Context is All: a qualitative case study of youth mentoring in the inner-city.

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I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:

Abstract

This project is an extended case study design investigating the mentoring programme of Kids Company, an innovative and controversial organisation that closed during fieldwork. The study considers the programme both as a case of the larger category of 'youth mentoring' as well as a case in itself – of a unique and situated intervention. Methods employed included participant observation and interviews with professional staff, as well as the analysis of a sample of mentoring records documenting the one-year relationship of six mentoring pairs from the perspective of the mentor. Plans to interview mentoring pairs were curtailed by the unexpected demise of the organisation, but the data set includes interviews with five new mentors and mentees. The project has developed from a collaborative studentship aimed at understanding the mentoring programme, to include a post mortem of an organisation in crisis. Thus, documentation by and about Kids Company during this very public downfall also forms part of the data set. The thesis organises its findings into three chapters with insights on the model of mentoring employed by Kids Company and the reliance of popularised ideas from attachment theory and neuroscience; insights into the mentoring relationships themselves, including the value of a middle stage of everyday 'being there'; and critical insights into how Kids Company's approach to young people and communities simultaneously takes on representations of race and class, yet elides them. The thesis draws together critical social policy and childhood studies literature on the history of child saving interventions and representations of the child in need within society, and psychology literature on youth mentoring initiatives, in order to make the argument that mentoring must be understood as an intervention situated in time and place. The messiness, complexity, and variety of youth mentoring experiences needs to be recognised. Nevertheless, youth mentoring also has potential to be powerful and productive for all involved and the thesis reflects on both the strengths and weaknesses of the Kids Company approach to make suggestions for good practice.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The study was originally planned as a collaborative project between myself (as a doctoral candidate at the University of Sussex) and Kids Company. It began as a mentoring case study; an example of the larger category of 'youth mentoring' that could inform the current mentoring literature and also aid Kids Company in their programme design and delivery. However, Kids Company suddenly closed its doors on 12th August 2015, while I was still in the process of conducting my fieldwork. Thus, the project became something else too. I began to see the project in terms of an 'emergent' case as described by Becker (1992) who suggests that it can be counterproductive to begin research with too strong an idea of what your research subject is a case of, as these preconceptions can hamper conceptual development. Becker therefore advises that researchers should continually ask themselves 'what is this a case of?'. When Kids Company closed down, I realised that I was not only investigating a case of mentoring, I was studying a case of youth mentoring within a case of a failed organisation.

The research design of the project is an extended case study design (Buroway, 1998). Extended case studies are concerned with making links between micro and macro levels of experience (e.g. the participants' experiences and the mentoring practices), and also local processes and extra-local forces (e.g. the mentoring programme and the wider organisation). Thus, I originally intended to use this research design to consider how the wider organisation of Kids Company influenced the design and implementation of the mentoring programme, and how the design and implementation of the mentoring programme influenced the experiences of the participating mentors and mentees. However, when Kids Company closed and it became apparent that their finances had not been effectively managed (National Audit Office, 2015) I was interested in exploring how the charity had become so popular and influential despite this. It seemed that the organisation had 'unique, privileged and significant access' to senior Ministers and Prime Ministers (House of Commons, 2016), and whilst this was partly due to the personality and advocacy skills of Kids Company's founder, Camila Batmanghelidjh, it was also related to how the charity's approach was aligned with certain social policies. Buroway (1998) notes that the extended case study's focus on both local and extra-local forces means that changes wrought by outside influences on the object of study can be embraced, rather than ignored. Thus, when Kids Company closed, the research design lent itself to the opening out of the project, and the consideration of how social policy had influenced both the organisation and the mentoring programme embedded within it.

Youth mentoring is an intervention in which an organisation facilitates a relationship between a young person (the mentee) and an unrelated adult (the mentor). The mentor and mentee are then required to meet regularly, and through the development of a relationship the mentee is expected to benefit in a number of ways. My interest in studying youth mentoring stems from a paradox between my own previous experiences as a volunteer youth mentor (for a different organisation), and the results of youth mentoring evaluation studies, which are the most prominent form of youth mentoring research. In my own experience, I felt that I had formed a valuable and enjoyable relationship with my mentee. However, the majority of evaluation literature, which splits young people into a mentored treatment group and a non-mentored control group to then compare their performance on various outcomes measures, consistently finds that mentored young people only show very small (if any) improvements compared to non-mentored young people (Dubois et al., 2002; DuBois et al., 2011). Considering my own experiences, and several qualitative studies in which both mentors and mentees have spoken very positively of their mentoring experiences (Dallos & Comley-Ross, 2005; Philip, 2008), this has led me to believe that evaluation literature does not adequately capture what is happening within youth mentoring relationships.

Despite the evidence for youth mentoring indicating that mentored young people only improve on behavioural outcome measures by a small amount, the fact that the approach lends itself to evaluation (meaning that it is relatively easy to split young people into mentored and non-mentored groups and then compare observable differences between the two groups), and the results are generally positive, even if slight, has meant that youth mentoring has become a very popular intervention. Youth mentoring evaluation research has coincided with the rise in evidence-based practice, and the belief among policy makers that interventions that can demonstrate results in this way are more reliable and, therefore, are perceived to reduce the inherent uncertainty of both social problems and social interventions. Such a perspective, however, ignores a number of the issues with the evidence produced by such evaluation studies. For example, many youth mentoring evaluation studies assume a linear form of causality (mentoring caused the mentee to change) and thus do not take into account the other elements in the participants' lives that could contribute to improvements in the young people. Relatedly, the popularity of Rhodes and colleagues' (2005, 2006) model of influence in youth mentoring that hypothesised that youth mentoring could influence a young person's social-emotional, identity, and cognitive development, and that these improvements manifest in a wide range of observable behavioural outcomes, has resulted in a reputation of youth mentoring being able to positively influence young people in myriad ways. Thus, the current conception of youth mentoring is that it is a context free and catch-all intervention, and can be deployed in any situation where a young person is deemed as in need of extra support.

My aim for this research is thus to explore the experiences of those who take part in youth mentoring, but to do this in relation to contexts such as mentoring programme practices (and the theories that underpin them), the lives and motivations of the participants, and the environments in which the mentoring relationships take place. My hope is that this will shed light on the mentoring experiences that are not captured through evaluation studies, and counteract the conception of youth mentoring being a context free and catch-all intervention.

Kids Company was founded in 1996 by Camila Batmanghelidjh. It started out as a single drop-in centre in South London that aimed to provide emotional and practical support to vulnerable young people. Over the years, the charity progressively grew to encompass several more centres in South London and one in North London, a London and Liverpool based schools programme and further centres in Bristol. The mentoring programme operated in London, mainly in the south, and organically developed within the charity after Batmanghelidjh identified the possibility of matching Kids Company volunteers with individual service users. The charity (and the mentoring programme) was heavily grounded in attachment theory. Thus, in terms of exploring how elements such as programme practices influence mentoring experiences, Kids Company was a very interesting case as its mentoring programme practices were so strongly aligned with specific theory.

When Kids Company closed down, I began to consider the ways in which the charity connected to the broader social policy landscape. A successful charity, its understanding of childhood, and working-class parents and communities, resonated strongly with popular and social policy understandings of childhood and poverty, and such figurations seemed to me to require further unpacking. In particular, Kids Company appeared to view youth disadvantage as the result of poor parenting, as opposed to social or economic difficulties, and felt that positive relationships with Kids Company staff could counteract the negative influence of inadequate parents and communities. To express these assumptions and justify intervention in their service users' lives, Kids Company used neuroscience to suggest that unsatisfactory parental relationships impeded their service users' brain development. This conception of disadvantage being passed down from parents to children through inadequate parenting is regularly expressed in policy documents that call for the need to 'break the

cycle of deprivation' in tackling youth outcomes (whilst eliding the influence of socio-economic factors) (Gillies, 2011). In addition, social policy has also favoured the use of neuroscience and the assertion that poor parenting can impede brain development to justify intervention into working-class families (e.g. Allen & Duncan Smith, 2008). It should be noted that these claims from neuroscience have been contested (e.g. Bruer, 2010). Nevertheless, it is notable that Kids Company imagined working class children, families and communities drawing on the same social policy discourses circulating at the time (and which continue to be current).

Looking at youth mentoring from a historical and cultural perspective, it is apparent that youth mentoring is also aligned with these assumptions regarding the nature of working-class life. The emergence of youth mentoring, at the beginning of the 20th century, did not follow a clear path and encompassed many different motivations from different 'child-saving' philanthropic groups. However, one element of its appeal was the perception by some that it could function as a way of raising the aspirations of working-class children to counteract the perceived negative influence of working-class parents and urban environments. In addition, it could be argued that such motivations are still apparent in modern youth mentoring (Freedman, 1995). Due to these parallels in both youth mentoring and Kids Company's construction of working-class children, families and communities, the thesis looks at both youth mentoring and Kids Company in relation to the social policy landscape.

Ultimately, this thesis encompasses three main goals. The first is to look at Kids Company's mentoring programme in terms of its practices and the theories that underpinned them. This will illuminate how the design and implementation of youth mentoring programmes influence the form of mentoring that takes place. Within this, I will explore how these practices and motivations came about in relation to the organisation as a whole, and in relation to social policy. Secondly, the thesis will explore how this form of mentoring is experienced. As Kids Company closed down before I had finished my fieldwork, I was not able to fully capture the voices of the young people who were participating in mentoring relationships, and these experiences are therefore mainly expressed from the mentor's point of view. However, this still sheds light on how mentors made sense of their role, how they either conformed to or adapted the programme's specified modes of interaction, and how they perceived their matched mentee to be experiencing the relationship. The third aim is to explore how the child, their families and their communities were positioned within both Kids Company and youth mentoring. Kids Company's construction of the child, their homes and communities, and their needs were related to particular understandings of childhood and particular ideas within social policy. These constructions helped to guide and justify the form of mentoring that Kids Company offered. Such understanding of how the construction of service users can influence a mentoring programme has been overlooked in the mentoring literature. In addition, such understanding illuminates how Kids Company's construction of their service users contributed to their popularity within the successive Governments.

The thesis takes a childhood and youth studies perspective to complete these aims. An important element of childhood and youth studies is the 'new' sociology of childhood (James & Prout, 1997), which emerged in the late 1990s as a challenge to traditional sociology, as when traditional sociology was concerned with children, it positioned them as passive recipients of adults' attempts to socialize them. In addition, the 'new' sociology of childhood challenges developmental psychology, which for the most part, accepts a universalizing, essentialist and linear assumption to child development (Thorne, 2007). In contrast, the 'new' sociology of childhood views childhood as a social construction. This means that rather than being seen as a 'natural' or universal feature of human groups, childhood is culturally and historically situated and socially (re)produced (Thorne, 2007). This kind of approach facilitates critical understandings of how ideas of childhood are

deployed within a culture as well as thinking through how actors create and live childhood in particular times and places. In addition, this conception of childhood engages with issues of human agency within larger social forces (Reagen-Porras, 2013). Thus, children are characterised as active, meaning-producing beings.

The majority of evaluation focussed youth mentoring research views young people as passive recipients of the mentoring intervention. Whilst it may take account of elements such as the quality and longevity of the dyadic mentoring relationship, it often ignores many other elements that could have an influence on young people's experience of mentoring such as their friendships and peer groups, their family's social and economic capital, their migration status and community relationships, as well as the influences of history. Within a childhood and youth studies approach, researchers view children as agentic social actors, and thus think about childhood in terms of 'interpretive reproduction' (Corsaro, 2012). Within this, through processes of appropriation, reinvention, and reproduction children participate in society. Rather than internalizing society and culture, they actively contribute to cultural production and change, whilst at the same time being constrained by the societies and cultures of which they are members (Corsaro, 2012; Bluebond-Langner & Korbin, 2007). In terms of mentoring research, within this understanding of childhood, children are seen as being able to make meaning with their mentors, rather than just being passive recipients of their mentoring relationships, and their experiences with their mentor may be influenced by societal and cultural factors. In addition, a particular strand of childhood and youth studies (e.g. Kehily, 2010; Cunningham, 2005) draws on historical and cultural approaches to understand how ideas of childhood are constructed, which allows for critical cultural analysis that does not take social policy at face value, and instead questions how social and political discourse constructs the figure of the child. Within this thesis, such an approach allows for the exploration of how youth mentoring and Kids Company's conception of the child is related to history and social policy.

In line with childhood and youth studies, the thesis employs interpretative methods to approach the research aims. This includes interviews with professional staff from Kids Company's mentoring programme, participant observation of training sessions for new mentors, interviews with mentors and mentees, and archival records documenting the one-year relationships of six mentoring pairs from the perspective of the mentor. As the thesis includes considerations of Kids Company's position in the social policy landscape, and how this contributed to the rise and fall of the organisation, documentation by and about Kids Company during this very public downfall also forms part of the data set.

The structure of the thesis is as follows: Chapter 2 will locate the thesis within youth mentoring research, taking into account social policy and ideas about childhood. Taking a historical and cultural look at youth mentoring, the chapter will show how youth mentoring gained popularity because it was seen as an appropriate intervention to counteract the perceived negative effects of urbanisation and working-class parenting on childhood. Youth mentoring's increasing popularity then coincided with the rise of evidence-based practice gaining popularity within the public sector as a method of assessing the validity of interventions, organising services, and rationing public spending. The wide variety of organisations offering youth mentoring, the model for the influence of youth mentoring that hypothesised a wide range of benefits, and the focus on evaluation studies all contributed to the characterisation that youth mentoring is a context free intervention that can be deployed in any situation where young people are in need. A particular element of youth mentoring that has been overlooked is how the child, their family and their community are positioned. The chapter will highlight how better understanding these elements can help to illuminate the underlying

motivations of a mentoring programme, as the imagined child will guide or justify the form of mentoring that is offered. Chapter 3 will describe the methodology employed by the project. It will discuss how the project began as a case study of a youth mentoring programme and was then adapted after Kids Company's closure, meaning that it became a case study of a mentoring programme within a case study of a failed organisation.

The thesis then organises its findings into three empirical chapters. Chapter 4 will cover Kids Company's development as an organisation and discuss how the charity became so popular. It will also discuss the circumstances that led to the charity's closure. The mentoring programme will be described in terms of its programme practices and the theories that underpinned them. The chapter will show that both Kids Company and the mentoring programme were heavily influenced by popularised ideas from attachment theory and neuroscience that have also influenced social policy. The chapter will also discuss particular modes of interaction that Kids Company expected mentors to conform to within their mentoring relationships.

Chapter 5 will provide insights into the mentoring relationships themselves. The chapter will explore how the mentors represented their relationships and how they interpreted their mentees experiences. Kids Company's expected modes of interaction will be explored in relation to how the mentors either conformed to or adapted them, and what this meant for the representations of the relationships. The chapter will track how mentoring relationships developed over the course of a year, and will show that the middle phase of the mentoring relationships was represented as being a valuable time for the mentoring pairs, and the mentor consistently 'being there' for the mentee seemed to be important.

Chapter 6 will explore how young people, their families, and their communities were positioned in both the mentoring programme and Kids Company. This will emphasise that the ways in which working-class people are imagined can influence the services that are designed and offered to them. This is something that is generally obscured within the youth mentoring literature. The chapter will also highlight how differences between the imagined child as presented to mentors in their training and the 'real-life' mentees they then encountered, influenced the mentoring relationships.

Ultimately, the thesis will argue that youth mentoring needs to be understood as an intervention situated in time and place. The actual practice of youth mentoring is messy, enjoyable and challenging, and is influenced by programme practices and the representation of the child in need. The thesis will suggest that contemporary youth mentoring requires an institutional framing in order to succeed, but that framing needs to be open and embrace the liminality of mentoring relationships, as well as allowing mentoring pairs to define those relationships and some boundaries for themselves. The thesis will explore the current conception of the mentor as a 'compensatory' relationship to suggest that the role is better understood as a 'complementary' relationship; thus, recognising the existing positives as well as the negatives in the participating young people's lives. Finally, the thesis will reflect on both the strengths and weaknesses of the Kids Company approach to make suggestions for good practice.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

'Oh happy Telemachus! You will never be bewildered as I have been bewildered, while you have such a guide and instructor! Mentor, you are the master!' (François Fénelon, Les Adventures de Telemaque 1699:136)

The term mentor is derived from Homer's Odyssey, as a character named Mentor is charged with looking after and providing guidance to Odysseus' son Telemachus when Odysseus leaves to fight the Trojan war. The narrative of Telemachus and Mentor is then continued in the story Les Adventures de Telemaque (Felon, 1699), where the first recorded modern usage of the term can be found. Through such representations, our cultural understanding of a mentor is that of a guide, a trusted advisor who will support and protect their ward. Philip (2000) defines this classic conception of a mentor as an 'older experienced guide who is acceptable to the young person and who can help ease the transition to adulthood by a mix of support and challenge', and this idea of youth mentoring as an aid for youth transitions has been taken up enthusiastically in the USA since the 1970s, with the formalisation of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA), and more recently in the UK. However, one of the reasons that mentoring has become such a popular youth intervention is due to some early positive results in randomised controlled trials (Grossman & Tierney, 1998) and policy makers desire for 'off the shelf' interventions that possess this type of evidence base (Meier, 2008). As a result, the current attitude towards youth mentoring is that it is a 'catch all' intervention that can be operationalised in any scenario where there are young people in need of support, regardless of the context or the lives and needs of the young people.

Despite this construction of youth mentoring as a context-free, catch all intervention, it is important to understand that fundamentally, mentoring is an instrument of social learning where the mentee is expected to take on a particular set of values and practices in order to transition into adulthood successfully (Baker & Maguire, 2005). As such, the practice of mentoring has always been contextually driven, as it meets the needs and mirrors the values of the time and place in which it occurs (Baker & Maguire, 2005). Thus, there is a paradox in our thinking about mentoring; whilst it is being used as a catch all intervention, disembodied from its social, economic and political contexts (Haggerty, 1986), it is difficult to better understand and improve mentoring programmes while it is thought of in this way, because mentoring relationships will always be influenced by underlying values and motivations.

The following chapter will track how and why youth mentoring came into favour in the USA, and then gained popularity in the UK as an alternative to other forms of youth work. It will explore the different ways that youth mentoring was justified and theorised throughout these phases of development, and will argue that youth mentoring in its current form requires more understanding as it not only carries this baggage from the past, but also the current values and ideals of policy makers. While individual mentoring programmes may appear straightforward on the surface, as a method of matching volunteers with disadvantaged youth, they are shaped by the underlying motivations and practices of the programme, and the influence of these practices needs to be better understood.

The first section will look at the different philanthropic efforts, and the ideas about childhood that they encompassed, that led to the emergence of youth mentoring. The second section will explore how evidence-based research began to dominate social policy in both the US and UK. In the USA, this meant that youth mentoring was tested within this paradigm and came out with favourable

results; as a consequence, youth mentoring was transported to the UK without much consideration to the different context. Due to the competition for funding and the changing landscape of social interventions, in which religious and philanthropic responses to social problems have given way to more technical and scientific responses (Nolas, 2015), theory has been applied to categorise different mentoring programmes. However, the underlying models of different programmes, and how they influence participants, have not been fully acknowledged. Within these different models one of the main elements that is missing are the young people themselves. The way that they are positioned within the intervention needs to be better articulated, and the third section of this chapter will discuss the analytical tools that I will use in order to better understand how the figure of the child is imagined within mentoring programmes, organisations and policies.

2.1 Youth Mentoring and Childhood

In the third section of this chapter I will describe how contemporary youth mentoring practices can be understood by taking a childhood and youth studies perspective, in which current fears about childhood (that childhood is 'in crisis') are conceptualised as a repetition of previous 'moral panics' about childhood (Kehily, 2010), and youth mentoring has been positioned as an adequate aid to counteract these concerns. Interestingly, whilst the emergence of youth mentoring did not follow a clear path when it first appeared at the beginning of the 20th Century, it was at this time also linked to a 'moral panic' about childhood. Thus, it is necessary to understand how the establishment of youth mentoring in its original form was intertwined with understandings of childhood, to then later make links regarding contemporary youth mentoring and social policies.

2.1.1 Ideas about Childhood in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries

As described by Cunningham (2005), patterns of change in the experience of childhood across Europe and North America have been similar. Prior to the nineteenth century, policy towards children (from both the state and philanthropists) was either concerned for the child's soul, or for creating and maintaining a future workforce; however, whilst both concerns remained into the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a further concern emerged – to 'save' children for the enjoyment of childhood (Cunningham, 2005). This view of childhood was influenced by a romantic sensibility, which imbued childhood with a sense of innocence, purity and natural goodness that was seen to be at risk of contamination by the corrupt outside world (Kehily, 2004). As such, children and childhood needed to be protected.

This romantic view of childhood was captured by Wordsworth's Ode (1807) and as Cunningham (2005) describes, became particularly popular between 1860 and 1930, in part due to the child heroes of Dickens. Children were seen as spiritual and close to God, and an ideal childhood was one that allowed children to creatively and freely express themselves (Kehily, 2010). Linked to this was an idea that children were the embodiment of a force of goodness that could rescue adults (Cunningham, 2005). Children and childhood, therefore became entwined with ideas of interiority and the self, as adults began to place more importance on the events of their own childhood in understanding the adult that they had become. This was embodied in the claim by Wordsworth in the poem My Heart Leaps Up (1802) that 'The Child is the father of the Man'. Thus, according to Cunningham (2005) romanticism 'embedded in the European and American mind a sense of importance of childhood, a belief that childhood should be happy, and a hope that the qualities of childhood, if they could be preserved in adulthood, might help redeem the adult world' (p72).

This view of childhood was the impetus of many philanthropic projects. Due in part to urbanisation, philanthropists felt that there was a great distance between these ideals of childhood and the

actuality of the experiences of working-class children (Cunningham, 2005). It was within this philanthropic landscape that youth mentoring first emerged.

2.1.2 Philanthropy and Child Welfare

Urbanisation in both the UK and the USA was marked by wide-scale poverty and destitution that effected the working class. Within this, children were characterised as being victims of their environment and the poor social conditions that they experienced. Child delinquency was a particular concern, as it was felt that exhibiting delinquent behaviour (i.e. stealing, smoking, and truancy) was a sign that a young person was succumbing to the cycle of poverty, moral decay, and social decline that they faced in their environment (Baker & Maguire, 2005). With a desire to 'save' children from the perceived negative influences within their environment, and to promote the romantic ideals of childhood, philanthropists aimed to connect children with 'networks of good influence' (Cunningham, 2005). Such networks may be seen as early forms of mentoring.

An example of a philanthropic group in the UK that aimed to make these networks was the Charity Organisation Society (COS), which was established towards the end of the 19th Century. Colley (2002) drawing on the work of Novak (1988) describes how the ruling-class initially attempted to quell their concerns regarding urbanisation by giving money to the poor through charity; however, this form of indiscriminate giving was seen to be both economically and ideologically unsatisfactory as a long-term plan. The COS believed that poverty was not only caused by material conditions, but more so by a lack of morals in the poor; thus, they felt that the working class needed to demonstrate moral values such as self-denial, temperance and forethought, before receiving charity. This association between morality and poverty, and the idea that some groups are poor due to issues beyond their control (and are thus 'deserving' of help) and some groups are poor due to moral deficiency (and are thus 'undeserving') has a history that goes further back than this time period (and continues into current social policy, as will be discussed in Section 2.3.3). In Britain, Welshman (2013) suggests that such values can be found as far back as the seventeenth-century Poor Law, in which effort was made to distinguish between deserving and undeserving claimants. In terms of the COS, a nationwide voluntary work programme was established, in which middle-class volunteers befriended working-class families with the purpose of 'presenting a moral example of the worth of diligence, self-discipline and thrift' (Colley, 2002, p266). The volunteers would then make reports monitoring the families' progress in taking on this moral guidance, and families would be classed as either 'deserving poor' (and received charity) or 'undeserving poor' depending on their performance.

Freedman (1995) describes a similar approach in America referred to as the 'friendly visiting' movement, which was directly inspired by the COS. According to Freedman, 'friendly visiting' was a voluntary movement that involved the establishment of a personal relationship between a 'genteel visitor' and an individual or family living in poverty. Like the COS, rather than providing money or practical relief, the impetus behind these relationships was that the visitor would provide moral guidance. For relationships that involved young people, it was hoped that they would be educated into adopting explicitly middle-class forms of activity and aspirations. Freedman thus suggests that these relationships could be seen as a form of early youth mentoring in which the mentor was expected to rescue the child from the perceived poor parenting skills of their working-class families.

The 'friendly visiting' movement suffered a fairly rapid demise, and this was seen to be due to resistance from communities, as people preferred to turn to friends and family when they needed guidance and support, rather than a 'genteel visitor' (Novak, 1988; Freedman, 1995). The COS

however, continued until 1946 at which point it was renamed as the Family Welfare Association and positioned itself as a form of support for families alongside the welfare state. Today the charity still operates under the name Family Action, and aims to offer practical, emotional, and financial support to families experiencing poverty (Family Action website).

The approach of the COS and the 'friendly visiting' movement has been criticised for a number of reasons. For example, participants are characterised as passive recipients of the intervention, and the idea that moral guidance can offset 'bad' influences within the environment is overly simplistic (Freedman, 1995). In turn, it has been suggested that the philanthropy of this era was about class control, in that the wealthy were forcing middle class values and ideals onto the poor (Jones, 1999), and working-class people had to submit to surveillance before receiving charity. As Cunningham (2005) notes, philanthropy had opened up working-class life to public intervention.

2.1.3 Youth Justice and Formalising Youth Mentoring through the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America

While elements of modern mentoring can be seen in the work of the COS and the 'friendly visiting' movement, Baker and Maguire (2005) traced the emergence of formal youth mentoring programmes to the establishment of the juvenile court system in America.

The first juvenile court in America was established in Chicago in 1899, and Baker and Maguire describe how a group of philanthropists, including Lucy Flower, Julia Lathrop and Jane Adams influenced the development of mentoring within this system. Flower and Lathrop were members of the Chicago Women's club, a philanthropic organisation of affluent women who took an active role in social reform, and Jane Adams was the founder of a renowned settlement home called Hull House. Settlement homes were residences that were established by charitable and religious organisations in impoverished working-class neighbourhoods. With parallels to the COS and the 'friendly visiting' movement, settlement homes involved people from outside of the community (in this case, artists, clergy, professors and students) providing for the social, economic, cultural, artistic and intellectual needs of the community.

In terms of the juvenile court system, Baker and Maguire state that this group of women personally served as guardians and advocates for young people charged at the courts. Additionally, realising that the need for such guardians was greater than their numbers, they raised the necessary funds to hire the courts' first probation officers. These probation officers formed the Juvenile Protective Association, and rather than being trained professionals, they were characterised as socially minded individuals who felt that children should not be to blame for the delinquency that they exhibited, as it was a result of the abhorrent circumstances that they were living in. The probation officers thus sought to provide care, guidance and nurturing to the young people that they formed relationships with, in an attempt to help them overcome their limited environments and facilitate positive development. Baker and Maguire (2005) thus suggest that probation officers were, in many ways, among the first youth mentors. In addition, they describe how Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA), the most well-known formal youth mentoring programme, was founded within the same time period and also related to the Juvenile Court movement.

According to Baker and Maguire (2005) the formal Big Brothers of America organisation came about through the parallel work of two different men, Ernest Coulter and Irvin Westheimer. Coulter was a journalist in New York and after the New York Times published a report in 1902 regarding the efforts

of a juvenile court judge, Julius M. Mayer, to secure 90 'influential' men to befriend children brought before the court, Coulter was inspired to leave his profession and go to work for Mayer as a court clerk. While working for Mayer, he picked up and continued Mayer's efforts to recruit mentors to serve New York's 'disenfranchised' youth. In 1913 Coulter published a book entitled The Children in the Shadow, where he called on men to be a 'Big Brother' to disadvantaged boys by saving them from the law and offering them justice 'the kind of justice only the brother can give – the love, the friendship, for which his life has been starving' (pp.xv-xvi). At around the same time, in Cincinnati, Westheimer, a businessman, is said to have witnessed a child rummaging through a rubbish bin in search of food. Moved by witnessing this, Westheimer is said to have befriended the boy, and to have encouraged others to also befriend disadvantaged Cincinnati youth, until in 1910, the Big Brothers of Cincinnati was formed. Thus, there is some debate as to who founded Big Brothers as a formal organisation but both men are credited as being influential. As the Big Brothers movement was taking hold, Big Sister organisations also began to appear, some through philanthropic organisations such as Hull House, but also through religious organisations such the New York Jesuit Big Sisters. The two movements ran in parallel but maintained separate identities until 1978 when they merged in the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Today there are approximately 375 agencies within the BBBSA network (Blakeslee & Keller, 2012).

This account of the founding of the BBBSA, and the other philanthropic movements that fed into the emergence of youth mentoring, highlight the different motivations encompassed within mentoring. Mentoring practice seemed to involve a number of different elements including love, friendship, moral support and guidance, but also control and the enforcing of middle-class values and beliefs. Through the affiliation with the juvenile court system (in the form of the Juvenile Protection Agency and also Coulter's role as a court clerk) mentoring was seen as a way of protecting young people from delinquent behaviour that could lead to their involvement with the courts. Westheimer's response of befriending rather than giving money to disadvantaged young people, and the 'friendly visiting' movement's similar ideology expressed the idea that mentoring could help young people overcome the negative aspects of their 'limited environments' by taking on middle-class values and aspirations. As mentioned by Freedman, this limited environment also included the perceived poor parenting skills of the working-classes. To a certain degree many of these motivations still subtly exist within modern ideas of mentoring, however they are less explicit or articulated in different ways, and this is something that the chapter will discuss further at the end of Section 2.

2.2 Youth Mentoring and Evidence Based Practice

Whilst BBBSA programmes (among other mentoring programmes) grew in popularity throughout America, enthusiasm for youth mentoring in the UK did not fully develop until the 1990s. This was linked to the rise of evidence-based practice (EBP) gaining popularity within the public sector as a method of assessing the validity of interventions, organising services, and rationing public spending. Through a so-called 'evidence hierarchy', evidence-based practice privileges interventions that perform well in randomised controlled trials (RCT), and on the face of it, youth mentoring appears as such an intervention. The following section will detail how, within this dominant paradigm of EBP, initial positive results from a large scale RCT of a BBBSA programme and the application of a theoretical model for the influence of mentoring, led to youth mentoring becoming a popular form of youth intervention in the eyes of policy makers, and characterised it as a context-free, 'catch all' intervention. As EBP was a transatlantic movement, UK policy makers also began to turn to youth mentoring to fulfil youth policy aims and objectives. Due to competition for funding and the

increased codification of interventions, meaning that religious and philanthropic responses to social problems gave way to more technical and scientific responses (Nolas, 2015), youth mentoring research in the UK has begun to look at differences between mentoring programmes, in terms of the theories that they employ and the audiences they intend to help. While this has gone some way to counteract the idea that mentoring is a 'catch all' intervention, I will argue that a more in-depth and situated understanding of youth mentoring is still required. Within this it is necessary to explore how programme practices, the lives and experiences of the mentees, and the background and approach of the mentors can influence youth mentoring.

2.2.1 Evaluation Studies of Youth Mentoring

Originating in medical practice, the EBP movement championed the need for medical practices to be more firmly grounded in scientific evidence as opposed to consultant authority and age-old ways of doing medicine, and since the 1990s has become an influential approach to social policy across the board (Lilienfeld et al., 2013). EBP offers an approach to social intervention framed by 'what works' according to RCT results. Within this paradigm, data from randomised controlled trials are considered the strongest forms of evidence (Lilienfeld et al., 2013). The dominance of this approach is in part due to policy makers, who feel that interventions that can demonstrate results in this way are more reliable and, therefore, are perceived to reduce the inherent uncertainty of social interventions.

