

## **BABY STEPS PARENTING MENTOR**

### **ROLE DESCRIPTION**

#### **The Baby Steps Project**

- Baby Steps is an innovative project (anticipated to last up until March 2027) seeking to improve the support available to care experienced parents.

Funded through the Herefordshire Community Foundation, the project is led by a Steering Group drawn from Herefordshire Council, the Community Foundation and other voluntary and statutory sector partners. This post will be hosted by The CLD Trust ([www.thecltrust.org](http://www.thecltrust.org)).

- The Baby Steps Project is funded currently until the end of March 2027.

The Baby Steps Project is committed to promoting the best interests of children and vulnerable adults. This includes taking steps to safeguard them when required. All our work is informed by this commitment.

#### **Role Overview**

The Parenting Mentor role is designed to enhance the parenting experience for care experienced parents and support available to them.

We know that “care leavers who become parents are among the most disadvantaged in our society” (Parson, S, Schoon, I and Fitzsimons, E. [2022]). They often lack reliable family networks, and the emotional and practical support afforded to other young parents.

They often feel judged by those around them and fear Local Authority intervention in their children’s lives.

The Parent Mentoring Role aims to support care experienced parents to become the best parents they can be. The intended outcomes for the project include improvements in the parents’ emotional health, access to employment, education and training, childcare and housing.

## **Your Role (Job Description)**

To help us achieve this ambitious vision, you will be responsible for:

- Developing rapport with care experienced parents who may find it hard to have trust in adults.
- Helping care experienced parents to access and engage with existing sources of support available to them, including support from midwives, health visitors and perinatal services.
- Working closely alongside Herefordshire Council's Personal Advisors, allocated to provide support to care leavers.
- Helping care experienced parents to develop a reliable network of support around them. This network may include professionals, family and friends and supportive people from the parent's time in care, including, for example, former foster carers.
- Providing practical, positive support and advice regarding parenting.
- Providing informed emotional and mental health support, facilitating access to specialist mental services if needed.
- Advocating on behalf of care experienced young people with other services, such as housing, social care, employers and training providers.
- Supporting parents to access additional sources of financial support available to care leavers, such as bursaries and specific grants.
- Providing clear and timely written records in relation to your work, using The CLD Trust's client record management system to store this information securely and then producing summary reports as requested to review and evaluate your work.
- Supporting the development of innovative and impactful practice that can be translated into changes in the support provided to care experienced parents beyond the life of this project.
- Help understand worries/risks that professional around the young person may have and support the young person to co-produce a plan which helps to reduce those worries/risks.
- Escalating safeguarding concerns and risks to statutory services when required.
- Attending and supporting profile-raising events that the Baby Steps programme delivers as part of its mission.
- Developing promotional materials to explain and raise the profile of the role, including online materials.

**To fulfil this role, you will have:**

- Knowledge and empathy in relation to the additional challenges facing care experienced parents.
- Experience of working directly with children or young people.
- An understanding of attachment theory and trauma informed practice.
- A working knowledge of the key stages of child development.
- An understanding of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- A working knowledge of parenting and parenting support.
- An understanding of the impact of trauma upon emotional and physical health.
- Experience of partnership work.
- Experience of working as part of a team.
- Experience of working one-to-one with children, young people or adults and an understanding of how to keep safe when lone working.
- A willingness to work in the community, including in parents' homes.
- The ability and willingness to work in an inclusive and non-discriminatory way in relation to, for example, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality, religion, and neurodiversity.
- The ability to work to an agreed plan, providing a responsive and reliable service that meets agreed goals.
- A willingness to speak up for care experienced young people when needed. Although Baby Steps is not primarily an advocacy service, you will need to be able to speak up for some of the parents and children you work with when required.
- A working knowledge of computers, including Microsoft Word, Excel and able to input reports and data to provide evidence of your work.
- A willingness to work creatively with care experienced parents who may require patience, tenacity and flexibility if you are to make progress.
- A willingness to schedule and plan appointments with young people, including sending and responding to emails and messages in a timely way, acting on your initiative when required.
- The ability to seek out support and advice if new information or risks come to light that require careful assessment and review by a manager.
- The ability to provide emotionally supportive relationships to young people while still maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.
- A commitment to your own ongoing professional development.
- A willingness to work flexibly in terms of the location and the time of work. We will not be unreasonable in our expectations, and we will take your own caring responsibilities into account carefully, but a willingness to work into the evening and in various locations is required for this role.
- A commitment to supporting the external evaluation of the Baby Steps Project by Warwick University. This may include providing data and case studies to support their work, as well taking part in research-based interviews.
- A willingness to attend Baby Steps Steering Group Meetings to provide updates on the progress of the project.

**In return for your commitment, you can expect:**

- The chance to shape and influence an innovative and high-profile project for a group who warrant additional support.
- Regular supervision and support from the Baby Steps Project Manager, provided in a structured way on a monthly basis but also supplemented by ad hoc support and advice as needed.
- A commitment to supporting your learning and development.
- Although working independently, the chance to work in a supportive environment alongside colleagues with similar areas of interest.
- The chance to work closely with a reputable university to develop research findings which may have wide-ranging implications.