

## CIRV Initial Mentor Training

All CIRV Mentors complete CIRV Initial Mentor Training (CIMT). CIMT has been designed following a training needs analysis and can be provided in partnership with specialist external agencies (for example the LEAP Confronting Conflict charity). It provides current and prospective mentors with an opportunity to explore the dynamics underlying youth gang culture and develop the skills to support young people to make positive lifestyle choices and move away from violence.

### CIRV Initial Mentor Training:

- Explores the key themes of Glasgow youth gang culture
- Develops understanding of the skills and qualities required of a mentor
- Defines the role of a CIRV mentor and the importance of creating and managing clear boundaries
- Gives training in skills like questioning, listening and giving and receiving feedback
- Explores the mentor's own relationship to conflict and their habits and patterns of behaviour in conflict.
- Explains the protocols, procedures and processes of the Glasgow CIRV model

CIMT is a four day programme in which participants learn about the background and history of CIRV and explore the issues affecting young people involved in gangs, group violence and territorialism in Glasgow. Using tried and tested gangs' work models, participants use interactive techniques to look at themes of Safety and Danger, Space and Territory, Status and Reputation and Enemies and Revenge. They also use practical, experiential exercises to explore communication styles, listening, questioning, the role of the mentor, ethics and boundaries. The course also outlines the systems, processes and procedures of the CIRV programme.

Further developmental mentor training courses are then sourced by the CIRV Mentoring Co-ordinator and provided subject to the needs of the project and the individual mentor.

### CIRV Mentor Exit Policy

The appropriate time for a mentor to stop working with a client will depend on each individual case. Client cases are closely monitored via the Case Management process, where mentor updates are considered and decisions made as to:

- the suitable continuation of the partnership,
- whether the client will benefit from continuing to work with that particular mentor and
- whether there is a genuine need from the client to continue linking in this way

There is no time limit restriction; the mentor-client relationship may last from a few weeks to over a year, dependent on need.

**When the decision is made to end the partnership, this is done in a structured way that gives the client confidence to continue on their own.**

Further information and documentation relating to the CIRV project can be obtained from:

**CIRV@strathclyde.pnn.police.uk**



With thanks to: Move On- [www.move-on.org.uk](http://www.move-on.org.uk) and The Scottish Mentoring Network- [www.scottishmentoringnetwork.co.uk](http://www.scottishmentoringnetwork.co.uk)

This Practice Note is part of a series which describe the CIRV model and gang intervention methodology. The others can be accessed via the national Violence Reduction Unit website [www.actiononviolence.org.uk](http://www.actiononviolence.org.uk)

## Mentoring

**violence is preventable not inevitable**

**VIOLENCE**  
reduction unit

*Violence is preventable, not inevitable.*

VIOLENCE REDUCTION UNIT

**CIRV**

Community Initiative to Reduce Violence

## Introduction

The **Community Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV)** is a multi-agency, community based, street gangs intervention service whose aim is to secure a rapid and sustained reduction in violent behaviour amongst gang members across Glasgow. The initiative has at its core a focused deterrence strategy coupled with diversion and personal development services. It is based on existing programmes introduced to tackle gang violence in the USA, but adapted to a Scottish context by Glasgow's CIRV Team.

A partnership group including police, social service providers and the community has been established to deliver a clear message to gangs: 'the violence must stop'. This message is communicated through a number of different mechanisms, including Self Referral Sessions, direct contact through street workers, police, prisons, teachers, school campus officers, community outreach workers and, when the time is right, the media.

**The CIRV process can be summarised as follows:**



**A series of Practice Notes have been compiled to describe this process in greater detail. This Practice Note concentrates on the mentoring process.**

# What is mentoring and why is it important to CIRV?

Although CIRV is managed by the police it is recognised that street gang violence will only be reduced in the long term when the community's own moral voice against violence dominates. A deep mistrust of the police and many of their partners is usual amongst street gang members. CIRV recognises this and therefore sources and administers not only a pool of professional support workers but also community based mentors to continually deliver the message of non-violence.

With a broad 'life-coaching' role, CIRV mentors work on a one-to-one basis with current and potential clients to ensure they are referred via the CIRV case conference process to appropriate programmes and services.

## The primary function of a CIRV Mentor is to:

- Assist the client in establishing goals, both long and short term, and planning how to achieve them.
- Act as a sounding board when the young person has decisions to make and needs to talk them through.
- Challenge the young person to recognise their strengths and abilities and look at the reasons why they sometimes don't capitalise on them.
- Act as a gateway to opportunities, sources of information and support
- Rehearse situations, allowing clients to practice and develop key skills for the future.
- Pass on 'know-how', i.e. share experience and life skills when relevant to a young person's situation.

# What is a CIRV Mentor?

The title 'CIRV Mentor' is used to cover a wide range of one-to-one support disciplines required by CIRV for its clients. There are four types of CIRV Mentor:

**CIRV Peer Mentor** - predominantly ex-gang members, usually former CIRV clients who are committed to helping others exit a violent gang lifestyle. Normally lacking any formal mentoring qualification, they will have successfully completed the initial CIRV Mentoring Course. Role is largely befriending and assisting in engagement of potential CIRV clients.