In terms of youth mentoring, evidence of its benefits for young people was produced when a non-profit organisation that supports youth interventions, Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), conducted a large scale experimental evaluation of the impact of participation in BBBSA programmes (Tierney, Grossman & Resch, 1995; Grossman & Tierney, 1998). Between 1992 and 1993, 1,138 young people (aged 10-16) applying to have a mentor through BBBSA programmes across America were randomly assigned to either a 'treatment group', who would be immediately matched with a mentor, or to a control group, who were put on a mentor waiting list for 18 months. Using interview and survey data at baseline and 18-month follow up assessments, the researchers found that young people assigned with a mentor were less likely to initiate alcohol and drug use; were less likely to hit someone; skipped school less often; felt more academic competence; and had more positive parent and peer relationships compared to their control group counterparts (Tierney, Grossman & Resch, 1995).

In an analysis of how youth mentoring aligns with public policy in the US, Walker (2005), suggests that this study was particularly influential in the growth and popularity of youth mentoring programmes. The centrist political orientation and practical conservatism of the Democratic Party, then in power in the US, like their UK counterparts, New Labour, meant that greater caution and limits were applied to social provisions, resulting in 'the outcome movement', a desire for 'proof' that social policy was working. For youth mentoring, the P/PV evaluation of BBBSA was the very form of proof that policy makers desired.

EBP asks not only whether an intervention works, but also why it works, and this explanation was offered by Rhodes and colleagues (2005, 2006) using the same BBBSA data as the P/PV evaluation to produce a model of youth mentoring. Drawing on theory and research from child and adolescent development, Rhodes posited that through a strong interpersonal connection between a mentor and mentee, various processes within a mentoring relationship can influence a young person's social-emotional, cognitive, and identity development. These processes are proposed to act in concert with one another over time, and the associated improvements can manifest themselves in observable outcomes such as school grades, emotional wellbeing, or behaviour. Within the model, it is also acknowledged that the effects of mentoring are likely to be influenced by various mediating

and moderating factors, such as the quality and the longevity of the mentoring relationship, and the young person's previous attachments.
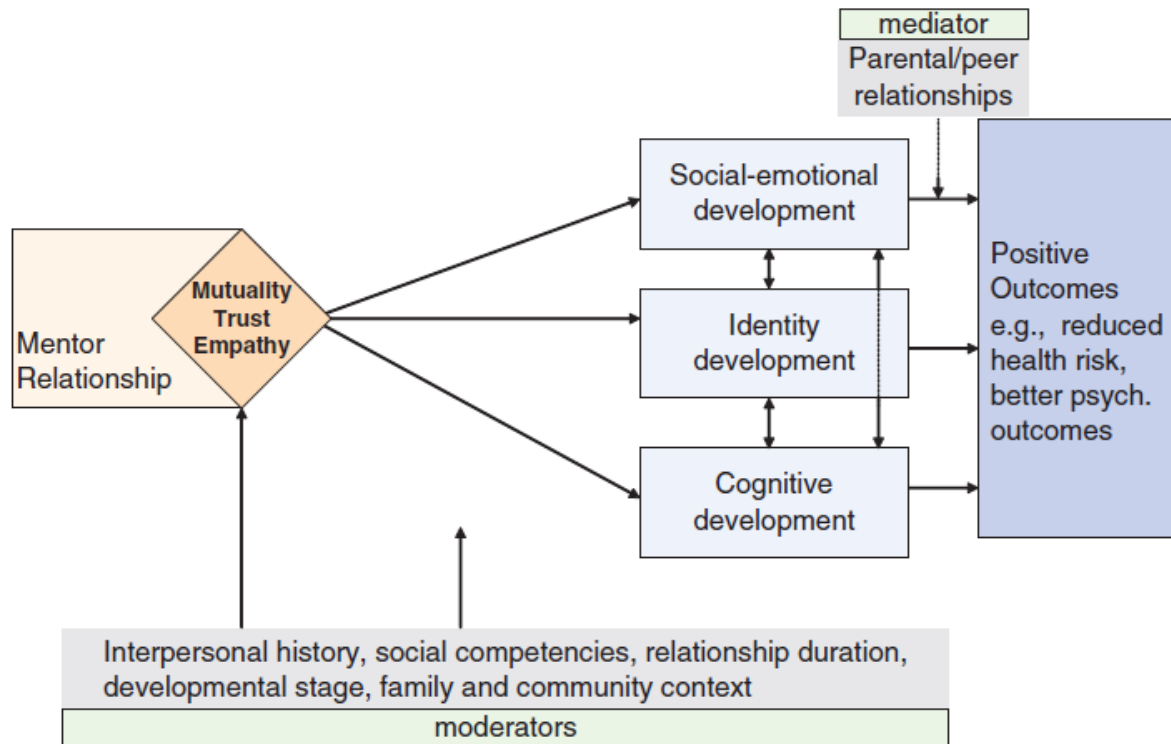
Figure 1: Rhodes (2005) Model for Youth Mentoring

Rhodes proposes several ways in which mentoring relationships may influence the social-emotional wellbeing and development of a mentee, and uses attachment theory to explicate some of these ideas. Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) originated as a way of understanding the relationship between a child and their primary care-giver. It proposes that if the care-giver meets the child's needs through attuned interactions, the child will form a 'secure' attachment to the care-giver. This attachment relationship will lead to the development of the child's 'internal working model' (Bowlby, 1969), which refers to the child's mental representations for understanding the world, the self and others. Thus, if the child develops a secure internal working model, they will see the world as a safe place, will understand themselves as valuable, and will view themselves as effective when interacting with others. If the care-giver does not meet the child's needs, the child will form either an ambivalent, avoidant or disorganised attachment, and this will have a negative influence on the child's internal working model.

Within youth mentoring, it is proposed that the introduction of a consistent and loving relationship, other than the primary care-giver can influence a person's internal working model. It is suggested that an individual's working model can be modified at any time during their life (Howe et al., 1999) and Rhodes argues that the introduction of a mentor during adolescence may be a particularly salient time to influence a person's internal working model, as this stage of development involves increased perspective taking and interpersonal understandings, whilst at the same time the young person may be seeking to gain some autonomy from parental control while exploring their own identity. Thus, a mentor could become an alternative attachment figure to the mentee's parents, and if the mentee has experienced previous negative attachments, the mentoring relationship may

offer opportunities for corrective emotional experiences that may generalise to improve the mentee's perspective of other social relationships (Rhodes, 2002).

In terms of cognitive development, Rhodes proposes that mentoring relationships can expose a young person to new opportunities for learning and intellectual challenge. Rhodes uses Vygotsky's (1978) theory of a 'zone of proximal development' in which learning takes place, to describe how mentoring relationships might do this. The zone of proximal development is the range between what a young person can achieve when problem solving independently and what he or she can achieve when working under adult guidance. Rhodes suggests that if interactions between mentor and mentee occur within this zone then the mental capacities of the young person may improve. Rhodes states that such interactions occur within a mentoring pair through the active exchange of ideas, allowing the young person to appropriate ideas from the mentor. Thus, Rhodes isn't necessarily suggesting that the mentee learns by taking part in educational activities with their mentor, but instead that the kind of conversations a mentoring pair have can nurture the young person's ideas and push them in the complexity of their thinking.

With regards to identity development, Rhodes' model posits that by serving as a role model and advocate, a mentor may contribute to a young person's positive identity development. Rhodes mentions several theories regarding identity development. For example, she discusses Markus and Nurius' (1986) ideas of 'possible selves' which refers to an individual's idea of what he or she might become, would like to become, and fears becoming; and relates this to a young person observing and comparing the adults that they know to inform their ideas and behaviour. If a mentor is seen as a positive role model, then this may influence the mentee's conception of their future identity.

There are a number of issues with this approach to understanding youth mentoring, in terms of both the practice of subjecting youth mentoring to RCT and the subsequent application of theory to explicate the results.

With regards to using RCT to evaluate youth mentoring programmes, it has been argued that this method ignores the impact of the environments in which the mentoring takes place (Brady & O'Regan, 2009). RCT is a positivist method of research, and as such, follows the assumption that social reality is objective and can be reduced and understood in terms of laws, through the application of logical analysis to empirical data. Thus, in terms of youth mentoring, by comparing the changes in a group of mentored young people to a group of non-mentored young people, this research design is assuming a linear form of causality (mentoring caused the mentee to change). As such, the context in which the mentoring is taking place and the motivation of the participants is completely ignored. These studies do not engage in understanding the mediating or moderating influences of a young person's family, schooling, or community relationships and wider feelings of belonging to a national, religious or other meaningful grouping. As such, the practice of researching youth mentoring in which context is restricted to the dyad, and the finding of a somewhat positive outcome, has contributed to a characterisation of youth mentoring as a context-free intervention that can work anywhere.

It should also be noted that the positive results found in the P/PV study have been criticised for a number of reasons following subsequent analyses of the data. Firstly, during the 18-month period of the experiment, both the treatment and control groups showed increased difficulties in different life domains such as academic, social-emotional, behavioural and relational; the young people with mentors just experienced these difficulties at a slower rate (Rhodes, 2002). Secondly, when assessed using a conventional metric of standardised mean difference, as DuBois and colleagues (2002) did in a meta-analysis of several mentoring evaluation studies, the size of the improvements made by the

mentored group in relation to the non-mentored group were relatively small. However, some researchers and policy-makers still hold up the study as 'proof' that mentoring works (Meier, 2008).

In terms of the underlying explanatory theory, the main issue is that Rhodes's model posits such a wide range of possible processes that can occur within mentoring, and these processes are hypothesised to manifest themselves in a wide range of observable outcomes. This has contributed to the thinking that youth mentoring is a 'catch all' intervention. Rhodes did note that certain mediating and moderating factors may influence the benefits of mentoring, such as the quality and longevity of the relationship and the mentees previous attachments, but this ignores many other elements that could have an influence on young people's experience of mentoring such as their friendships and peer groups, their family's social and economic capital, their migration status and community relationships, as well as the influences of history (Elder, Modell and Parke, 1993), all of which are known from longitudinal cohort studies to influence life chances and outcomes (Pearson, 2016).

In summary, the use of RCT and the wide range of benefits posited by Rhodes have created a characterisation of mentoring as a 'catch all', context-free intervention that can be utilised in many different times and places. Currently, programme evaluations are the most prevalent form of published youth mentoring research (Blakeslee & Keller, 2012), however, while results are often positive, a meta-analysis by DuBois and colleagues (2011) has found that the influence on young people is relatively small. Thus, it seems necessary for a move away from the dominance of evaluation studies, and for research to turn its focus onto understanding how youth mentoring works in relation to different contexts. This would aid a more situated understanding of youth mentoring that could counteract the current conception that it is a 'catch all' intervention.

2.2.2 Importing Mentoring to the UK

In the UK, evidence-based practice had also begun to dominate youth provisions, and mentoring has become a particularly popular choice for working with vulnerable young people especially, for a number of reasons. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, continuing pressure on state funding for social work, criminal justice and education meant that youth work funding was neglected. As a result, there was a shift in attitudes of policy makers away from funding 'open' provisions for all young people (such as youth clubs), towards issue-based work targeting 'at-risk' youth that could produce 'concrete' outcomes (Smith, 2013). Additionally, whereas state-sponsorship of youth provisions had previously involved the giving of grants to local community groups and organisations, focus shifted towards meeting targets set by central government, meaning that a culture of commissioning and contracting larger organisations with bid-making infrastructure was favoured (Smith, 2013). These organisations often integrated mentoring into their services because it was a method that lent itself to evaluation, and appeared to have a proven track record in the USA.

Under the 1997 New Labour Government, youth mentoring emerged as a major element of several strategies concerned with youth transitions in particular, such as the New Deal and the Learning Gateway (Colley, 2002). In understanding this new enthusiasm for mentoring, Freedman (1999) notes the similarities between the economic and social context of the time and that of the Victorian era and the rise of the COS; unemployment and poverty caused by technological change, large-scale migration of working people, and capitalist economic competition on a global scale. All of which, according to Freedman, contributed to governmental concerns to combat the threat of social unrest while reducing public expenditure on welfare.

In particular, the New Labour government embraced youth mentoring as a way of combating social exclusion among young people (Philip & Spratt, 2007). The support from the government was extended to both formal mentoring programmes in their own right and to mentoring elements within larger government programmes of training and education; the most well-known example of this being the Connexions Service, which provided young people with paid personal advisors and volunteer mentors, who were both expected to form one-to-one relationships with youths in a bid to provide personal support and career guidance. Whilst this service was initially intended to be a universal provision to a general youth population, with targeted support for those at risk of 'dropping out', due to the poor articulation of the service its main focus became working with young people thought to be vulnerable (Smith, 2007).

In 2005, the government announced the end of Connexions through the Green Paper Youth Matters (DfES, 2005), stating that it was planning a 'new targeted youth support service' which was designed to build on the successful elements of Connexions (Philip & Spratt, 2007). However, mentoring was still maintained through other government led programmes, such as the National Mentoring Pilot Project, which was developed specifically to bring young people into higher education. In this case, mentors were recruited from undergraduate students in colleges and universities to work with young people from disadvantaged areas. Overall, through such government led programmes and stand-alone mentoring programmes, thousands of volunteers were being recruited and trained to act as youth mentors. This trend has continued through the Con/Lib-Dem coalition (2010-2015) and Conservative (2015-to date) governments, justified by austerity policies which were introduced following the 2008 banking crisis, and the related policy focus on 'The Big Society', a continuation of the outsourced state provision of social care through charities and voluntary organisations. Additionally, mentoring networks and projects have been found to be particularly adept at tapping into corporate sponsorship (Philip & Spratt, 2007).

During this period, there was some criticism for the way that youth mentoring interventions do not pay enough attention to the wider contexts in which young people act and make choices (Liabo, Lucas & Roberts, 2005). These criticisms have been said to reflect how the individualistic nature of youth mentoring is at odds with youth work in the UK, which traditionally works at both group and individual levels (Philip, 2003). Despite these concerns, Colley (2002) notes that since the mid-90s youth mentoring in the UK has gone through an unprecedented degree of official and systematic organisation. Within this systemisation, due to the nature of the funding landscape and the protocols of funding bids, some delineation of youth mentoring has been performed. Philip and Spratt (2007) present a typology of youth mentoring programmes in the UK through a review of quantitative and qualitative data examining the implementation of different programmes (Figure 2). The purpose of the typology was to sort existing programmes into categories, so that programmes could better articulate their approach. Within this, Philip and Spratt identified different theoretical frameworks underlying the different approaches. For the purpose of the current study, I will further explicate what they refer to as 'compensatory' mentoring as this is the category that I feel the mentoring programme that is the subject of this study is most in line with.

Mentoring Forms	(i) Compensatory	(ii) Instrumental	(iii) Expanding opportunities	(iv) Reduction of unwanted behaviours	(v) Integration into community
Underlying assumptions	Deficit model of yp/family	Remedy absence of or missed opportunities to build expertise	Deficit model: lack social capital and access to networks.	Disruptive/ challenging behaviour often linked to schools	Yp alienated from mainstream community – often linked with (i)
Theoretical framework – (explicit or implicit)	Attachment theory/ resilience/social capital (bridging)/ developmental psych	Mentoring as 'professional friendship'- Youth transitions Social support	Ecology of development Social capital and social inclusion	Cognitive behavioural therapy; resilience; social capital	Ecology of development; Attachment; resilience;
Target groups (mentees)	Children from single parent family; isolated yp; known family difficulties	'underachieving', disadvantaged, potentially at risk, esp young men	'underachieving' Possible school problems, poor background	NEET; substance misusers, yp in criminal justice system	Yp from marginalised groups eg minority ethnic
Target groups (mentors)	Male 'role models' favoured but majority women	Volunteers and sometime paid staff. Skills in key areas, ability to relate to yp	Volunteers ideally with business background/ knowledge. Complement work of paid staff	volunteers to complement work of paid staff	'community' members – often unclear which community

Mentoring Forms	(i) Compensatory	(ii) Instrumental	(iii) Expanding opportunities	(iv) Reduction of unwanted behaviours	(v) Integration into community
Strategies	Building social skills	Develop relationship via shared interest/activity	Link with individuals/agencies and young person; build skills and confidence	Confidence/ resilience, explore alternatives, challenge behaviour, advocacy	Confidence, solidarity, strengthen communities that may feel under threat
Level of emotional engagement	Important – befriending key element and building trust key	Relationship may develop beyond the immediate tasks – mentor determines this.	Variable – focus on developing skills. May be seen as inappropriate	Viewed as key but highly variable	Important – often aims to rebuild relationships
Age groups	10-25	10-25	15+	13+	Primary age- young adults
Duration	Ideally flexible but not less than I year	Ideally flexible – may be intensive rather than long term	Variable – schemes vary. Mentoring often ended if yp leaves employment scheme	Variable – may be linked to employment scheme	Variable – aim for longstanding
Style	Classic	Classic, peer and group	Classic e-mentoring	Classic and group	Classic, peer and group

Figure 2: Philip & Spratt (2007) Typology of Mentoring

According to Philip and Spratt (2007) compensatory mentoring is a form of mentoring that can help compensate for unsatisfactory existing relationships in a young person's life. They suggest that the theories that underpin this form of youth mentoring are attachment theory, resilience theory and social capital theory. In terms of attachment theory, Philip and Spratt's thinking is similar to that of

Rhodes' model; that the introduction of a mentor into a young person's life can influence their internal working model and therefore improve their sense of self and their relationships with others. Resilience theory, which was originally conceptualised in an attempt to characterise the observed phenomenon that some young people are able to overcome adversities in disadvantaged situations whilst others aren't (Rutter, 1995), is used to express how a key relationship with a mentor can offer a young person guidance to make 'good' choices in a risk-filled society through support and role-modelling (Liabo, Lucas & Roberts, 2005). Social capital theory is drawn-on within mentoring literatures to explain the connections between individuals and their social networks (Coleman, 1988). Putman (2000) differentiates between bonding social capital, the social cement that brings a community together, and bridging social capital, the sharing of social capital between communities. Within compensatory mentoring, Philip and Spratt suggest that a mentor can offer bridging capital, thus helping to broaden a young person's horizons, providing them with new opportunities and helping them move 'up and out' of unsatisfactory communities. As mentioned, through attachment theory the young person's sense of self will be improved, thus aiding this process of taking advantage of this capital.

Breaking compensatory mentoring down in this way reveals a number of issues with the state of youth mentoring in the UK, and also a number of similarities between modern mentoring and mentoring of the 'child saving' and social reformist era. In the UK, mentoring has been most strongly embraced as a method to combat social exclusion, and as demonstrated, compensatory mentoring is expected to counteract social exclusion by aiding young people to avoid the 'risks' within their own community and make connections with wider society. Thus, the mentoring relationship is conceptualised as being separate from the young person's existing social network; the mentor identifies problems in the mentee's life, or potential in the mentee that cannot currently be realised, and offers advice and guidance. This interpretation of mentoring has been criticised for the way it constructs the mentee as a passive recipient of information (Philip, 2000), which parallels Freedman's (1995) criticisms of the 'friendly visiting' movement. Furthermore, this approach has been criticised for ignoring how structural issues and the position that the young person's community, class or ethnic group may constrain their development (Liabo, Lucas & Roberts, 2005); although arguably this model implicitly understands young people's communities as a source of risk rather than resources and thus seeks to bridge them away from it. Again, this has parallels with the criticisms that previous forms of mentoring perceived working-class parents and communities as 'bad', and that the assumption that moral guidance could help a young person to overcome these perceived issues was overly simplistic.

2.2.3 Who are the mentors?

Within this form of compensatory mentoring, Philip and Spratt (2007) suggest that the 'target group' for mentors are male 'role models', however the majority of mentors are female (see Figure 2). Their study does not expand on this, but to gain a more nuanced understanding of youth mentoring relationships, it seems necessary to consider not only the underlying assumptions of the mentoring programme, but also the mentors themselves and their own values and assumptions that they might bring.

Mentoring literature suggests that in both the USA and the UK, the majority of mentors are female and there is a lack of mentors from ethnic minority backgrounds (Philip, 2000; Golden et al, 2002; Grossman & Garry, 1997). There is little evidence regarding the social class of mentors, but some UK research has suggested that they tend to be predominantly middle class (Philip, 2000; Colley, 2001).

In a quantitative study using the same BBBS data as the previously mentioned P/PV study, Gaddis (2012) looked at the influence of mentors on whether their mentees had improved in academic performance and behaviour. Gaddis found that the level of trust that a mentee had for their mentor was the most influential factor on the mentee's academic and behavioural improvements, and that differences of race or social class did not have an influence on trust levels. Ultimately, Gaddis argued that if a mentor did not act as authority figure and showed that they cared for their mentee, they were likely to build a trusting, and therefore effective, mentoring relationship.

Gaddis was somewhat surprised by these findings having previously reviewed literature regarding the influence of similarly and difference on other forms of relationships. Gaddis highlighted literature that posits that racial similarity results in more intimate and longer-lasting relationships, and that an individual's network consists of more relationships based on racial and class similarity than difference (Homans 1950; Laumann 1966; Lazarsfeld and Merton 1954; cited in Gaddis, 2012). Pawson (2004) suggests that within youth mentoring, such similarly may be helpful in creating an immediate 'comfort zone' from which a longer relationship may be developed, whereas mentoring pairs that do not share such similarities may have to work harder to find ways to relate to each other in the early stages of a relationship.

Overall, the mentoring literature seems to suggests that as long as mentoring pairs can build trust they can overcome differences, however, racial or class homogeneity may help with initial relationship formation. Other than suggesting that a mentor should not act as an authority figure, the research does not explore the ways in which trust may be formed (especially if mentoring pairs do not share the same race or class), or what obstacles may inhibit some relationships from getting to this place of trust. Sociological and cultural researchers looking at class processes and practices have highlighted the previously unacknowledged positioning of the middle-class experience as 'normal' while the working-class experience is pathologized and diminished (e.g. Reay, 2006; Reay, 2007; Skeggs, 2004). As previously discussed there are underlying assumptions of youth mentoring that could be interpreted as critical of the young person's community and their position in society; thus, there may be a risk that middle-class mentors may not respect or appreciate their mentee's lived experiences. Skeggs (2002) suggests that recognition is important, as the naming and marking of experiences through recognition enables experiences to be understood. Thus, even if mentors are respectful of their mentee's position, mentees matched with a middle-class mentor may miss out on making sense of their experiences in this way.

Relatedly, Reay (2007) looked at the experience of working-class and middle-class pupils in education and suggested that 'petty mundane humiliations and slights of social class' (p917) infuse interactions between teachers and pupils (as well as between pupils), with working-class pupils reporting feeling 'looked down on' by their teachers. Thus, it is possible that working-class mentees could experience similar difficulties in relationships with middle-class mentors. Referring back to Skeggs (2004), the recognition of being 'othered' can produce feelings of shame. As Skeggs notes, shame involves recognising that you are being judged and measured against standards established by others. Ultimately then, it seems that there is a level of risk when matching mentoring pairs and a possibility that social distance could be detrimental to the likelihood of mentoring pairs building trust.

In sum, evaluation studies of youth mentoring that measure improvements in young people cannot fully capture what is really happening within youth mentoring; how programme practices, socio-economic and political contexts, and the social positioning of both mentees and their mentors can

influence experiences of youth mentoring. The development of a typology of youth mentoring programmes has gone some way towards explaining how different forms of youth mentoring might operate and alerts us to the traditions that they are part of. However, more understanding is needed in terms of how programme practices and the way programmes position young people within mentoring can influence mentoring relationships for both mentors and mentees. At the centre of each typology of mentoring is a particular construction of the child and their needs, which then licenses a certain kind of approach and relationship with the mentor and the mentoring organisation. In the following section, I will outline the theoretical tools that I employ in this study to interrogate the programme practices that are the focus of this thesis.

2.3 Youth Mentoring and the Imagined Child

The construction of the child and their needs within each typology of mentoring is related to different ideas about childhood and associated social policies. For compensatory mentoring, the constructed child figure is one whose family and environment is inadequate and thus requires compensating from an outside source. Understanding who the mentored child is and how they are positioned within youth mentoring in order to guide or justify programme practices is something that has been overlooked in the youth mentoring literature. The majority of youth mentoring evaluation studies do not consider the child in this way, as they generally define the child in terms of the widespread psychological model of biological age and stages, and focus on the dyadic mentoring relationship rather than taking a more holistic view of the mentee's experiences.

An approach that enables the construction of the mentored child to be explored comes from childhood and youth studies. The interdisciplinary field of childhood and youth studies views childhood as a social construction (e.g. James & Prout, 1997; James et al., 1998; Jenks, 1996). This means that rather than being seen as a 'natural' or universal feature of human groups, childhood is understood as socially produced (Thorne, 2007). Looking at childhood in this way allows for critical cultural analysis that does not take social policy at face value and instead questions how social and political discourse constructs the figure of the child.

In this section, I will describe how childhood and youth studies identifies current fears about childhood as a dominant discourse that childhood is 'in crisis'. Within this discourse, children are constructed as not having a childhood, and parents alone cannot be trusted to provide them with one. Like the fears about childhood expressed in the late 19th and early 20th century (as described in Section 1), this current conception of childhood stems from a romantic discourse. Thus, social policy is not only concerned with enabling children to 'have' a childhood, it is also focussed on ensuring that parents are fulfilling their parental responsibilities by raising their children's aspirations and enabling them to fulfil their potential. To justify this approach of state intervention within the family, a certain figure of the child is constructed. Later in this thesis I will argue that it is the same child figure used within this discourse that is used within compensatory mentoring. Thus, at the end of this section I will detail the key ideas and theoretical tools that I am taking from childhood studies, and will use in this thesis to make sense of the imagined child at the centre of the mentoring programme of study.

In the next chapter, I will detail how the organisation in which the mentoring programme was embedded closed down during my fieldwork. Before suffering a very sudden demise, the organisation was very popular (whilst also being quite controversial). Thus, while this thesis is exploring the mentoring programme, it is also engaged with the rise and fall of the organisation. I

will suggest that this rise and fall was related to the social policies that the organisation aligned itself with, and the child figure that they evoked in relation to these policies. Thus, in describing the tools that I will use to understand the child figure at the centre of the mentoring programme, this is also related to the child figure that was evoked by the organisation as a whole.

2.3.1 Childhood Studies and Childhood in Crisis

In approaching childhood as a social construction, Mary Jane Kehily (2010) suggests that childhood is 'brought into being by the discourses that name and shape it' (Kehily, 2010, p172). To examine such discourses and how they shape figurations of childhood, Kehily uses a methodological approach that draws on deconstructive modes of analysis found in sociological and cultural studies accounts of social processes. This involves the analysis of how cultural texts such as media texts, cultural commentary and policy documents produce a dominant discourse of childhood. Specifically, Kehily discusses how since the beginning of the 21st century, the dominant discourse of childhood is that it is in crisis. Kehily notes that a historical and cultural studies perspective reveals that this discourse of childhood in crisis can be seen as another manifestation of previous moral panics, such as those described in Section 1.

As with the concerns regarding childhood that were apparent in the 19th and early 20th century, the current moral panic is related to romantic ideas of childhood. Present concerns include children's exposure to visual culture, commercialism, new technologies, and the pressures of academic testing; all of which are thought to make it harder to preserve the idealised version of childhood manifested in the romantic discourse (Kehily, 2010; Cunningham, 2005). Kehily highlights how this idea that childhood is in crisis was brought about through various cultural texts. For example, in 2006 the Daily Telegraph launched a campaign to stop the death of childhood entitled 'Hold on to Childhood' which was supported by 110 academics, writers and medical experts. The main concerns were that children had been 'tainted' by over-exposure to electronic media, lack of space to play and increased pressure from academic testing in schools. Cultural commentators such as Sue Palmer, with the publication of her book 'Toxic Childhood: How the Modern World is Damaging Our Children and What We Can Do About It' (2006) reinforced such ideas, with the argument that technological change over the past 25 years has impacted modern life, and the side-effects of such cultural changes have produced a 'toxic cocktail' that is damaging the social, emotional and cognitive development of children. The ingredients of this cocktail, according to Palmer are consumerism, (as children have come to associate happiness with cycle of wanting and then obtaining things), the denigration of places to play, and the stress of academic testing. The resulting toxicity produces anxiety and contaminates children's experience of childhood.

In addition to these concerns, the child's position within the family and within wider society has changed in recent times. As Cunningham (2005) notes, children have more rights than they did previously; firstly to a childhood, but also as individuals. Cunningham suggests that this has resulted in a shift in the balance of power within families, as childrearing has become a matter of negotiation between parent and child. As Wyness (2012) puts it, children are now seen to be structurally in the 'wrong' place, and cannot easily be positioned as generational inferiors or social apprentices as they once were. Thus, Cunningham argues that present tensions regarding childhood stem from a struggle between the idea of the child as a person with rights, and the endurance of romanticism that asserts that the right of a child is to be a child. Kehily (2010) therefore suggests that the current view that childhood is in crisis stems from the collision between competing and contradictory versions of childhood. As Kehily puts it: 'The powerful pull of the romantic ideal and the pragmatism of contemporary childrearing practices appear to create an incongruous space, giving rise to a range of discordant voices and harbingers of doom' (2010, p177).

This 'incongruous space' has also led to justifications for state intervention within the family. For example, Wyness (2012) suggests that this space has led to a feeling that the correct balance between 'care and control' needs to be restored within families, and the deployment of political and social forces are required to do this.

2.3.2 Social Policies: potential and surveillance

As discussed in Section 1, the romantic discourse of childhood is also concerned with adulthood, as one's experiences within childhood are thought to influence who they become as an adult. As such, the idea that the state needs to support parents in finding a balance between 'care and control' has an added implication that parenting is thought by policy makers to be a fundamental determinant of children's future life chances (Gillies, 2005). Due to this, there has been an increase in policy interventions with the purpose of 'supporting' parents to 'successfully' raise their children (Gillies, 2005). Gillies (2011) argues that the family has taken on political significance as the formative site through which 'competent personhood' is cultivated. Thus, family relationships have been heavily risk assed by policy makers, and the minutiae of everyday domestic and family life is considered to be an appropriate target for state intervention.

Since the start of the New Labour Government in 1997, Gillies (2011) suggests that the boundaries around families have been redrawn, in what she refers to as an 'aggressive' attempt to re-position family life as a public rather than private concern. Within this, previous legislation that placed everyday family life as generally outside of the remit of state intervention was explicitly challenged through a moral focus on children as the most important members of the family, who required monitoring and protection. As such, policy literature has become concerned with linking a range of parenting practices and everyday elements of family life to 'outcomes' for both the child and for society as a whole, using psychologically informed input-output models of evaluation (Gillies, 2011).

A crucial element of this view that what happens within the family will influence both the child and the child's future is the incorporation of neuroscience. In line with the zero-three years early intervention movement (Bruer, 2010), claims about children's developing brains have become a central element of child health and welfare policies in England (Macvarish, Lee & Lowe, 2014). As a result, when parents and parenting are positioned as influencing child outcomes, the assertion is that parenting is directly influencing the child's brain development, and this successful or unsuccessful brain development will impact the child's future life chances. Within this, the child's 'early years' are said to be particularly important, thus further justifying state involvement in the family. As Wall (2010) notes, such brain development discourses present a view of childhood in which the child is highly malleable and full of potential, but this potential can only be activated if the child's parenting is appropriate. Macvarish, Lee and Lowe (2014) suggest that this has further contributed to a culture of surveillance and monitoring in relation to family life.

