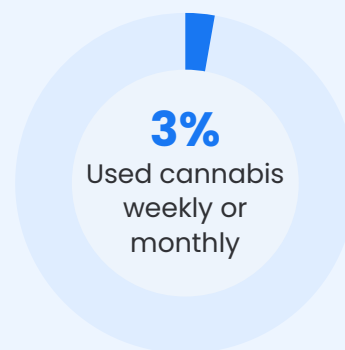
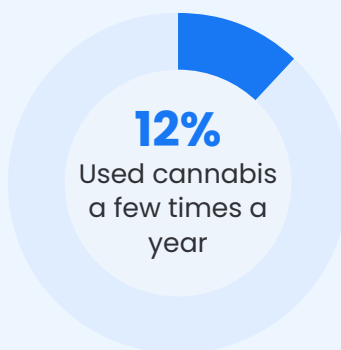
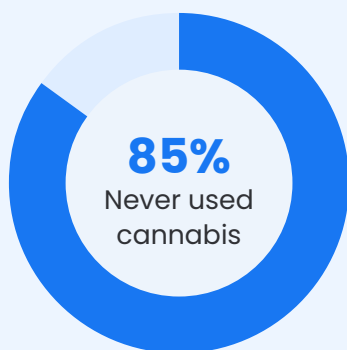
Citizenship



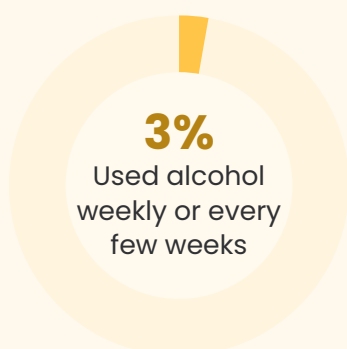
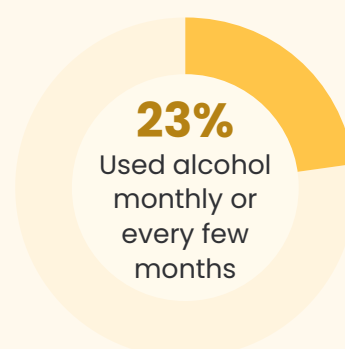
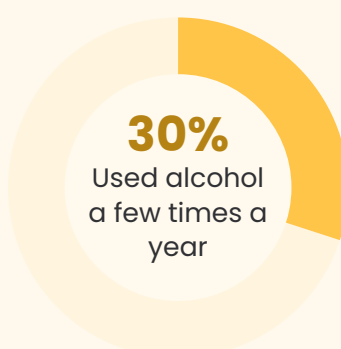
Law

Only **1** mentee was in conflict with the law

Cannabis



Alcohol



"I accomplished things I never thought I would. If I was alone, I would not have gone done the things I did to further my career. I also had my mentor accountability. Since I have had a mentor, speaking about my uncle and his criminal ways, my family started to take me more seriously. My family helped me find my own place so I don't have to deal with the police because of my uncle. I stood up for myself.

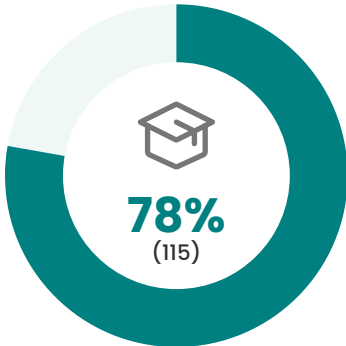
I now play rugby with friends and am back at boxing. I have been given an offer to join a boxing club! I have had many friends, during my mentorship I have been choosing friendships. This year I have left many friends and those I am friends with are there for me now. I don't let most of my emotions take over. I am taking over now. Letting them take over leads to me doing things I regret. Now I let things go, put a smile on and move on. I can take wiser decision and not take decision which I later regret. The tone I use and approach and talk to people has changed a lot. I use a friendly tone now."

United Kingdom Outcomes

148 matches.

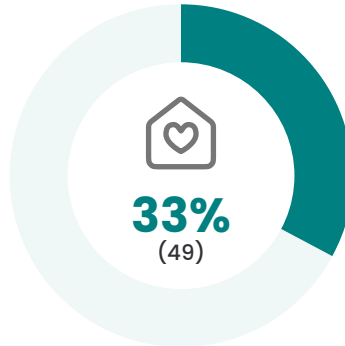
130 new matches.

622% increase from matches contracted in 2023.



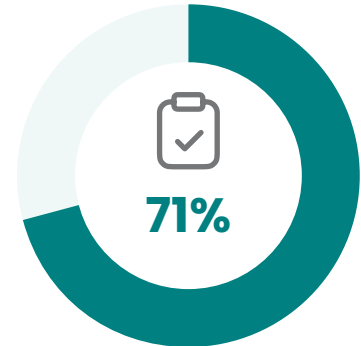
Graduated

Mentorship programmes span 9 months (39 weeks). 65% of scheduled weekly meetings must be completed in order to graduate.



Care-experienced

Support was provided to mentees with experience of the care system in the UK



Attendance Rate

weekly attendance rate (sessions >45 mins)

Our United Kingdom programmes included:

Custom programmes

BUSINESS PARTNER

Nike PowerUp

Programme for sports for development coaches in SA & UK

19 new matches

Core programmes

Disadvantaged young adults

Programme for disadvantaged young adults in the UK (24–32 years, 67% care-experienced)

12 matches

Young Londoners

Programme for disadvantaged youth (aged 14–24, 25% care-experienced, 56% with mental health concerns)

117 matches

“Support received has been different than that received in the past. It has been honest and tailored to my needs- not just textbook. Felt in control.”

