

ADVOCACY – INTERVENTION – MENTORING

A.I.M. PROPOSAL



ELEVATED MINDS CIC



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Introduction

A.I.M. Advocacy – Intervention – Mentoring.

A.I.M. is a 12-month programme that will provide services for:

- parents and families of victims of serious crime
- parents and families of perpetrators of serious crime

Primarily, this programme will be accessible to families living in Birmingham and London.

Rationale

When asked, one of the main concerns raised by parents of victims of serious crime was their lack of knowledge and understanding of how the Criminal Justice System operates.

Parents voiced that they were not familiar with the overall process and found it challenging to navigate in their bereaved or traumatised state. Parents added that it was often assumed that they were able to understand what to do following the murder of their child. Yet, they were emotionally unable to take anything in, let alone know the procedures and timings associated with the process.

Example

In 2017, Rachel's son Kyron was murdered. Rachel's experience with the charity *Victim Support* was a good one. However, when dealing with the authorities and other agencies, she noticed a serious lack of explanation regarding the process. For instance, nobody explained to her what was happening, why it was happening and what she needed to do next.

Other bereaved parents have concurred with Rachel's observations.

Rachel felt that the authorities considered Kyron's death as just another statistic of knife crime. She commented that the necessary personal and empathetic touch was absent from all involved. It was clear to Rachel that presumptions were made about Kyron, that he must have been involved in gang-related activities and drugs.

The attitude communicated to Rachel was: "What did Kyron do to cause his own death?" Questions put to Rachel were along the lines of, "when did you realise that Kyron was going down the wrong path?" The comments and attitudes from the authorities involved dehumanised the whole process for Rachel, even though she understood that this was the narrative from which they worked. She found the processes disabling and overwhelming as a result. Added to that, Rachel had to work through the mammoth amount of information she received in order to comprehend it.

At Elevated Minds, we believe that we can bring positive change as we work with families, communities and agencies to shift the mindset that victims of crime are just a statistic.



Established in April 2019, **Elevated Minds CIC** is a community interest company based in Southwark, London.

The company aims to tackle the disproportionate levels of BAME children and young people who are excluded from mainstream education and risk exclusion from society. We facilitate and deliver early-intervention services, delivering this work within schools and educational provisions across London and Birmingham where exclusion is greatest.

Our service focuses on personal development embedded with proven coaching methods and neuro-linguistic programming techniques. We adopt a holistic approach, working with parents and teachers who support these young people, as well as external agencies and organisations.

Our team consists of knowledgeable and skilled professionals, including educationalists, behaviour specialists, mentors and life coaches, some of whom were born in London and in Birmingham and now live and work in both cities. This proposal is a result of the first-hand experience of an **Elevated Minds'** team member whose son was murdered in October 2017 by an assailant known to him.

Additionally, the CEO was instrumental in supporting bereaved parents and families in her previous roles as the head of a pupil referral unit and an alternative provision. In four years, five of her students lost their lives through violent crime and gang crime.

This proposal will encompass collaborative working relationships with educational settings, youth offending teams, therapists and social services. **Elevated Minds** will focus on working specifically with these services as they are often at the core of support available for young people.



Elevated Minds already has a number of enterprises, all of which have seen sustained levels of success. Each of the programmes includes basic coaching skills and behaviour management training, directly with young people or with those who work with and support young people.

Our services include:

- ***Cycles of Change Rewards Management programme***

We work closely with Safer Schools Officers and the MET Police in empowering young people to make positive choices regarding future outcomes, thus reducing the potential for their involvement in criminal activity.

- ***Having Challenging Conversations programme***

This accredited programme is delivered to groups of parents (or one-to-one sessions) to help develop parents' confidence in communicating with their children and the professionals who work with their children.

- ***The IDENTITY Project, The Leadership Project and The Entrepreneurship Project***

These early-intervention projects are accredited by NCFE. They are designed to develop self-awareness, emotional intelligence, confidence, self-esteem, leadership and enterprise skills in young people aged 9 to 16 years.

- ***Restorative Approaches to Stop and Search: Breaking Barriers and Building Bridges***

Elevated Minds aim to develop positive relationships between the police and young people, in particular black males, by promoting understanding and learning on the part of the young person and the police officer who stopped and searched them through Restorative meetings.

- ***One-to-One Coaching***

Our coaching focuses on supporting, encouraging and intrinsically motivating people within marginalised communities.

- ***Face-to-Face Training***

This is delivered via webinars or face-to-face and covers subjects such as Diversity and Inclusion, Effective Leadership, Mental Health and Wellbeing and Mental Health First Aid for Adults.



There are many formal processes in place, as well as a code of practice, for victims of crime. However, as a bereaved parent, relative or friend of a victim, it is enormously challenging to absorb these processes mentally and to understand and adhere to the requirements of the different agencies/services.

We are proposing to work alongside departments within the Criminal Justice System to provide a bespoke service, including advocacy, intervention and mentoring to families across London who have suffered bereavement and trauma associated with violent crime. While our service is primarily aimed at those who have experienced the loss of a loved one due to crime, it is also for victims and their families where death is not the outcome.