It should be noted that Kids Company itself has been influential in popularity of neuroscience in the UK, as Batmanghelidjh spent millions of the organisation's funds on brain scan research after receiving a 'sheaf of papers' from Prince Charles suggesting that childhood neglect changed brain structure (Gillies & Edwards, 2016). Batmanghelidjh aimed to show that the deprived young people who used Kids Company's services were neurobiologically damaged by their parents and thus required Kids Company's specialist care (this is discussed further in Chapter 4). Gillies and Edwards (2016) highlight that Batmanghelidjh was vocal and passionate in her promotion of this theory, and her conviction to it had a strong influence on policy makers; however, the studies themselves did not provide adequate evidence. Nevertheless, they argue that politicians across parties such as the

Conservative MP Ian Duncan Smith and the Labour MP Graham Allen were compelled by Batmanghelidjh's ideas and similar notions that were being expressed by US child advocacy groups such as the Carnegie Corporation and the Rob Reiner Foundation to produce documents such as the cross-party paper Early Intervention: Good Parents, Great Kids, Better Citizens (Duncan Smith & Allen, 2008). It is important to highlight however, that the brain related claims that underpin these policies have been strongly contested (e.g. Wilson, 2002; Bruer, 2010). Thus, Macvarish, Lee and Lowe (2014) argue that this trend of 'neuroculture' is more about using the brain to reconstruct existing understandings of child development.

Within this context of children's brain development being seen as reliant on parenting ability, Wall (2010) notes that the kind of intensive parenting that is expected of 'good' parents are reflective of middle-class values, and require social capital and financial resources that come with higher levels of education and income. Regardless of this, when working-class parents are deemed to not be parenting adequately, this is not related to their lack of social capital or income, but is instead viewed as a moral issue. Gillies (2011) highlights that during David Cameron's time as the British Prime Minister he suggested that rather than being concerned about poverty of income, a more pressing issue was 'poverty of parenting'. He went on to claim that 'differences in child outcomes between a child born in poverty and a child born in wealth are no longer statistically significant when both have been raised by confident and able parents' (cited in Gillies, 2011). As such, working-class parents have become a focus as part of the current preoccupation on parenting within social policy. This idea that poverty is related to inadequate parenting is something that underlines compensatory mentoring, as within this form of mentoring the mentor is expected to compensate for unsatisfactory parental relationships.

2.3.3 The Figure of the Child and the Imagined Family

Within this policy context, a certain figure of the child is constructed and I will argue that a similar child figure is evoked within compensatory mentoring, as it is aligned with the same policy landscape. To explore this imagined child figure, the work it does in justifying or guiding action, and how it relates to 'real' young people participating in mentoring relationships I will draw on several ideas from childhood and youth studies. The first being Steedman's (1995) tracking of representations of the fictional child character Mignon and exploration of why the character is so enduring in relation to the romantic discourse of childhood. The second is Castañeda's examination of how the perception that children are not fully formed means that their image can be re-figured in different ways for different purposes. As this particular child figure is so strongly associated with family (the justification for intervention in the child's life being that the family is inadequate), I will also draw on ideas from critical social policy literature in relation to included and excluded families.

With regards to Steedman's (1995) exploration of the recurrence of the character Mignon within fiction and culture, Steedman relates this to the persistence of the romantic discourse of childhood throughout history. Mignon first appeared in Goethe's 1795-6 novel *Wilhelm Meister*. In this original conception, she is a child acrobat without a family, who is strange and deformed yet beautiful. She is a tragic figure who has been damaged by adults and her experiences in the world. Initially, cultural critics could not decide whether she was in fact a child or should be considered a woman due to all of her experiences; until in 1810 when one such critic, Germain de Stael, described her as a child without a childhood (Steedman, 1995). Since Mignon's creation, she has been an enduring child-figure throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, who Steedman (1995) has tracked in both literature and cultural representations of childhood. Mignon can be seen in stories and songs about

orphans or street children, but also in the descriptions of real-life encounters with disadvantaged children such as the nineteenth century social commentator Henry Mayhew's meeting with an 8-year-old street vendor, the Watercress Girl. Mayhew describes how the Watercress Girl, in his mind, is not a child because although she is only eight, she has 'lost all childish ways'.

In terms of the romantic discourse, Steedman (1995) argues that the figure of Mignon is so enduring because she represents the idea that what happens in childhood influences one's adulthood. Steedman suggests that Mignon's emergence coincided with the appearance of what were new understandings of the 'self' and how one's self comes into being. The idea is thus that childhood is linked to our 'interiority' as adults; if our childhood is damaging this will negatively impact our psyche. Thus, the figuration of Mignon is not a way of understanding childhood experiences, but of understanding how images of childhood influence adults. Ultimately, Mignon is emotionally moving for adults. However, when invoking her image to describe 'real' children such as mentees, this may have consequences in the way that adults approach relationships with them.

Castañeda (2002) discusses how children are viewed as entities 'in the making'. As the child figure is not yet fully formed it is associated with malleability. This malleability means that the figure of the child is made available to adults to re-form and re-figure for different purposes. These different figurations can do different things, and Castañeda suggests that they are powerful because they are imbued with risk. This connection to risk comes from the sense of incompleteness and instability associated with the process of becoming fully formed, as this process is seen as normative and there is thus a potential for failure.

To illustrate this argument, Castañeda draws on the example of the adoption advocate Elizabeth Bartholet who was able to claim that white couples should be permitted to adopt children of a different race by re-figuring the child's race as an unimportant difference between the adoptee child and their potential adoptive parents. By referring to a model of 'common humanity', Bartholet was able to contend that the most important thing about these children was their need for a loving family. Within this, their 'racial make-up' could be acknowledged as a difference between the parents and the adopted child, but it was not a significant difference in relation to their other needs. In relation to this thesis, I will argue that re-figuring the child in terms of its brain development can do a similar thing. If children are defined by their need for a relationship with an adult (such as a mentor) that will positively influence their brain development, the differences between the child and the adult (such as race and class) are made unimportant in relation to the brain development needs.

With regards to how families are constructed within social policy, Gillies (2005) argues that policy separates parenting practices from socio-economic status (as discussed in the previous sub-section), however it then uses parenting practices (or lack of) to explain inequality, meaning that a person's low economic status is blamed on their lack of good parenting. Related to ideas of the 'undeserving poor', this is referred to as the 'cycle of deprivation' in which poverty is perceived as running in families as a result of children inheriting negative values and lifestyles from their parents, thus locking them into permanent disadvantage. It should be noted that this idea was originated in the early 1970s and was advocated by Keith Joseph, the Conservative Secretary for State of Education; however extensive research commissioned by Joseph in an attempt to find evidence for this 'cycle of deprivation' actually discredited the theory, instead highlighting the influence of structural factors (Morris, 1994; cited in Gillies, 2005). Similarly, in recent years McDonald et al. (2013) went to two of the most deprived areas of the UK to seek out families that contained three generations where no family member was in work, due to repeated claims within social policy of the need to combat a culture of 'welfare dependency', and found that such 'intergenerational cultures of worklessness' did not exist.

Nevertheless, current social policy still ignores structural constraints and instead uses notions of good parenting in abstraction from their situated, interpersonal context to characterise families in terms of notions of inclusion and exclusion (Gillies, 2005). Within this the 'included majority' are characterised as rational, moral citizens who provide the best opportunities for their children, and the 'excluded minority' are characterised as being disconnected from mainstream values and aspirations, and are thus unable to pass these on to their children. As a result, class differences are overlooked and parents who are poor are re-figured as 'poor parents' (Ridge, 2013). Within this thesis I will explore how compensatory mentoring uses this characterisation of 'poor parents' to justify the need for mentoring.

Conclusions

When youth mentoring first emerged it encompassed many different motivations, such as providing friendship, moral support and guidance, but also social control and the enforcing of middle-class values and beliefs. Due to the dominance of evaluation research, we do not fully understand which of these motivations youth mentoring currently serves. Some work has been done to form a typology of different mentoring programmes, but research needs to further explore the theories and practices that make up each typology and how this influences the experiences of participants. An important element that has been overlooked by the youth mentoring research literature is how the young person, their family and community is constructed and positioned within the intervention; how this justifies programme practices, and how this influences the experiences of the 'real' children being mentored. Compensatory mentoring is aligned with social policy that imagines disadvantaged young people as being not just held back, but neurologically impeded, by their experience of inadequate parenting (rather than social and economic inequalities). Thus, I have suggested ways in which the mentee within the organisation that is the focus of this study might be understood in relation to this construction.

This literature review frames the project and introduces some of the key ideas and conceptual tools that I will employ to make sense of the case study. The literature review also establishes the gaps within the existing literature that I aim to fill, including a more situated understanding of what happens within youth mentoring relationships and how youth mentoring can be understood as embedded with a particular organisation, and a particular time and place. The following research questions have been arrived at iteratively through an immersion in the literature and over the course of the research process.

Research Questions

1) *What is youth mentoring, and what is youth mentoring within this organisation?* In asking this question I aim to understand the motivations and practices within the mentoring programme of study, and how these relate to the wider organisation that the programme was embedded in. This will include exploring the theories that underpinned the mentoring programme (and the wider organisation), and the programme's expectations of mentoring interactions.

2) *What is happening inside these youth mentoring relationships?* This question will explore how the mentoring relationships are experienced and how they develop over time. Evaluation literature does not fully capture this as it is focussed on outcomes. Thus, this question will investigate how programme practices and expectations for mentoring interactions influence relationship development.

3) *What are the contexts of youth mentoring and how is the child, their families, and their communities positioned within both Kids Company and youth mentoring?* The purpose of this question is to explore how the service users and their contexts are imagined by the mentoring intervention and the wider organisation. This is to understand how these constructions influence not only the design and delivery of the mentoring programme, but also the rise and fall of the organisation that it was embedded in. This question will also look at how differences between the imagined mentee and the 'real-life' mentees that the mentors formed relationships with influenced relationship development.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This project is a case study of a mentoring programme, but it is also a case study of Kids Company – an exploration of what Kids Company was a 'case' of. The study was originally planned as a collaborative project between myself (as a doctoral candidate at the University of Sussex) and Kids Company. It was intended to be a mentoring case study, an example of the larger category of 'youth mentoring' that could inform the current mentoring literature and also aid Kids Company in their programme design and delivery. However, as Kids Company closed down while I was conducting my field work, the project became something else too. I began to see the project in terms of an 'emergent' case as described by Becker (1992). Becker suggests that it can be counterproductive to begin research with too strong an idea of what your research subject is a case of, as these preconceptions can hamper conceptual development. Becker therefore advises that researchers should continually ask themselves 'what is this a case of?'. When Kids Company closed down, I realised that I was not only investigating a case of mentoring, I was studying a case of mentoring within a case of a failed organisation. In the immediate aftermath of the charity's demise I was preoccupied with attempts to 'salvage' my initial project, yet I also began to develop a critical and culturally informed perspective on the charity as a whole, thinking about what they were doing and why, and how the mentoring programme worked within that.

In the first section of this chapter I will describe the collaborative project that was agreed with Kids Company at the start of this endeavour, how the project was re-focused after the closure of the organisation, and the research journey that this took me on. In the next section, I will discuss how an extended case study research design best captured this initial planned project, and how the nature of the extended case study also allowed for the incorporation of a post-mortem of the organisation once I had worked out how to adapt the project after Kids Company's closure. The third and fourth sections of this chapter will describe the research methods that I employed within the case study design, explaining also how I then analysed the data. The final section will consider the ethics of the project, including issues relating to using data from an organisation, after the organisation has shut down.

3.1 Mentoring in the Inner-City: a collaborative studentship

In the literature review I established that youth mentoring is treated as an intervention that can be deployed in any situation where a vulnerable young person requires extra support. This assumption, in part, comes from mentoring evaluation studies performed within the tradition of psychology. In the first sub-section I will describe how my previous experience of volunteering as a mentor, and researching a mentoring programme using a positivist, psychological approach influenced my desire to gain a more in-depth and situated understanding of youth mentoring.

Kids Company were keen to understand how their own mentoring programme was experienced, and what they might change or improve. Thus, we negotiated a research design that could explore these elements. As an alternative to the dominant positivist approach to youth mentoring research, this research design was located within childhood and youth studies, and the second sub-section will describe how that influenced the methodology.

As detailed in the literature review, the rise in popularity of youth mentoring was in part due to its alignment with several aspects of social policy. After the organisation shut down, I realised that Kids Company had also aligned itself with these aspects of social policy and, in addition, had a strong relationship with many policy decision makers. Thus, it became clear that it was necessary for me to

not only explore the mentoring programme, but also the rise and fall of the organisation that it was located within. In the third sub-section I will discuss how this realisation came about and how the project was adapted.

3.1.1 The Initial Planned Project

The initial mentoring project came about through conversations with Kids Company's research team and their mentoring team. For the research team, the main aim of the research was to develop new knowledge about community participation and engagement that could be used by the organisation to inform its service development work. Encompassed in this was a desire to take an in-depth look at mentoring relationships to better understand the possibilities and limitations of youth mentoring; what kind of work were their volunteer mentors currently doing with the young people at Kids Company and what more could they do? In addition to gaining knowledge that could help Kids Company better utilise current mentors, the research team were also interested in engaging future volunteer mentors. This meant better understanding and articulating mentoring activities, to communicate what the role entailed for new mentors. Through conversations with the mentoring team it became apparent that the mentoring programme had developed quite organically within the organisation (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4), and the team saw this research as an opportunity to take a reflexive look at their practice and understand how it was experienced by their service users (both mentors and mentees). In keeping with much of Kids Company's commissioned research the proposed project would both contribute to the organisation's understanding of good practice but also provide a showcase of this work to external audiences.

My own goals for the research stemmed from my previous experiences within both youth mentoring and research. My previous research training had been within the field of psychology, having completed an MSc in Research Methods in Psychology. The particular course that I undertook had a strong focus on positivism, meaning that quantitative research following experimental designs were favoured. At the same time, I was volunteering as a youth mentor (with an organisation different to Kids Company), and thus decided to research youth mentoring for my MSc dissertation project. I was aware that evaluations were the most prominent form of youth mentoring research and that the results often showed that participating young people improved in the measured domains, but only by a small amount (DuBois et al., 2002). As such, these evaluations called for further quantitative investigation into the mediators and moderators of youth mentoring relationships (Deutsch & Spencer, 2009). Influenced by this, and with access to a large group of mentors through the mentor 'support group' that I attended, I designed a survey-based research study that looked for correlations between different features of mentoring relationships and whether mentors felt positive or negative about their relationship as a whole.

The main finding of the study was that a lack of support from parents or guardians was the strongest predictor that a mentor would view their relationship negatively. However, I felt that this finding did not tell the whole story about the specific mentoring programme from which the sample came. The programme mentored 'looked-after' children, meaning that the majority of mentees were living with foster parents (or had recently moved back in with their biological parents). In addition, there was an emphasis on the mentors' 'independence' from the care system and from parents, with the idea that the mentor could act as advocate for their mentee if issues arose with their foster family or biological family. As such, it was possible that practices specific to the mentoring programme influenced the finding that parents and guardians had such a strong influence on the mentors' feelings about their relationships, and that the survey-based study could not capture this. My feeling that this approach did not adequately reflect what was happening within the mentoring relationships influenced my desire to take a more holistic approach to youth mentoring research,

which could take into account the influence of contexts such as specific programme practices. As this project only focussed on mentors, and mentoring research generally characterises participating young people as passive recipients of mentoring (as discussed in the literature review), I was also keen of finding a way to privilege the voices of mentees. Thus, the initial project agreed with Kids Company aimed to explore the theories and practices that made up Kids Company's mentoring programme, and how this programme was experienced by both mentors and mentees.

3.1.2 Social Constructionism and a Childhood and Youth Studies approach

Following my experience of conducting positivist youth mentoring research within the field of psychology, my feeling was that an approach influenced by social constructionism would allow for the more holistic understanding of youth mentoring that I desired. Whereas my previous approach had tried to uncover 'rules' that could be used to understand the moderators of youth mentoring relationships (e.g. parental attitudes will influence mentors experiences), an approach grounded in social constructionism could use language to produce situated understandings about the mentoring experience from the perspective of both mentors and mentees (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This led me to childhood and youth studies.

An important element of childhood and youth studies is the 'new' sociology of childhood (James & Prout, 1997), which both opposes traditional sociology and developmental psychology by viewing childhood as a social construction. This means that rather than being seen as a 'natural' or universal feature of human groups, it is socially produced (Thorne, 2007). This kind of approach facilitates critical understandings of how ideas of childhood are deployed within a culture as well as thinking through how actors create and live childhood in particular times and places. Importantly, this conception of childhood engages with issues of human agency within larger social forces (Reagen-Porras, 2013). Thus, children are characterised as active, meaning-producing beings. Researchers who view children as agentic social actors in this way, think about childhood in terms of 'interpretive reproduction' (Cosaro, 2012). Within this, through processes of appropriation, reinvention, and reproduction children participate in society. Rather than internalizing society and culture, they actively contribute to cultural production and change, whilst at the same time being constrained by the societies and cultures of which they are members (Corsaro, 2012). In terms of mentoring research, within this understanding of childhood, children are seen as being able to make meaning with their mentors, rather than just being passive recipients of their mentoring relationships, and their experiences with their mentor may be influenced by societal and cultural factors.

As such, the initial planned project aimed to understand how mentees and their mentors made meaning together and how the context of the specific mentoring programme influenced this. When Kids Company closed down, I had not completed all of the intended interviews with the participating mentees. As a result, the voices of young people could not be privileged in the way that I had hoped. This was incredibly disappointing; however, as I opened the project out and realised that I was looking at both a case of youth mentoring and a case of Kids Company itself, the project was able to remain grounded in childhood and youth studies by looking at how the popularity of both mentoring and Kids Company can be understood in relation to ideas of childhood and social policy. This focus on the ways in which children and childhood is imagined and deployed politically resonates with a strand of childhood and youth studies that draws on historical and cultural studies approaches (e.g. Kehily, 2010; Cunningham, 2005).

3.1.2 A Case of Mentoring and a Case of Something Else

In the next section, I will discuss how the epistemological position described above was best suited to interpretive research methods and an extended case study research design. However, I will first describe the events that took place before and after Kids Company closed down that influenced my thinking about the organisation and helped me to realise that my project was an investigation of what Kids Company was a case of, as well as an investigation of a case of youth mentoring.

Leading up to and after the closure of Kids Company, stories about its practices dominated the British news. Many of these stories had an influence on my thinking about Kids Company as an organisation, and it became necessary for me to include this thinking in my project. One of the most interesting things about these stories was that the young people that used Kids Company's services were largely left out of the organisation's narrative. There were stories criticising some of Kids Company's practices with their service users, such as giving them envelopes of cash or designer clothing (Alan White, Buzzfeed, 06/08/15), but the voices of the young people themselves seemed to be missing. Journalists that actively tried to understand who the service users were seemed to struggle. For example, a few months before the charity closed, Camilla Long, a columnist with The Times and the Sunday Times, visited the charity and claimed that over the course of nine hours, spread over two days, she met "about 75 staff but only two children" (The Sunday Times, 05/07/15). After the charity closed, Peter Beresford (The Guardian, 03/08/15), a social work academic known for his research on service users' involvement, and service design, and evaluation, detailed how he struggled to find any quotes from young services users when preparing to write an article on Kids Company. What particularly struck me about Beresford's article was that he went on to suggest that the young people's voices had not only been left out of the media coverage, but they had been left out of the charity's service design, suggesting that organisations such as Kids Company (and other voluntary, statutory and private social services organisations) should be more focused on creating an environment where vulnerable service users can speak for themselves and be listened to (similar findings have been discussed in the work of Nolas, Sanders-McDonagh, and Neville, e.g. 2012 and in press).

In addition, the stories that came out after Kids Company closed made me question how Kids Company felt about the families and communities that their service users came from. Parents and families did not seem to be held in particularly high regard within the Kids Company service model, as exemplified by reports of service users being given paid-for accommodation without parents' consent, such as a report in the Sunday Telegraph quoting a former member of staff: "They were just saying, here's a flat, and the kids were doing the things you'd expect unsupervised teenagers to do. Some of the kids' families were unhappy about it." (Andrew Gilligan, The Sunday Telegraph, 05/07/15). In addition, reports of a document written by Kids Company and sent to the Cabinet Office as part of discussions regarding whether or not Kids Company would receive a grant to help restructure the organisation and keep it afloat, emphasised that the charity saw itself as a substitute parent for service users, implying that they saw parents as not adequately fulfilling their role. The report was quite extreme as it stated that Kids Company had 'created a structure which acts as a substitute parent and extended family' meaning that if the charity closed down, the termination of relationships between staff and service users 'will be therefore potentially equivalent to death of the primary care giver, i.e. a mother, a father and/or the whole extended family within a biological familial structure' for the young people (Patrick Butler, The Guardian, 25/8/15). The report went on to suggest that if Kids Company closed there was a risk of rioting and that the communities served by Kids Company could 'descend into savagery'. I had already been interested in thinking about how young people, their parents and their community fit into Kids Company's mentoring programme, as these are elements that are often neglected in youth mentoring research (as demonstrated in the

literature review), but these reports suggested that Kids Company imagined these groups in quite a specific way that warranted more exploration in my project.

By the time the charity closed, I had already performed an initial analysis on data that I had collected regarding Kids Company's mentoring practices, and I had noted how strongly the model was influenced by attachment theory, and that this particular version of attachment theory used neurobiology to conceptualise the effects of different attachments. During the closure of Kids Company several articles were published that highlighted how strong Kids Company's commitment to neuroscience research had been. For example, the charity had funded a 2008 study by the Institute for Child Health and Great Ormond Street to use MRI scans of Kids Company service users to look for neural and physiological markers of antisocial behaviour. The charity commissioned a further study in 2010 carried out by the Institute of Psychiatry, University College London, the Anna Freud Centre, University of Oxford, and the Tavistock Clinic, and a 2011 study collaborating with King's College London and the Rita Lila Weston Foundation, all involving service users to explore links between brain development in vulnerable children and negative behaviour.

Many newspapers commented on the ethical issues of the research that Kids Company was taking part in, for example in an article by John Bingham, the social and religious affairs editor at The Telegraph (The Telegraph, 17/08/15), Dr Jan Macvarish, a research fellow at the Centre for Parenting Culture Studies based at the University of Kent asserted that 'If these kids were part of Kids Company, they will have been exposed to the idea that "my brain made me do it" … I think there is a massive ethical issue with transmitting that message to young people'. These reports not only made me further question how Kids Company constructed their image of their services users (by suggesting that they had 'negatively developed' brains) but it also influenced my understanding of how embedded the mentoring model was within Kids Company's general approach, as the programme had clearly entrenched the neuroscience ideas held by the wider organisation.

Importantly, media analyses of Kids Company's practice also highlighted how the charity had aligned itself with certain youth policies, namely, that their use of attachment theory and neurobiology could be seen to perpetuate an idea that youth work interventions should involve breaking the 'cycle of deprivation'. As Peter Beresford described in The Guardian:

> At the heart of Batmanghelidjh's philosophy is the idea that children's behaviour is biologically determined. The quality of parenting at an early age hard-wires children's brains for success or failure, deviance or conformity. The promise of organisations like Kids Company is that their intervention can break this cycle of damaged people producing further generations of the same. It is an idea that has been popular from Victorian days with its notion of a destructive 'residuum', through interest in eugenics, to Charles Murray's 'underclass' in the late 20th century. (The Guardian, 03/08/15)

This conceptualisation of young people in need is similar to the original impetus behind the conception of early mentoring programmes, as described in the literature review, and highlighted for me the need to take a more in-depth look at Kids Company in its entirety, in addition to describing their mentoring model. A particular interest for me was how Kids Company's closeness to consecutive Governments and their alignment to a particular conceptualisation of 'need' appeared to exempt them from the requirement to evidence the impact of their practice as a basis for funding that held for other charities (this is discussed further in Chapter 4).

Blumer (1969) suggests that the basic operation in studying society is the production and refinement of an image of the thing that we are studying. Ultimately, with my project, I had thought that I

already had a clear image of Kids Company, and the image that I was trying to create was of the lesser known and previously unresearched mentoring programme within it. However, after Kids Company closed down, I realised that the image that I had of Kids Company in my mind was different to the image that was emerging through these stories in the press and my initial analyses. As a result, I felt that I had to attend to the image of Kids Company as well as the image of the mentoring programme, and consider what Kids Company was a case of.

3.2 Research design: a case study approach

As demonstrated in the literature review, youth mentoring research is currently dominated by evaluation research in the positivist tradition. This has led to a lack of high quality, in-depth qualitative studies looking at mentoring processes (Liablo et al., 2005), and young people's voices are not privileged (Reagen-Porras, 2013). To counteract this, I began with an extended case study design (Buroway, 1998), and located my approach within a tradition of interdisciplinary childhood and youth studies (as described above). The aim of this was to produce detailed, context-based knowledge about youth mentoring that included a focus on the experiences of the participating young people. The extended case study focuses on links between micro and macro experiences and links between local processes and extra-local forces. Thus, I was concerned with understanding how the practices of the mentoring programme influenced the young people's experiences, and how the wider organisation influenced the mentoring programme. Kids Company's closure meant that I was unable to fully capture young people's experiences. However, as I was already thinking about extra-local forces, I was able to re-focus the project and think about how Kids Company's approach not only influenced the mentoring programme, but also how it fit more generally within the policy landscape in its approach to working with young people and communities. During the fieldwork section of my project I worked from Kids Company's head office, thus whilst my project was not technically an ethnography, it had ethnographic elements as I was embedded within the organisation. The insights gained from this experience enable me to adapt the focus of the project after Kids Company closed as I felt that I had the knowledge and experience to discuss certain wider aspects of the organisation. Thus, to conclude this section I will discuss the ethnographic elements of the project and the influence that working within Kids Company had on the project.

3.2.1 The Extended Case Study

The main goals of the initial agreed project with Kids Company was to take an in-depth look at the mentoring programme's practices and to explore how these practices were experienced by the mentors and mentees that took part in mentoring relationships. This would allow the mentoring staff to reflect on their practice and the relationships that they were facilitating, for the research team to better understand and articulate the role of youth mentors to engage future volunteers, and to fill in some gaps in the literature, such as taking a situated look at youth mentoring and privileging the voices of young people. An extended case study research design was appropriate to fulfil these goals for a number of reasons.

Yin (2003) describes case studies as an empirical inquiry that 'investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context', thus an appropriate design to gain a situated understanding of a mentoring programme. Flyvberg (2011) highlights that case study designs not only allow for detail, richness and depth, they also take into account 'developmental factors', meaning that case studies acknowledge the way that events occur and develop within a particular time and a particular place. Extended case studies, more specifically, are concerned with making links between micro and macro levels of experience (e.g. the children's experiences and the

mentoring practices), and also local processes and extra-local forces (e.g. the mentoring programme and the wider organisation). Within the extended case study, the project also aimed to take a phronetic approach (Flyvbjerg 2001) to the research. Phronesis refers to practical wisdom, a form of knowledge that develops through human learning and the process of starting something as a 'novice' and then developing to become an 'expert' (Flyvberg, 2001; Nolas, 2010). Thus, the project was concerned with creating spaces for situated stories about mentoring to occur. For example, from practitioners reflecting on their practice as facilitators and trainers, and from mentors considering the details of what their role entailed.

Thus, for the initial project, it was agreed that the research design would consist of two phases. The first phase would use in-depth practitioner interviews and participant observation of mentor training sessions to understand and articulate Kids Company's mentoring model, including the theories and assumptions that underpinned it. The second phase would use a longitudinal design, comprised of two dimensions, to explore how this model of mentoring was experienced. The first dimension was a piece of archival research of completed mentoring relationships. The aim of this was to understand how mentors wrote about and made sense of mentoring relationships, in relation to the model. The second dimension was in-depth interviews with current mentoring pairs (the young people and their matched mentors) charting the formation, maintenance and ending of mentoring relationships over a year.

When Kids Company closed, I had not yet completed my fieldwork. I had carried out the practitioner interviews, conducted the participant observation of the training sessions, and collected the archival data. However, in terms of the interviews with current mentoring pairs, I had only conducted the first round of three intended interview phases (interviews had been planned to be conducted at the beginning, middle and end of relationships). After the organisation closed down, I was no longer able to contact the young people (I will discuss this more in the next section). As a result, the biggest negative influence that the closure had on my project was that I was not able to focus on the voices of young people in the way that I had hoped.

In section 3.1.2 I discussed how the sudden closure of Kids Company influenced my thinking in terms of the work that the organisation was doing, as well as how the mentoring programme fit into it. The elements that I was particularly interested in was how Kids Company positioned young people within their organisation, how they conceptualised the families and communities that these young people came from, and how these conceptualisations were related to social policy. Due to the nature of the extended case study, it was therefore possible to re-focus my project. As Buroway (1998) notes, the extended case study's focus on both local and extra-local forces means that changes wrought by outside influences on the object of study can be embraced, rather than ignored. Thus, although the voices of mentees were not as prominent as I had hoped they would be within the project, I was able to open the project out somewhat and not only take an in-depth look at youth mentoring, but also look at Kids Company itself, as a unique and situated intervention. Ultimately, the research design was focused on describing and defining Kids Company's model of mentoring, exploring how this model was experienced (mainly through the mentors' representations), and how young people, their families and communities were positioned both within the mentoring programme and the organisation as a whole. All of which was framed within the social policy landscape.

3.2.2 An Ethnographic Sensibility and Being an Embedded Researcher

During the fieldwork phase of my project I was based in Kids Company's head office, working from a desk within the youth mentoring team. Throughout this period, I had conversations with the mentoring team, Key Workers, psychotherapists, and other members of Kids Company staff, and gained knowledge as to how the mentoring team fit within the wider organisation, and how the wider organisation operated. Before embarking on my fieldwork, it was agreed with Kids Company what data would be included in the overall project (practitioner interviews, participant observation of mentor training, archival records, and mentor and mentee interviews), as such the conversations and insights from my time working within Kids Company have not been explicitly included in this thesis. However, after the organisation closed down, and I continued to analyse the data that I had collected, my experiences within Kids Company did inform the way that I thought about my data. As such, it could be said that the project follows an ethnographic sensibility.

Specifically, the project can be viewed within the tradition of 'focused ethnography'. Polit and Tatano Beck (2008) categorise ethnography into two main types: 'macroethnography', which is 'concerned with broadly defined cultures', and 'microethnography', or 'focused ethnography', which explores 'more narrowly defined cultures'. Cruz and Higginbottom (2013) define the characteristics of focused ethnography as being context-specific, focused on a discrete community or organisation, consisting of the conceptual orientation of a single researcher, involving a limited number of participants who usually hold specific knowledge, and involving episodic participant observation. Thus, my time spent within Kids Company, talking to and observing the mentoring team and other Kids Company staff can be understood in this way.

Being embedded in Kids Company offered interesting insights that influenced my reading of my data, for example, I was aware of just how much attachment theory influenced staff. However, there were also costs to this embeddedness which I did not recognise until after the organisation had closed and I had gained some distance from it, for example, what was missing from the staff's approach due to this strong focus on attachment theory. Namely, staff on the mentoring team and within the wider organisation did not seem to engage with ideas of race and class when it came to their service users, and as a consequence of this my own data collection also overlooked the participants' race and class. To illustrate this, when discussing sample selection for the project with two members of the mentoring team, it was agreed that to get a cross-section of mentoring experiences mentors should be categorised in terms of whether they were 'similar' or 'different' to their matched mentee, and mentees should be categorised in terms of how 'chaotic' they were (this is discussed further in section 3.3.3). Within this conversation, rather than discussing whether mentors were similar to mentees because they shared the same race or social class, they were classed as similar if they had also had a 'difficult' childhood. At the time I did not recognise this and thus did not interrogate these categories as I should have.

Kids Company's model did not only overlook race and class, it also operationalised attachment theory in an idiosyncratic manner, in which they used terms such as 'insecure' or 'negative' attachment, which are not typical terms within attachment theory. Attachment styles are usually classed as secure, ambivalent, avoidant or disorganised (Ainsworth et al., 1978), and it could be suggested that Kids Company used 'insecure' and 'negative' to make attachment theory more 'user friendly' for staff, mentors, and donors. However, whilst embedded within the organisation, not only did I not recognise this use of language, I also began using it too. In initial analyses and write ups of my data, I repeatedly used these terms without recognising that they were Kids Company's terms and that this adaptation and simplification of attachment theory was data in itself.