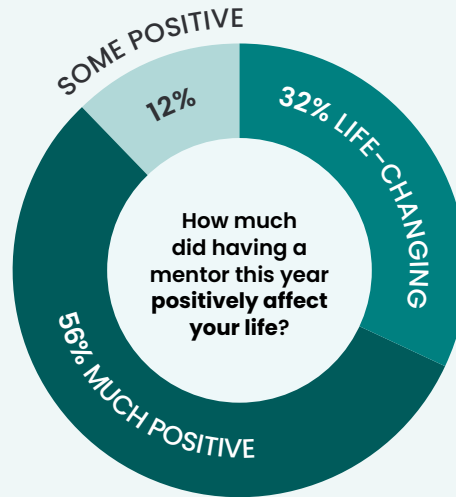
Impact on Life Outcomes (UK)

For this report we surveyed 102 of the 115 graduating mentees.

100%

said having a mentor positively impacted their life.

Positive Impact on Life



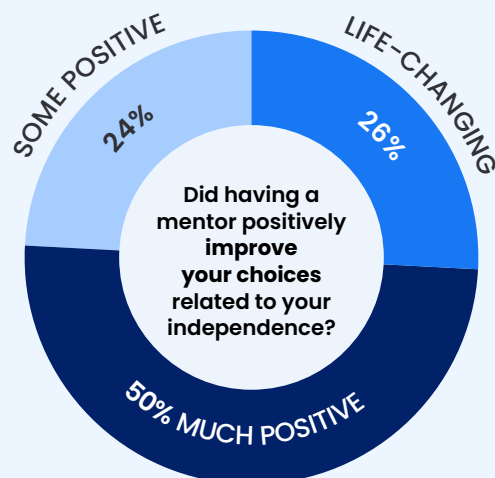
"Absolutely life changing. I barely let institutions around me, only if I trust them, and you guys have been really helpful. It's made me accept who I am, even the negative sides. Thank you so much for being there for me, I really appreciate all that you guys do."

"I was able to learn new techniques and methods. It was an experience that left me more open minded, with new perspectives as well. There is a positively noticeable difference in who I was and who I am now."

100%

of mentees thought that having a mentor positively improved their choices related to independence.

Choices Related to Independence

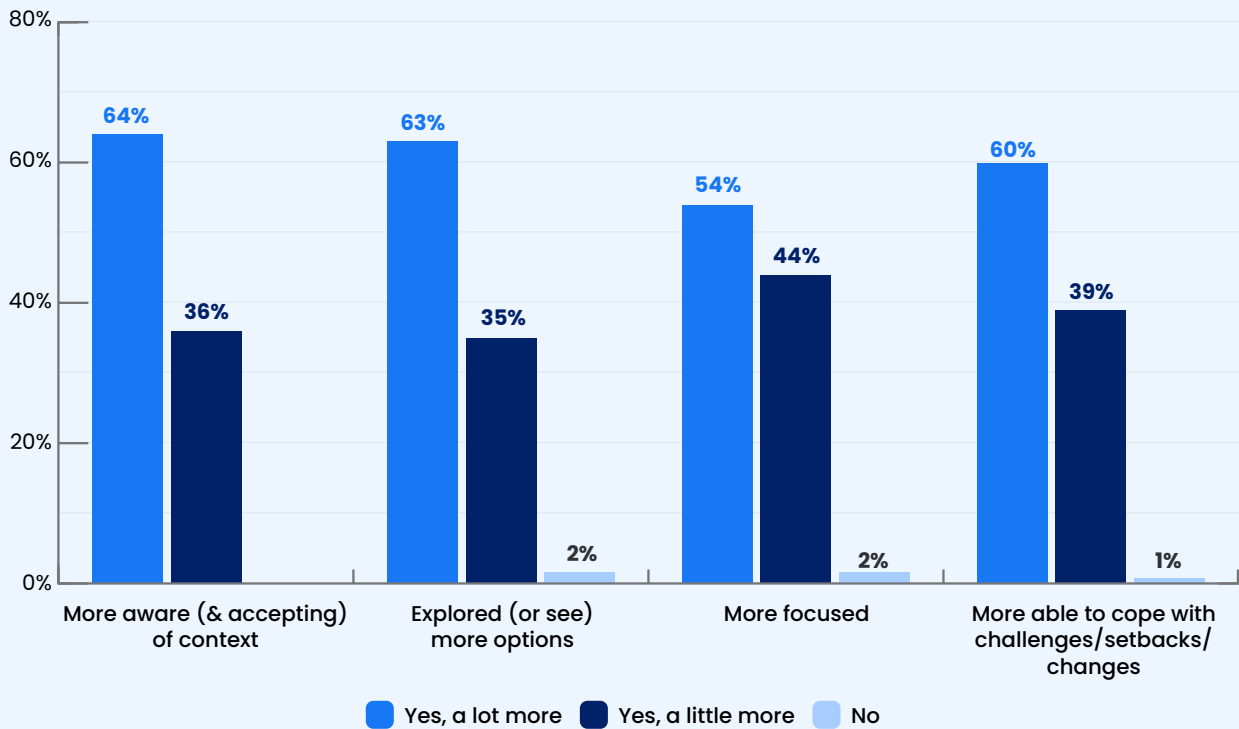


"Setting goals for myself, that's really helped me navigate through everything."

Positive Impact on Aspects of Decision-Making

Mentees are asked how their decision-making improved with respect to independence, both in a ranking format and by noting examples of improved decision-making across each independence domain. SAYes trains mentors to work on different stages of decision-making with their mentees – raising consciousness, exploring options, getting a focused plan, and then adjusting and revising to feedback/setbacks.