Our early-intervention work targets vulnerable young people from families who are victims or perpetrators of violent crime. These youngsters can often end up making choices that bring conflict and severe consequences to their own lives and that of their family members. We recognise that their choices can stem from grief, revenge or fear. For example, they might feel scared about becoming a victim themselves, or they might be confused by the whole experience. The role of the **Elevated Minds** team is to take a lead role in providing a Team Around the Family (TAF), offering vital guidance and support services to each family.

Many vulnerable young people often have deep-rooted feelings of inferiority and inadequacy, adding to their sense of low self-worth. This leads to negative interactions with peers and adults around them, especially those in roles of authority. Parents and siblings of these vulnerable young people often become adversely affected by their thoughts and actions. The trauma of experiencing a serious incident resulting in death can be extremely disabling for the parent and families, especially if the young person is a victim of knife crime.

We cannot immediately find any words of comfort for someone who has suffered an incredible amount of grief from the loss of a loved one. However, our service offers a team that can empathise, provide positive role models and enable each family member to trust themselves so that they can live again.

We can provide:

- A highly-trained team with good knowledge and understanding of the processes within the Criminal Justice System. This includes all aspects of the code of practice for victims of crime.
- An operational lead with lived experience to guide and provide insight into the immediate and long-term needs of bereaved parents and families.
- An advocacy service to support families by helping them access essential services such as undertakers, legal representatives, police liaison, therapists and educational support.

- Vital contact and communication post-incident, post-sentencing, etc.
- Much-needed empathy, care and respect to individuals who have lost a loved one to violent crime; we will not consider anyone's death as just a statistic.
- One-to-one and small group grief and trauma counselling sessions.
- A mentoring service with positive role models who will offer guidance and support for younger siblings. Our emotional intelligence programmes were written, accredited and explicitly aimed at vulnerable young people, their parents and those who have suffered the repercussions of violent crime (either as a victim or a perpetrator).
- Restorative Justice conferences between families of victims and families of perpetrators.



Our service has the following aims:

- To promote knowledge and understanding of the Criminal Justice System.
- To ensure that individuals and families receive the support that they need at a time when they need it.
- To provide a bespoke service to the families of victims and the families of perpetrators of serious crime.
- To create new opportunities for families to rebuild and move forwards with their lives, both emotionally and mentally.
- To ensure that family members recognise the need to access therapeutic interventions through our coaching and mentoring support.
- To help prevent young people being drawn into a life of crime and violence through a focus on building and developing the self-awareness, emotional intelligence, self-confidence and self-esteem of the younger siblings of victims and perpetrators of serious crime through our early-intervention programmes.



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COSTS OF VIOLENT CRIME

The following information is taken from *The Home Office Research Report 99, Second edition, July 2018*¹.

“Violent crimes make up the largest proportion of the total costs of individual crime – almost three quarters – but only one third of the number of crimes. This is mainly due to the higher physical and emotional costs to the victims of violent offences.”

The report identifies homicide as having the highest cost to society.

Example: Costs to society for one homicidal crime

Physical and emotional harm = £2,082,430

Lost output = £254,710

Health services = £1,110

Victim services = £5,480

Police costs = £11,960

Other CJS costs = £800,980

Total = £3,217,740

Rape is second on the list with a total cost of £39,360.

Third is theft of a commercial vehicle at the cost of £35,180 (no cost for victim services).

Fourth: commercial burglary at the cost of £15,460 (no cost for victim services).

Fifth: violence with injury at the cost of £14,050 (no cost for victim services).

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732110/the-economic-and-social-costs-of-crime-horr99.pdf

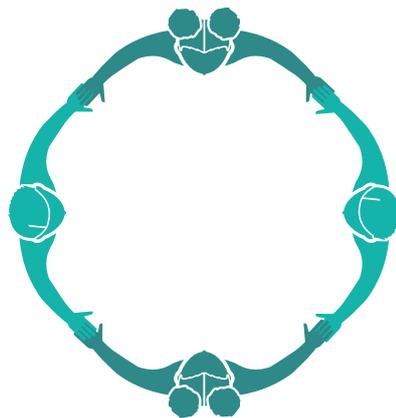
Elevated Minds are proposing a service that will reduce these costs by focusing on empowering individuals through our early-intervention programmes. We will also guide individuals to use their voices when necessary so that they can be heard.

Additionally, our advocacy and intervention services will benefit the families of victims and perpetrators of violent crime. Confidence will improve as family members receive one-to-one mentoring and coaching as well as the structured support offered to parents and siblings of victims and perpetrators. This support will help them all to learn how to 'live' again within their communities. Our emotional intelligence programme will develop their self-belief, resilience and self-knowledge as they recognise their strengths and work on areas of development.

Impact of Our Support

Our intervention programmes have already had a positive impact on the lives of young people, resulting in:

- Significantly improved relationships
- Improved confidence
- Improved communication
- Taking responsibility
- Taking an alternative pathway
- Seeking support without the fear of reprimand
- Spending quality time with family members



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