When Kids Company closed down, I was not given any pre-warning and did not have any contact with staff afterwards. In the weeks prior to the closure Kids Company had moved offices due to the expiration of their lease, and there was not an available desk for me to work from in the new office. As such, the office move signified the beginning of my transition from a position of embedded researcher to outsider, and the sudden closure and lack of contact confirmed this position. Whilst the closure of Kids Company meant that I had to adapt my project and could not reflect the voices and experiences of young people in the way that I had wanted to, this change in my position from insider to outsider was actually beneficial for my project as it provided the distance that I needed to recognise the significance of Kids Company's model of working (and the things that the model ignored). Furthermore, the stories that came out after Kids Company's closure enabled me to realise how the model needed to be understood in relation to the social and political landscape.

3.3 Research Methods: qualitative and interpretive

Interpretative methods were used to gain detailed, in-depth and situated knowledge. The methods employed were semi-structured interviews, participant observation and archival research. Below I will describe why each method was chosen and how it was employed. The process of fieldwork began in October 2014 and ended in November 2015 and is represented in the chart below:

October 2014	November 2014	January 2015	March – June 2015	April – July 2015	April – July 2015	October – November 2015
Practitioner Interviews	Participant Observation	Archival Data Collection	Interview Recruitment	Mentee First Interviews	Mentor First Interviews	Mentor Second Interviews

Table 1: Fieldwork schedule

3.3.1 Practitioner Interviews

Within the field of youth mentoring research, it has been suggested that interviews are underused, and could provide in-depth information about the characteristics of youth mentoring relationships (Deutsch & Spencer, 2006; DuBois & Neville, 1998). Qualitative interviews investigate human experience by attempting to understand the world through the subject's point of view to see how they make meaning of their lived world (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Thus, interviews can be seen as an alternative to positivist methods such as questionnaires, which may be considered a more 'top-down' way of understanding reality. With regards to the extended case study research design, Buroway (2009) suggests that in-depth interviews can unpack situational experiences by encouraging the respondent to virtually move through their space and time. Power dynamics must be considered within interviews however, as the interviewer may be seen to be in a position of power and the respondent may feel that they want to please the interviewer. Relatedly, Potter and Hepburn (2005) point out that interview data is too often treated as context-free, and as though the interviewee's words are simple and direct reflections of their thoughts and feelings. They suggest that it is therefore important to be aware of the stake that both interviewer and interviewee have within the interview process.

Practitioner interviews were conducted to gain insights regarding Kids Company's mentoring programme. The programme manager, Jessica, and the longest serving member of staff, Jo, were selected as it was felt that they had the greatest knowledge of the mentoring programme. Jo in particular joined the programme soon after it was first developed within the charity, however due to

personal circumstances she did not feel that she could commit to managing the programme. Thus, Jessica was brought in as manager in 2010 when the original manager stepped down. Jo and Jessica worked very closely together to implement more structured practices within the programme.

The interviews were semi-structured with an interview guide developed in advance [see appendix 1]. The interviews were conducted separately, at Kids Company's head office in October 2014. The interviews covered seven broad topics; The Person, their Role and the Organisation, Hopes and Aspirations, the History and Evolution of the Mentoring Programme, Theories in Practice, About the Mentors, About the Mentees, and About the Relationships. After the separate interviews, I interviewed Jessica and Jo together for the purpose of working out how to choose a sample for the interviews of mentoring pairs and for the archival data analysis. This was a relatively informal conversation, but the pair enjoyed reflecting on the mentoring programme and its practices together and the conversation lasted for over an hour, so I decided to analyse this interview along with the separate interviews as it was equally rich with description of their practice. As discussed, context is usually ignored when using interview data, thus in Chapter 6, I discuss how the conversations within the joint interview where slightly different from the separate interviews, as Jo and Jessica were reminiscing and discussing specific real-life mentoring relationships. I reflect on how the representations of mentees from the practitioners' memories of real-life relationships were different to the representations of mentees when the practitioners were discussing 'the mentee' as a figure within Kids Company's mentoring model.

3.3.2 Participant Observation

Observational methods are rarely used within youth mentoring research (Deutsch & Spencer, 2009; Ragins & Kram, 2007), due to the complications that could arise from trying to directly observe the dyadic mentoring relationship (such as the negotiation of times and locations), and perceived risk that the presence of an observer could be felt as intrusive and affect how the mentoring pair interact. However, it has been suggested that more structured events within youth mentoring, such as training days, lend themselves to observational techniques. Observation in these settings may be less intrusive and can provide a window into events as they occur, rather than through retrospective accounts (Deutsch & Spencer, 2009). The purpose of observing Kids Company's mentor training sessions was to explore the theories and assumptions that underpinned Kids Company's programme, and to investigate how this was disseminated to mentors. Participant observation has been employed for similar uses in other research, such as Blackwood, Hopkins and Reicher (2015), in which participant observation of a counterterrorism workshop was used to explore the particular psychological model of radicalisation that was being utilized.

Participant observation was carried out over two mentoring training sessions in November 2014. Observation was conducted over two sessions as the content of the sessions were different. The first session (Training Session 1) involved introducing mentors to Kids Company and the mentoring programme, and explaining the programme's expectations for mentoring relationships. The second session (Training Session 2) involved a more focussed exploration of how the mentors were expected to enact their role once they have been matched with a mentee. Training sessions were held every Saturday at Kids Company's Head Office, the first and third Saturday of the month would be Training Session 1, and the second and fourth Saturday would be Training Session 2. Mentors had to attend both training sessions, but were free to choose when they would attend provided they did not leave a gap longer than three months between training sessions 1 and 2.

Fieldnotes (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995) were made during each observation session. This involved producing a written account of what I had seen, heard and experienced during the training sessions. The process of producing these notes consisted of three stages. During the training session, I would make 'jottings', which were words, phrases and short descriptions of what was happening and my immediate reflections. Immediately after the session ended I then went through these jottings, fleshing them out with more details that I had not managed to write down at the time and making sure that they would make sense to me when I came back to read them later. The following day I would then write up full length descriptions of the training session based on these notes. The full-length descriptions were written as four sections. The first section was the 'practical description' of what was happening, for example the instructions that the mentors were given to complete an exercise. The second section was the 'overall description', for example how the mentors would tackle the exercise as a group. The third section was 'individual descriptions' to pick out how individual mentors were responding to the exercise. The final section was 'analytical thoughts' which was the space that I used to reflect on each exercise.

3.3.3 Archival Data

The majority of youth mentoring research provides a snapshot of mentoring relationships at a single point in time, as a result, more longitudinal research is needed to fully understand how youth mentoring is experienced (Spencer, 2006). Therefore, case records were analysed of six mentoring relationships from the beginning of each relationship until the end. These case records were called 'Meeting Records' within Kids Company and they were an A4 document that asked the mentor to describe the meeting with their mentee. The document began with administrative questions such as where the meeting took place, and what activity the pair did together. The following questions required more detail and mentors are encouraged to fill these out as descriptively as possible. These questions were: 'describe your mentee's physical appearance', 'how would you describe your mentee's emotional state', and 'describe the details of your meeting, what stood out for you, what your mentee enjoyed or disliked, significant moments and conversations, etc.'. This final question was the section of the form that mentors tended to focus most details on. Mentoring pairs were expected to meet once a week for a year, so a typical relationship had roughly 50 meeting notes on record.

As discussed in section 3.3.1, I interviewed Jessica and Jo to work out how to choose a sample of mentoring relationships, the idea being that the sample should aim to include all of the different relationship formations found within the programme. This involved discussing Jessica and Jo's memories of completed relationships, and thinking about areas of difference between mentoring experiences within the programme and how these differences might be classified. It was discussed that mentors generally differed in terms of whether they were from a similar background to the mentees (and their motivation for mentoring was therefore likely to be that they either had a mentor who helped them through difficult situations as a child or wished that they had), or from a different background to the mentees (and thus wanted to be mentors to 'give back' to society because they were grateful about their own situation). The practitioners differentiated between mentees in terms of how 'chaotic' their lives were deemed to be, as this influenced the level of care the practitioners felt the mentees needed, and the level of skill and support the mentor they were matched with would need. Mentees lives were classed as 'very chaotic', 'moderately chaotic' or 'less chaotic'. A final difference was the gender match of mentoring pairs i.e., same genders or different genders. A flow chart was then devised to represent all of the different relationship formations (Figure 3), and the practitioners selected from their records six relationships that they felt

represented a cross section of the different relationship combinations. A further requirement for selection was that the records were complete or close to complete (very few mentors managed to fill out a record after every single visit with their mentee), and that the records where filled out in a relatively detailed way, rather than one-word answers.
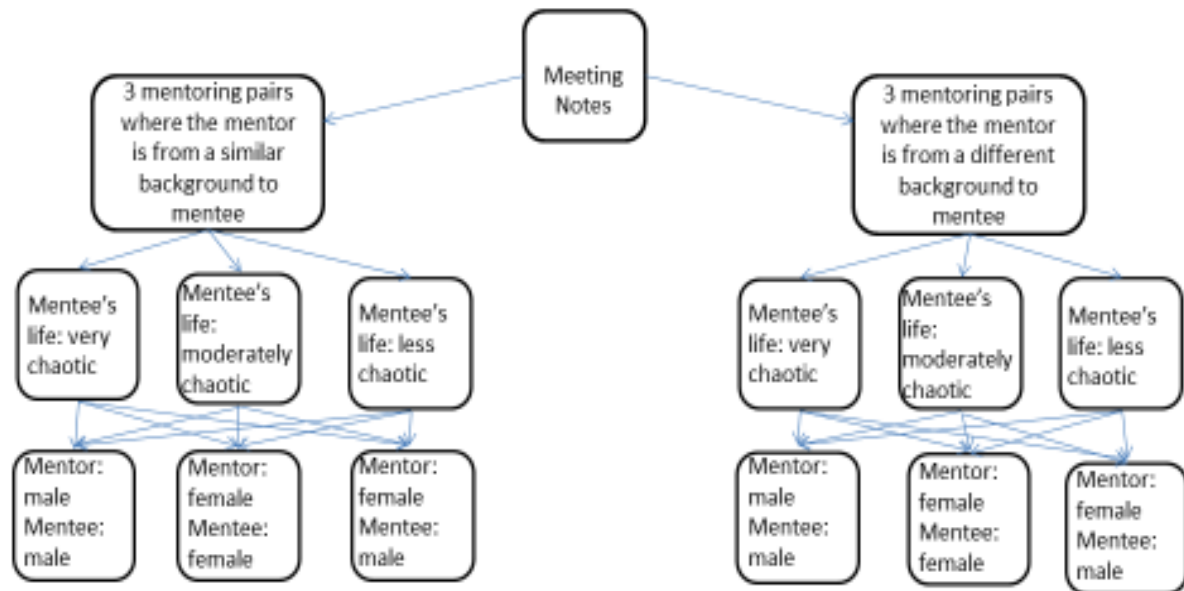
Figure 3: Different relationship formations

As noted in section 3.2.2 I failed to interrogate these classifications, and as such they are quite vague. The classifications of similarity and difference seemed to relate to the mentors' childhood experiences rather than their race, social class, or the community that they came from. The use of the term chaotic, also obscured these elements of the mentees' identities. In the literature review I discussed how the influence of a mentor's social and racial backgrounds may influence their relationship with a mentee. Unfortunately, due to the lack of this demographic information this project is also unable to fully explore this. However, the were occasions when mentors themselves suggested that they were working-class, were from the same South London area as their mentee, or had received help from social services, and on these occasions, I have tried to reflect on how such similarities may have influenced their relationships. In Chapter 6 I also reflect on the use of the term 'chaotic' to describe Kids Company's service users and reflect on the parallels between this and the way that social policy refers to families experiencing poverty as 'excluded' to obscure the complexities of their lives.

The final chosen sample for the meeting records analysis is represented in the Table 2. All meeting records were anonymised and names were replaced with pseudonyms.

Mentor & Mentee	Mentor's Background	Mentee's life	Gender match
Eve & Isiah	'Similar'	Moderately 'Chaotic'	F & M
Pete & Jamie	'Similar'	Very 'Chaotic'	M & M
Charlotte & Antonio	'Different'	Less 'Chaotic'	F & M
Hannah & Amirah	'Different'	Moderately 'Chaotic'	F & F
Jenny & Suzie	'Different'	Moderately 'Chaotic'	F & F
Robert & Lex	'Different'	Very 'Chaotic'	M & M

Table 2: Meeting Records sample

3.3.4 Mentor and Mentee Interviews

I had originally planned to recruit six newly matched mentoring pairs to take part in longitudinal interviews. As I explain below, recruiting young people to the study proved incredibly difficult. Nevertheless, I was still able to recruit five mentoring pairs.

To gain access to a cross section of relationships, the same categorisation process of mentors and mentees was followed, as described in the Meeting Records sub-section (mentee level of 'chaos', mentor's background, gender match), with the practitioners allocating the relationships into the categories; again, this meant that information regarding race and social class was unfortunately overlooked. To recruit the mentees, I was provided with the contact details of the mentees' Key Workers (the member of staff that dealt with their individual care plan) and requested the Key Workers to explain the project to the young person that they worked with to see if they wanted to take part. Thus, the Key Workers acted as gate-keepers to the young people and this led to a number of difficulties in the recruitment process. Firstly, some Key Workers decided on the young person's behalf that it would not be appropriate for them to take part in the study without asking the young person. Reasons cited for this included that the young people generally had to wait for a long time to be matched with a mentor – there was a waiting list for the programme – thus Key Workers felt nervous that the research could be disruptive to relationship formation, which would be a shame as the young person had been waiting so long to start the relationship. In addition, some Key Workers felt that the young person's life was too complicated and that participating in a research study would be stressful for them. Secondly, it seemed that some Key Workers were overloaded with work and did not spend very much time explaining the project to the young person that they were working with, so the young person declined to take part in the study because they did not fully understand what would be involved.

To recruit mentors, I emailed them directly. All of the mentors that I contacted agreed to take part in the study, but I was specifically looking for matched pairs, so mentors could only take part in the study if their matched mentee also agreed to participate. Ultimately, after three rounds of recruitment, five mentoring pairs were recruited. As demonstrated in the chart below, the mentoring pairs were fairly well balanced in terms of conforming to the categorisation of the mentees' levels of 'chaos' and the mentors' backgrounds, but unfortunately it was unbalanced in terms of a mix of gender matches. All names have been changed to pseudonyms.

Mentor & Mentee	Mentor's Background	Mentee's Life	Gender Match
Sarah & Hayley	'Similar'	Moderately 'Chaotic'	F & F
John & Ash	'Similar'	Very 'Chaotic'	M & M
Dev & Lamar	'Different'	Very 'Chaotic'	M & M
David & Jayden	'Different'	Moderately 'Chaotic'	M & M
Stuart & Kai	'Different'	Less 'Chaotic'	M & M

Table 3: Interview sample

I planned to interview mentees and mentors separately, at three different points in their relationship (at the beginning, the middle, and the end). Semi-structured life world interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) were planned, as this form of interview aims to understand themes of the lived everyday world of the interviewee from their own perspective. This is done by obtaining descriptions of the interviewee's lived world and interpreting the meaning of the phenomena that they are describing (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). First round interviews were conducted in this way with the five mentees in person [see appendix 2], at their own home or in a café, and with the five mentors over the phone [see appendix 3].

Unfortunately, Kids Company closed before any more interviews could be conducted with mentees and I had no way of contacting them directly. As the mentees had been recruited through their Key Workers I did not have their personal contact details, and therefore could not get in touch with them for follow up interviews after Kids Company closed (I also could not get in touch with Key Workers as I had previously been communicating with them through their work email accounts and mobile phones, which were no longer in operation). This was very upsetting as I had been particularly keen to focus on the experiences of the young people participating in youth mentoring.

Fortunately, as I was able to contact mentors directly, I was able to conduct another round of interviews with them, where they discussed how their mentoring relationships had progressed since I had last interviewed them and their experience of Kids Company's closure [see appendix 4]. All of the mentoring relationships had been terminated due to Kids Company's closure apart from one relationship, Stuart and Kai, who had decided to continue their relationship informally.

3.4 Data Analysis

When Kids Company closed I had performed an initial analysis of the practitioner interviews and the participant observation to begin thinking about Kids Company's model of mentoring. After the closure, I began to consider how the organisation in its entirety fit within the social policy landscape, in addition to how the mentoring programme fit into the organisation. Thus, as I continued my analysis on this data, and moved on to analyse the meeting records and the mentor and mentee interviews, I was influenced by themes related to social policy, as discussed in the literature review. Overall, the purpose of the data analysis was to describe Kids Company's mentoring model, explore how the model was experienced (mainly through the mentors' representations as I had not fully captured the young people's voices), and investigate how Kids Company positioned young people, their families and communities within their work.

3.4.1 Thematic Analysis

The practitioner interviews and the participant observation data were analysed together with the purpose of defining and describing Kids Company's model of mentoring. As the aim of this analysis was to look across these pieces of data to find patterns in how mentoring practices were described and implemented, thematic analysis seemed to be the most appropriate method of analysis. The analysis followed the six phases of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), this involved becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up a report of the final themes. I was also influenced by the approach of Attride-Stirling (2001) in which data is organised as thematic networks; web-like illustrations (networks) that summarize the main themes of the data. These are hierarchically presented, in which Basic Themes are the 'lowest order' of patterns within the data, Organizing Themes are groups of Basic Themes that summarise more abstract principles, and Global Themes are 'super-ordinate' themes that encapsulate the overarching metaphors of the data [see appendix 5].

Some themes that came out of this analysis were how prominently the programme utilised attachment theory and neurobiology to understand the process of mentoring and to conceptualise the mentees, and how this influenced the way that the programme positioned young people and their families. These theories were also embedded within the organisation as a whole, and were related to what was happening within social policy at the time. Thus, when describing Kids Company's model, I felt that it was necessary to frame this within the context of the organisation and the social policy landscape. To gain a richer understanding of the entire organisation I used secondary data that had been commissioned by Kids Company to articulate their model of work (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013; Lemma, 2010).

The mentor interviews were thematically analysed after I had begun to describe and define Kids Company's model. Thus, the themes of the model influenced the analysis of the interviews, as I was keen to understand how the model influenced experiences. I was also concerned with how the mentors represented the young person that they were matched with, and their family, to explore how this related to how the practitioners represented them. The interviews with the young people themselves were quite short. This was possibly because they were slightly nervous having never met me before, but also because they had only been matched with their mentors for a short amount of time. I had felt that the second and third follow up interviews would be more detailed, as the young people would be more comfortable with the interview process, and because they would have built up more experiences in their mentoring relationship, but unfortunately these follow up interview did not happen. Thus, whilst the interviews were thematically analysed and have been incorporated into my analysis, the data felt quite thin and the insights provided are somewhat 'slight'. Visual methods of drawing and mapping were also used with the young people as a way of communicating how they saw Kids Company and how close they felt to their mentor. These have also been included in the analysis. It should be noted that the drawing exercise in which the mentees expressed how they saw Kids Company was also used as a way of encouraging the mentee to feel comfortable with me. Therefore, I asked the mentee to suggest what images popped into their head when they thought of Kids Company, and we then took it in turns to draw the images. Thus, some of the drawings were created by me.

3.4.2 Narrative Analysis

Narrative analysis was used to analyse the meeting records. When I read each mentor's set of meeting records, they seemed to have a strong sense of temporality to them, as the way that the mentors described their experiences changed and developed over the course of the relationships. As

such, and drawing on a pluralistic narrative framework of analysis developed by Frost (2009) and Nolas (2007), I employed both a structural and performative narrative analysis [see appendix 6]. Firstly, Labov and Weletsky's (1967) framework for narrative analysis was utilised as it encourages narrative data to be structured in terms of a beginning, middle and an end. The framework also places importance on the evaluation element of the story, which highlights the story's significance, thus pointing out what was important about the mentoring experiences for the mentors. As the meeting records had a specific purpose, which was for the mentors to update the mentoring practitioners that they had had a meeting with their mentee, and to let the practitioners know about the details of the meeting, elements of Parker's (2005) framework were also used to analyse the data as a mode of communication (Nolas, 2007). Specifically, ideas regarding agency, context, and format were incorporated into the analysis. Agency looks at who the protagonist is and their relationship to time, events, context and other people, thus drawing out who the mentors were and how they enacted their role. Context looks at the social relationships and cultural backgrounds that are present within the narrative, which enabled me to look at how the mentors represented their mentees' families and communities, in addition to the mentees themselves. Format refers to how the story is being told, which helped me to focus on how the mentors communicated their role and actions to Kids Company, thus highlighting how the mentors either conformed to or attempted to adapt Kids Company's model of mentoring. Overall, the use of both Labov and Weletsky's, and Parker's framework allowed me to explore how the mentors experienced the mentoring relationship, how they reflected on their role, and how they represented the young people that they were matched with when communicating with Kids Company.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Several ethical considerations were taken into account in relation to the design of the study, and also in relation to continuing the research after the organisation had closed down. The initial research design was submitted for and received ethical approval from the University of Sussex Social Sciences & Arts C-REC [see appendix 7].

3.5.1 Recruitment and Informed Consent

The study approach was based on Informed consent from all of the participants, secured by the use of detailed information sheets and written consent forms. Consent for the practitioner interviews was gained from both Jessica and Jo. As it was not possible to keep their identities anonymous (which I discuss in the next sub-section), a copy of the interview guide was emailed to them a week in advance of the interview, to give them an opportunity to consider the questions that they were going to be asked, and to decide whether there was anything that they did not feel comfortable talking about. Before the interviews took place, we discussed whether they wanted anything in the interview guide to be changed or adapted, which they did not. For the participant observation of the two mentor training sessions, any mentor that was required to attend training was informed in advance about the project and told which dates I would be attending. Mentor training sessions ran every Saturday, and mentors were free to decide which dates they attended, thus if anyone did not want to take part in the project, they did not have to attend the particular sessions that I would be attending. This information was also reiterated in Kids Company's Mentoring Newsletter. At the beginning of each session that I attended, I introduced myself to the group of mentors and obtained written consent from all participants.

In recruiting and gaining consent for the mentee interviews, both the mentees and their parents or guardians were informed in advance about the project and asked to give consent. The mentees' Key

Workers explained the project to both the mentees and parents with the use of information sheets. As discussed earlier, there were some cases where I was concerned that the Key Workers did not fully explain the project to the mentee, and some Key Workers declined the mentee's participation without asking them. However, this seemed to come from a place of being protective of the young person that they worked with and being reluctant to introduce anything into their life that could be perceived as stressful. Thus, due to this 'protectiveness' I feel that the mentees who did choose to be involved with the study did so because they were happy to take part, and it is unlikely that their Key Worker coerced them into doing so. In addition, although only mentoring pairs where both mentor and mentee gave consent could be included in the research project, I did not let the mentee know that their mentor had agreed to take part in the project until after they had themselves agreed to take part, so that they did not feel the pressure of knowing that their mentor had already consented. In terms of recruiting the mentors, this was done by email with the use of information sheets. Again, I did not discuss whether or not their mentee had agreed to take part, until they had made their own decision about the project so that they did not feel pressured to participate. Consent from mentors was gained verbally over the phone at the start of each interview.

3.5.2 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The nature of the collaborative project meant that the organisation could not be anonymised. This had implications for all research participants. For the practitioner interviews, I discussed with Jessica and Jo that it would be impossible to keep their identities private, their colleagues at Kids Company knew that the research was being carried out and thus would be able to identify them and, in addition, it may be possible to the public to identify them due to the use of their job titles. To account for this, steps were taken to ensure that Jessica and Jo felt comfortable with their contribution to the research. This involved showing them the interview guide as discussed above. As mentioned, during my fieldwork I made use of a desk in the mentoring team's office and spent quite a lot of time with the mentoring team, thus there were many informal opportunities for Jessica and Jo to chat about the research with me, and I tried to convey that they could talk to me if they had any concerns about the research. I had also hoped to show them a write up of my analysis, to make sure that they were comfortable with the way that their words had been represented. Unfortunately, I was unable to do this as the charity closed before I had got to this stage, and the only contact information that I had for the practitioners was their work email address and phone number, all of which were shut down when the charity closed.

In terms of the mentee and mentor interviews I was concerned with protecting the participants identities in general, but also specifically from the mentoring practitioners, as I did not want the mentoring pairs experiences within the programme to be influenced by the fact that they were taking part in the research. To do this, the practitioners provided me with a spreadsheet or all of the newly formed mentoring pairs (that they had categorised in line with the previously discussed sampling categories). This spreadsheet contained the contact details of the mentors and of the mentees' Key Workers. I then approached the mentors and Key Workers independently of the mentoring practitioners, and did not discuss with the practitioners which of the mentoring pairs had agreed to take part in the project. Pseudonyms were then used for all of the participants.

With regards to the meeting records, the records were all stored electronically on Kids Company's database. A member of the mentoring team collated the records of the chosen sample and saved all of the records for each mentoring relationship into six different folders. I then anonymised all of the

records on site, before downloading them onto an encrypted USB key and taking them off site for analysis.

3.5.3 After the Closure

After Kids Company closed, whilst it was upsetting and difficult to continue the project without having further access to the mentees, and without being able to contact the mentoring practitioners or the Key Workers, I had several ethical concerns to consider. The first was that I still had the contact details of the mentors, and thus had to decide whether to continue to involve them in the project. I decided to approach all of the mentors, via email, a few days after Kids Company closed, to extend my sympathies over the closure, and to ask them if they would be willing to speak to me at a later date, once they had decided whether or not to continue their mentoring relationship. All of the mentors responded that they would be happy to talk, and I arranged telephone interviews with them. When conducting the interviews, I endeavoured to treat the subject of the relationship terminations sensitively, as the mentors seemed disappointed that the relationships had come to a premature end. I did this by keeping the structure of the interview quite loose by inviting the mentors to reflect on the ending of their relationship, rather than asking direct questions. This elicited information about their thoughts and feelings regarding the relationship, without pushing them to talk about anything that they may not have wanted to. The other main concern was that I was now representing an organisation that had closed down, and the research was therefore no longer collaborative.[1] This is something that I have thought about quite a bit during my analysis; and while I have been critical of some of Kids Company's practices, I have also tried to think about the project in terms of the kind of information that I would have fed back to Kids Company had they still been operational. The mentoring team were keen to look at the programme reflexively, and thus I have tried to explore both the positives and negatives of the mentoring programme, and hope that it will still be useful for other organisations that engage in youth mentoring. In practice, the whole of the writing process for this thesis has been undertaken without the input of Kids Company staff, confirming the academic independence of the analysis and interpretation.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I have detailed the collaborative project that was originally agreed between myself and Kids Company. I have expressed how the project was re-focused after the closure of Kids Company, to encompass an exploration of the wider organisation in addition to the mentoring programme. This involved thinking about both youth mentoring and Kids Company from a historical and cultural perspective, and in relation to social policy. I have described how an extended case study was the most appropriate research design for this task, and discussed the interpretive research mentors that I have employed, including how they were analysed. Finally, I have summarised the ethical considerations of the project.

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[1] The first two years of the project were co-funded by Kids Company, the ESRC and the University of Sussex. Due to the closure of Kids Company, the final year was funded exclusively by the ESRC and the University of Sussex, which ensured continuity and completion, and also ensured the academic independence of the project.

Chapter 4: Kids Company: the organisation and the mentoring programme

Failure of care by parents is forcing children to resort to savagery in order to survive corrupted inner cities. (Camila Batmanghelidjh, Conversations in a taxi: firearms and forks. A systemic analysis of youth crime, 2007, p453)

The purpose of this chapter is to begin to answer my first research question: what is youth mentoring and what is youth mentoring within this organisation? Kids Company had a very strong presence in the public sphere and a clear message of how they worked: they believed that showing vulnerable young people love and unconditional support could improve their lives. Their rationale for this approach was grounded in attachment theory and later incorporated neurobiology. The backbone of their model was the idea that positive relationships could have a transformational effect on young people; thus, it makes sense that youth mentoring was one of the services that the charity offered. In the literature review I discussed how mentoring is characterised as a context free, catch-all intervention, yet individual mentoring programmes have their own specific practices and theoretical underpinnings that will influence the form of mentoring that they are providing and how it is experienced. The focus of this chapter is therefore to both describe the mentoring model offered by Kids Company and to contextualise it by locating it within the organisation as a whole.

The first section of this chapter will draw a detailed picture of Kids Company as an organisation. This will include an overview of its model for working with vulnerable young people, and the critical moments in the charity's development that led to the consolidation of this model. As the charity closed in very dramatic circumstances in August 2015, the circumstances that led to the closure will be discussed first. The second section will describe Kids Company's mentoring model, and will detail how, like the charity as a whole, it was strongly grounded in attachment theory and neuroscience. Within this overall attachment model of mentoring, other expectations of mentoring interactions were also revealed when the mentoring staff described how they envisioned mentors to enact their role in real-life. Additionally, the trainee mentors appeared to have contrasting expectations of the role, which revealed that they too had their own ideas about working with vulnerable young people. These expectations will be explored in the third section of this chapter. What is particularly interesting about these expectations is that they seemed to have parallels with some of the values and motivations related to the types of youth mentoring that emerged as part of the 'child saving' movements of the late 19th century and early 20th century.

To construct this exploration of Kids Company and their mentoring approach I have drawn on data from interviews that I conducted with two mentoring practitioners, participant observation of two mentor training sessions, and publicly available articles and reviews of Kids Company. As discussed in the methodology chapter, it should be noted that these reviews were commissioned by Kids Company, thus within the context of this chapter, they should be read as information that Kids Company wanted in the public domain to shape the way that they were seen, rather than data that 'proved' Kids Company's model worked.

4.1 Overview of Kids Company

Before it closed, Kids Company was a well-known and influential children's charity, despite the fact that it primarily served a relatively small South London location. What is particularly interesting is the way that the charity's model of working seemed to be an acceptable middle ground for policy makers between social services and more traditional forms of youth work. This is partly because its model, whilst thought to be more dynamic than social services, was also perceived to be more grounded in theory than youth work. Not only that, the theories that it drew on were in line with the policy landscape at the time, as it located issues with vulnerable young people within the individual and the family, rather than within society as a whole. This section will give an overview of these developments to highlight how the charity became so popular and to contextualise the organisation within which the mentoring programme was developed, as the mentoring programme was so strongly aligned with the organisation as a whole. As the closure of the charity was particularly dramatic, and a number of things that came out of it informed my own thinking (as discussed in the methodology chapter), the section will begin with the charity's closure and then work backwards to track how the charity and its model of working became so well known.

4.1.1 The Collapse of Kids Company

Kids Company filed for insolvency on 12th August 2015. Despite previously claiming that they worked with 36,000 service users, the charity only passed on 1,900 open cases to local authorities after it closed its doors (House of Commons, 2016). Since the charity's demise, several investigations have been carried out to understand what led to its closure. Reports from bodies such as the National Audit Office and the House of Commons constructed a picture of a charity that had a strong presence in the public sphere and a unique influence over successive governments, but lacked a coherent funding model or a consistent way of monitoring and keeping track of the work that they were doing. The following section will draw on these reports to detail how Kids Company's closure came about.

Kids Company was funded by private donations, including from celebrities and well-known businesses; however, a large proportion of the charity's finances were provided by central government, who gave Kids Company £42 million in grants over a 15-year period. In the next sub-section, I will discuss how Kids Company's model of working was popular with both liberal and conservative governments, but what is particularly interesting is that, throughout successive administrations, Kids Company had 'unique, privileged and significant access' to senior Ministers and Prime Ministers (House of Commons, 2016). This was seen to be in part due to Kids Company's Chief Executive Camila Batmanghelidjh, whose personality and ability to create 'spin' for the charity was said to captivate senior political figures (House of Commons, 2016). According to reports, this high-profile support for Kids Company influenced funding decisions, as rather than putting Kids Company through the rigorous grant process that most charities were required to undergo, Kids Company justified their funding by submitting reviews and evaluations that were either self-assessed or commissioned by the charity (e.g. Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013; Lemma 2010, discussed in the methodology) (National Audit Office, 2015). These reviews were then said to have been read 'selectively' by governments with the purpose of 'confirming a pre-existing and positive impression of the charity' (House of Commons, 2016). As a result, Kids Company grew very quickly and did not establish a reliable business model for financing its operations.