When it comes to factors affecting independence do you feel that you are now...



"I made some lifechanging decisions and if I didn't have this mentorship there wouldn't have been so much change - like work, or things I did in uni, new hobbies I picked up or went back to."

"Its held me accountable, given me an outlet, given me advice & helped me to organise my thoughts. Put things into steps so that they are actionable & achievable."

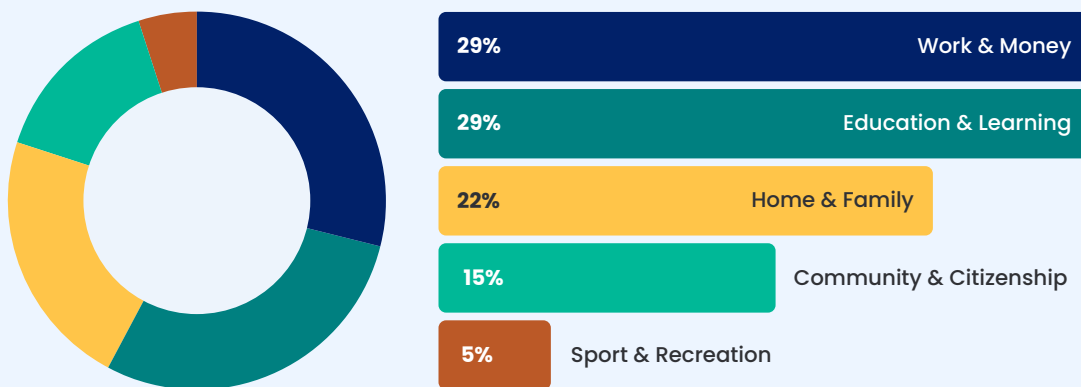
Area of Most Impact (Independence)

The sense of deliberate and focused decision-making (agency) in one's life is an unmistakable sign of the impact of good mentoring, and is emphasised in the SAYes support role (an accessible, responsive, and emotional available approach combined with a balance of demand and responsiveness and clear boundaries). Likewise, mentor role-modelling of honest authentic conversations, working constructively with feedback, and proactive problem solving of process over outcome are at the core of improved coping with setbacks and challenges. Improved contextual self-awareness (and self-acceptance) is heavily indexed in the SAYes approach to guidance, while expanding the base of options

explored in various life domains is essential to creative mentoring, and is the core of the SAYes approach to advocacy in strengthening motivation and a commitment to change (scaffolding and building affordances).

Mentees work on transition plans organised by domain. When asked at the end of the programme cycle about impact by domain, mentees thought the area where having a mentor most improved their independence was Education & Learning (29%) and Work & Money (29%), followed by Home & Family (22%). 15% of mentees selected Community & Citizenship, with the 5% selecting Sport & Recreation as the most impacted area in independence.

In which area do you think having a mentor most positively improved your independence?



“Because of working with my mentor, I had the confidence and self-agency to attend upskilling programs.”

“Applying for student finance and deciding which University I wanted to go to”

“Without this mentorship I would not have had a good enough relationship with my parents to keep me safe. I have also developed boundaries which have transformed my energy levels and interactions with others.”

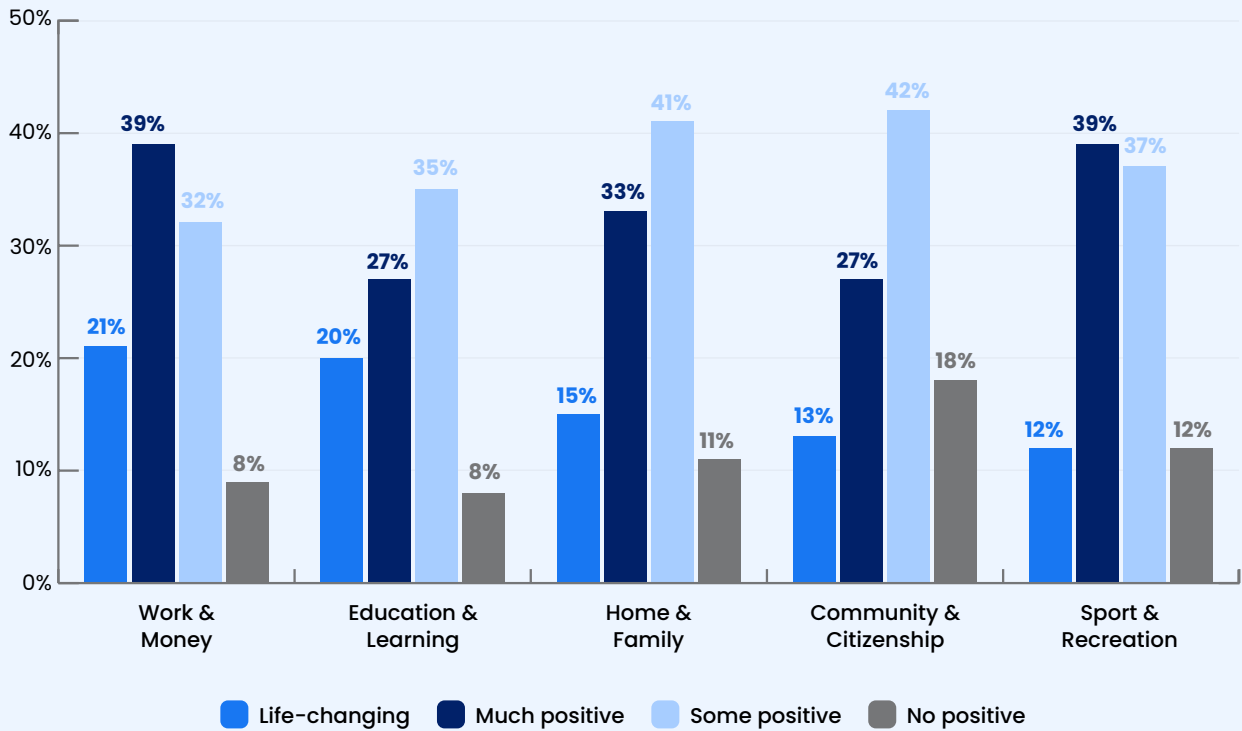
“Job hunting – not just googling it but going out to do so.”

