

Mentorship, Counselling skills (psychosocial support skills) for children



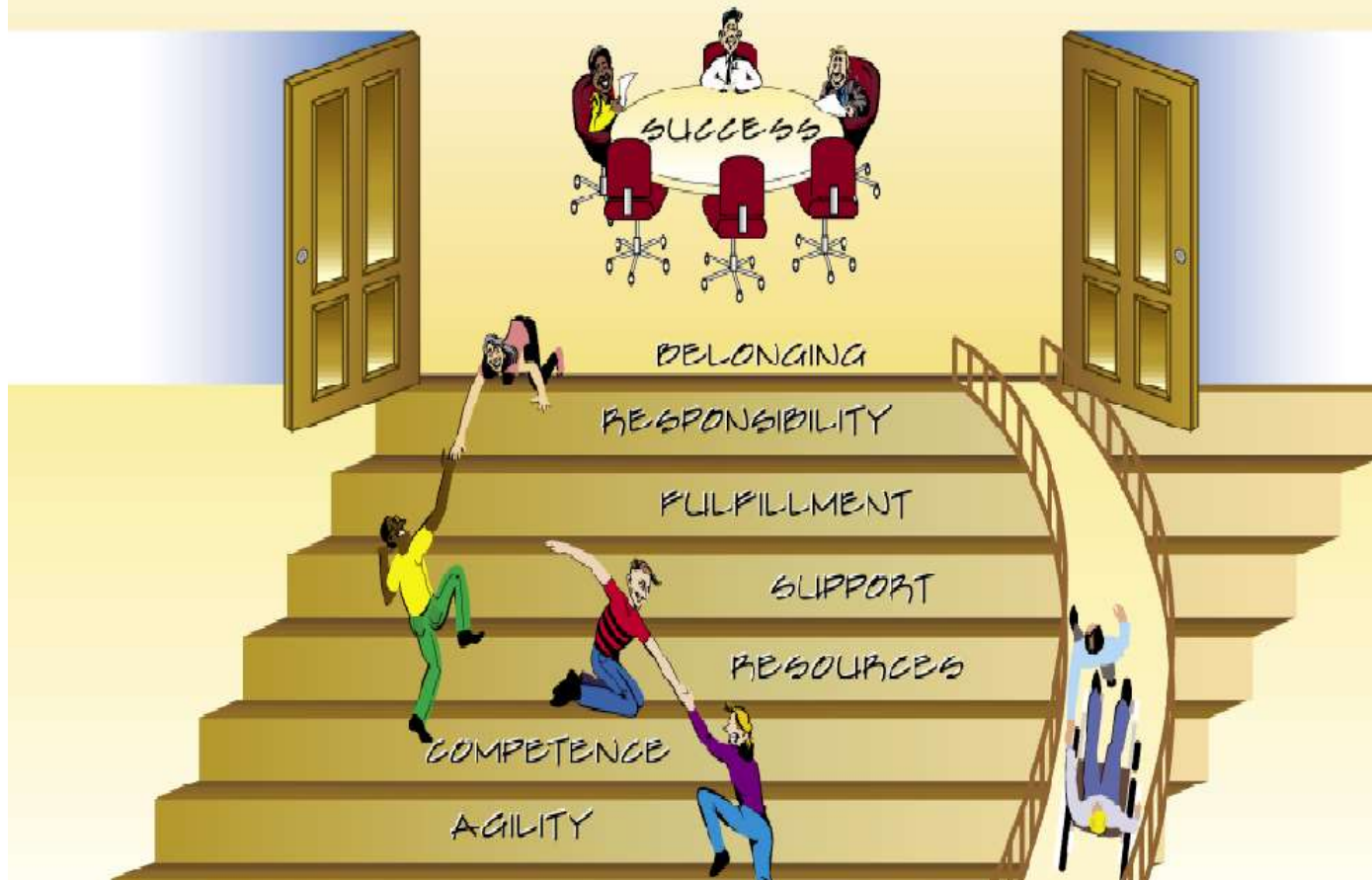
Eradication of child labour in Nigeria

Mentoring is.....