The Department for Education oversaw grant funding of Kids Company until July 2013, when the Cabinet Office took responsibility for youth policy. Following this, a more systematic approach to the funding of Kids Company was taken. The Cabinet Office commissioned external reviews into the charity's financial management and governance controls. The results of these reviews suggested

that whilst the charity's system of governance was appropriate, the main risk to the organisation was cash flow, meaning that trustees needed to improve the supervision of cash management (National Audit Office, 2015). In June 2015, Cabinet Office officials suggested to ministers that a further grant to Kids Company did not represent 'value for money', that the charity had not met earlier grant conditions, and that there were still concerns related to poor financial management (National Audit Office, 2015). As a result, ministers instructed officials to give Kids Company £3 million for the purpose of restructuring the organisation, so that it could become sustainable with less government funding. It was agreed that this would include Batmanghelidjh stepping down as Chief Executive, appointing new trustees, and reducing the running costs of the organisation by 40 percent (House of Commons, 2016). An agreement was also made with a group of philanthropists to match this government donation to aid the restructuring and continued running of Kids Company.

On 30th July, the government transferred the agreed funds to Kids Company, however, the organisation was notified on the same day that the Metropolitan Police were investigating the charity due to allegations of sexual and physical abuse taking place at their centres. As a result, trustees decided not to take the agreed donation from the philanthropists because it was felt that the damage done to the charity's reputation would impede future fundraising and the charity would not be able to survive regardless of restructuring (House of Commons, 2016; National Audit office, 2015). Instead, the trustees decided to close the charity.

In addition to the criticism that Kids Company were never able to establish a financially sustainable model of working, the charity was also criticised for not monitoring and evaluating their work; other than through self-assessed or commissioned reviews. In the literature review, I discussed issues with the current focus on evidence-based practice and the reliance on outcome studies to articulate the 'worth' of youth provisions. However, whilst Kids Company were criticised for not having this type of data, they also seemed to lack more reflexive data that looked at their practice, how their practice was experienced by service users and how it could be improved. It should be noted that the reviews that were commissioned by Kids Company did look at Kids Company's model of practice, but the reports were commissioned specifically to articulate the positives of the model to secure funding. Overall, the closure of Kids Company revealed that while the charity was operating they were not as accountable for their practice as they should have been, but they were able to keep going because they had constructed a public image that was compelling for both public and private funders.

4.1.2 Kids Company's Practice: parenting by proxy

Kids Company grew out of South London and is most strongly associated with the areas Brixton (in the London Borough of Lambeth) and Peckham (in the London Borough of Southwark). Both neighbourhoods are amongst the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country (Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2015). It was in these areas of South London in 1996 that Camila Batmanghelidjh first met groups of vulnerable and disadvantaged young people whom she felt she had the capacity to help. This led to her opening a temporary drop-in centre in Peckham, that then moved to a permanent home in Brixton, where young people were provided with food and access to various resources and services. The charity expanded through opening more centres in South London and one in Kilburn, North London, and through the establishment of a schools programme. In 2013, further centres were opened in Bristol and the schools programme was rolled out in Liverpool. Within Kids Company's centres young people were provided with services related to education, health, housing, emotional wellbeing, youth justice, sports and arts. One of the centres, the Urban Academy, also operated as an accredited educational centre catering for young people

excluded from formal education. Within the schools programme, Kids Company provided therapeutic provisions in addition to sporting and arts activities.

Camila Batmanghelidjh is a trained psychotherapist. Through the reviews that Kids Company commissioned to articulate how they viewed their model of working, it was described that Kids Company approached youth work in a therapeutic manner (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013). Whilst each centre offered a range of services and practical support, the charity's overall work was self-described as 'therapeutic child care' (Ward & McMahon, 1998, cited in Lemma, 2010); meaning that whether young people were visiting the centres for specific support or to generally 'hang out', the aim of the charity was to maximise the therapeutic potential of the environment (Lemma, 2010). This approach was described in an article by Batmanghelidjh as follows:

> At Kids Company, we have experimented with a model where all the professionals work under one roof, in a club-style atmosphere; assessments happen around the pool table over lunch and dinner (Batmanghelidjh, 2007).

Within this therapeutic environment, Kids Company viewed a central element of their approach to be the fostering of strong relationships between staff and young people (referred to as service users or clients). These relationships were described as being based on love, which the charity characterised as 'unconditional nurturing support and a long-term commitment to the relationship' (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013). These staff-client relationships were represented by the charity as being most powerful between a young person and their 'Key Worker', the member of staff in charge of their individual care plan.

The organisation's rationale behind this focus on close, loving relationships cultivated within a safe environment was grounded in attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969). Young people attending Kids Company were characterised as experiencing uncaring parental relationships defined by neglect or abuse (Lemma, 2010). Thus, the experience of a safe environment and secure relationships at Kids Company was expected to be emotionally reparative, encouraging young people to see themselves and their relationships more positively (referred to within attachment theory as modifying the young person's internal working model, as described in the literature review). In my interview with the manager of the mentoring programme, Jessica, she described how Kids Company operationalised attachment theory through the environment of Kids Company and then through relationships with staff:

> Well, attachment theory essentially is about relationships; relationship to yourself and relationships to others and so as an organisation what we are promoting is a sense of security for our kids and a secure attachment. And the way that we work with our young people is initially to help them feel secure in the space, the space of Kids Company … then from there they're then able to develop a relationship with the Key Worker or other member of staff that they're working with. And of course, it takes time, and sometimes can take a lot of time, but what we're really promoting is the sense of security for our children; making sure that they feel as though there is a safe adult who they can talk to, they can bring their issues, their problems, but also, they can just be accepted for who they are. (Jessica interview).

Overall, Kids Company presented itself as a substitute family for vulnerable young people whose parental relationships were lacking. The space of Kids Company was equated with the therapeutic

idea of the 'brick mother' (Rey, 1994; cited in Lemma, 2010); a place of safety that provides continuity and stability, and Kids Company staff were characterised as 'parents by proxy' (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013) for its service users. Within this, through secure attachment to the space and the staff, young people's internal working models could be modified. As such, Kids Company's model of working with young people was concerned primarily with intervening at the level of the young person's individual psyche within the space of Kids Company; there was little concern for working with young people as community or family members, and even less that could be described as intervention at a structural level (e.g. critique of government policy that leads to child poverty). This individualist approach to social issues, and young people's problems in particular, fit with the wider, neoliberal social policy climate of the time. The next sub-section will look at developments within Kids Company that consolidated this de-socialised approach to youth work and explore how its parallels with policy led to its heightened popularity.

4.1.3 Critical Moments in Kids Company's Development

Kids Company initially began to gain attention with the media and policy makers when it made a concerted effort to place itself in opposition to statutory services for the population of young people that it served. It did this in two ways, by operating an open-door policy where young people could self-refer to the charity, and by building relationships with young people that were said to be based on love.

Batmanghelidjh, who has been referred to as a particularly adept and persuasive spokesperson for the charity (House of Commons, 2016) regularly constructed an image of social services as overstretched and difficult for young people to access. Batmanghelidjh argued that only young people who were 'administratively competent' could access help because the structure of social services was so complex and service providers who 'sit in offices adhering to appointments' could not offer dynamic care (Batmanghelidjh, 2013). Kids Company, in contrast, was presented as highly accessible and welcoming, as their drop-in centres were open seven days a week, were staffed with professionals such as psychiatrists, health professionals and youth workers, and promised to never turn a young person away. Reinforcing the idea that Kids Company acted as a substitute family, young people could also self-refer without their parents' involvement. Crucially, at the time, Kids Company was also presented as cheaper than statutory services. For example, in one article Batmanghelidjh claimed that one Kids Company centre could cater for 6000 children and only cost £5 million a year, which she then contrasted with 'local authorities, spending some £876.6 million between 2011 and 2012 in services for young people' (Batmanghelidjh, 2013). It should be noted however, that such claims of cost effectiveness may now be thought of as questionable as it was Kids Company's struggle to cover the costs of their model that led to its closure.

In the previous sub-section, it was discussed how Kids Company's model involved close, loving relationships between staff and clients. These relationships were also presented as better than the relationships that social workers could have with young people. To do this, Kids Company evoked a certain stereotype that was in the public consciousness following investigations into social work cases such as Victoria Climbie and Peter Connelly, of detached, stressed out social workers who were overwhelmed by their jobs. Batmanghelidjh claimed that these social workers were too scared or damaged to form relationships with young people: 'to protect themselves, they numb their feelings and take up a robotic stance, tick-boxing their way into personal safety against being sued or scapegoated' (Batmanghelidjh, 2013). On the other hand, Kids Company staff were encouraged to be engaged and child centred, as Jessica (the mentoring manager) discussed in our interview:

Well the wonderful thing about Kids Company is that the staff are really empowered to be creative and quite innovative and that's something that Camilla Batmanghelidjh really promotes among the staff group, which is great because we're able to then really harness our skills and to not really work inside of the box, and in that way, we are really able to create an individual care package for each child that comes through … So for instance when I have worked directly with the child I can meet them after school and we can go out for hot chocolate in the wintertime or we can go for a walk in the park when it's nice out, we can do those sorts of activities that really promote the development of a relationship and so that's something that is very unique within Kids Company and there's not necessarily the scope to work in that way elsewhere and there are many reasons around that, but that's one of the really beautiful things about our organisation (Jessica Interview).

Another critical moment in the development of Kids Company was when it incorporated neuroscience into its attachment-based approach. As described in the literature review, attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) posits that if a baby's needs are not met by their primary caregiver in early life, this non-secure attachment will have an influence on their internal working model (their conception of the self and relationships with others). By introducing neuroscience into their approach, Kids Company subscribed to a hypothesis that such non-secure attachments in early life have the ability to impact the neurophysiological development of a child's brain structure (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013). Specifically, this hypothesis suggests that non-secure attachment may inhibit the brain from becoming 'wired' in a way that allows for normal development and brain function, and may negatively influence how the brain processes stimuli; meaning that cognitive control, emotion regulation and perspective-taking can be adversely affected and can manifest behaviourally as anti-social behaviour and difficulties in controlling violent and aggressive impulses (Sterzer et al., 2005; Stadler et al., 2007; Fallon, 2006).

Kids Company therefore believed that the young people that used their services had experienced negative relationships with their main caregivers and these relationships had impeded their brain development. Crucially, Kids Company espoused a belief in the popular and often uncritically deployed theory of neuroplasticity of the brain, meaning that a young person's brain could be 're-wired' (Davidson & McEwen, 2012; Pollak, 2005). Thus, Kids Company believed that through their model of care that involved building positive attachment relationships with their service users, they could not only influence the way that young people saw themselves and others (as posited by attachment theory) but could also actually influence their brain functioning, thus reducing the negative emotions and challenging behaviours they displayed.

At around the same time period, welfare policy makers in the UK were also becoming influenced by the work of academics such as Gerhardt (2004) and Perry (2002), who, in line with the zero-three early intervention movement (Bruer, 2010), posited that the first three years of childhood where integral for positive brain development, and it was love and good parenting that could positively influence this. This idea fit into the tradition of UK welfare policies, as there was an already established practice of policies that tried to 'save' children from what they characterised as incompetent or indifferent parenting in an attempt to 'break the cycle' of intergenerational disadvantage (Cunningham, 2005) (as opposed to focusing on environmental or social factors). Thus, this emerging brain science legitimised policy makers' focus on 'bad parenting', and brain development became a key trend in policy creation (Rose and Abi-Rached 2013), as exemplified by the cross-party paper Early Intervention: Good Parents, Great Kids, Better Citizens (Allen & Duncan Smith, 2008).

This incorporation of neuroscience, along with attachment theory meant that Kids Company and its drop-in centres were more highly valued than traditional youth work and youth clubs. As discussed in the literature review, such traditional forms of youth work strongly fell out of favour in the 1990s, due to a perception that they lacked a strong theoretical foundation (cf. Nolas, 2013). Kids Company on the other hand, by utilising neurobiology as well as attachment theory, were perceived to be grounded not only in theory but also in science. Furthermore, this use of neurobiology and attachment theory aligned Kids Company with the policy outlook at the time, as it lay the blame of young people's issues with parents and 'bad parenting' rather than economic and social factors, and saw the solution to be in improving the individual rather than their environment. This line of thinking also fits with youth mentoring, so it is interesting and appropriate that Kids Company decided to incorporate a youth mentoring programme into their services. The next section will discuss how Kids Company characterised their mentoring programme, and how it was very much in line with their model as a whole.

4.2 The Mentoring Model: attachment relationships

Before the organisation closed, there were roughly 200 active mentoring relationships participating in Kids Company's mentoring programme. Mentoring relationships were expected to last for at least one year, with pairs meeting up once a week, usually at the weekend. A budget of £15 per meeting was provided to cover expenses, including travel, food and tickets to activities such as cinema trips and bowling. Potential mentors applied to the programme online and were then interviewed by a member of the mentoring team. If they were deemed suitable for the mentoring programme, they would attend two days of training before being matched with a young person. Once matched, the mentor was required to complete a 'meeting record' after each mentoring meeting, to enable staff to monitor relationships. In addition, mentors were required to attend group supervision every three months and personally contact staff if they felt they needed additional support.

Mentees were Kids Company's clients who had been assessed as 'low risk' and had been identified in their individual care plans as potentially benefiting from mentoring. Thus, some mentees would also be participating in other services at Kids Company, and their parents may also have been receiving support (such as food vouchers). Potential mentees would be logged on a waiting list and would be matched to a suitable mentor when one was available. Matching was based on shared interests (both mentors and mentees completed a form detailing their interests and hobbies once accepted onto the programme), and distance that the mentor was willing to travel to see their mentee. The mentoring programme remained popular until the charity's closing with the programme experiencing a steady stream of volunteers despite not formally advertising mentor positions.

As explained by Jo, the longest serving member of the mentoring staff, the mentoring programme started out as a fairly casual arrangement. With uncanny parallels to Westheimer encouraging his acquaintances to befriend disadvantaged boys in Cincinnati in 1910, which led to the establishment of the Big Brothers of Cincinnati, Kids Company's mentoring programme began because Batmanghelidjh would encourage friends of the organisation to befriend particular service users. As Jo explained in our interview:

> I think it was basically Camilla meeting somebody in any circumstance and really liking them and saying, "Actually, I would like you to go and hang out with this kid and just be a volunteer", so it was very loose. But I think from those very loose arrangements it was – and Kids Company has obviously been since the 1990's, so Camilla has probably been doing this,

[laughs] very loosely since the 19...since 1996. So, I think that it started to have formal structure to it probably about seven years ago (Jo interview)

Once the mentoring programme became formalised, specific programme practices were designed by a Kids Company psychotherapist. Using data from my individual and joint interviews with Jessica (the mentoring manager) and Jo (the longest serving member of staff), and ethnographic data from my observation of two mentor training sessions, the following section will detail how the mentoring model related to Kids Company's attachment and neurobiological approach. This will have a specific focus on how mentoring relationships were characterised and what they were expected to achieve, how relationships were operationalised in terms of staff involvement with the dyadic mentoring relationship, and how the mentees taking part in the mentoring relationships were characterised.

4.2.1 Internal Working Models

The mentoring practitioners suggested that, like the charity as a whole, the mentoring model was strongly grounded in attachment theory. Mentoring pairs were expected to form an attachment relationship, where the mentee viewed their mentor as a safe, secure and reliable presence in their life:

> Well Kids Company's mentoring programme is all about young people having access to a safe, reliable, committed adult, and mentoring is a space for the children to engage in activities, and it's through those activities that the children first of all get to have fun and just be a kid, but they are also with an adult who, and maybe the first time that they've ever had exposure to an adult who is really safe and reliable, and it's the qualities that the mentor just naturally possesses and demonstrates in a relationship that has so many benefits for the child. (Jessica interview)

In line with attachment theory, the mentoring practitioners believed that the main outcome of this attachment relationship was that it would modify the mentee's internal working model, thus the practitioners believed that mentoring could improve a mentee's feelings of self-worth and their relationships with others. In terms of self-worth, the practitioners described how a mentoring relationship could influence the mentee's negative self-belief: 'The kids also begin to believe that they are worthy. So that negative core belief gets rewritten for them' (Jo, joint interview). They had many examples of how the mentoring relationship could do this, and these examples seemed to suggest that there is something influential about a mentor consistently 'being there' for a mentee:

> When we had a little boy, who used to enjoy playing football but never really had the opportunity to join a club, so he joined a club, I think somebody used to take him and drop him off at the club, and he was okay just quite shy. Then he got a mentor and all the mentor used to do was to go and watch him from the side lines every week without fail, and the mentee became very quickly the star of the team and suddenly was the one being carried on the shoulders of the others - in a very short space of time. And for me that really demonstrated how this attachment works, because all you need is that belief, a belief system almost in the child, to make them really understand that they're worth something. (Jo interview)

In terms of relationships with others, the mentoring practitioners described how mentoring relationships provided mentees with a template of a positive relationship that they could then refer to in their relationships with others:

> So, with the mentor who is emotionally resilient as well as emotionally congruent, the children pick-up on that and they begin to internalise that and what we see developing within mentoring is that these children have a positive template for future relationships, so they bring that to the relationships with friends, to their family and then as they get older, to their own personal relationships. And that's really what mentoring is all about; it's about this lovely experience for the children but that has such significant impact for them as they grow. (Jessica interview)

Jo even suggested that mentoring relationships sometimes ended because the mentee would form new positive relationships due to their mentoring experience, and then no longer needed their mentor:

> That's really nice actually when that happens, when it is all very positive and they just start to spend more time with their own peer groups or they suddenly have a girlfriend or a boyfriend and it's maybe that they just; the skills that they've learned within; the social skills that they've learnt within the mentoring relationship then mean that maybe they've joined a club or a group and they are just very busy and it's nice when you see them actually starting to build their own lives, it's good. (Jo, joint interview)

4.2.2 Held and Contained

A central element of attachment theory is the concept that a baby will develop a 'secure' working model if they feel that they are being 'held and contained' by their significant care giver, as this makes them feel safe to explore their environment, and encourages a positive sense of themselves and their relationships within this environment. A unique aspect of Kids Company's mentoring model was that they took this concept of providing feelings of safety and security to encourage positive development and applied it to the operation of mentoring relationships. In general, mentoring programmes have the most contact with mentors and mentees before a relationship has been formed (during the training and selection process). Once a mentoring match has been made, the relationship develops away from the programme, with minimal contact from practitioners. In contrast, Kids Company's mentoring team maintained a strong presence throughout the duration of the mentoring relationships with the idea that this presence would offer a sense of safety for the mentoring pairs. For example, Jessica discussed that whenever there were problems within a mentoring relationship, it was expected that the issue should be brought to the mentoring team so that staff could help deal with it, rather than it being kept within the mentoring pair:

> It almost becomes habitual to contain [problems] there, which is obviously a lot of the training that we do is encouraging them to reach out and to know the importance of not containing anything in that unit, they need to contain it in the wider mentor team unit. (Jessica, joint interview)

This presence of the mentoring staff would begin from the moment the mentoring pair had been created as both the mentor and mentee had to sign a confidentiality agreement that stated that all confidential matters would be shared with staff, so confidentiality would be held in a triangle of mentor, mentee and staff, rather than the mentor-mentee dyad. Staff presence would then be

maintained for the duration of the mentoring relationship as the mentor had to submit a record to staff following each weekly meeting that they had with their mentee. These meeting records were then expected to be read by staff, who would monitor what the mentoring pair were doing, how the relationship was developing and if the mentor required any additional support:

> The mentors, they do actively seek support from us, but we are also quite proactive in getting in touch with them. So, it tends to be that the mentors won't necessarily pick-up when there's an issue with the relationship dynamics, whereas we, reading the meeting records or talking to them in supervision, will be able to pick that up. So that's not something that they necessarily come to us with, but it's very much something we are hot on. (Jessica interview)

Additionally, mentors were required to attend regular group supervisions with a Kids Company psychotherapist (referred to as Life Lounge) to discuss any issues that they may have been having in their relationship:

> The mentor Life Lounge is a group supervision, it's clinical supervision for mentors. So, the group is run by a child psychotherapist who works here at Kids Company. It's a small group, no more than six mentors, and there are quite often less, usually between three, about three or four mentors. So, they're current mentors of any length of time who come to Life Lounge, and they must come, it's compulsory to come once every three months so that we know that they're taking the support that we offer. So very early on, we ask them to come along to a mentor Life Lounge, and at that Life Lounge it's quite likely that they will be sharing that space with other mentors who have been mentoring for a year or two years, so it's really good because it's a sharing experience, all the mentors share their own situations. They may be bringing specific challenges or patterns of behaviour that they're experiencing with their mentees at the time, so it's really good for the new mentors to really start hearing what the relationship is like in practice. (Jo, interview)

In a way, Kids Company mentoring staff could thus be characterised as an attachment figure for the mentoring pair, as it seems that the intention of this staff involvement was to encourage the mentoring pairs to feel safe to explore the world (and their relationship) because they knew they were being held and contained within Kids Company. In the next chapter, I will explore what was happening inside mentoring relationships and will question whether this staff involvement did encourage mentoring pairs to feel secure, or whether it was somewhat constraining. Additionally, given that Kids Company's closure was due to financial issues, questions might also be raised about the financial sustainability of such a 'hands-on' model of mentoring.

4.2.3 Characterisation of Mentees

At the first mentor training session, mentors were taught about attachment theory, and how the mentoring relationship was intended to improve the mentees' sense of self and relationships with others. Attachment theory, combined with neurobiological theory was also used to characterise the mentees, with the intention of helping the mentors understand what to expect when building a relationship with them. In Chapter 6 I will further discuss how the service users were positioned within the programme, however, it seems important to mention here how they were represented in the training, to draw a picture of how mentoring relationships were characterised for mentors prior to embarking on their own mentoring relationships.

In the interview with Jessica, she stated that mentors were taught about Kids Company's views that non-secure attachment styles could adversely influence brain development and manifest in what Jessica referred to as 'behaviour that might be seen as challenging or difficult'. Jessica went on to explain that if mentors experienced these 'challenging or difficult' behaviours from their mentee it would not hamper the development of a relationship, because the mentor would understand that the behaviour was not directed at them:

> we talk about in training so our mentors have a sense of well exactly what is trauma, how does that impact on brain development, what might I see in terms of behaviours. The mentors have an understanding of what that means, and with that they're then able to view our kids with a much higher sense of empathy and understanding as to where they're coming from. (Jessica, individual interview)

Thus, Jessica believed that if the young people were characterised as having experienced non-secure attachment relationships, any difficult behaviour would be viewed empathetically by the mentors because the behaviour could be seen as a by-product of previous difficult relationships, rather than as an indicator that the mentee was not happy with their mentor or their mentoring relationship.

In the training sessions that I observed, I felt that it was unclear whether this characterisation of mentees had the desired effect of increasing empathy and understanding. During the first session Jessica presented a PowerPoint presentation entitled 'Trauma and Attachment' which consisted of several slides of labelled diagrams of differently developed brains. Jessica then gave a talk explaining Kids Company's understanding of how non-secure attachments impede brain development, and in turn, impacts children's ability to regulate their behaviour. However, I felt that through the use of brain diagrams and scientific language, rather than increasing empathy towards the mentees, this presentation seemed to build a picture of damaged young people who were constrained by their development. As a result, the picture painted of the mentees felt very theoretical and it was difficult to imagine the mentees as real people that the mentors were preparing to embark on a relationship with. This message is further illustrated within my field notes made during the presentation below:

> This section is very focused on developmental psychology and neurobiology. Feels like it almost takes agency away from the child. The child is completely controlled by how they develop. The scientific explanations about positive and negative emotions and behaviour are delivered quickly and feel quite confusing. I feel a bit blinded by science. I think this focus on science might be to … start a theme that continues over the next few slides that negative behaviour exhibited by mentees (towards mentors) is not "their fault", it's the way they have developed.
>
> I'm interested in why Jessica chose to describe attachment in this way. I feel it could have been done in a much more simplistic way. What is being accomplished by this specific way of delivering the message?
>
> The overall message seems to be: a baby's needs might not be met, therefore their executive functioning doesn't develop properly, and therefore as they grow up their behaviour will be difficult. I feel like this makes sense but I also feel like it makes the child sound less human/real in some way - the child doesn't have any agency, it's all about development (Fieldnotes, Training Session 1).

For the mentors, it seemed that this use of scientific language did not really compliment the overall message of Kids Company, that love and secure attachments could positively influence the young people that they served. For those prospective mentors attending the training sessions I observed,

the training message was received quite differently. As the quote below illustrates, prospective mentors posited that a 'scientific' problem such as impeded brain development ought to require a 'scientific' solution, such as medication. This was most starkly illustrated when one of the mentors asked if Kids Company ever looked at young people's blood work and Jessica had to emphasise that the Kids Company approach is based on relationships:

> Aiden asks whether Kids Co ever looks at young people's blood work and checks for things like high levels of cortisol. This could be managed by exercise and diet.

> Jessica says that they don't do blood work, instead they explore young people's relationship histories, what has happened and what is missing. (Fieldnotes, Training Session 1)

Following-on from this presentation, Jessica reinforced the learning that the mentors had just done on attachment theory and non-secure attachments by showing the mentors a video clip of Tronik's 'still-face experiment' (Tronik, et al., 1975)[2] to express how damaging it can be if a baby's needs are not met:

> Jessica shows a video clip of a mother and baby facing each other. The baby is trying to get the mother's attention, but the mother does not respond to the baby no matter how the baby reacts. In an attempt to get the mother's attention, the baby starts by smiling and pointing but quickly becomes very distressed, screeches and then begins to cry.

> The group has a very strong reaction to this video. General comments include surprise at how quickly the baby becomes distressed, how disturbing the noise is when she screeches, questioning of what happens to children who are treated like that all the time, questioning whether parents understand the effect they're having when they ignore their babies. Jessica says "Mum can repair that, as mentors can repair that".

> The purpose of the video seems to be to convey the message that babies' development is strongly influenced by how they are treated by adults. (Behaviour is not their "fault")

> Also trying to convey how support and attention from a mentor could help to fix this kind of damage.

> The video seems to have had a very strong effect on the mentors. (Fieldnotes, Training Session 1)

This video clip seemed relatively effective in moving the discourse back to relationships and away from neuroscience, as the mentors seemed to have a positive response towards it and seemed to subscribe to the message that it was the relationship with the mother that was influencing the baby's behaviour. However, the use of the phrase 'mentors can repair that' sounded very technical and as though Jessica may have been referring to repairing the mentees' brains.

Overall, Kids Company's mentoring model was strongly aligned with their attachment theory and neurobiological approach to working with vulnerable young people. Mentoring relationships were characterised as attachment relationships with the expectation that the presence of a mentor in a young person's life could positively influence their internal working model. In turn, the mentoring staff also seemed to see themselves as an attachment figure for the mentoring dyad, and expected to be continually involved in mentoring relationships as they progressed. The neuroscience element

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[2] Well-known psychological experiment designed to test affective regulation in the mother/primary-care giver and infant dyad.

of Kids Company's approach came across most strongly in the characterisation of mentees. Pre-empting the possibility that mentees might display behaviours that could be experienced by the mentors as difficult or challenging, and could hamper the development of a mentoring relationship, these behaviours were explained as being the result of mentees' brain development. Attachment theory can be seen to underpin many mentoring programmes, as it is thought to be a central element of compensatory mentoring (as discussed in the literature review). However, using attachment theory to account for a high level of staff involvement, and the combination of attachment theory and neurobiology to characterise mentees, is particularly unique to Kids Company's mentoring model. In Chapter 5, I will describe what Kids Company mentoring relationships looked like in practice and will discuss how these unique elements seemed to influence relationship development. In Chapter 6 I will consider further what it meant for Kids Company to describe their clients in relation to their brain development.

4.3 The Mentoring Model: other theories and expectations

In terms of putting this attachment model of mentoring into action, the mentoring practitioners had a number of expectations about who they would recruit as mentors and who out of the Kids Company client base were appropriate mentees. In the literature review I suggested that Kids Company's form of mentoring could be classed as compensatory mentoring, which is underpinned by attachment theory, but also theories of resilience and social capital. By looking at the practitioners' expectations of appropriate mentors and mentees, the promotion of resilience and the contribution of social capital (bridging social capital as per the theory), seemed to be implicitly important. By looking at how the practitioners expected the mentors to enact their role once they had been matched with a mentee, it seemed that the practitioners were also inspired by Rogerian person-centred counselling approaches. Furthermore, the trainee mentors also had their own expectations in terms of their modes of interaction, which suggested that they were bringing their own ideas about mentoring to their relationships. What is particularly interesting is that some of these expectations held by practitioners and trainee mentors seemed to have parallels with the previous era of 'child saving' mentoring programmes.

4.3.1 Practitioners' Expectations of Mentoring Interactions

With regards to the practitioners' views on appropriate mentors and mentees, the practitioners suggested that there was not a 'typical' mentor. However, there were a number of qualities that it was important for mentors to possess, such as being settled, stable and emotionally resilient;

> So this idea of emotional resilience as well as emotional congruence is really important for our mentors to have … There isn't a mould really that our mentors fit into but they are quite stable individuals. (Jessica Interview)

In the youth mentoring literature, resilience theory is used to highlight how mentors can help mentees navigate a 'risk filled' society by offering support and guidance. The above description of Kids Company mentors suggests that practitioners may have been looking for mentors who could promote resilience in this way.

In describing mentees, the practitioners' suggestion that 'lower-risk' Kids Company clients who lacked guidance were appropriate for the mentoring programme reinforced this idea that promoting resilience was important. Additionally, the description that mentees came from insular communities and needed their 'horizons broadened' suggested that the idea of bridging social capital was also implicitly important. Literature on social capital in youth mentoring suggests that mentors can

encourage mentees to move 'up and out' of unsatisfactory communities through the broadening of horizons;

> As I said, the lower risk kids at Kids Company, but somebody who really is lacking that guidance; they lack guidance, they lack fun, they lack emotional support … And also, they are kids that tend to come up from local communities that are quite insular, so these kids are not seeing what's happening on the other side of London and they have no idea how far away, or even how close perhaps Big Ben is to where they live, they'll think it's like so far away they could never get there, because the communities they're living in are very insular and they to do obviously keep themselves to themselves, and so they need their horizons broadened. (Jo Interview)

Thus, Kids Company's model of mentoring conformed with compensatory mentoring. In addition, the practitioners had a number of expectations regarding mentoring interactions, and within this, a number of other implicit ideas about mentoring were apparent. The practitioners expected mentoring interactions to be empathetic, with the mentor giving their mentee the impression that they have listened to them, validated their feelings, but not judged them. This was illustrated by Jessica's instruction for mentors to 'be empathic, attuned, open and transparent … Don't express judgement' (Fieldnotes, Training Session 1). These specific interactions resonate strongly with Rogerian person-centred counselling approaches (Rogers, 1951) in which a therapist supports a client by showing unconditional positive regard (not judging the client) and genuineness (showing empathy and accurately reflecting the client's feelings) (Kensit, 2000).

Although the mentoring practitioners did not explicitly state that they were drawing on Rogerian approaches in terms of their expectations for 'empathic' mentoring interactions, the mentoring programme was designed by a Kids Company psychotherapist, thus it is possible that the psychotherapist was inspired by such ideas. However, within the mentoring programme's interpretation of this approach, two specific boundaries were applied to this expected mode of interaction. The first boundary was that mentors should not give advice, and the second boundary was that mentors should not take any practical action. Instead mentors were expected to pass on any information that they were concerned about to the mentoring team, and then staff would decide how to proceed with the issue of concern. For the practitioners, the idea that mentors maintain these boundaries was very important, as Jo stated; 'Boundaries, I don't think there's a day that goes by where we don't say it at least 20 times!' (Jo, joint interview).