“[Mentor] helped me so much in my return to work when I was on sick leave for several months.”

Positive Impact on Choices in Independence Domains

Within each independence domain mentees also rate the extent of impact. We're confident mentee ratings reflect the impact of the mentoring as young people experience it, and pleased to report once again exceptional impact ratings across all independence domains.

Did having a mentor positively improve your choices in the area of...?



“Talking about things before exams. Planning ahead gave me a better sense of clarity. That really helped.”

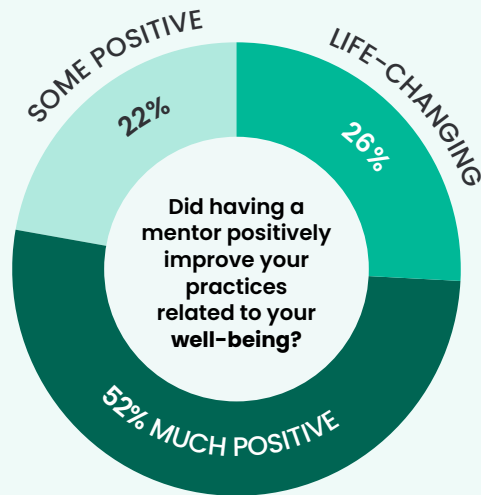
“I feel more comfortable about going to interviews and continuing with my job search. I’m not really afraid to speak up - I ask more questions now.”

“Prep and role play with mentor - Got promotion.”

Healthy Practices Impact

100%

of mentees thought that having a mentor positively improved their practices related to well-being.

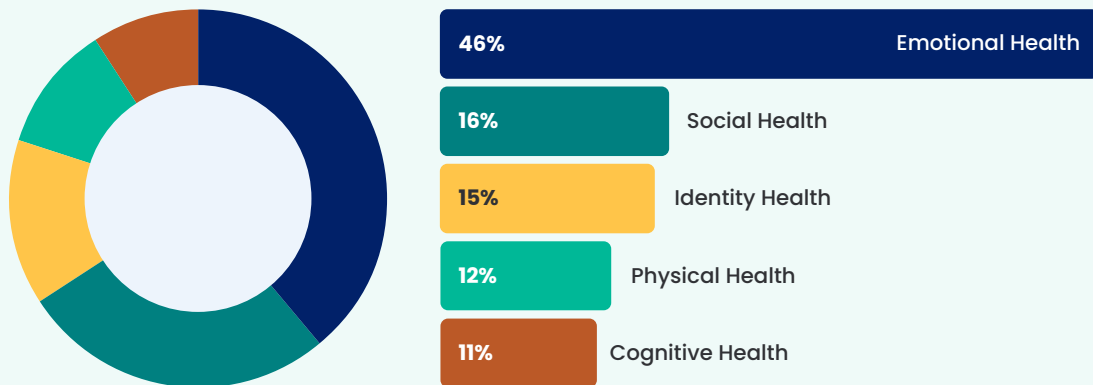


"I don't lash out at my family any more when I am confused and angry, I take a step back and I won't respond."

"I have learned to let myself take up space and have more confidence to try little things. At the beginning of the year I was too anxious to leave my house but through talking with my mentor I was able to take small steps to being more comfortable going out in public."

Area of Most Impact (Well-Being)

In which area do you think having a mentor most positively improved your well-being?



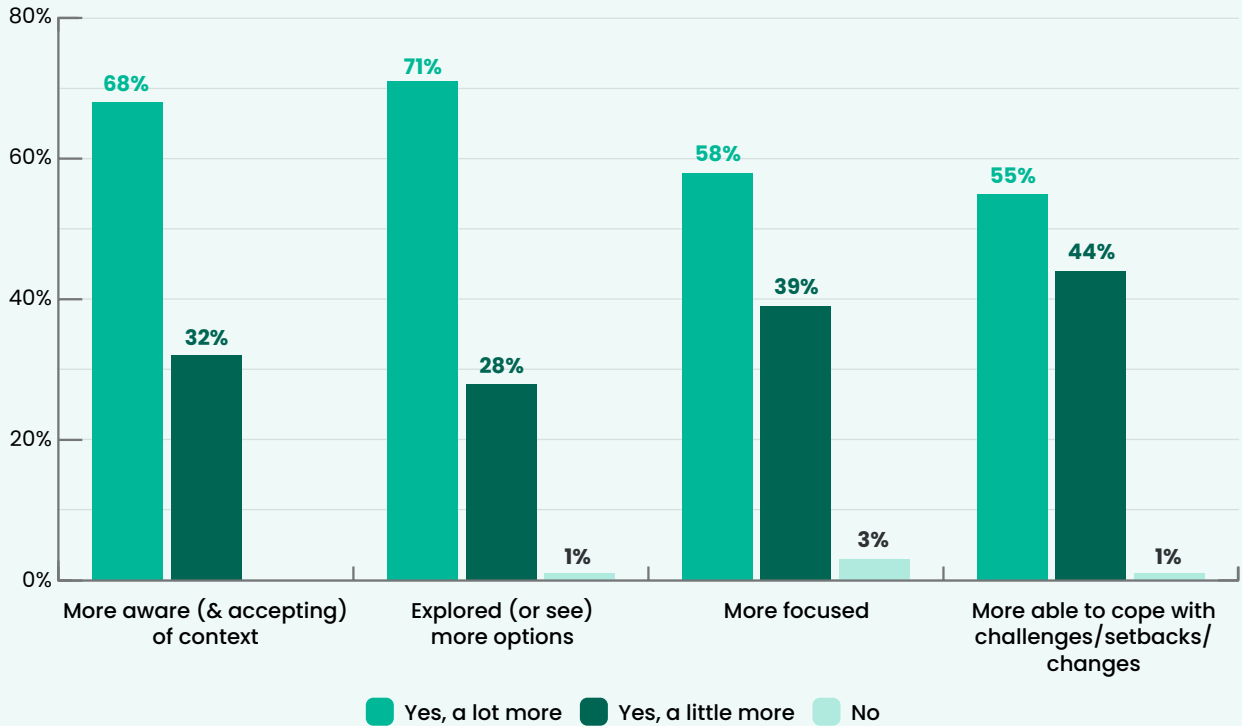
"I learned, when interacting with my family, that I shouldn't let my emotions control my reactions."