“....unlocking a person’s potential to maximise their own performance. It’s more often about helping them learn rather than teaching them”



"Mentoring for Success"



D.A. Oluwole, PhD

- **Background to the concept of mentoring**
- Mentoring is an ancient concept. Two thousand years ago, Homer referred to the notion of mentoring in *The Iliad*.
- When Odysseus was faced with a long journey away from home, he left his son Telemachus under the care of his old friend Mentor.
- Today, mentoring has been associated with discipleship, peer mentoring, coaching, sponsorship, apprenticeship, teaching, and role modelling.

- Mentoring, whether it is formal or informal, is useful in connecting people to support mechanisms that may enable them to progress personally and/or professionally.
- Often mentoring relationships are informal in nature as is the case of mentoring relationships between a supervisor and subordinate.

**A Mentor =
A Knowledgeable Wise Friend**

Mentoring is a relationship in which one person helps another to discover more about themselves, their potential and their capabilities.

- 470-399 Socrates
- 427-347 Plato
- 384-322 Aristotle
- 356-323 Alexander the great

Understanding the Impact of Abuse on Child Development

Childhood abuse, whether physical, emotional, or sexual, can have profound and lasting effects on a child's social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Traumatic experiences during these formative years can disrupt normal brain maturation, leading to long-term challenges in areas like self-regulation, interpersonal relationships, and academic performance.

Abused children often struggle with feelings of shame, low self-esteem, and difficulty trusting others. They may also exhibit behavioral problems, such as aggression or withdrawal, as coping mechanisms.

Providing targeted support and creating safe, nurturing environments is crucial for mitigating the negative impacts of abuse on a child's wellbeing and future success.

What is mentoring?

- Mentoring is a caring and supportive interpersonal relationship between an experienced practitioner (the Mentor) and a less experienced practitioner (the Mentee).
- In the relationship, the Mentor has a personal interest in the education and development of the Mentee.

Mentorship and psychosocial support are vital for helping abused children heal, build resilience, and reclaim their lives.

Through personalized guidance and counseling, we empower these young individuals to overcome trauma, develop healthy coping mechanisms, and rediscover their inner strength.

What is mentoring?

- Mentoring:
 - enables someone to learn and develop faster than they would otherwise do so.
 - aims at improving outcomes for the children and families we work with
 - maintains and improves retention rates

Social work supervision “(enhances) the professional skills and competence of social work practitioners and thereby strengthening the capacities of social workers to achieve positive outcomes for the people with whom they work”.

- **The three functions of supervision are referred to as Education, Support and Accountability.**
- So, while supervision focuses on the tasks and work performance of the employee, mentoring usually focuses on the future and broader skills for personal or career development.
- Nonetheless, both aim to enhance worker capacity to improve outcomes for children and families, but via different mechanisms. Coaching, whilst related, is different again.
- It is usually a short-term intervention, done for the purpose of improving or gaining specific skills.
- Coaching is often part of mentoring and while the two are often used interchangeably, mentoring is an ongoing relationship that takes a broader view of the person than coaching does, and can last for a long period of time.

Challenges faced by Child Protection workers

- Child Protection can be very rewarding work but also stressful and difficult.
- It requires working with all levels of government, civil society, and the general population, including some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in society where our personal safety can be compromised.
- In addition, many workers may be operating in isolated environments, away from family, friends, and other supportive networks.
- In addition, a psychosocial personnel may confront unfamiliar issues or harmful practices.
- Child Protection mentoring aims to support and build capacity to consider how personal and professional competencies can be impacted by cultural norms and beliefs, including gender and power dynamics.

- In this context, Tony Morrison also outlines some other challenges for workers:
- Child abuse affects our emotions and feelings as workers and can trigger painful feelings and experiences from our own lives.
- Expectations from the children and families we work with.
- The people we work with may not want our “help”. They may be suspicious, afraid, angry or feel overwhelmed.
- Sometimes they may refuse or deny the need for child protection-related support.
- ***Despite this, workers are still expected to be calm, consistent and helpful at all times, even if things are unpredictable and volatile.***

Role of the mentor in supporting children to manage challenges

- Tony Morrison outlines some ways that a mentor can support a child in managing these difficulties.
- Support them to feel safe
- Create a safe and inclusive environment that meets the needs of individuals.