Teaching mentors how to interact with their mentee in an empathic and non-judgmental way, whilst remaining inside the two boundaries was one of the main focusses of the training sessions. Empathic responses were taught to mentors through several different exercises. In the first training session Jessica conducted an exercise to help define what was meant by the term 'empathy':

> Jessica explains that there is a difference between empathy and sympathy. Sympathy = pity, empathy = imagining being in someone else's shoes. She explains that the goal of this exercise is for the mentors to think about how they would respond to their mentee in an attuned, empathic way … Jessica says that in mentoring one should give empathic responses to convey "I have listened, it matters to me. I get where you're coming from."(Fieldnotes, Training Session 1)

This was followed by an exercise where mentors were given various scenarios where they had to decide how they would respond to make their mentee feel like they 1) had listened 2) had validated their mentee's feelings 3) had given their mentee some vocabulary for their emotions. Within this exercise, Jessica also emphasised the boundary of not acting on information, and instead passing information on to Kids Company to be dealt with. For example, in discussing one scenario Jessica emphasised that it was the 'staff's role to take the matter further not the mentors':

> Scenario 3: *Your mentee says "I've got a secret attic room where I go to hide from everyone"*. The group suggest they would be appreciative of being told a secret. Jessica says that picking up on it being a secret is important. She suggests that you would then tell Kids Co staff so they can explore more about it. She emphasises that it is the staff's role to take the matter further not the mentors ... Natasha says that her response would be to say "I can understand the feeling of wanting to get away", but says that she would also ask what the mentee does in the secret room. She says she wouldn't probe too much. Jessica says it's good to name the feeling (wanting to get away), and create a space for more questions, but emphasises not to take this too far. (Fieldnotes, Training Session 1)

Following this, the mentors were given another set of scenarios where they were asked to pick out the significant details of the experience and discuss how they would respond if it happened to them. The purpose of this exercise seemed to be to consolidate what the mentors had learnt about empathic responses and also to reiterate both forms of boundaries. For example:

> Scenario 3: *Kyle is a 12-year-old boy. It is your second meeting, and you arrive at his home to pick him up. As you ring the doorbell, you hear raised voices inside. Kyle's mother comes to the door. You met her previously at Kyle's school during the initial introduction meeting, and you greet her tentatively. She says that Kyle has been playing up, and she is not sure whether to let him out for his mentoring session. Kyle comes to the door, and she shouts at him telling him how much trouble he causes her, that he will put her in an early grave, and how you (the mentor) need to sort him out.* The group discuss that they would be polite to the mother, and they would try to talk to their mentee about it but they wouldn't delve too deep/stir things up. Then they would flag up the incident with Kids Co staff by writing about it in their Meeting Notes record. Hope says "We're really getting it!" and I think she means that she now understands where the boundary is between what a mentor can do for a child and what other Kids Co staff can do - it's not the mentor's job to talk to the mum, instead, the mentor tells staff and staff talk to the mum. (Training Session 1)

A similar exercise was conducted in the second training session and this is the only exercise that was repeated over the two sessions, illustrating how important it was for the mentors to understand what was expected of them in terms of these mentoring interactions.

Research into psychotherapy, and the common factors of therapeutic relationships that bring about change, suggests that the Rogerian notion of unconditional positive regard is one of the most empirically supported psychotherapeutic stances (Lambert & Barley, 2002); thus, the mentoring programme's expectation that mentoring interactions should centre around empathy and non-judgement may have been a valuable element of Kids Company's mentoring approach. In the next chapter, I will explore how this expected mode of interaction was positive for initial relationship development as it encouraged mentors to not pre-judge their mentees. However, as relationships progressed, the rules imposed on interactions (to not give advice and not take practical action) were experienced as disabling, as mentors reported difficulties in dealing with grey areas of their mentoring relationships.

The rule that mentors should not take practical action with their mentee, but should instead pass information on to Kids Company for action, had an interesting consequence as the practitioners seemed to be encouraging the mentors to take part in the surveillance of their mentee and mentee's family. This was because the type of information that mentors were expected to pass on to Kids Company encompassed things that clearly were issues that required action, but also things that were only possible issues. An example of a clear issue would be if a mentee did not have a winter coat when the weather turned cold, the mentor should tell Kids Company and Kids Company would buy the mentee a coat. However, mentors were also encouraged to report things that were only slightly out of the ordinary. For example, during one of the training sessions, mentors were told to be vigilant about the possibility of the presence of underlying issues:

> Jessica also mentions that mentors should be aware of the possibility of underlying issues e.g. if the mentee is eating very quickly he might not have enough food at home. This would be something a mentor should mention to Kids Co. (Training Session 1)

Mentors were also encouraged to extend this form of observation to the mentee's family, and communicate to Kids Company if they felt there might be any issues in the home:

> [To stop the mentors taking practical action themselves] the way to work around that is obviously just to try and remind the mentors that the best way that they can help is to communicate with us about their observations that they are seeing at home. (Jo, joint interview)

The way that mentors were expected to communicate with Kids Company staff was through the meeting records that they completed after each meeting with their mentee. This is particularly interesting as it has strong parallels with the Victorian COS model of working with vulnerable young people. As discussed in the literature review, the COS involved volunteers monitoring working class families and reporting back to the organisation for it to be decided whether or not to provide the family with charity. There are differences however, as the volunteers for the COS were specifically monitoring families progress towards fulfilling criteria that demonstrated that they were 'deserving' of charity. Whereas Kids Company were monitoring families to decide whether a situation was 'bad enough' to warrant action. However, it is still an example of middle class volunteers monitoring working-class families, and highlights that some of the motivations that underpinned the original forms of mentoring may still be apparent in modern mentoring.

4.3.2 Mentors' Expectations of Interactions

In the literature review I discussed that more research is required in understanding how mentors influence mentoring relationships, however, there is some research to suggest that whilst mentors who do not share similarities in terms of race and class can build trusting relationships, mentoring pairs who do share such similarly may find this helpful in creating an immediate 'comfort zone' from which to develop the mentoring relationship (Gaddis, 2012; Pawson, 2004). In the methodology chapter I discussed how the current project did not collect adequate demographic information related to the mentors, instead dividing them into arbitrary categories of 'similar to their mentee' and 'different to their mentee', without interrogating what these similarities and differences consisted of. However, in the mentoring training session, Sabrina suggested that she had grown up in a similar community to Kids Company services users. Sabrina's response to a scenario exercise was different to some of the other mentors, and her approach may suggest that there may be some differences in how working-class mentors approach mentoring relationships.

During the scenario exercises in which mentors were taught how to use empathic responses, some of the mentors struggled with the idea that they were not supposed to offer advice. However, Sabrina recognised that there is a power imbalance between mentors and mentees that could make mentees feel uncomfortable if mentors tried to question them when they got into trouble;

> The mentors find it hard to imagine giving support without asking questions or giving lessons e.g. "do you understand why you weren't allowed to play football?" Sabrina suggests that mentors aren't counsellors/teachers, but Alicia says "aren't mentors supposed to inspire mentees if they are struggling at school?" Sabrina thinks they shouldn't ask questions because they are in a position of power and the mentee might feel they have to answer even if they don't want to. (Training Session 1)

Sabrina's recognition of this power imbalance is likely to have stemmed from experience, perhaps with teachers (as noted in the literature review, Reay (2007) discussed how working-class children can feel 'looked down on' by teachers). Sabrina also described how social services had been involved in her childhood at various points. As such, in line with Skeggs (2007) discussion of recognition, this form of recognition could be helpful in a mentoring relationship, as Sabrina may be able to name and mark these experiences in a mentee's life to enable the mentee to understand them.

In the above quote, Alicia, suggests that mentors should 'inspire' mentees if they are not doing well in school. Another mentor, Daniel, asked if responding to this situation empathically and non-judgementally could be detrimental to the mentee, as it could encourage the mentee to think that they should not be disciplined in general:

> Daniel asks if the mentoring relationship, which has been characterised as non-judgmental, could actually be detrimental for the mentee's other relationships. Will they think their teachers/parents shouldn't discipline them/teach them because their mentor doesn't? (Training Session 1)

In this instance, Alicia and Daniel seem to be expressing a 'child-saving' motivation, similar to early forms of youth mentoring that were concerned with raising the aspirations of young people and educating them about middle class values. As described in the literature review, sociological and cultural researchers have highlighted the positioning of the middle-class experience as 'normal' while the working-class experience is pathologized (e.g. Reay, 2006). Thus, this 'child-saving' motivation expressed by Alicia and David, may stem from this positioning, and a desire to encourage their mentee conform to middle-class standards. As noted by Skeegs (2004) this 'othering' can produce feeling of shame, and a mentee may recognise that they are being measured against specific standards.

As such, it seems that similarities in social class may aid the formation of mentoring relationships. In Chapter 5, I will further discuss how the only mentoring pair from the interview sample that continued their mentoring relationship after Kids Company closed down also involved a mentor who expressed that he had grown up in the same South London area as his mentee. However, I will also suggest that the instruction from the mentoring programme that mentors should interact with their mentees in an empathic and non-judgemental way appeared to aid relationship formation, regardless of the mentors' backgrounds.

Overall, these expectations held by the practitioners and the trainee mentors highlight the different motivations and values that can exist in youth mentoring in addition to the 'official' goals of the mentoring programme. What is particularly interesting is that some of these motivations, such as monitoring families and educating young people, have parallels with the 'social reformist' and 'child-saving' forms of youth work that brought about the formalisation of youth mentoring. Such

motivations are not generally cited as explicit goals of modern mentoring (or at least not compensatory mentoring), thus it is noteworthy that they still appear to exist implicitly. Additionally, the idea that mentoring relationships may be influenced by the mentors' own backgrounds and experiences is an interesting element that is not generally explored in the youth mentoring literature.

Conclusions

Up until its closure in August 2015, Kids Company was a high-profile charity known for its unique approach to working with vulnerable inner-city young people. Kids Company's model of care centred around the idea that loving and supportive relationships at Kids Company could make up for young people's parental relationships, which were characterised as lacking. As such, Kids Company saw themselves as acting as a substitute family for youth in need. This approach was grounded in attachment theory and neurobiology. The focus on loving relationships put Kids Company in opposition with social services, and the use of these theories meant that Kids Company was perceived as more reliable than traditional youth work. Kids Company was particularly popular with policy makers as, in line with policy trends at the time, their approach focussed on what was lacking within the individual and their family, rather than social and economic factors that contributed to their difficulties. The adaptation of Kids Company's model of care into a mentoring model meant that mentoring relationships were characterised as attachment relationships that could improve young people's sense of self and relationships with others. Additionally, in line with compensatory mentoring, theories of resilience and social capital also underpinned the model, as guidance and broadening horizons were also considered important. Youth mentoring is often characterised as a straightforward intervention; however, this ignores the variety of different motivations and values held by different people within a single programme. Within Kids Company's mentoring programme, the practitioners and the trainee mentors held a number of different motivations and goals in addition to the 'official' goals of the attachment model.

In the next chapter, I will look at mentoring relationships longitudinally, to explore how they developed over time. Within this, I will detail how the different expectations that the mentors brought to the relationship interacted with Kids Company's mentoring model and the expectations of the mentoring practitioners. In Chapter 6 I will discuss the elements that were left out of Kids Company's de-socialised approach; the complexities of the young people's biographies and contexts.

Chapter 5: The Temporalities of Mentoring Relationships

> I asked Suzie if she got the note I left her last week … so she would know that I was there to pick her up, and she said "I know you're here every Saturday" (Jenny Meeting Record 10)

To better understand youth mentoring and challenge dominant understandings of youth mentoring as a decontextualized, catch all intervention, it is necessary to understand what happens inside mentoring relationships; how do the different people participating in these relationships experience them? Youth mentoring is treated as an intervention that can be operationalised at any time, any place where there are young people in need of support, regardless of the context or the lives and needs of the particular young people. I argue that mentoring relationships are more complex than this characterisation suggests, as programme practices, motivations of the mentors, and the young people's wants and needs for the relationship can all come into play. To illuminate how this variety of factors interact within mentoring relationships, this chapter will take a temporal look inside the mentoring experience. It will track the beginning, middle and ending of mentoring relationships, as represented by Kids Company mentors. To do this, I will draw on data from the completed meeting records of six mentors, and two sets of interviews with five mentors; one from when they were first matched with their mentee and one from when their mentoring relationship came to an end, due to the closure of Kids Company. In the previous chapter, I outlined Kids Company's attachment model of mentoring, and discussed other expectations and motivations that were present. This chapter will explore how these motivations influenced the relationships in practice.

The first section of this chapter will detail the initiation of these youth mentoring relationships, which look somewhat formal and careful. Both mentors and mentees seemed to be putting a lot of effort into working out who this new person in their life was, and what this new relationship would be like. The second section, detailing the middle phase of the relationships, will explore how relationships appeared to become a lot more relaxed. Mentoring pairs appeared more comfortable, and it seemed as though there was some therapeutic work happening, as the mentor consistently 'being there' for the mentee seemed important. The third section of the chapter will look at the experience of the mentoring relationships ending. As represented in the meeting records, relationship endings were talked about and prepared for between the mentor and mentee, but many still came across as quite emotional and at times upsetting. For the mentoring pairs that ended due to the closure of Kids Company, there are questions regarding the decontextualized nature of Kids Company model. The charity (and mentoring programme) were not embedded within the community that they served, thus when it closed, mentors felt uncomfortable, or struggled to maintain relationships with mentees, as they were not a part of their mentee's community or involved in any of their other social networks. Interestingly, one mentoring pair continued their relationship despite Kids Company's closure, and the mentor had explicitly stated that he originally grew-up in the same area as his mentee and (along with his feeling that his mentee was particularly 'easy' to mentor) this meant that he felt comfortable enough to keep the relationship going without Kids Company's support.

5.1 The Beginning

The beginning of the mentoring relationships could be characterised by a sense of intensive relational effort from both the mentors and mentees. As described in the methodology chapter, the

meeting records that the mentors filled out consisted of some administrative questions, questions about the mentee's physical and emotional appearance, and then a request for the mentor to 'describe the details of your meeting, what stood out for you, what your mentee enjoyed or disliked, significant moments and conversations, etc.'. This final question was the section of the form that mentors focused the most details on. At this initial stage of the relationships, the meeting records submitted by mentors tended to be very long, with this final section being up to seven paragraphs. A significant portion of this was dedicated to reflecting on and interpreting their mentee. A lot of effort (in terms of travel, time and money) was also spent by the mentors in organising the activities that the relationships are centred around.

5.1.1 The Labour of Working Each Other Out

In the initial meeting records, the mentors seemed to put a lot of work into interpreting their new mentee, creating an image in their mind of who this young person was. This involved the use of many evaluative statements about the mentees. For example, after Pete's first meeting with his mentee Jamie, Pete spent a large portion of his notes describing and evaluating Jamie, based on the details that Jamie had volunteered during the meeting (that his parents were divorced, that he regularly had bad dreams):

> It is obvious that his parent's divorce still affects him and he gets a bit sad when he brings it up in conversation. He spoke a bit about dreams he has been having … He clearly has a vivid imagination, at one point talking about how he could see the grass and sky on fire … On the whole he came across as a fairly normal 9-year-old boy. (Pete Meeting Record 1)

It is possible that the mentors' keenness to get to know their mentee as a person could have been influenced by the Rogerian inspired mentoring approach that was taught to the mentors in the training sessions. The Rogerian inspired mode of interaction encouraged mentors to show their mentee unconditional positive regard and not judge them. (Additionally, this idea that mentors should not judge was also reinforced by the practitioners' policy of not sharing many details about the mentee to the mentor prior to the match, with the specific intention that this would reduce the chance of mentors pre-judging their mentee). Thus, the mentors seemed to approach the relationship with an open mind and a willingness to learn about their mentee.

However, within this desire to learn about their mentee, the mentors did seem to be making some comparisons; between their mentee and their previous experiences with young people, and between their mentee and the characterisation of mentees that they were presented with in the training. For example, Pete came to the conclusion that 'on the whole' Jamie was 'a fairly normal 9-year-old boy'. Thus, it could be said that Pete was considering Jamie on a scale between his own theories of a 'normal' child and the training's characterisation of a 'damaged' Kids Company child, to find that Jamie was 'fairly normal'.

Through behaviour that was interpreted in the mentors' meeting records as boundary testing, the mentees were also represented as though they were putting labour into working out who their mentor was, and also what the parameters of the relationship would be. For example, Jenny stated that she thought that her mentee, Suzy, was 'acting out' at the end of visits to test the boundaries:

> On the way home Suzie was trying to grab my hat from my hand (Suzie always grabs my hat off my head or out my hand), as we were almost home, I had said the game was over and we were calming down to get home. Suzie then said "I'll bite you". I said "you will not". Suzie then put her teeth on my hand and I just looked at her and said in a very stern tone "don't"

– she instantly let go and I said "that will never happen again and you don't threaten or bite people." I feel this was more of a boundary test than a real threat or concern. I do feel there is a pattern forming – Suzie seem to act out in some way in the last 30 mins of our hang out. (Jenny Meeting Record 6)

Whilst Jenny seemed relatively unaffected by Suzie's boundary testing, Eve's representation of her mentee, Isiah's boundary testing came across as quite anxious. Eve presented Isiah's boundary testing in relation to a set of safety rules that she was trying to introduce. Eve had reported in earlier records that Isiah kept running off, thus mentoring staff suggested that to reduce this behaviour and keep him safe, Eve should choose a predefined spot (such as a lamppost in the distance) and allow Isiah to run off, with the agreement that he would stop once he reached the spot. Eve described how Isiah was 'testing her patience' by not sticking to these rules;

> Overall the meeting went well although I kept repeating the rules Isaiah still runs off but I think it is just a matter of time, he will eventually listen I am sure. I sometimes feel he is trying to test my patience, which is ok as I am sure he will eventually realize there is no point in misbehaving. (Eve Meeting Record 9)

The use of phrases such as 'it is just a matter of time', 'I am sure', 'which is ok' suggest that Eve was finding this situation stressful, as she appeared to be reassuring herself that things would be ok as Isiah would 'eventually realize there is no point in misbehaving'.

5.1.2 Organising Activities

The beginning phase of the mentoring relationship was also characterised by the mentors organising lots of activities for their mentee, with a particular focus on visiting a variety of tourist attractions such as museums and art galleries. The wide variety of places that the mentoring pairs visited at the beginning of the relationship is epitomised in Charlotte and Antonio's first meeting, where they packed lots of activities in to a single meeting; the cinema, a football stadium and a Lamborghini showroom. For the rest of the mentors, these types of activities were also typical at the beginning of the relationship, but they tended to do one attraction per visit:

> He was keen to go to the cinema to see Twilight, so when this wasn't on locally, I suggested we got the tube. He gradually came round to the idea. On the way to the cinema, we were talking about football and how much he loves it and how much he'd like to see a stadium. I said I knew where there was one and he was very excited. When we arrived at the football ground he was so happy and ran up to the stadium and even asked me to take a photo of him outside … I offered to take him for something to eat on the way home – but he was unsure. So we got the tube home, (via South Kensington- because I promised him I'd show him a real Lamborghini – as there is a car Garage there and he completely loved it.) (Charlotte Meeting Record 1)

Similar to the labour that the mentors put into working out their mentee, the organisation of activities also seemed to be characterised by certain levels of anxiety. For example, the previous quote from Charlotte is so full of different activities that there is a sense that she felt that she only had one shot to get it right. Even for the mentors who organised only one activity per session, the meetings seemed relatively stressful, as they were trying to entertain, get to know, and keep safe a young person that they did not know very well in a busy public place:

As soon as we arrived to the museum Isaiah made a point that he did not like it and he was bored and wanted to leave. I asked him to be a bit more patient and I explained that we were already there so we might as well make the most of it, that he may find interesting things as we went along. Isaiah walked off away from me for most of the time we were at the museum, it worried me a bit sometimes as I didn't want him getting lost! I asked him several times not to run off and said that if there was somewhere he wanted to go he just had to let me know and we would go and see that part of the museum. I reminded him quite a few times about this as I spent most of the day running after him. (Eve Meeting Record 7)

As our previous session had been a bit stressful with Isaiah running off I followed suggestions [from Kids Company staff] and decided to stay local. (Eve Meeting Record 8)

Despite the level of stress surrounding these visits, the mentors may have felt they were important experiences for the mentees to have, as the mentors seemed concerned with taking their mentees out of their local environment and exposing them to more middle class pedagogical environments. This was expressed by David in our first interview:

So, I'm determined at some stage to expose him to some cultural aspects, as it were, so I've got a sneaky plan for tomorrow, no Friday, when I go and pick him up again, because we're going to the South Bank, to walk from Waterloo to London Bridge along the South Bank to look at the sights. Along there of course is the Tate Modern, so I'm hoping, the forecast is that it might rain, so I can say "come on, let's quickly nip in here, to get out of the rain" and we'll see what he makes of that, because it's quite an interesting space. So, I think sometimes as a mentor you've got to be a bit sneaky as well to broaden their horizons as much as you can, and expose them to things that for a ten-year-old, they're not even in their thought process really. So, it's just giving them the opportunity to have different experiences. (David, Interview 1)

Implicit in David's reflections and his careful orchestration of a visit to the Tate Modern is the 'child-saving' model discussed in the literature review and the desire to 'inspire' mentees that some of the mentors in the training sessions held. Additionally, his approach fits well with the Kids Company practitioners' implicit desires to increase mentees' social capital and 'broaden their horizons'.

Interestingly, Robert and his mentee Lex were an exception within this relationship initiation phase, as rather than visiting tourist attractions they visited different workplaces. It seemed that Lex had a clear idea of what he wanted from the relationship and Robert was able to provide this:

We talked about what we thought this whole mentor/mentee thing was all about. Short response – he wants 'opportunity in life'. I asked him some questions about the sort of things we might do together, and that it might be a good idea to plan fun things and discuss other stuff while we are doing it – which he seemed to agree to. (Robert Meeting Record 1)

We discussed last weeks missed appointment and also our expectations of these meetings. Lex said that he thought it would be more about coming with me to my work (almost like work experience) and so on … this is something that we will be able to do one day but in the meantime I have thought about trying to expose him to some other people's work. (Robert Meeting Record 6)

Overall, the beginning of the mentoring relationships seemed to be characterised by a desire of both the mentors and the mentees to work out who each other were. Whilst at times, this labour of

working each other out was represented as slightly stressful for mentors (for example, when they felt their mentee was 'testing boundaries'); the mentors were generally open-minded and keen to get to know their mentee as a person, rather than follow any pre-judged ideas of who their mentee was. There did, however, seem to be an element of mentors comparing their new mentee to their own received wisdom of a 'normal' child, and what they thought a Kids Company child (as characterised in the training sessions) might be like. The influence of the mentoring programme's characterisation of their service users (as experiencing non-secure parental attachments, which may have impeded their brain development) on the mentors will be discussed further in the next chapter. In addition to getting to know their mentee, the mentors were also keen to organise lots of cultural activities for their mentee at the beginning of the relationship. I have suggested that such approaches to practising mentoring carry an implicit 'child-saving' model of mentoring whereby the mentor is expected to raise the aspirations of their mentee. In the following section, I will describe how this focus on cultural activities reduced as mentoring pairs began to establish routines based much more on 'hanging out' in areas local to the mentee, and suggest that these 'child-saving' motivations gave way to a more therapeutic mode of interaction based on consistency.

5.2 The Middle

During the middle phase of the mentoring relationships, mentoring pairs seemed to move into a more gentle and relaxed phase. Throughout this phase the meeting records submitted by mentors were generally shorter and less detailed, with mentors only using two or three paragraphs to summarise the descriptions of the meeting. Some of the young people went through difficult stages in their lives at this point, but the consistency of continuing routines that the mentoring pairs had established seemed to make these difficulties more bearable. However, some struggles were also apparent in the development of relationships, such as difficulties in offering support and working within the mentoring programme's prescribed boundaries.

5.2.1 Establishing a Routine

In contrast to the somewhat frenetic beginning phase of the mentoring relationships, the middle phase of the relationships felt much more relaxed, and this was represented by the mentoring pairs establishing routines. These routines often revolved around visits to a local café where the mentoring pair would generally hang out, chat and play a game or do a craft-based activity:

> I picked Antonio up from his mum's and we took our bikes to the park. We rode around for quite a while and then we went to the café. Antonio took pleasure in ordering 'our usual' – a Panini, Fanta and tea for me! (Charlotte Meeting Record 25)

> We got to Starbucks and ordered some pastries and hot chocolate. Isaiah wanted to sit at our usual table but it was busy, so he found another place for us to sit and waited for me to arrive with the food. We started chatting about football and the world cup, I had another football magazine for him so when we finished our food we looked through it. There was a quiz and we did this together, it was really good fun and I could tell he was enjoying himself very much. We laughed a lot. (Eve Meeting Record 15)

> We went to the café again and did the same thing. He is very keen for routines so as soon as we do something he likes to do the same thing again. (Pete Meeting Record 24)

Whereas in the previous relationship stage, the mentors had used the meeting records to describe the activity that the mentoring pair had done, whether the activity had gone well or not, and their interpretations of who their mentee was; in the middle relationship stage, meeting records were much shorter. These meeting records are interesting for two reasons. The first is that the mentors seemed to struggle to find things to write about. Within Kids Company's attachment model of mentoring, it was expected for mentoring staff to be very involved in the mentoring relationship, with staff acting as attachment figures, supporting mentors throughout the relationship. However, when the mentoring pairs were enacting these relaxed routines, and the mentors did not need active support, it seems that they still felt obliged to give detailed reports to keep mentoring staff involved. This meant that mentors tended to report the minutia of their café visits. For example, Charlotte detailed her 'fantastical' conversations with Antonio:

> We talked a lot, mainly about fantastical things like "if you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life what would it be?" and "if you could be an animal what would it be?" (Charlotte Meeting Record 28)

Pete described teaching Jamie how to play draughts and then used the phrase 'so that took up most of meeting', almost as a justification as to why he had not written more:

> We went to the café and played draughts. I have been teaching him the tactics and how to play and he has become determined to beat me. So that took up most of our meeting. (Pete Meeting Record 25)

Relatedly, the second element that is interesting about this middle stage of the mentoring relationships, and the established routines, is the sense of 'normality' that permeates the meeting records. For example, Pete continues the same meeting record to state that he and Jamie had their 'normal' conversations, as though they chat about the same topics every week.

> We had our normal conversations and he seems a happy kid these days, which is good. (Pete Meeting Record 25)

Pete also states that Jamie seemed happy, and many of the mentees were described as enjoying themselves and having fun. Whilst the mentees did go through some difficult times, which will be discussed in the next sub-section, it is interesting how in the middle phase of the mentoring relationships, the mentors seemed to experience the mentees as multi-faceted individuals; sometimes they were sad or stressed, but sometimes they were happy and funny. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6; but it is important to highlight here how the middle phase of the mentoring relationships created a space for mentors to get to know their mentees as complex individuals, in contrast to the quite simplistic characterisation of mentees that the mentors were presented with in the training. It should be noted that during this phase, mentoring pairs did still visit tourist attractions, but these seemed more like occasional 'treats'. Also, Robert and Lex continued with their own routine of doing more tailored activities based on Lex's desire to visit different workplaces.

5.2.2 Support Through Difficulties
During this middle phase of the relationship, many of the mentees went through some kind of difficult event in their lives; Amirah's father was diagnosed with cancer, Antonio's teenage sister became unexpectedly pregnant and had a baby, Jamie moved house and Lex's granddad was

arrested for selling drugs, resulting in social services becoming involved with the family. In general, the mentees did not talk in-depth about these issues with their mentors. However, the mentors maintained the stable routines of hanging-out that they had already established, and it seemed that this provided the mentees some respite from these events, as they were able to get out of the house and away from the situation for a while. This was reflected in Hannah's meeting with her mentee Amirah, when Amirah's father was ill. Hannah represented Amirah as relaxed during the meeting, but then not wanting to return home;

> Amirah seemed really distracted and her mood kept flipping between bubbly and sad. Her dad is undergoing chemotherapy and there's quite a bit of disruption in the family, so I think Amirah is feeling it. In the end, Amirah spent most of the time colouring in her music homework, which seemed a little unnecessary(!) but she appeared to be relaxed doing it. On the way home, Amirah tried every delaying tactic in the book: needing the toilet, showing me where her nan lived, short-cuts, long-cuts, stopping, running down side-streets etc. (Hannah Meeting Record 37)

The consistency of the weekly mentoring meetings also seemed helpful for the mentees during this period. For example, when they were going through these stressful times the mentees would sometimes be depicted as exhibiting behaviour in contrast to the usual relaxed behaviours that they were generally characterised by during this middle period. However, even though the mentors presented these meetings as difficult, the relationships would continue and the mentees seemed to return back to their relaxed routines:

> Antonio's sister has had her baby and was due to return from hospital. I offered to take Antonio out for a little while. Right from the start, he was very difficult to engage with and not listening to me. We went to get on a bus to the park. He was generally rude and I tried to make conversation with him but he just insisted that I give him my phone so that he could play games. I suggested we went to the park and then perhaps to the shop to buy something small for the baby. He suggested a teddy… We chatted about the baby, he seemed OK – but not very friendly, which was quite out of character for him. We usually chat quite freely. When we got off the bus he was difficult to control, running all over and throwing stones. It was hard to manage, I tried to stay calm and keep him safe. We got to the park to play crazy golf – he was unimpressed and cheated throughout the game. At one point he hit the ball very hard towards a crowd of people in a café. It was really challenging for me, he has pushed boundaries before – but generally not where other people are involved before. (Charlotte Meeting Record 22)

> I picked Antonio up from his mum's and we wandered along to the Park. When we got there he played on my bike and we played in the sand at the playground. We had a lot of fun, and he was talking a lot about the new baby and what he had been doing. His behaviour was a lot better than on our previous meeting. We went to a café and had a sandwich. He really enjoyed it. (Charlotte Meeting Record 23)

Thus, there seemed to be something important about the mentor being there for the mentee in times of stress. The mentee was able to exhibit behaviour that the mentor found challenging, and a meeting may have felt difficult for the mentor at the time, but the mentor would always come back the next week.