Positive Impact on Aspects of Healthy Practices

Mentees are also asked how their healthy practices improved with respect to well-being, both in a ranking format and by noting examples of healthy practices across each well-being domain.

88% of mentees reported positive impact across all aspects of healthy practices.

When it comes to factors affecting well-being do you feel that you are now...



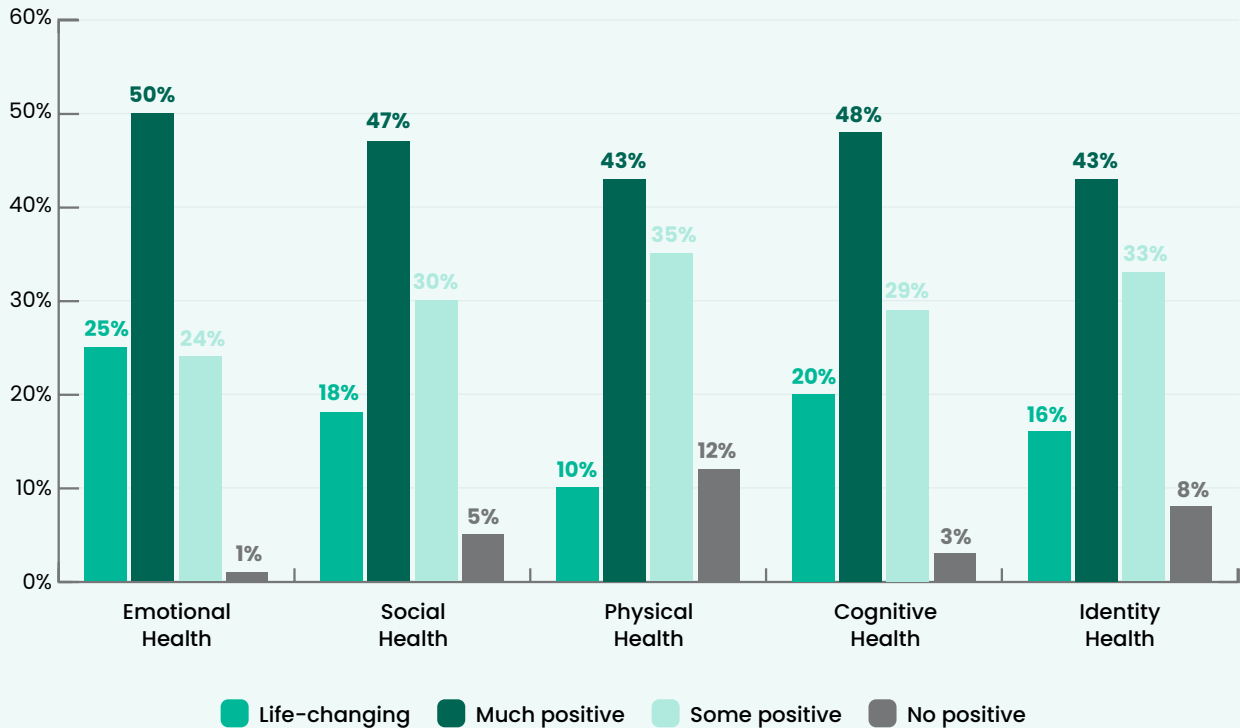
"People commenting on how much I have grown and how my awareness has grown."

Positive Impact on Practices in Well-being Domains

Within each Well-being domain mentees also rate the extent of impact.

94% positive impact was achieved across all domains.

Did having a mentor positively improve your practices in the area of...?



“My confidence increased some more which contributed to me joining my local youth club which has been great for me to improve my social skills and emotional regulation. Moreover, I was made to feel validated about my neurodivergence even before I was diagnosed in February (with Autism and ADHD), which was incredibly helpful in helping me even get the diagnosis.”

“Choosing to reduce or cut contact with people that were unhelpful for my social well-being. Engaging more with others that I feel more connected to and slowly building better, more positive relationships.”