Importance of Relationship Building

- Establishing a relationship of trust, respect and confidentiality between mentor and mentee is required for the arrangement to be beneficial and enjoyable for both mentee and mentor. This provides a safe space to discuss any personal issues that may arise from the work.

In order to build a positive relationship, mentors should focus on the following:

- ✓ • A relationship of trust and collegiality
- ✓ • Fostering a culture of support, not inspection
- ✓ • Engaging with mentees as co-learners
- ✓ • Valuing the knowledge of mentees
- ✓ • The importance of being non-judgmental
- ✓ • Making mistakes is a part of normal practice and provides opportunities for reflection and improvement
- ✓ • Affirming successes
- ✓ • Building confidence
- ✓ • Actively seeking feedback from the mentee, so difficulties can be named and resolved, and the relationship can be strengthened

Communication skills required for Mentoring

Active Listening

Active Listening is a process that is used to encourage mentees to explore and discover for themselves:

- What their major issues are ?
- What resolutions they might consider?
- And the steps they will take as a result.
- Utilise positive body language, such as looking interested and offering eye contact sensitively and appropriately, in order to establish and maintain an open approach to communication.
- positive body language and active listening involves using open, closed and 'why' questions appropriately, reflecting feelings and summarising facts.
- Paraphrasing statements can also be useful, such as "May I just check I've understood...", "You seem to be saying...", and "...is that right?"

Open questions

- A variety of question types are helpful, but the most useful are open questions, which encourage the mentee to develop their thoughts and consider numerous options and issues to help them make decisions and learn more effectively.
- Open questions allow a range of responses.
- An open question gives a signal that the mentee is free to make choices about what they will discuss and creates a more relaxed atmosphere.
- In the mentoring relationship, the mentor is seeking information around issues such as checking in;
- how to raise concerns with employer/manager e.g. workload; burnout; conflicts; office culture;
- team dynamics;
- lack of resources;
- over identification with children and families; professional boundaries etc.

Suggested Open Questions for Mentor

- 1. What would you like to get out of this mentoring session?
- 2. What are you hoping to achieve?
- 3. What may stop you getting there?
- 4. Tell me another way to look at this situation
- 5. Tell me more about that
- 6. Help me understand better
- 7. Explain why you took that course of action
- 8. What does your (significant others in personal life) think about how this is impacting on you? (Is it possible to have an agreement to discuss this aspect of things when mentee signals it is becoming a problem for personal life?)

- 9. Can you tell me about a time you did a good job and felt proud of yourself- how did you manage that?
- 10. Describe at least 3 good things about yourself
- 11. Help me understand what you did well and how you can use those skills and strengths in this situation?
- 12. What will you do next as a result of this conversation?
- 13. How will you know you have been successful?
- 14. Let's summarise what we have learned from this session

- **Closed questions**
- Closed questions usually call for a response from a very narrow range of choices and frequently elicit one-word answers, followed by a silence in which the mentee waits for the next question.
- In terms of mentoring, some useful examples might be:
 - 1. Have you received mentoring before?
 - 2. Do you know what the mentoring process involves?
 - 3. Are you still interested in receiving mentoring?
 - 4. Was the (child/family/manager) responsive when you did this?
 - 5. How many cases do you have at the moment?

Closed questions tend to contribute to a more authoritarian atmosphere, so they should be used sparingly.

- They leave authority and responsibility with the mentor, not the mentee, and can make an interview sound like an interrogation. They are best used for information gathering rather than an active mentoring process.

- **Why questions**
- Why questions can be problematic and can be perceived as judgemental. Like closed questions, they need to be used thoughtfully in order to prompt reflection, learning and insight.