One mentor that I interviewed, however, suggested that he could not support his mentee through a difficult time; and although the relationship came to an end due to the closure of Kids Company, the mentor, John, felt that the relationship may have been coming to a premature end regardless. What

is particularly interesting about John's struggle to support his mentee, Ash, is that whereas the other mentors had been helping their mentees through difficult situations that were happening around them and that they were caught-up in (such as family illness or changes in housing situations), for John and Ash, the difficulties were related to Ash's personal experiences at school. John suggested that Ash had originally been referred to the mentoring programme because it was felt that he would benefit from talking;

> He wasn't much of a talker, which is why; his mum actually said to me, "that's why we've got him a mentor, because he doesn't talk to anyone", whether that be teachers or his mum. (John Interview 2)

However, John described that over the course of their relationship Ash was expelled from school for physically fighting with a fellow pupil. Thus, there seemed to be an implication that the topics that it was hoped Ash would talk about with a mentor were related to his own attitudes and behaviours. John described how Ash 'kind of in his head probably placed me in the same bracket as, you know, social workers or teachers' from the beginning of their relationship, suggesting that Ash understood and was resistant to the implications of why he had been given a mentor. As a result, John found Ash quite difficult to engage;

> But one of the things, in the first few times we met, you know, the first six to ten times, I was like, what would you like to do next week, and was always just shrugging his shoulders, so it was literally wherever I decide to take him, so it didn't feel interactive. (John Interview 2)

Following Ash's expulsion, rather than offering Ash support through the process of changing schools, John suggested that the relationship became more difficult because Ash's behaviour with him 'deteriorated', and he described this as Ash being 'disrespectful' towards him. At this point Kids Company closed down, and the relationship thus came to an end, but John suggested that Ash was not fully engaged in the relationship regardless;

> It was just something he was doing, going through the motions. (John Interview 2)

In my interview with Ash, he also implied that he saw one of the purposes of mentoring to be the improvement of behaviour. When we spoke, Ash had been only matched with John for two months. To explore Ash's expectations of what mentoring might entail and what influence it may have, I asked him if he had a friend who might benefit from mentoring, and if so, why? Ash's response was that he had a friend who behaved badly at school, implying that mentoring might influence behaviour change. Within this, he suggested that the friend was dealing with things that happened at home, so there is also the possibility that Ash felt that there was a therapeutic side to mentoring that could help young people cope with difficulties in the home;

> Um, I think my friend [friend's name] needs a mentor, cos, like, in school he doesn't settle down properly, and I think that stuff happens at home, and that's why he goes round trying to hit people and stuff like that. (Ash interview)

However, when I asked Ash if he had a friend who did not need a mentor, Ash framed his answer entirely in terms of behaviour, as he described a friend who is respectful and kind;

> Um, I think my friend [friend's name], I don't think he needs a mentor because, like, after school I've been to his house and he, like, he speaks respectful, like, to his mum and says kind things. Like if his mum says no, then he says, like, it's ok. (Ash Interview)

John's struggle to engage Ash and then support him through the experience of being expelled and changing schools illustrates how the context of the mentee's own wants and needs for the relationship may influence the mentoring experience. As discussed, mentoring is viewed as an anytime-anyplace intervention for vulnerable young people in need of support. However, John and Ash's relationship highlights that the mentee may reject the mentoring relationship and not want to accept this support. In addition, the form of support that seemed to be expected of John was to encourage Ash's behaviour change through talking, and none of the other mentors in the sample were expected to actively influence their mentee's behaviour in this way. As discussed in the methodology, to categorise the mentees in the interview and meeting records samples, the mentoring practitioners classed the mentees as either 'less chaotic', 'moderately chaotic' or 'very chaotic'. Ash was classed as 'very chaotic', and this may have contributed to John's struggle with the relationship; however, Lex was also classed as 'very chaotic', and although he did go through a disruptive situation in his family life, his personal attitude towards his mentoring relationship appeared to be very positive, whereas (according to John) Ash's personal attitude was less so. Thus, further highlighting how the mentee's own wants and needs of the mentoring relationship contribute to the mentoring experience. This difference in the accounts of two mentors who were mentoring 'very chaotic' mentees also highlights how labels such as 'chaotic' are sometimes used as blanket terms to define vulnerable people, that obscure the differences and complexities of their lives. The use of the term 'chaotic' to obscure complexity is discussed further in Chapter 6 in relation to the mentoring programme referring to mentees' families as 'chaotic' in a way that mirrors social policy's use of the term 'troubled families'.

5.2.3 Working Within the Boundaries

Throughout the whole course of the mentoring relationships, the mentors seemed to question, and in many cases, seek permission from the mentoring team, with regards to the type and level of support that they could offer their mentee. This is exemplified by Hannah, who checked with Kids Company that she was maintaining appropriate boundaries at the beginning (Meeting Record 2), middle (Meeting Record 14) and towards the end (Meeting Record 42) of her relationship:

> When we were getting changed, she made comments about her pubic hair as though she'd quite like to know about shaving(?) as she's quite well-developed. It wasn't clear whether her mum had/would talk to her about it. (Hannah Meeting Record 2)

> She keeps getting told by bus drivers that she looks 16, so she needs a child travel pass. I have got her the form from the post office and filled in the necessary bits, but she needs to take into school to get stamped and then return with a £10 fee. Not sure if this something I should be helping with or not. I took a photo of her for her form, but have since realized this may not be allowed(?). (Hannah Meeting Record 14)

> One thing: When we were in a clothes shop, she did mention that she wanted to get herself measured for a bra. I wasn't sure that was appropriate for our outing, so thought I should highlight it in case it's something Charlotte (her keyworker) or someone else could arrange? (Hannah Meeting Record 42)

In the first instance, it seems understandable that Hannah would seek advice about how to respond to Amirah's question regarding personal grooming, as it is quite a personal question, and only the second time that the pair have ever met. However, with Hannah's second and third meeting records, it is interesting that after knowing Amirah for a while, she was still not confident in making judgements as to what was and was not appropriate. In terms of the Child Travel Pass discussed in

the second record, it is likely that Hannah's uncertainty stemmed from the boundary set by Kids Company, that mentors should not take practical action. But she also questioned whether or not it was appropriate that she took a photograph of Amirah; a dilemma that could also be located in more generalised social anxieties regarding 'appropriate' conduct between adults and children. Again, in the third record, the question of whether or not Hannah could organise a bra fitting appointment for Amirah, seems both related to the question of whether this counts as 'practical action' as defined by Kids Company, but also whether it is appropriate behaviour between an adult and an unrelated child. Additionally, in the first and third meeting records there also seems to be the question of whether these things should be happening between Amirah and her mother, rather than Amirah and her mentor.

The idea of mentors encroaching on space that would normally be occupied by parents or teachers was also encountered by Robert when he was concerned for Lex's diet and health. Robert was 'sensitive' to the fact that Lex's diet was not his responsibility, and that his parents may have felt that he had crossed a line by intervening. Robert was also aware that he could not 'enforce' any diet changes as he was not Lex's 'teacher or mother'. Nevertheless, Robert felt concerned enough to broach the subject anyway;

> The other subject that I decided to bring up was Lex's diet. I opened the discussion by making sure he realised that I cared about him a lot and that I wouldn't really try and advise him on anything unless it was for his benefit; that I wasn't his teacher or mother and so would not be there to enforce or back up my suggestion, but that I thought he could do some easy things to improve his health ... I am sensitive to the fact that Lex's diet should not be my responsibility, and that his family may react negatively to my involvement (if they ever became aware of our conversation that is), but with the backdrop being that Lex and I agreed to have a 'man-to-man' conversation about it, I felt compelled to follow through with the advice. Interested to hear any input. (I have already written cause for concerns about Lex's health so this shouldn't be new news to anyone at KidsCo ... but I want to make sure it is on someone's agenda there, or at his school, or at home via his mother. Is it on the agenda?! (Robert Meeting Record 32)

What is particularly interesting is that, whereas Hannah did not seem to form any strategies to cope with the ambiguity of her role, Robert managed to take action by framing his exchange with Lex as a 'man-to-man' conversation, which Lex agreed to participate in. Thus, even though Robert seemed to know he was in a grey area for a mentor, the pair created their own particular term of engagement, other than mentor-mentee, to allow them to have this conversation.

It is possible that the mentors struggled with these grey areas due to both of the aforementioned boundaries placed on the relationship by the mentoring programme. The boundary that they should pass information on to the mentoring team, rather than act on information themselves, hampered Hannah's articulation of her role. However, the boundary that mentors should not give advice may have also hampered the mentors' confidence to explore what was and was not within their remit. Although Robert did manage to find his own strategy to traverse a grey area, this was towards the latter part of his mentoring relationship. Nonetheless, he still comes across as anxious about how he responds to the situation, ultimately reports his strategy to the mentoring team, and directly appeals to the records reader for a response ('I want to make sure it is on someone's agenda there, or at his school, or at home via his mother. Is it on the agenda?!').

The above extract from Robert is also interesting as it highlights how mentors were very separate from the mentee's other social networks, including Kids Company to a certain extent (as mentors generally only communicated through these records, thus did not have direct contact with their

mentee's Key Worker or other staff that their mentee had relationships with). Thus, Robert did not know if Lex's diet was on his school or family's agenda, or even Kids Company's agenda, and he appeared to find this very frustrating.

5.2.4 Surveillance

Similar to the way that the mentors tried to stay within the mentoring programme's boundaries, they also maintained the request of practitioners to monitor and report back on their mentee's parents. This surveillance started as soon as the mentoring relationships began, with mentors mentioning very small details about parents (such as them being stressed or getting things wrong), which without the knowledge that mentors had been encouraged to monitor parents, would seem unnecessary;

> Also his mum called about half way through to say she might not be home in time and asked if I could take him to Kensal Rise. I said I would call back when we were on our way back to check where she was. We ended up running late, so she was home by the time we got back. (Pete Meeting Record 6)

What is particularly interesting is that the mentors maintained this vigilance towards their mentee's parents even during the middle stage of the relationship when they felt comfortable with their mentee. Thus, although mentoring allowed for a space where the mentors were able to experience their mentee as a multifaceted individual, their representation of parents did not seem to change.

Furthermore, on some occasions the mentors would explicitly describe the parents as competent and engaged in their child's life; however, this did not reduce the level of scrutiny that they subjected the parents to. For example, from quite early on in the relationship, Charlotte would describe Antonio's mother as very involved in Antonio's school life; she was concerned about his school performance and would instil punishments when Antonio did not complete his homework. However, despite this representation of competency, Charlotte still reported on small moments of disorganisation in the same fashion as the other mentors, even towards the end of the relationship;

> When I got there, no one was dressed and all still in bed/pyjamas. His big sister was feeding the baby, mum at work, middle sister and cousin listening to music videos. Antonio started running around trying to get ready. (Charlotte Meeting Record 32)

Adding further parallels to the COS, where volunteers would report back to the organisation to decide on whether a family deserved charity; within this relationship between Charlotte and Antonio's mother, both parties seemed to behave as though they felt that the meeting records were used for this purpose. In one meeting record, for example, Charlotte described how Antonio's mother explicitly asked her to mention in her 'Kids Co record' that she felt that she required more support from Kids Company;

> I was making arrangements with Maria (his mum) about our plans for next weekend. We were talking generally about Antonio and how he is doing at school. She expressed that she is feeling frustrated at the moment and showed me a recent report. She explained that Antonio is currently performing below average and she does not feel supported by his school. She stated that she was feeling upset because she does not think that the reasons for his poor performance have been fully investigated. She asked me to mention this in my Kids Co record, in case there is anyway someone could assist her in discussing her concerns. (Charlotte Meeting Record 13)

Thus, it seems that Antonio's mother felt that part of Charlotte's role as a mentor was to amplify her concerns to Kids Company in the hope that she might gain access to more resources.

Overall, the middle phase of mentoring relationships was defined by a sense of normality and routine, where mentoring pairs took pleasure in hanging-out in each other's company. Within this mentoring space, mentors were able get to know their mentees as multi-faceted individuals. Meetings centred around cafes in the mentee's local area, rather than cultural visits to tourist attractions. As such, desires to inspire or broaden the mentees horizons seemed to fall away somewhat in favour of a more therapeutic mode of interaction, where the consistency and routine of regular mentoring meetings seemed to aid mentees during difficult times. However, the mentors still encountered some struggles such as offering support if the mentee was not receptive, and working out how to enact their mentoring role while maintaining the mentoring programme's boundaries of interaction.

5.3 Endings

Mentoring relationships at Kids Company were expected to last for at least one year. Of the six mentoring pairs within the meeting records sample, four relationships ended quite soon after they had reached the one-year point, and in all cases the ending was instigated by the mentor. The mentoring programme had a process in place to support relationship endings; mentors were expected to inform the mentoring team and their mentee several months before the date that they intended the relationship to end, and then the mentoring team would encourage mentoring pairs to use these months as an opportunity to look back on the relationship and to prepare to say goodbye to each other. In practice, the mentoring pairs had a range of experiences when going through this ending process.

5.3.1 Ideal Endings

The mentoring practitioners characterised endings in a positive way. They saw relationship endings as both a space to consolidate the achievements of the mentoring relationship, and an opportunity for the mentees to experience a relationship ending in a safe and managed way;

> The ending of the mentoring relationship is something that we manage very closely because we ask for several months' notice. Because what we need to do here, when a mentoring relationship is going to end, we need to ensure that the child's experience of an ending is as positive as possible, so that we're not presenting them with another broken attachment. So, we actually make the ending an accomplishment rather than a loss. But we can only do that if we several months' notice to work through it properly so there's time for reflecting, and as the mentors are trained, to then talk to the mentees to reflect on the times that they've had together; so, the positive times, the times they've really had big belly laughs, or the times when they've navigated trickier times together but they've navigated and come through the other side. And as they do that, the child starts to really feel that they've contributed to this relationship, and they feel good about themselves. Again, it's a self-worth thing. And because these children will grow up to face a lot of loss or rejection in their lives, ending this in a very managed and appropriate way is like gifting them the opportunity to learn how to cope with an ending, so that going forward they can rest assured that endings or loss, so, I don't know, maybe they're going to be dumped by a boyfriend or girlfriend, or they're going to lose a job, or a pet dies or a loved one dies, they then start to be able to tap into this experience for their own emotional resource so that they can actually think, 'Oh, I know I'll

be okay,' and it's really powerful, it's like an enormous gift I think that we give to these kids. (Jo interview)

This positive experience of an ending was depicted in Charlotte's meeting records when she informed Antonio that she would be ending their relationship. Charlotte told Antonio's mother in advance and then informed Antonio personally during one of their meetings. Although Antonio seemed to be upset by the idea of the relationship ending, and tried to negotiate a different meeting time so that the relationship could continue, it appeared that Antonio had several opportunities to discuss and process the ending with Charlotte;

> We headed towards the tube and then I told him that over the next few weeks, I will be stopping being his mentor. I told him that I had already spoken to his mum, to explain that I am not going to be able to come to Brixton so often, so couldn't commit to being his mentor. (Charlotte Meeting Record 35)

> I took him home, and on the way, he asked me why I wasn't going to be his mentor anymore. I explained that coming to Brixton on Saturdays was going to be difficult for me in the future. He asked why I can't come on Fridays instead. I felt really sad for him. I really care about his feelings and he obviously doesn't want me to stop coming. (Charlotte Meeting Record 36)

> We talked a bit more about me leaving and he asked if it was possible to carry on. I explained that unfortunately, I could not carry on being his mentor, but that was only because of my situation – not down to anything he had done wrong. (Charlotte Meeting Record 37)

During their penultimate meeting, the pair printed off photographs of activities that they had taken part in, and then during their final meeting they made a scrap book for Antonio to keep. This seemed to be in line with the practitioners feeling that relationship endings could be experienced as an opportunity to look back on the relationship and view it as an accomplishment;

> I picked him up from home and we went into town to buy some supplies to decorate our photo album … We ordered food and sat for a couple of hours, chatting, reminiscing and creating a scrap book of pictures documenting all the activities we have done together (Meeting Record 39)

Charlotte expressed gratitude to Antonio for their relationship, and focused on providing Antonio with objects that could help him remember the relationship positively, such as the scrap book, a letter and items used during previous visits. Ultimately, Charlotte represented the ending as emotional, but also 'calm' and 'special'. Thus, this also follows the practitioners' ideas that the ending of a mentoring relationship could show mentees that they can successfully cope with endings. Charlotte even suggested that she was proud of how well Antonio coped;

> I was keen to express to him how much I think of him and say thank you for our time together. So, while we sat together, I wrote him a letter – which I then read aloud to him … As I told him I would miss him, he became tearful – and so did I. It was very moving ... After a little while when he felt better I gave him the letter, the album and a couple of things that we've used together (like table tennis equipment) and then we walked home – really slowly. I took him in to his mum and he showed off the album to her. I thanked them both and left.

Although it was very sad to say goodbye it was a calm and very special ending. I was proud of how Antonio behaved and coped with his emotions. (Meeting Record 39)

5.3.2 Emotional Responses

Some of the mentors represented their mentee as having a strong negative response to the idea of the relationship ending. For both Eve and Jenny, their mentees' responses may have been partly due to the way that they learned their relationship was ending. The intended procedure was for mentors to tell the mentees about the ending themselves. However, for Eve and Jenny, the mentoring team informed the mentees and their families that the relationships would be coming to an end before the mentor had had a chance to tell them. Eve described how she arrived for her meeting with Isiah and was taken by surprise to find out the he and his mother had already learned about her plan to end the relationship;

> I was going to speak to him about ending sessions; however, his mum brought it up as soon as I arrived as she already knew. I said I would speak to her when I dropped off Isaiah as I wanted to speak to Isaiah first. As we were walking out of the building Isaiah started asking me about ending sessions, he had already been informed that I was moving- I tried to explain as well as I possibly could, but it took me by surprise as I thought he hadn't been yet told (Eve Meeting Record 26)

Eve went on to describe Isiah as 'misbehaving' and then becoming upset. She felt that this was a response to the relationship ending;

> During the film, he seemed to be enjoying, however after this ended he started misbehaving and things got a little bit difficult … Whilst we walked to the house he started slowing his pace and didn't want to walk, I asked him to follow me but he didn't want to speak and by this point he looked very upset and would not say a word. I asked a couple of times if he was ok and also asked if he was upset because we were ending sessions, but I got no reply. I explained that if he didn't want to talk it was ok, and I asked if he wanted me to come back the following weekend, where he nodded with a yes. I am under the impression that he is sad about me leaving, I think that is what has caused his misbehaviour. So overall the session wasn't the best but I am hoping that next week it will all go well. (Eve Meeting Record 26)

Similarly, Jenny described picking Suzie up for a meeting, not knowing that Suzie had been informed about the relationship ending until Suzie brought it up herself. Jenny was surprised by this and described a feeling of the communication between herself and the mentoring team as being 'broken down';

> We jumped on the bus and we started talking about ice skating under the London eye when Suzie stopped what she was saying and said "why are you leaving me" "why are you leaving" and I said what do you mean – Suzie then went on to explain that her mum and Kids Company had told her that I was not going to be mentoring her any more. This took me by surprise as I would have thought and hoped that I would have spoken to her first or at least have been told that she was aware of what was happening. (Communication between myself and Kids Company felt broken down at this point) (Jenny Meeting Record 27)

Also, like Eve and Isiah, Jenny described Suzie as having an 'aggressive' response to the idea of the relationship ending;

We got our skates on and raced around the ring a few times, we stopped at one of the sides and Suzie just looked at me with a non-happy face and kicked my leg with her skate and then skated off. This was not a playful moment I felt like this was a reaction. I wanted for Suzie to come back to the side – she skated around 3 or 4 times and when she came over I knelt on my knee and asked her if she was ok and why she kicked me. She looked at the floor and did not answer. I said is this a reaction to us only have 7 hangouts left and if it was it was ok to have a reaction but not an aggressive one. (Jenny Meeting Record 27)

While it is understandable to imagine that the ending of a mentoring relationship may be upsetting for some mentees, there seemed to be something particularly difficult about the mentees hearing that the relationship was ending from the mentoring team, rather than their mentor. As we saw with Charlotte and Antonio, Antonio spent some time discussing and attempting to negotiate with Charlotte before coming to accept that the relationship was going to end. Thus, it is possible that he felt that he had at least a small element of agency over the ending. However, when the mentees heard about the ending from the mentoring team rather than their mentor, this feeling of agency may have been taken away.

Both Robert and Hannah continued their mentoring relationships for over a year. Robert continued mentoring until Lex's home life became more stable and Hannah only stopped mentoring when she became pregnant. Both Lex and Amirah seemed quite accepting of these endings. This may be because the mentoring relationships had followed a life arc and came to an end at a time that seemed to make sense for the mentees, rather than ending because they had reached the minimum required length as prescribed by the mentoring model.

5.3.3 Relationship Endings due to the Closure of Kids Company

According to the mentors that I interviewed, when Kids Company closed suddenly, they received an automated email from the mentoring department informing them of the closure and encouraging them to terminate their mentoring relationship as they were no longer covered by Kids Company's insurance. Some of the mentors did receive a phone call, so it is likely that the practitioners had endeavoured to personally contact all of the mentors, but were unable to do so before the office closed. However, these phone calls also urged the mentors to end their relationships. Out of the five mentors, two took Kids Company's advice and formally ended their relationship with their mentee, two attempted to continue mentoring but struggled to maintain contact with their mentees, resulting in the relationships ending a few months after the charity's closure. One mentor, at the time of our final interview was still mentoring and felt that the relationship would continue into the future.

For the two mentors who immediately terminated their relationships, David and John, both mentors explained that they felt uncomfortable maintaining a relationship with a young person without the protection of Kids Company. Both mentors suggested that they feared being wrongly accused of inappropriate behaviour and not having Kids Company there to validate that their relationship was safe and legitimate.

> I took the view, similar view that a teacher took, who I knew who's involved with the programme, and his view was look, you know, it's all well and good, and these kids are very deserving, but from your personal perspective it's not, kind of, normal to be wandering around having fun with a young lad in South East London on a weekly basis when you're a sixty-year-old bloke. And I kind of understand that because, you know, these days' people

are naturally suspicious, and rightly so, but, it's just sad that that modern-day cynicism about people trying to help has been tarnished with all of these sort of abuse things that have been going on over many many years, which is equally sad I think really. So he said, as a result, he felt vulnerable too, the possibility of those types of things, and I kind of took the same view really. (David Interview 2)

Um, my experience, because my girlfriend is a deputy head teacher of a primary school and my dad is a retired primary school head teacher, and my sister is a youth worker and my mum is an educational welfare officer, they all said to me, as much as you want to keep it going, because there was talk about it, I spoke to the mentor of one of his brothers, and she was talking about continuing it, and talking to the school and this and that. But the advice from my family was that, as much as you want to, and it feels like something you want to do, but you're not covered by the insurance they have, the child welfare insurance and stuff. So you can put yourself in a situation where you continue the relationship and you do what you were doing, and if they were then to say, oh, he touched me in a certain way, or whatever, you're not covered by the insurance of kids company, and you're basically exposed, and it's not safe for you to do it really. (John Interview 2)

Interestingly, both of the mentors were advised by friends and family who were teaching professionals to end their relationships. Thus, this advice may have been informed by the teachers' heightened awareness of child protection issues and risks of being accused of misconduct, in addition to general fears in society regarding adult and child relationships.

Two mentors, Dev and Sarah, attempted to maintain their mentoring relationships, but struggled due to communication and scheduling difficulties. Dev described how he and his mentee 'lost touch' after a few failed attempts to meet up;

We tried a couple of times, but I think it just fell through, and thereafter just lost touch. (Dev Interview 2)

However, Sarah seemed unsure of the current status of her mentoring relationship. Her mentee had previously stated that she wanted to continue the relationship, but then did not return any of Sarah's messages. Sarah seemed quite distressed by this and emphasised that if Kids Company and the mentoring team were still around she would have turned to them for support;

The last time, I was due to meet her and then she sent me a text, she'd just got a new phone, saying she wasn't feeling well, could she postpone, and I said fine. And after that, I went round there and there was nobody there. Nobody was answering the door; nobody was answering texts. So that was the last thing. I sent her a birthday card which was the 28th October. And this is where you suddenly realise there's just nobody to communicate with. So I have no idea. So it's a real, it's a real shame … And there's no one I can speak to now, there's no key worker, no one at Kids Company, I don't know what to do, other than stalking the house, which doesn't feel right! (Sarah Interview 2)

At the time of the last interview, one mentor, Stuart, was still in a mentoring relationship. Stuart suggested a number of reasons as to why this was the case, for example his mentee, Kai, did not have complex needs, and he felt the responsibilities of his role were to give Kai some one-to-one time outside of the home, as Kai's family worked long hours and Kai spent quite a lot of time indoors. Although Stuart and Kai had only been in a relationship for two months before Kids Company closed, the way that Stuart spoke about the relationship sounded very similar to the

middle phase of the relationships depicted in the meeting records, suggesting that their relationship felt 'relaxed' and 'natural';

> It's very relaxed, it's not forced in any way, it feels natural and I enjoy spending time with him, so I decided to keep the relationship going, just independently (Stuart Interview 2)

All of the mentors that I interviewed after Kids Company's closure had been matched with their mentee for between two and four months. Stuart and Kai had been matched for the shortest time, yet Stuart was the only mentor who discussed the relationship in terms that suggested that his relationship had gone through the careful and formal beginning phase, and moved into the relaxed and casual middle phase. One possibility as to why Stuart and Kai reached this stage of their relationship relatively quickly, is that Stuart grew up in the same area of London as his mentee;

> I'm from South London, I was born in South London, I know it's pretty fucking shit down there sometimes, but also pretty good down there sometimes (Stuart Interview 2)

Thus, due to this similarly and shared knowledge the mentoring pair may have quickly created a 'comfort zone' from which they developed their relationship, as described by Pawson (2004), whereas the other mentoring pairs may have still been working out how to relate to each other.

Overall, the closure of Kids Company, and the resulting termination of all but one relationship, highlights how necessary the presence of the charity and the mentoring programme was in maintaining the mentoring relationships. This formal structure was necessary for two reasons. The first was that it legitimised and insured the relationships, and removed fear for the mentors that they could be viewed as taking part in an inappropriate relationship. Secondly, mentors needed the mentoring team to aid them in keeping in contact with their mentee's family. The mentors did not come from the same community as their mentee and they were not a part of any of their mentee's other social networks. Thus, if they could not contact their mentees parents, they did not have any other connections that they could use to get in touch with their mentee. The continuation of Stuart and Kai's relationship, despite the charity's closure, illustrates how coming from a similar social background may help early relationship formation, as suggested by Pawson (2004) and discussed in the literature review.

Conclusions

The mentoring relationships followed a temporal pattern of having a beginning, a middle and an end. The beginning phase was characterised by mentoring pairs putting effort into getting to know each other, and the mentors putting effort into broadening the mentees horizons by exposing them to cultural environments. During the middle phase however, the focus on cultural visits reduced and relationships became more relaxed as meetings centred around the mentees local environments. A sense of comfortable normality ran through the middle phase of the relationships, and the routines that mentoring pairs developed during this stage seemed to offer mentees respite during difficult periods in their lives. The struggle of John to support his mentee Ash, however, highlights how the mentee's own wants and needs of the relationship come into play, and how mentoring should not be thought of as an intervention that can be employed in any situation where a young person is deemed as in need of support. The ending phase of mentoring relationships were intended to be planned out, so that mentees could prepare for it and be encouraged to view the relationship as an achievement. In some cases, endings did not unfold in this way, because the mentoring team informed the mentee of the ending before the mentor had managed to discuss it with them. The

closure of Kids Company and the resulting termination of mentoring relationships highlights how the relationships were separate from the mentees' families and communities. Although the mentoring meetings took place in cafes within the mentees' local area, the relationships themselves developed away from the mentees' social networks.

In terms of Kids Company's attachment model of mentoring, there did seem to be something important about the mentors consistently being there for the mentees, especially during times of difficulty. In terms of the other expectations and motivations of mentoring, the Rogerian inspired mode of interaction encouraged in the mentor training sessions appeared to be helpful in encouraging mentors to get to know their mentee, rather than pre-judging them. The 'child-saving' desire to broaden mentees horizons seemed to be strong at the beginning of relationships, but reduced as mentoring pairs reached the middle phase of their relationship; whereas the mentors fulfilled the mentoring team's request of monitoring and reporting back on the mentees' families throughout the relationships.

Chapter 6: Figurations of Children, Families and Communities

> It seems as if she had never known childhood … having been doomed to suffering in an age which nature has destined only for enjoyment. (De Stael-Holstein, *Germany*, vol. 2, pp.326-8)

In this chapter, I will explore the contexts of youth mentoring and how the child, their families, and their communities were positioned both within the youth mentoring programme and Kids Company. The purpose of this is to further illuminate the values and motivations that can influence different mentoring experiences. The main focus of this study has been to provide an alternative to the dominant view that youth mentoring is a straight forward, 'off the self' intervention; to highlight how complex youth mentoring relationships can be and the many factors that can influence them. I have described the mentoring programme's attachment model of mentoring and the additional motivations and expectations held by the mentoring practitioners and the mentors, and explored how this looked within mentoring relationships in the field. A more elusive element of the intervention that needs to be addressed is how the mentoring programme depicted the young people themselves in order to justify the need for youth mentoring in their lives.

Youth mentoring is not an intervention that privileges the voice of services users (Liabo, Lucas and Roberts, 2005), instead service users and their needs are imagined by mentoring practitioners, and the relationships are constructed to meet such needs. Thus, these imagined service users influence the motivations and practices of practitioners (and mentors who are trained by the practitioners), which in turn influences the experiences of the real-life service users. Therefore, to draw a more detailed picture of Kids Company's specific mentoring programme, it is necessary to understand how they imagined their service users. Kids Company's model of mentoring was a form of compensatory mentoring, in that it was attempting to compensate for unsatisfactory existing relationships, thus it is also necessary to explore how the mentoring programme imagined these existing relationships. Within this I will explore how the construction of the mentee is positioned in relation to an image of an archetypal 'Kids Company kid' who is a figure that the mentors are assured that they will not meet, but who is used by the mentoring practitioners to 'move' the mentors. I will also show how this 'Kids Company kid' was used in Kids Company's advertising for similar purposes.

The first section of this chapter will therefore critically explore the ways in which the mentoring programme imagined the child mentee, their family and their community, and posit the ways in which this may have influenced mentors. As discussed in the literature review, this approach builds on a body of cultural analysis within the interdisciplinary field of childhood and youth studies that places importance on cultural imaginaries, exploring how the child is figured in public representations and the work that these figures then do. To illuminate the figure of the mentee in the case of Kids Company's mentoring programme (and the related archetypal Kids Company kid), I will draw on the ways that the practitioners spoke about mentees in our interviews, and the way they characterised them to the mentors in the training sessions. I will also look at publicly available material that Kids Company published, such as fundraising advertisements.

As discussed in the previous chapter, considerable labour was invested by the mentors into working out who their mentee was. While their representations of mentees initially conformed to the image that the mentoring programme had created, the progression of the mentoring relationships allowed mentors to experience different parts of their mentees' personalities, and the second section of this chapter will explore these different representations. As the mentoring relationships generally took place outside of the young people's everyday lives and routines (through one-to-one visits to cafes

and parks), the mentors did not engage in detailed representations of the mentees' families or communities (outside of monitoring parents). However, on some occasions mentors did offer alternative representations to those imagined by Kids Company, and these glimpses of alternative representations will also be explored.

6.1: Figuring the Child and Re-figuring Difference

The mentoring programme imagined the Kids Company mentee in a very specific way. By using an idiosyncratic interpretation of attachment theory that focused only on non-secure attachment, itself never clearly explicated, the mentee was defined by the damage that they had suffered due to their relationships and environment. Through the use of neuroscience, this damage was specifically located within the mentee's brain. As discussed in the literature review, Castañeda (2002) argues that representations of imagined children can be very powerful, and different forms of representations can do different things. Thus, this section will explore how the mentoring programme constructed the figure of the mentee, and infer how this figure was intended to influence the mentors. By defining the imagined mentee by their damage, their biographies and contexts were ignored, meaning that the mentoring programme did not pay much focus to the mentee's family or community. However, on the occasions when families or communities were mentioned these representations conformed to damaged figurations.

6.1.1 The Emotive Child Figure

The mentoring practitioners described the mentees as 'low-risk', in comparison to other service users at Kids Company; meaning that they were 'emotionally and socially ready' to build a relationship with a mentor. What is interesting about this characterisation is that the practitioners were not making a distinction between some children at Kids Company who were 'low-risk' (and therefore suitable for mentoring) and some children who were 'high-risk' (and were not suitable for mentoring), instead they were suggesting that all children who came to Kids Company started out as high-risk, but some moved into the category of low-risk after spending a period of time at Kids Company. This was expressed in the following quote from Jo, who suggested that there was such a thing as a 'Kids Company kid', a figure who arrived at Kids Company 'full of trauma and anger and blame' and was therefore not yet ready for mentoring;

> A Kids Company mentee has to be emotionally and socially ready for mentoring, because they have to be – emotionally, because they have to be able to build a relationship with somebody. So, we cannot introduce mentoring to a Kids Company kid when they first come to Kids Company because they'll be so full of trauma and anger and blame that they will not be able to build a relationship, and certainly with somebody they don't know, they won't be even able to think about trusting them, so it won't happen, it's not going to work. (Jo, individual interview)

There was, therefore, an imagined archetypal 'Kids Company kid' who was 'so full of trauma' and for the practitioners, the imagined 'Kids Company mentee' was positioned in relation to this archetypal child figure. The imagined mentee was the same child as the archetypal child, but had moved further along in their Kids Company journey, to a place where they were beginning to develop more 'pro-social' emotional and social skills.