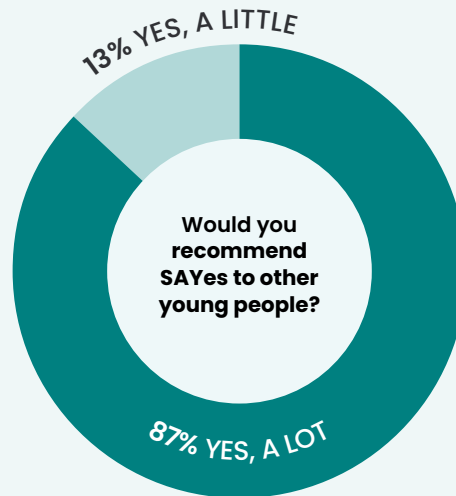
“Reduced phone time. Improved sleep routine. Managing stress. Timetabling for studying. Finding out what works for me, less stress. The revision time table reduced the stress I had and made me more organised.”

Impression of SAYes (UK)

100%

of mentees would recommend SAYes mentoring to other young people

Recommend SAYes Mentoring



"It's definitely an organization filled with people who helped me, and can help so many more."

"MH Support including breaks and Christmas unlike other programmes."

"Really friendly staff, everyone I've spoken to has been sweet and genuine. I also like how structured and organised it is."

"There are not many platforms like this to provide a structured mentor programme. Even the matching - having the right match can make the difference Structured programme helped."

"Everyone is very hands on and I feel able to reach out and they are quick to help."

"Very novel way to help people & having been in the NGO system I know the strengths & limitations of social workers & service users & the improvements that can be made & the high turnover rates so barriers to connection & SAYes is long term."

"Not much opportunities for people who are above 18 as programmes tend to stop then. The scope of mentors from around the world is also amazing."

"It was really reassuring to have someone in my limited support network even when there were weeks I didnt want to open up, I still saw the value of attending & having a dedicated space for me to share if I chose to"

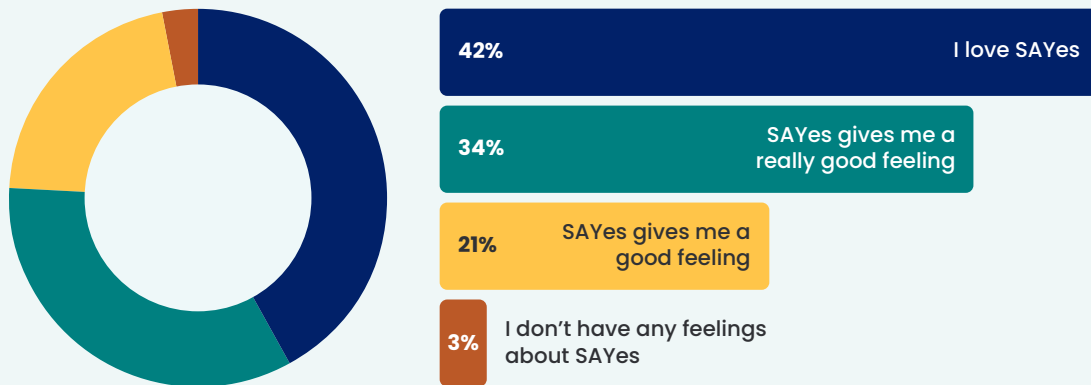
"There are very few programmes like SAYes that offer young people free access to mentorship. The personal support I received during the matching process and beyond was great, and I'm deeply grateful to the dedicated staff and volunteers who make this possible. It's also unique in the fact that it is international, so I gained some interesting perspectives from my mentor who lives in Canada while I'm in the UK."

"Friendly, feel like family that I don't have in the UK Always there to support - Always there for everything."

"seamless support - only want to help."

Feelings About SAYes

Which score below best describes your feelings about SAYes?



"They are very helpful in every aspect. from the minute I joined the first person I spoke to was [Mentee Liaison] and he was extremely perceptive and helpful. [Mentor] has been great through the whole journey. [Transition Specialist] was great in also helping me, making me laugh and giving clear guidance. It was also very nice talking to [SAYes Team]. Throughout the journey everyone I have interacted with has had a very real and honest perspective which I really appreciate."

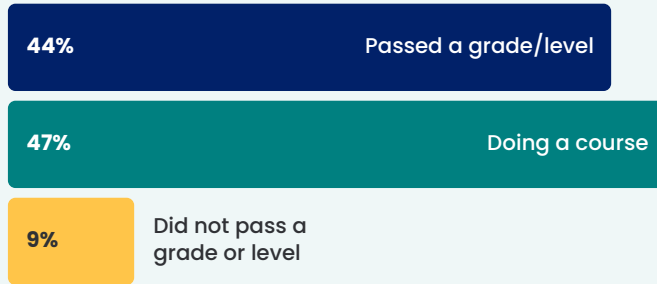
"Great organisation. Love what SAYes is doing Don't normally feel that mentoring is in young people's reach and SAYes have reached out to YP and enabled them to have a mentoring journey that they normally wouldn't be able to do. I love SAYes"

"I love sayes process and the community feel that makes you feel really cared for."

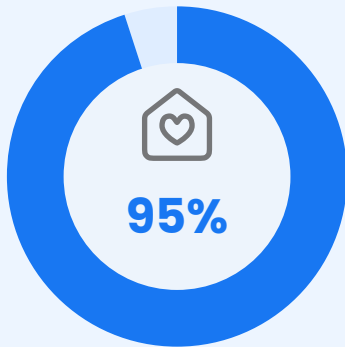
Community Indicators (UK)

While community indicators are not the best predictors of long-term improvements in life outcomes (i.e., compared to process variables such as the quality of decision-making and consistency of healthy practices), for completeness we include several such indicators.

