

ONLINE WORKSHOP - EUROPEAN CENTER FOR EVIDENCE-BASED MENTORING

How to keep mentoring activities going

On the 20th of March 2020, an online workshop took place for members of the European Center. This workshop was called for unexpectedly, due to the suddenly changing situation. Main topic of the conversation and exchange was: How to keep mentoring going in Corona-times.

The workshop attracted much attention, there were some 18 people participating. After a short exchange of the current status in different countries, mentoring professionals shared their upcoming initiatives and ideas.

Focus of the conversation was: what opportunities and needs do we see and where can we create chances to reach mentors and mentees. Overall impression of the workshop is that mentoring programmes are active to shift activities online and to offer all the possible support to mentors, mentees and mentoring crew to keep mentoring going.

The workshop delivered some recommendations and ideas.

Establish the current situation of mentors and mentees:

- Talk to families and mentees to see if they have access to the media and internet
- Show pro-active attitude and ask questions
- Check in with your mentors if they have time to continue their relationships (special conditions at work etc)
- Make a survey to map the situation of your mentees. It can be done through Facebook or other platforms. Try to map mentee's challenges and questions.
- How is the mental state of your beneficiaries? Is mental support needed, before mentoring can start?
- An opportunity: some mentors have even more time than before, so they can spend more time with their mentees

How to keep your community of mentors on board:

- Give your mentors support in how to keep contact (whatsapp, zoom, etc)
- Emphasise the importance of keeping connectivity
- Create a Google drive for tools and a whatsapp group to exchange
- Organize online meeting to discuss topics

How to keep mentoring going?

- Offer ideas for online games as an activity between mentor and mentee
- Create an online tool box. Example: a set of questions that they can ask of their mentees, to be able to talk about the current situation. Even if the questions seem basic, they help to see how mentees deal with the lock down.
- An online course for mentors
- Encourage your mentors to stay pro-active to their mentees
- Online supervision for peer mentors and studentmentors. It works.
- Asking mentors to prepare videos about themselves and what they are doing (topic for conversations with their mentees)
- Experiment with online matching. It works! Make sure you prepare both the mentor and mentee for this way of connecting to each other. Observation: people listen even better to each other, due to the fact that it is online.
- Offer inspirational sessions, by your mentors, for groups of students / mentees
- In case a mentee has no access to internet and devices: try to reach through a social worker (foster care? Refugees center?) if possible.