Eddies

 Suite G10 & G11, Blenheim House

Cambridge Innovation Park

Denny End Road

Waterbeach

Cambridge

CB25 9GL

01223 883130

Peer Mentorship Manager: 07477928633

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Dear SENco Team,

**Eddie’s Peer Mentorship Project – funded by NHS England**

Eddie’s is part of The Edmund Trust charity that have been delivering care support for over 70 years across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to people of all ages with a learning disability. Eddie’s offers a wide range of services to children, young people and their families to deliver practical support and to promote inclusion. Our aim is to make sure their voices are heard and listened to so they can build upon their strengths, confidence, self-esteem and self-worth, all of which will support their mental health and well-being.

The Peer Mentorship Project first launched in September 2023 to support young people with autism & learning disabilities to develop their skills, increase opportunities, and to look at preparing them for moving into adulthood. The project is funded by NHS England as part of their autism and learning disability improvement plan. The project will work with those young people with and without special educational needs to meet and share time together, develop ideas, create new experiences and hopefully form new friendships. So far, we have predominately worked in secondary schools across Cambridgeshire, but our long-term plan is to engage with all secondary and primary schools across the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough.

The project feedback we have received has been positive and the children & young people have enjoyed taking part in the project. Due to the successful delivery of the project, we have 3 secondary schools who have signed up for a second cohort of children and young people to have the opportunity to be involved in our Peer Mentorship Project.

**Children and young people’s comments:**

 *‘I like coming to these sessions because we have fun’*

 *‘These sessions make me feel good’*

 *‘I like making positive affirmations posters and getting stickers’*

 *‘I have learnt how to manage situations better’*

**SEN/deputy Head teachers:**

 *‘It is good to know the students are engaging and participating’*

 *‘All of the students are positive and want to attend the sessions’*

*‘It would be great if you can deliver this project again in the autumn term to another cohort of young people’*

*‘The sessions are refreshing, and it is good to see the young people communicating with each other and having fun’*

 **Peer Mentorship Project delivery and expectations**

Peer mentorship has a proven track record as a method in supporting children & young people in developing skills and creating new opportunities.

Eddie’s is committed to delivering the peer mentorship project and would like to invite your school (secondary/primary) to work alongside us with this exciting inclusive opportunity. Our target group is for children & young people with special educational needs, or an EHCP, or a learning disability and/or autism.

Working collaboratively together with you, we would like to develop a safe space where the young people can feel supported. We will listen to their views, wishes and feelings and allow them to express themselves in a safe environment.

The project aims to meet once a week for approximately 1 – 1.5 hours with young people to take part in activities relating to person-centred thinking, addressing issues of similarity rather than that of difference, and encouraging people to spend time together in a safe space which will be led by the young people. The project aims to achieve outcomes such as helping people see ability rather than disability, learning and developing social coping skills, working towards dreams and aspirations, developing peer and family supported person-centred plans and building resilience.

Looking forward when the project is in its second year we would like to pair mainstream settings up with SEN provision to explore new experiences for young people to come together and share their ideas so we can help to develop relationships & support networks around them. However, this future development will be a discussion with your school after delivery of the peer mentorship project.

We also plan to work alongside Cambridgeshire and Peterborough’s Children’s and Young Adults social work teams and education departments to increase awareness and model inclusive practice within all schools.

If you are interested in working with Eddie’s to facilitate this project and be part of creating new experiences for the children & young people, it would be great to hear from you.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am more than happy discuss the project either in person or via a video link or over the telephone, I would love to know your thoughts and ideas on how we can work together.

Yours sincerely,

*Helen Phillips*

**Helen Phillips**

**Peer Mentorship Manager**

**The Edmund Trust**

**Email:** helen.phillips@edmundtrust.org.uk **| Mob:** 07477928633