Education

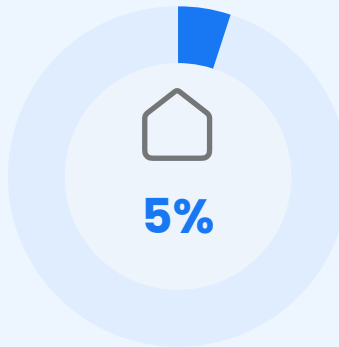


Accommodation



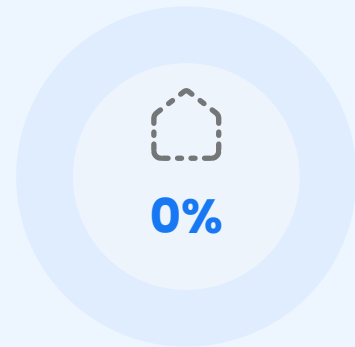
Stable

Living in a place and I know I can stay here for a while



Unstable

Living in a place but unsure how long I can stay here



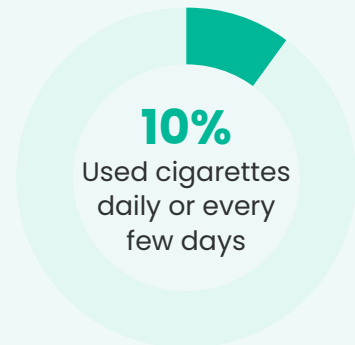
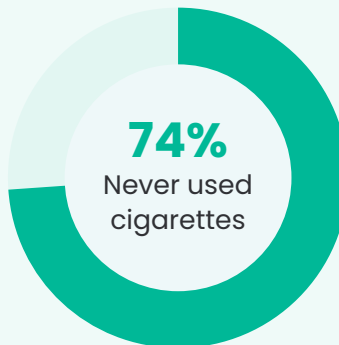
Homeless

None are currently homeless

Pregnancy



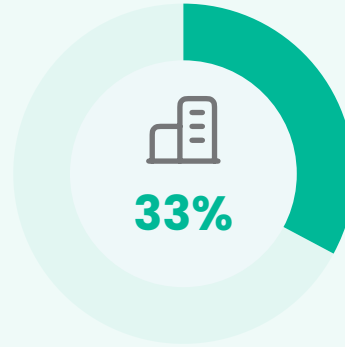
Cigarettes



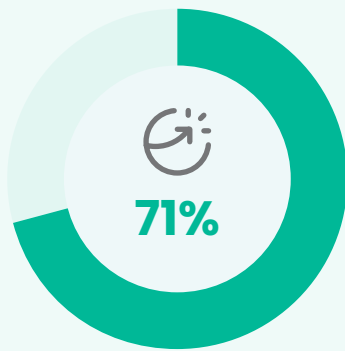
Work



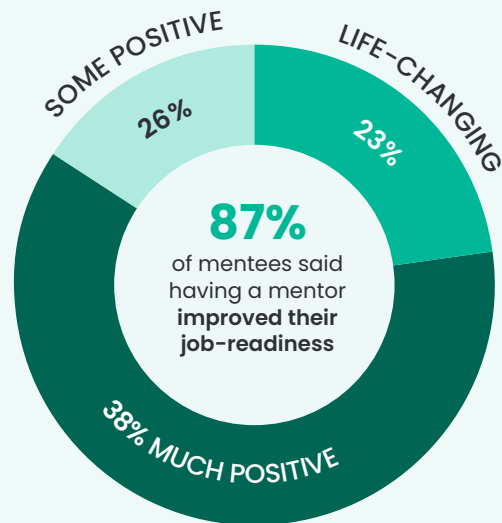
of all mentees were
employed
during the mentorship



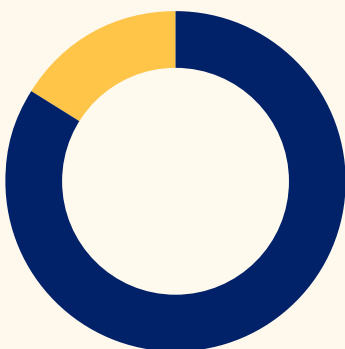
of all mentees gained
work experience
due to the mentorship



of mentees reported gaining/improving
work-related transferable skills
due to the mentorship



Citizenship



84%

of mentees were UK citizens

16%

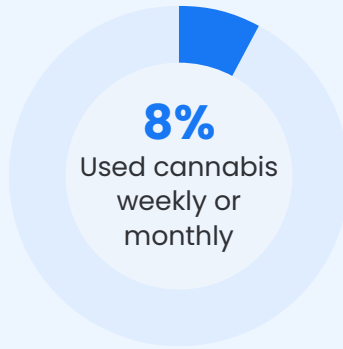
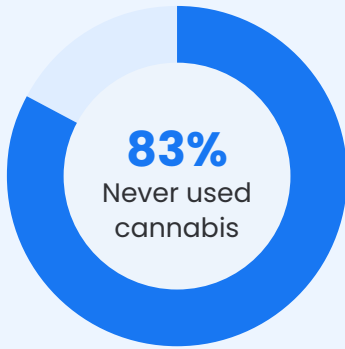
of mentees were not UK citizens though they had
documentation in support of current residency