Open questions	Closed questions
What...?	Is...?
How...?	Do...?
(Please) tell me...	Are...?
In what ways...?	Did...?
Could you tell me about...?	Where?
Who...?	When
...?	Questions relating to time, quantity, location and those that require a simple yes or no answer are often closed questions
Questions that require reflection are often open questions	

- **Giving Feedback**

- Well-conceived and constructive feedback has been demonstrated to be a powerful influence for learning and improvement.
- Providing feedback is a vital aspect of mentoring.
- Giving feedback is a skill.
- And like all skills it requires lots of practice to get it right. Here are some guidelines for providing effective feedback

Guidelines for giving feedback

- Start with a positive experience
- Be timely
- Make it regular
- Base your feedback on evidence
- Prepare your comments
- Provide constructive feedback in private
- Use "I" statements
- Limit your focus
- Follow up

The Miracle Question

- If the Mentor feels that the Mentee is stuck, or unable to think their way through an issue, then one option is to use the miracle question.
- The miracle question helps move the conversation quickly and easily into the future where the problems of the mentee are gone (de Shazer, 2007).
- The miracle question gets the mentee to imagine a solution to the problem they are experiencing, which helps them to establish goals in order to achieve the solution. Here is an example of the miracle question:

‘If you had three wishes about how your approach could have been different what would they be?’

- The miracle allows the mentee to voice their wishes about the change they want to see, and the support needed to move towards it, instead of focusing on past negative experiences.
- Evidence shows that the miracle question leads to improved communication and relationships between mentors and mentee

- Start with a positive experience
- This helps put the mentee at ease.
- It also lets them "see" what success looks like and this helps them to take the right steps next time.
- Allow the mentee to speak first. e.g. What do you think worked well for you? Why do you think this was the case?
- NB: Here the "why" question has been used to promote reflection (why do you think this happened?) rather than to judge (why did this happen?) Then you can move to a more negative experience. e.g. What didn't work so well? What would you do next time to improve this?

- **Be timely**
- The best time to provide feedback is at the end of the session
- **Base your feedback on evidence**
- When you give feedback to a mentee it should be specific, not general. This evidence might come from observations of their practice or previous conversations.
- An example: I noticed you used a lot of closed questions.
- What do you think would happen if you used more open questions?
- **Prepare your comments**
- Before you provide feedback to the mentee, you should examine all your evidence from their practice and make notes on these.
- This will help you to provide clear and concise feedback.

- **Provide constructive feedback in private**
- Your feedback sessions should always be held in private, particularly if you want to provide constructive feedback to the mentee.
- You don't want to be interrupted or overheard.
- **Use "I" statements**
- Give the feedback from your perspective. This way you avoid labelling the person.
- **Limit your focus**
- Don't try to cover everything.
- By planning with the mentee, a mentor can help set specific goals designed to improve areas of weakness.
- Focus on these specific areas. Try not to cover more than two feedback issues in each session. You should also address behaviours the person can change or influence.

Mentorship Principles: Building Trust and Fostering Resilience



Trust-Building

Establishing a rapport of trust and understanding is crucial for mentors to effectively guide and support abused children on their path to healing and empowerment.



Fostering Resilience

By instilling a sense of hope, self-worth, and the ability to overcome adversity, mentors play a vital role in nurturing the innate resilience within abused children.



Empowering Mindset

Mentors work to cultivate a mindset of strength and agency within abused children, helping them reclaim their power and envision a brighter future.

Training Methods: Trauma-Informed Approaches

1

Establishing Safety

Create a secure, predictable environment that helps abused children feel calm and in control. Use de-escalation techniques to manage emotional responses.

2

Promoting Emotional Regulation

Teach coping strategies like deep breathing, visualization, and journaling to help children manage overwhelming feelings and build self-awareness.

3

Fostering Resilience

Emphasize strengths, empower children to make choices, and celebrate small victories. Encourage self-expression through art, play, and storytelling.



Identifying and Addressing Emotional Needs

1 Emotional Assessment

Conduct a comprehensive evaluation to understand the child's emotional state, including trauma symptoms, anxiety, depression, and overall well-being.

3 Ongoing Support

Provide continuous emotional support, validation, and a safe space for the child to process their experiences and feelings.