**Specialist Project Worker** - professionally qualified support providers, such as those from the Includem charity, who provide intensive, one-to-one, tailored support for the most chaotic and vulnerable CIRV clients and their families

**Key Support Worker** - Skills Development Scotland's employability keyworkers, providing intensive specialised employability support to CIRV clients, including careers guidance interviews, ongoing mentoring support, help with application forms, CVs and accessing financial support. They also engage with clients' parents, encouraging them to support their child's involvement with CIRV, carry out home engagement visits to potential CIRV clients and support attendance at Self Referral Sessions.

**Case Worker** - sourced from across the CIRV network of partners, such as Glasgow Housing Association (GHA), Glasgow Community & Safety Services (GCSS), Glasgow Life etc. Case workers, in addition to their normal jobs, have received CIRV Mentor Training and are experienced in working with young people. Provide regular point of contact support to CIRV clients.

# The profile of a CIRV Mentor

<p><b>CIRV Mentors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen</li> <li>Don't judge</li> <li>Pay attention</li> <li>Accept the client's feelings</li> <li>Understand the client's world and feelings; put themselves in the client's shoes.</li> <li>Think about the client</li> </ul>	<p><b>So that the client can...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop his/her thinking</li> <li>Feel safe and respected</li> <li>Know that the mentor cares</li> <li>Know he/she is not being judged</li> <li>Know you are with him/her</li> <li>Get the best help possible</li> </ul>
<p><b>CIRV Mentors may:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask questions</li> <li>Summarise</li> </ul>	<p><b>So that the client can...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop his/her own thinking</li> <li>Hear his/her thoughts and know he/she is understood.</li> <li>Release blocking emotion such as unexpressed anger or sadness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CIRV Mentors do not:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Argue</li> <li>Dwell on their own difficulties</li> <li>Solve the problem for the client</li> <li>Give advice</li> <li>Belittle the client's concern</li> <li>Avoid painful areas</li> </ul>	<p><b>As this can make clients:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defensive</li> <li>Withdraw</li> <li>Dependent</li> <li>Dependent or hostile</li> <li>Withdraw or attack</li> <li>Frustrated</li> </ul>

# Mentors

CIRV Mentors come from all walks of life. They are often volunteers and specific educational qualifications are not always required.

## CIRV looks for people who:

- Have time, enthusiasm and persistence to see through a commitment which may last up to two years.
- Are able to communicate well with young street gang members and are good listeners
- Are able to form positive, supportive relationships with others.
- Can relate to the issues and challenges facing young street gang members in Glasgow
- Are reliable, consistent and dependable.
- Are willing to challenge their own assumptions about violence
- Are able to keep confidentiality appropriately.
- Are comfortable working on their own, relying on their own initiative and common sense, but also know when to seek support.
- Are able to put their own needs to the side and focus on another person's needs and situation.
- Can accept that being challenged and let down by other people is a natural part of life and will occur in any mentoring relationship.

## Mentors cont.

### They must have:

- An ability to appreciate and value the difference between people.
- An acceptance of others for who they are.
- A belief that everyone has the right to opportunities to achieve their potential.
- A respect for others as being of equal worth.
- Realism about what can be achieved without becoming cynical.
- A belief that they can make a difference to their own and other peoples' lives. No situation is "hopeless".

### They must be able to:

- Understand and work to the procedures and practices of CIRV.
- Meet the important paperwork requirements of the service.
- Organise meetings with CIRV clients over time and monitor whether the arrangements are working.

### The relationship between CIRV clients and their mentors

The relationship between client and mentor varies with each individual case, depending on the client's needs. The service continues until both parties agree that support is no longer required.

### Mentoring relationships go through a number of phases:

- Making a connection – starting to build trust and credibility
- Assisting the young person in the process of identifying goals
- Monitoring and evaluating progress towards goals
- Celebrating achievements / managing ending

There are obviously always ongoing tasks such as staying in touch with CIRV staff, identifying suitable activities and rebuilding relationships after any period of non-engagement.

### Role of the CIRV Mentoring Coordinator

The role of the Mentoring Coordinator is crucial to the whole process. The coordinator is responsible for appointing the appropriate type of mentor for each client; this is done in conjunction with the CIRV Case Manager.

### The CIRV Mentoring Process

- The mentoring process begins as soon as a client is discussed at CIRV case conference and after all relevant information from partner agencies has been collated.
- CIRV case conferences review the client's needs and expectations and allocate a suitable mentor to offer support in further education, self development or any specific identified need (see Case Management Practice Note)
- Mentors feed information to the CIRV Co-ordinating Team, update on client progress, advise of any difficulties and source other services available to the client.
- The mentor engages in meaningful dialogue with the client to encourage them to be more open, relaxed and trusting of the CIRV programme.
- In most cases mentors link up with their clients at least once a week, ensuring regular contact and updates are being kept.
- The mentor and client continue this relationship until both agree support is no longer required. At this time a phasing out period begins to decrease contact with the client but also ensure they are coping. Should this not work out, or the client feels this is too soon, contact increases until they feel the time is right.

### The CIRV Mentoring process is outlined below.