Law

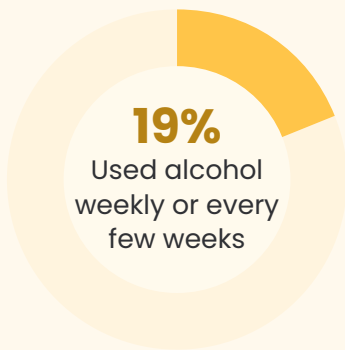
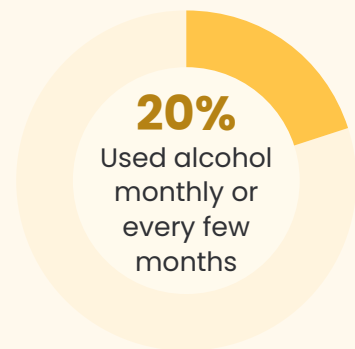
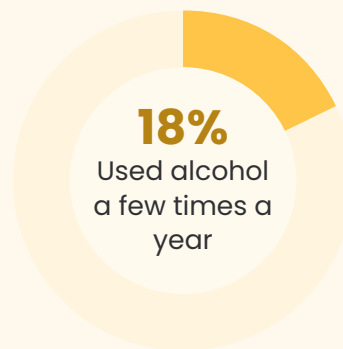
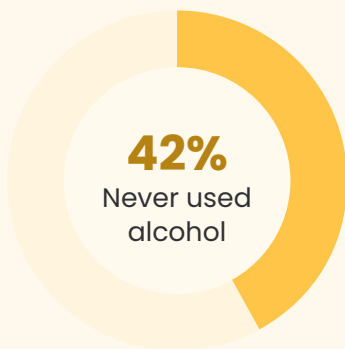
0

mentees were in conflict with the law during the mentorship

Cannabis



Alcohol



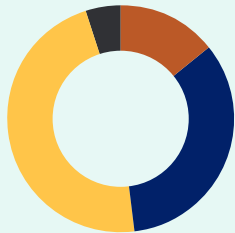
“Having a mentor made me feel truly seen and supported at a time when I was struggling with motivation and navigating a lot of changes in my life. It was about feeling safe to explore who I am and what matters to me. My mentor helped me reflect on my values, take small steps toward my goals, and reminded me that it’s okay to ask for support. That had a huge emotional impact on me.”

“It was amazing having that outside perspective from someone older than me who is able to tell me about different ways to navigate through the issues I was struggling with - a non judgemental friend who was always ready to listen and to talk - it was exactly what I needed to feel better about myself and about my future.”

Financial Review

United Kingdom

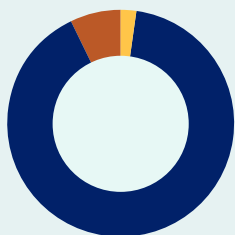
Income



Corporate (14%)	£50,026
Trusts and Foundations (34%)	£118,466
Government (47%)	£164,950
Other Donations (5%)	£16,611

Total £350,053

Expenditure



Cost of generating voluntary income (2%)	£8,096
Charitable activities (91%)	£316,589
Governance (7%)	£24,769

Total £349,454

Surplus for the year £599

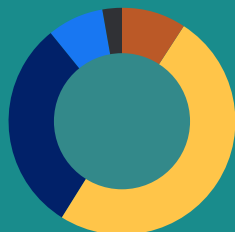
Income £350,053

Expenditure £349,454

Surplus £599

South Africa

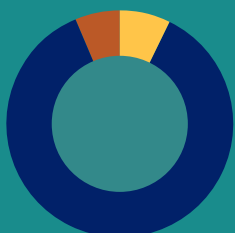
Income



Corporate (9%)	R89,266
Nonprofit Partnerships (50%)	R477,000
Trusts and Foundations (30%)	R290,133
Other Donations (3%)	R26,920
Interest (8%)	R76,727

Total **R960,046**

Expenditure



Cost of generating voluntary income (7%)	R191,783
Charitable activities (87%)	R2,268,843
Governance (6%)	R162,303

Total **R2,622,929**

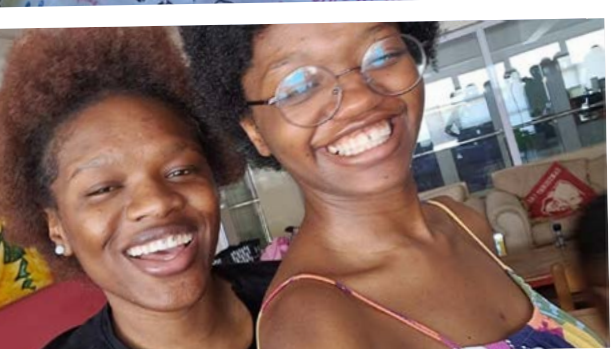
Deficit for the year **-R1,662,883***

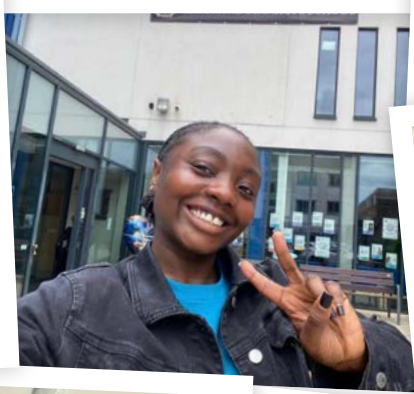
Income **R960,046**

Expenditure **R2,622,929**

Deficit **-R1,662,883***

* In 2023, we reported a R1.23 million surplus, largely reflecting restricted grant income received late in the year to fund 2024 programme delivery. As that income was recognised in 2023, the related programme expenditure appears in 2024, resulting in an operating deficit of R1.66 million for the year. The Trust closed 2024 with R2.04 million in restricted funds to support ongoing commitments.





The SAYes Mentoring Trust

Registered in South Africa

Registration no. IT 2774/2010

NPO no. 088-299-NPO

PBO no. 930 035 691, Section 18A

Level One (135% B-BBEE procurement recognition)

SAYes Mentoring Ltd.

Registered in England and Wales

Charity no. 1127701

Company no. 6693065

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