2 Tailored Interventions

Develop personalized therapeutic approaches that address the child's specific emotional needs, such as art therapy, play therapy, or cognitive-behavioral techniques.

4 Family Involvement

Engage the child's family or caregivers to ensure a holistic approach to addressing emotional needs and fostering a nurturing environment.

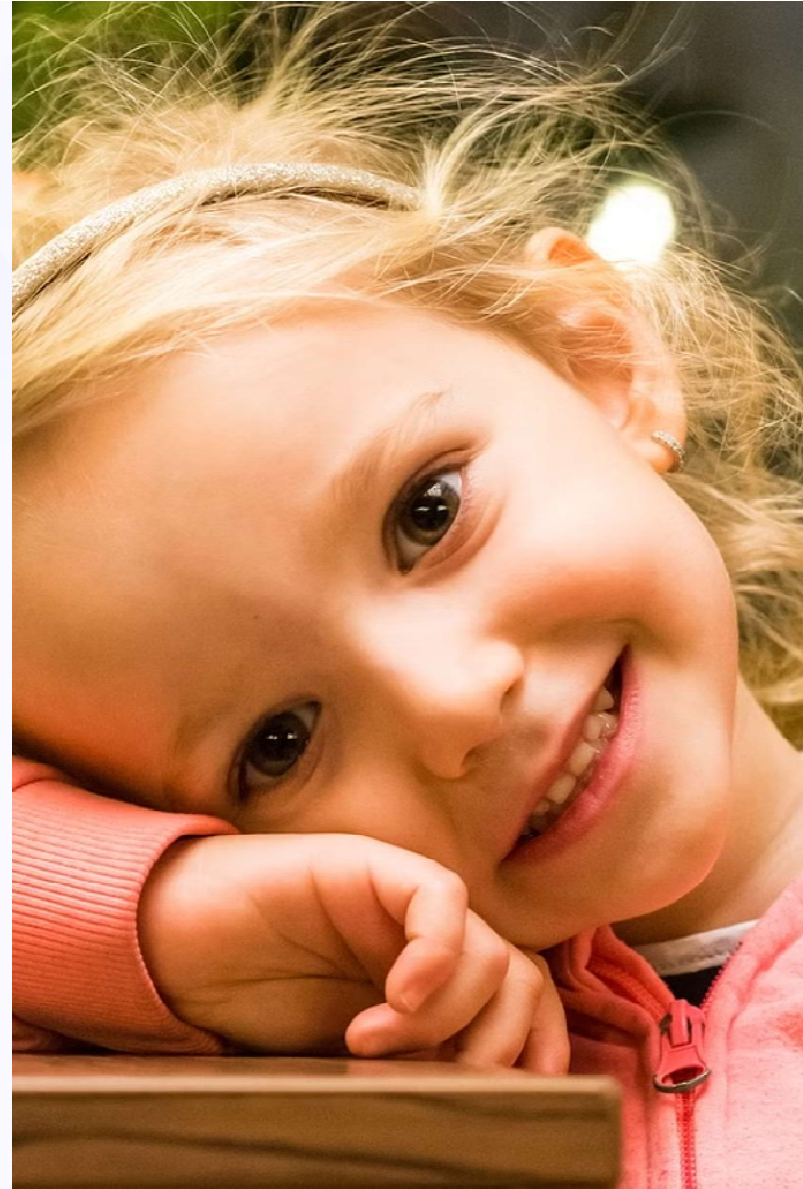
Collaborative Interventions: Partnering with Families and Communities

Empowering abused children requires a collaborative approach, drawing on the strengths and resources within their families and local communities. By fostering strong partnerships, we can create a comprehensive support network to address the child's unique needs.

Family members and community leaders can offer invaluable insights, cultural knowledge, and trusted relationships that complement the professional interventions. Together, we can develop tailored plans to promote the child's healing, resilience, and reintegration into a nurturing environment.

Conclusion:

Through mentorship, training, and psychosocial support, we can empower abused children to overcome trauma and unlock their full potential. By fostering resilience and collaborative interventions, we can help these children reclaim their sense of safety, self-worth, and hope for the future.



THANK YOU
END



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Obrigado!



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