During the training sessions, the mentors were presented with both the archetypal Kids Company kid and the imagined mentee, and it was expressed to the mentors that these representations

where the same child but at different stages in their journey. For example, in the second training session, the mentors took part in an exercise where they had to stand next to one of five coloured cushions to express how they felt they view the world. Nathan, the training co-ordinator, stood next to a red cushion that was said to represent the view 'the world is tough and hard like a jungle; it's eat or be eaten' and he performed a role play of a Kids Company child who may hold this world view:

> Nathan is standing next to the red cushion and he role-plays a mentee who believes in the red worldview.
>
> He says something along the lines of his dad is violent and owns knives. It's a dog eat dog world and you have to look after yourself. If anyone tries to hurt him he'll cut them with one of the knives.
>
> This role play is quite extreme and I think the mentors are a bit nervous about the prospect of being matched with a mentee who has this worldview. Or at least a mentee who expresses this world view in such a scary way. (Fieldnotes, Training Session 2)

He then stood next to a purple cushion, representing 'the world is mysterious and frightening'

> Nathan does another role play. He is standing in front of the purple cushion and acts out a very anxious child who is being followed by a man who stands outside his school gates. He says that the anxiety is causing him to wet himself.
>
> Again, the mentors seem quite taken aback by this role play. (Fieldnotes, Training Session 2)

The mentors were quite disturbed by these role plays, and as a result they spent the 'debrief' portion of the exercise asking Nathan about the likelihood that they would be matched with a young person similar to the ones that he had portrayed. Nathan reassured the mentors that the young people that he had portrayed were young people who he had worked with when they had first joined Kids Company.

By utilising both the figure of the archetypal Kids Company kid and the imagined mentee, the mentoring programme was thus able to present very extreme examples of children, which were compelling and emotive (and disturbing), without scaring potential mentors away from the role; as mentors could be reassured that they would never meet these children directly.

To explore why such extreme examples are so compelling, the figure of Mignon is helpful. As described in the literature review, Mignon is a fictional child acrobat, first created by Goethe at the end of the 18th Century, and then recreated throughout the 19th and 20th century through literary and cultural representations. Mignon's story was one of harm caused by adults. Mignon's first appearance in the novel *Wilhelm Meister* depicts her as having no parents, and being raised in harsh conditions by a troupe of circus performers. When the protagonist Meister witnesses Mignon being beaten by the troupe leader, he rescues her from the circus and tries to become a paternal figure for her. However, this relationship is difficult because Mignon has been so damaged by her previous relationships and experiences. As can be seen, there are strong parallels between this child figure and the figure of the Kids Company kid who could not form relationships because they were so 'full of trauma and anger and blame'.

Steedman (1995) suggests that the figure of Mignon is so powerful because she 'promotes pity and tenderness in the beholder (in the reader, as much as in Meister)' (p25). Steedman describes how Friedrich Schiller, on reading Goethe's final manuscript before it was published, wrote to Goethe to express that although she is not the main character of the story, Mignon was the image that stood

out most strongly to him, and 'moved me so deeply that afterwards I could not expunge the impression' (p25). Mignon's early life as a child acrobat means that she is deformed from contorting her body, and through Meister removing Mignon from her circus environment, she is dislocated from her environment. Steedman argues that through these deformities and dislocations, Mignon is defined by her 'un-wholeness'. Thus, Steedman suggests that the reader is moved because of the evocation of what Mignon lacks.

The imagined Kids Company mentee was also defined by what they lacked. As noted in Chapter 4, when describing a 'typical' mentee, Jo suggested that 'they lack guidance, they lack fun, they lack emotional support'. However, whereas Steedman suggests that the evocation of what Mignon lacks invokes pity in the reader, the practitioners suggested that their characterisation of mentees was intended to invoke empathy rather than pity. I would argue, nevertheless, that this figuration of the Kids Company mentee did arouse pity, because like Mignon, the imagined mentee was often discussed in relation to a romanticised idea of childhood. As described in the literature review, romantic discourses underpin many contemporary understandings of childhood in post-industrialised economies of northern European and North America. Children were seen as spiritual and close to God, and an ideal childhood was one that allowed children to creatively and freely express themselves (Kehily, 2010). As such, children and childhood needed to be protected.

The quote that opened this chapter expresses how Mignon was placed within this discourse, as the cultural critic De Stael-Holstein lamented that nature intended childhood to be for enjoyment, but for Mignon it was only full of suffering. Similarly, the practitioners suggested that mentoring was important because it allowed the mentee to 'just be a kid', meaning that it allowed the mentee to enjoy the experience of childhood, which they did not normally get to do;

> Mentoring is a space for the children to engage in activities and it's through those activities that the children first of all get to have fun and just be a kid, but they are also with an adult who, and maybe the first time that they've ever had exposure to an adult who is really safe and reliable (Jessica Interview 1)

Furthermore, as mentioned in the literature review, the romantic discourse of childhood is also related to ideas about adulthood, as one's childhood is thought to influence one's sense of self as an adult. Thus, in presenting the Kids Company mentee in this way, this may have been emotive to the mentors as it evoked memories of their own childhood in relation to who they are now.

6.1.2 The Brain-Damaged Child Figure

The figure of the Kids Company mentee, like Mignon, was presented as being damaged by their relationships and their harsh environment. For the imagined mentee, attachment theory was used to conceptualise exactly how this damage had influenced them; the mentee was seen as having a non-secure attachment to parents, which had a negative influence of their sense of self and of others. As discussed in Chapter 4, neuroscience was used to further elucidate how Kids Company felt this damage manifested itself in their service users. Kids Company suggested that due to the stresses of these inadequate parental relationships, the mentee's brain had not developed 'normally', meaning that they could not control their own behaviours and emotions. Crucially, Kids Company also believed in the plasticity of the brain, suggesting that through the introduction of a positive relationship, this abnormal brain development could be rectified (as Jessica stated while showing the mentors a video of Tronick's 'Still Face Experiment': 'Mum can repair that, as mentors can repair that'). Thus, Kids Company explicitly located the mentee's brain as the site of their damage.

Castañeda (2002) discusses how children can be re-figured in this way (for example, focussing on their brains and ignoring other elements of their identity) because the child is understood as an 'entity in the making'. As discussed in the literature review, Castañeda argues that the child figure is viewed as not yet fully formed, and is therefore associated with malleability. Within this conceptualisation there is also a sense of risk, as the child's path to becoming fully formed is viewed as normative, and thus, there is the potential for failure. Castañeda suggests that overall, this conceptualisation imbues the child with a sense of incompleteness and instability, and this makes the figure of the child available. The child is not fully formed, and is therefore available for re-formation for different purposes.

In the literature review I discussed an example from Castañeda regarding how an adoption advocate, Elizabeth Bartholet, was able to argue that white couples should be permitted to adopt children of a different race by re-figuring the child's race as an unimportant difference between the adoptee child and their potential adoptive parents, in relations to the child's other needs (namely their need for a loving family). By viewing the adoptee child within a model of 'common humanity' Bartholet argued that the most important thing about the adoptee child was their need for a family, thus whilst the difference between the child and the adoptive parents 'racial make-up' could be acknowledged as slightly problematic, it was not important in relation to their other needs.

In Chapter 4 I described in detail how the practitioners characterised the imagined mentee to the mentors in the training sessions. I described the presentation that Jessica gave that involved labelled diagrams of differently developed brains. In the extract of my fieldwork diary that I shared, I discussed how I could not understand what the mentoring programme was attempting to achieve by characterising mentees in this way, as I felt that it stripped the mentees of agency, rendering them voiceless and entirely controlled by their biological and cognitive development. By approaching Jessica's presentation through a lens of (re)figuration, an understanding of the training, and Kids Company's more general modus operandi, becomes possible. By stripping the mentee of their identity and framing them primarily in terms of their biological and cognitive development (which the mentoring programme believed the mentors could have an influence on), the figure of the imagined mentee that the mentoring programme constructed became simplistic *and,* importantly, manageable. The mentors did not have to deal with the complexities of the mentees' lives, they just had to form a relationship with them, and this relationship would improve their brain development.

This construction of the Kids Company mentee is also similar to the child constructed within contemporary social policy, as described in the literature review. Within social policy that is aligned to the zero-three years early intervention movement, the child is defined by and reduced to their brain development, and their parents' ability to encourage successful brain development. Thus, the complexities of both the child and the parents' lives are obscured.

6.1.3 Figuring the Working-Class Family

As mentors were not expected to deal with the complexities of their mentees' lives, the mentoring programme did not offer them a detailed picture of the imagined mentee's parents. However, when they did discuss parents, the image that they created conformed with the image of working-class parents often used in conservative social policy to argue that poverty is caused by parents reinforcing a 'cycle of deprivation' by not raising the aspirations of their children and not encouraging them to overcome their environment (as discussed in the literature review).

During the training sessions, an image of parents was constructed through the case scenario exercises. As described in Chapter 4, the case scenario exercises consisted of the practitioners describing situations that could occur in a mentoring relationship to the trainee mentors, and asking

the mentors to imagine how they would respond in these situations. One case scenario exercise asked mentors how they would respond if their mentee told them that their mother did not want them to go to University and was therefore refusing to sign a Student Loan form; thus, implying that parents did not encourage (further) education. Additionally, when discussing how they would respond to this situation, the mentors could not fathom why a parent would not support their child going to University, and rather than discuss possible reasons (e.g. the parents fear of their child being in debt, the loss of extra household income they could have received if the child went straight into work), the overall message that Jessica wanted to get across was that such situations were for the mentoring team to deal with, rather than mentors, and the mentors job was to pass the information on;

> Jessica says that a good response would be to suggest the mentee speak to their Key Worker and ask the mentee if they would like you to talk to mentoring staff. That way the staff can come up with the practical solutions rather than the mentor. Jessica says that the overall message from the mentor to the mentee should be "I get it and I'll pass it on" (Training Session 1).

In addition, the case study scenario discussed in Chapter 4 that asked mentors how they would respond if they came to pick up their mentee and heard the mentee's mother shouting at him, depicted a very aggressive parent. Again, the purpose of this example was to highlight that mentors should report things like this to the mentoring team.

Overall, in the training it seemed that practitioners were preparing the mentors for difficult, aggressive or uninterested parents. As described in the literature review, conceptualisations of inequality within social policy have become framed by ideas regarding 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' (Gillies, 2005; Gillies, 2011). Within this model, class difference is obscured as people are seen as agentic and self-reflexive, meaning that to be 'included' requires individuals to use their own skills and make the most of opportunities. Thus, poverty and disadvantage are associated with poor self-management, rather than structural issues and a lack of material or financial capital. Working-class parents, therefore, are seen to be perpetuating a 'cycle of deprivation' by not successfully imbibing their children with middle class aspirations and values. Tess Ridge (2013) suggests that this conceptualisation became even stronger under the austerity strategy of the Coalition government, due to their political rhetoric regarding welfare reform and the legitimacy of welfare recipients. Ridge argues that media discourses have both informed and been informed by this rhetoric, and as a result in both political and public imaginations, parents who are poor have been re-framed as 'poor parents'. The image of parents that the mentoring programme constructed seemed to be in line with this idea of 'poor parents', rather than parents who are poor.

Furthermore, according to Ridge (2013), a result of this characterisation of 'poor parents' has been a move away from a structural approach to social policy informed by social justice, to a narrower focus on 'troubled families', where the child is positioned firmly within the family, meaning that the wider society is relieved of any shared responsibility or concern for childhood disadvantage. The mentoring programme also conformed to this characterisation of families through the depiction of them as chaotic. For example, Jo suggested that parents had few responsibilities when it came to their child's mentoring relationship, but they still struggled to facilitate the relationship by returning phone calls and remembering meetings as their lives were so chaotic;

> But communication is the main thing that they [the parents] have to do … But many times, we have to work with Key Workers to very discretely remind parents of what their responsibilities are, because these parents live very chaotic lives, they find it hard sometimes to remember when the meetings are happening even when they're being texted

or messaged every week to say that it's happening they forget. So that's one of the challenges the mentors face is dealing with the chaotic nature of some of the parents. (Jo, individual interview).

Ultimately, whilst the mentoring programme did not place a great deal of focus on the mentee's family when constructing the imagined mentee, when the mentoring programme did created images of parents they conformed to common ideas of 'poor parents' and 'troubled families'.

6.1.4 Stereotypes of 'Dangerous' Communities

Kids Company discussed communities even less than they discussed families. However, as the imagined mentee was said to have been damaged by their relationships and their *environment*, it is important to surface the underlying assumptions about these 'environments' beyond the family, namely the communities in which Kids Company were located. Kids Company was most strongly associated with the South London locations of Peckham and Brixton, and both of these locations have a reputation as 'dangerous', where danger often refers to fears of both urbanisation and race. Before discussing the few occasions when practitioners referred to the mentee's neighbourhood as dangerous, focusing on Brixton in particular, I will discuss how this representation came about and became so prominent that the mentoring practitioners were able to invoke it through brief references.

After the Second World War, the demographics of Brixton and changed as the severe bombing damage that the areas had suffered brought down house prices. As a result, many of the large Victorian mansions that were still standing were converted into relatively cheap boarding houses, and Brixton received significant numbers of Irish, Polish, Cypriot and Maltese immigrants (Howarth, 2002). Following the 1948 Nationality Act, West Indians began to settle in the area too. Due to racial discrimination, both in the allocation of social housing, and the prices charged by local landlords, many West Indians bought their own properties and then rented them out to fellow West Indians. As such, by the end of the 1950s, Brixton had become a 'poly-ethnic enclave' of various West Indian communities (Mavrommatis, 2010). From the 1980s onwards, strong African migration flows arrived and more recently, migrations from various other parts of the world, including Central and Eastern Europe, have further diversified the multicultural character of Brixton (Mavrommatis, 2010).

From the 1970s, a political discourse that linked race to the declining status of inner cities came to the fore in Britain. Race was unfairly constructed as the main reason for inner-city deterioration (Runnymede Trust 1980: 86) and areas with high levels of West Indian populations, such as Brixton, were portrayed by the media as lawless urban lands, which were dangerous and to be avoided (Mavrommatis, 2010). Crucially, this negative portrayal that equated race with crime, led to Brixton and its residents being seen as 'different' to other areas of London. Additionally, controversial police policies in the 1980s that were designed to reduce street crime appeared to target, and therefore criminalise, Brixton's black community. This lead to multiple riots, as Brixton's residence expressed their frustrations with the police, but also with experiences of racial discrimination and high levels of black unemployment and poverty (Howarth, 2002; Mavrommatis, 2010). For those outside looking in, the violence of these riots further cemented links between race, violence and difference in Brixton.

More recently, Brixton has become a site of gentrification. This began in the late 1980s, due to a housing boom and the low prices of Brixton property owing to its negative reputation. At the time, the Mail on Sunday stated that: 'Brixton has a name as a savage and brutal place, but to some it's fast becoming the smartest address in London' (Mail on Sunday, 10 May 1987: 16; cited in Howarth, 2002), and this process of gentrification continued throughout the 1990s. Due to a number of

regeneration schemes, which took a free-market approach with minimum community participation, business and capital has dictated the reshaping of Brixton. As a result, Brixton today is known for its bars, restaurants and clubs, but this 'night time economy' has been criticised as a 'theme-parkisation' of urban, multicultural spaces for a privileged social group at the expense of poorer inhabitants (Butler & Robinson, 2001; Mavrommatis, 2010). Thus, long-term Brixton residents have generally not seen their lives or their representation in the cultural consciousness improve (Howarth, 2002).

In terms of the mentoring programmes representations of the imagined mentee's neighbourhood, Kids Company made a number of references to negative stereotypes of black communities, such as gang culture and absent fathers. For example, in the first training session, Jessica referred to 'post-code boundaries' and 'gangs';

> Jessica makes a speech about Kids Co using several slides. Characterisation of children: need help and support, actively in crisis, abused, traumatic home environment, traumatic communities, post code boundaries, gangs. (Training Session 1)

In our interview, Jessica also suggested that most of the service users come from single parent families;

> We gain consent from most likely mum, because it tends to be that many of the children's fathers just are absent from their lives so they tend to live with mum, so we'll be gaining her consent for mentoring to take place as well as the child's (Jessica Interview)

The above descriptions have been related to my own data from the mentoring programme specifically. However, Kids Company demonstrated through their advertising that the organisation in its entirety followed a similar approach of defining their service users by their damage (as a method of emotionally moving onlookers), whilst uncritically deploying negative stereotypes and ignoring the structural factors that can lead to disadvantage. In 2009 Kids Company released a series of poster advertisements that were criticised by the Advertising Standards Authority. In one of the posters published by Kids Company, the emotional damage of their service users was equated with violence through the depiction of two black teenagers harassing a white man, with the headline 'How do you get inside the head of a 16-year-old knife wielding thug? First get inside of a 16-year-old bed wetting boy'. In a second advertisement featuring four black teenagers and diagrams of a 'normal' brain and a brain influenced by 'extreme neglect', this damage and the associated violence was explicitly located in the brain as the headline read 'You are right – kids who can kill really are wrong in the head'. The ASA deemed that the adverts were racist because they 'focused on a negative image of black teenagers that was likely to reinforce negative stereotypes'. Furthermore, as the advertisements were making a link between violence and emotional underdevelopment, whilst only featuring black teenagers, this was judged as likely to cause serious offence. For the advert that depicted differently developed brains, the ASA also rejected the truthfulness of these claims as the images had been taken from a study by Perry (1997) looking at the effect of sensory deprivation, rather than emotional neglect, on brain size. Relatedly, these brain scan pictures have been used in social policy documents arguing for the importance of early intervention (e.g. Allen, 2011) and the validity of the study and appropriateness of its use within the early intervention movement has been questioned (Rose & Rose, 2016).

Kids Company argued that the advertisements were part of a series of nine, and some of the other adverts had featured white teenagers. They suggested that they had portrayed more black

teenagers than white teenagers to reflect the demographics of their service users, of which 80% were from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds. Kids Company further argued that the suggestion of the adverts, that violence was due to emotional difficulties, sought to 'confront superficial judgements and prejudices'. Thus, it seems that Kids Company's intention was to re-figure their service users in terms of their emotional damage so as to create pity for the 'knife-wielding thug' or 'kids who kill' because they cannot control their emotions. Within this depiction, the emotional damage was located within the brain, thus other elements of the service user's identity, such as their race and class, were treated as unimportant. Kids Company therefore may have felt that they could portray more black than white teenagers because it is merely a 'true' depiction of their demographics. However, by not engaging with ideas of race, and other factors that contribute to disadvantage (other than 'emotional damage'), the charity was ignoring the social and economic structures within which their service users live their lives.

6.2: Alternative Understandings

Kids Company and the mentoring programme had a dominant way of conceptualising their service users, including their families and their communities. In terms of the mentors' representations, the way that they documented their mentees in the meeting records progressed from representations that were similar to that of the imagined Kids Company mentee to more multi-faceted representations. Furthermore, the mentoring practitioners themselves, when invoking memories of specific 'real-life' mentees (rather than the imagined mentee), also presented an alternative picture of service users.

Additionally, although mentors did not discuss parents and communities in great detail, they did occasionally offer an alternative view to the 'chaos' and 'danger' that dominated Kids Company's representations. Furthermore, other studies (e.g. Howarth, 2002; Reynolds, 2013) have explored young people's experiences within these stigmatised neighbourhoods and found that, while danger might be a part of young people's experiences, their communities can also offer a sense of belonging to alleviate the negative experiences of prejudice that they face when they leave their local area.

In this section, I will highlight these alternative understandings of mentees, their families and their communities, so that in the discussion I can consider what youth mentoring interventions could look like if they embraced a different representation of the imagined service user.

6.2.1 Imagined Mentees and 'Real-Life' Mentees.

In Chapter 5 I discussed how during the initiation phase of mentoring relationships the mentors put a lot of effort into working out who their mentee was. This involved the mentors using the meeting records to evaluate their mentees and compare them with their own received wisdom of what they thought a 'normal' child would be like and what they thought a Kids Company child would be like. Perhaps due to the characterisation of mentees in the training sessions, within the mentors' early reflections, they seemed to spend a lot of time trying to 'see' and understand a certain 'unseeable' or inexpressible damage within their mentee. This was conveyed by Eve who tried to interpret Isiah's drawings as a representation of his inner feelings;

> There is one thing which I am not sure whether children do this or not. On the first page of the sketch book we wrote our names and we drew smiley faces, to these smiley faces he added teeth and then blood coming out of the mouth and eyebrows to make the faces look angry- he also wrote 'he, he, he' coming out of the monster's mouth. It didn't worry me but it was after we had finished drawing about all the mentoring sessions when he asked if he could draw a random picture. I said he could and so he got a red pen and drew a person and a few more bits. I asked what it was he said that it was him and there was blood and that he

was making everything explode except for 'this' and he pointed out his name (which I had written on the side). He also wrote the words 'not cool', coming out of his mouth. I guess he is just nine and children watch tv and have imagination but I thought it may be important to explain this. I don't know if there is anything else behind this- maybe he is angry at someone? I asked what about me? He said I was not in the picture. (Eve Meeting Record 4)

In the training sessions, the mentors were told about the archetypal Kids Company kid, who was extremely damaged, and the imagined mentee, who was the same child but further along in their Kids Company journey. Thus, the mentors may have felt that their mentee had experienced damage in their past, and wondered if it was still within them, but under the surface. Steedman discussed how this idea of inexpressible damage was also explicitly attributed to Mignon in later representations of her. Steedman (1995) noted that depictions of Mignon in the 20th Century described her as mute, which was a trait that Goethe had not given her. Steedman suggests that this muteness was due to both the dominance of Freudian thought regarding the unconscious, and the popularity of melodrama. Thus, Mignon's muteness became a signifier that she was damaged but could not express this. As Steedman puts it: 'We know by the sign of her silence that damage has been done to her' (p. 164).

Related to the idea that the mentees were damaged, the mentors also seemed to be influenced by the Mignon-esque characterisation that the mentees had somehow experienced 'too much', and as a result they could experience thoughts and feelings that children their age generally did not. The acceptance of this idea was exemplified by Robert who after his first meeting with Lex submitted a long meeting record describing Lex's personality. Robert suggested that that Lex whilst cheeky, was also sentimental (in a way that was uncharacteristic of 'most 13-year old boys'), sensitive and full of conflicting emotions;

> He is lively and interested in things (music and comics especially) but has an interesting change in mood, flipping from cheekiness and an occasional smart-alec comment to sentimentality uncharacteristic of most 13-year-old boys, in a heart-beat. He is very clearly a sensitive boy and I can see that he has lots of conflicting (not necessarily negatively) emotions racing through his mind. (Robert Meeting Record 1).

Robert's description of Lex has uncanny parallels with de Stael-Holstein's assessment of Mignon, who suggested that one cannot understand all of the emotions that Mignon has experienced, despite her being a young girl;

> we cannot represent to ourselves with emotion the least of the feelings that agitate this young girl; there is in her I know not what of magic simplicity, that supposes a profundidty of thought and feelings (de Stael-Holstein, 1810, cited in Steedman, 1995, p31)

In Chapter 5 I discussed how during the middle phase of mentoring relationships, the mentors seemed to see beyond this original interpretation of their mentees, and the process of mentoring created a space where the mentors got to experience a more multi-faceted version of their mentee. What is particularly interesting about the meeting records from the middle phase of relationships is that, while mentors did sometimes portray their mentees as sad or distressed during difficult times, the overriding representation of mentees was one of fun and humour. This was most strongly represented in the relationship between Paul and Jamie, where Paul would often write about Jamie making jokes;

> We had a conversation about running for trains and he did a great impression of someone who runs on to the train as the doors are closing, forces their way through and then once that are clear carry on as if nothing has happened (you had to be there!). (Pete Meeting Record 30)

> On the way back he told me that he wanted to stay up to watch the world cup and he did a funny impression of how the conversation was going to go with his mum, with her initially refusing then slowly giving more and more ground. (Pete Meeting Record 39)

The mentees were also regularly represented as polite, kind, and having good social skills. For example, Robert wrote about several of his and Lex's workplace visits, and noted how much everybody who met Lex liked him;

> Lex was on funny cheeky form and it was fun to be with him. The guys at Audio Networks sent me a message later that evening saying how much they'd enjoyed meeting him. (Robert Meeting Record 13)

Ultimately, it seems that after the mentors spent some time with their mentee, their figuration of mentees changed. While 'damage' may have been one element of that figuration, humour and social skills were also part of the mentee.

This experience of 'real-life' mentees influencing the imagined figure of the mentee was also relevant for practitioners. Due to the structure of the mentoring programme, the mentoring practitioners did not have much face-to-face contact with 'real-life' mentees. The practitioners were based at Kids Company's Head Office, rather than at one of the Drop-in Centres, and when matching and monitoring relationships, their channels of communication were through the mentors and the mentees' Key Workers, rather the mentees themselves. Thus, the strongest mentee figure for the practitioners was likely to have been the imagined mentee that they described to mentors in the training sessions. In the individual interviews that I conducted with Jessica and Jo, this seemed to be the mentee that they were invoking, as the interviews required them to give an overview of the programme and the theories that underpinned it. During the joint interview, however, the questions revolved around their memories and experiences of actual mentoring relationships. Within this conversation, the practitioners seemed to bring out a slightly different conception of mentees. Rather than just focusing on the damaged mentee, Jessica and Jo suggested that mentees where active participants in relationships, and that they were able to acknowledge and ask for what they wanted from a relationship;

> They specifically ask to be paired with someone who is in the profession that they want to go into (Jo, joint interview)

> One of our young people goes to uni open days with his mentor and that's helping him perceive his aspiration of going to university (Jessica, joint interview)

Within this, the practitioners also described how the mentees could view the mentoring relationships in quite a light-hearted way;

> One of the mentees requested, how can we qualify this, [to Jessica] you know what I'm going to say don't you? I'm not quite sure what he was looking for in this relationship, but he requested a mentor that was like Beyoncé, but that could do magic tricks! (Jo, joint interview)

This memory of a mentee who wanted a mentor 'like Beyoncé, but that could do magic tricks', implying that the mentee wanted someone who was fun and exciting, seems quite in contention with the imagined mentee, who at this stage of the matching process, is only just entering an emotional space where they are ready to form a relationship with someone.

6.2.2 Glimpses of Parents' Everyday Lives

The mentoring programme imagined parents living chaotic lives where they struggled to remember and stick to mentoring meetings. Within the meeting records the mentors did mention meetings that had to be rearranged or cancelled, sometimes at the last minute. However, the mentors usually noted a reason for these scheduling difficulties, and these tended to be related to changes in the parent's work pattern, difficulties with childcare arrangements, or the mentee's other parent unexpectedly becoming available and wanting to spend time with their child. Thus, rather than being 'chaotic' a different conception of parents could be that they were no less organised than parents who did not require Kids Company's services, rather, they had an increased number of unpredictable variables in their lives.

Although the mentors did acknowledge the reasons behind the parents' scheduling difficulties, it should be noted that this did not seem to change their overall conception of parents. Like the mentoring programme, and Kids Company as a whole, the mentors seemed to view parents within the discourse of social inclusion and exclusion, as they seemed to ascribe a certain moral judgement to how parents dealt with the unpredictable variables of their lives. This was most clearly represented by Charlotte who had a very strong reaction to Antonio's mother asking her to leave Antonio at her place of work. Antonio's mother worked as a cleaner in the toilets at Victoria Station and could not arrange for anyone to look after Antonio once his mentoring meeting was over. As a result, she asked Charlotte to leave him in the cleaning office of the station toilets, where Antonio was to wait until his mother's shift was over. Whilst Charlotte recognised that this was not a regular occurrence and that Antonio's mother was struggling with her childcare options, Charlotte was still very upset about leaving Antonio in the cleaning office, exemplified by Charlotte's use of the abrupt sentence 'This was awful.', and her assertion that she felt 'extremely guilty' about leaving Antonio there;

> I picked Antonio up from the flat at 3.30pm. His mum had telephoned earlier in the day to ask if instead of bringing him back to the flat, I would bring him to her workplace, because there would be no one at home to care for him … I dropped him off at Victoria train station, where his mum is a cleaner. She told me to bring him to the ladies' toilets, where she sat him in a cleaning office for him to wait until she finished work. This was awful. I felt extremely guilty about leaving him here. It was very out of character for his mum to suggest it. She was obviously really struggling for child care, and explained that his sister is currently away. (Charlotte Meeting Record 35)

It is difficult to define exactly why Charlotte had such an extreme response to this situation. She seemed to understand that Antonio was not regularly made to wait for his mother while she finished work, so it is unlikely that Charlotte was upset because she felt that Antonio was being neglected in some way. Thus, the thing that was upsetting Charlotte may have been the experience of being exposed to the realities of low paid work, and the fact that Antonio was also being exposed to this too (Tyler, 2013). Viewed through a lens of social exclusion, in which it is the working-class parent's responsibility to raise their children's aspirations so that they can break the 'cycle of deprivation',

Charlotte generally represented Antonio's mother as a 'good' working-class parent as she was highly engaged with Antonio's education and social life. The experience of leaving Antonio in the cleaning office may have therefore been so upsetting for Charlotte because she felt that it was 'very out of character' of Antonio's mother to not keep Antonio away from this side of her life.

In a similar manner, David spoke very warmly about his mentee Jayden's mother, describing how 'fantastic' she was. However, David did also seem to be engaging with ideas of social exclusion in that he expressed that it is 'right and appropriate' for Jayden's mother to receive a lot of support from Kids Company, because she was 'holding down a job' and looking after her three children. Thus, it could be suggested that David was invoking ideas of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. In line with this, David seemed to embrace the idea that part of his role as a mentor was not just to form a relationship with Jayden, but to also 'keep an eye' on Jayden's mother, reflecting ideas that working-class parenting may be monitored;

> All I've seen with Jayden's mum is that she is fantastic, and I really don't know how she manages to cope, but she does get a lot of help from Kids Company, which she values enormously, and I think is right and appropriate. But she's in a position where she's holding a job down, raising three kids, and doing a really good job so far, from what I can see … But she really is in desperate need of other help as well, which I'm sure kids company is aware of and provide. It seems to me when I see her, she needs a holiday and she can't have one. She's potentially worn out and tired … And again, what I can try and do to help her as well as Jayden, is just keep an eye on that on a regular basis, just to make sure that she stays as strong as she's been so far. (David interview 1)

Additionally, whilst the purpose of David's statement was to express how highly he regarded Jayden's mother and how sympathetic he was to her situation, there is an expectation of immanent failure in his description of the mother's situation ('and doing a really good job so far'). This can be viewed as an indication of the precarity of her situation on the one hand, but it may also be seen as a nod towards the mentoring programmes representation of parents are chaotic.

Overall, while the mentors did seem to acknowledge the social and economic issues that these parents faced to a greater extent than Kids Company did, their description seemed to conform to characterisations used by Kids Company, social policy and the media related to social exclusion, in which parents are spoken about as 'good' or 'bad' at raising their children's aspirations, and 'deserving' or 'undeserving' of help.

An element that was missing in the mentoring programme's representation of the imagined mentee's family was the members of their extended family. The mentors occasionally acknowledged the influence that extended family members had on their mentees' lives, by noting that extended family members often helped out with childcare. However, the mentees themselves highlighted that there were several people in their extended family, many of whom that they felt very close to. During the interviews that I conducted with the mentees at the beginning of their mentoring relationships I invited them to demonstrate on a graph how close they felt to their mentor and any other significant adults in their lives. The original plan was that I would then interview the mentees again at the middle and end points of their mentoring relationship, thus the graph was intended as a tool to explore if and how these relationships changed over time. All of the mentees depicted various grandparents, aunts and uncles on the graph, and in several cases classed these family members as close to them. The most extreme example of this was Kai (who was matched with Stuart) who placed stickers representing his mother, aunt, grandmother and grandfather very close to the sticker representing himself;
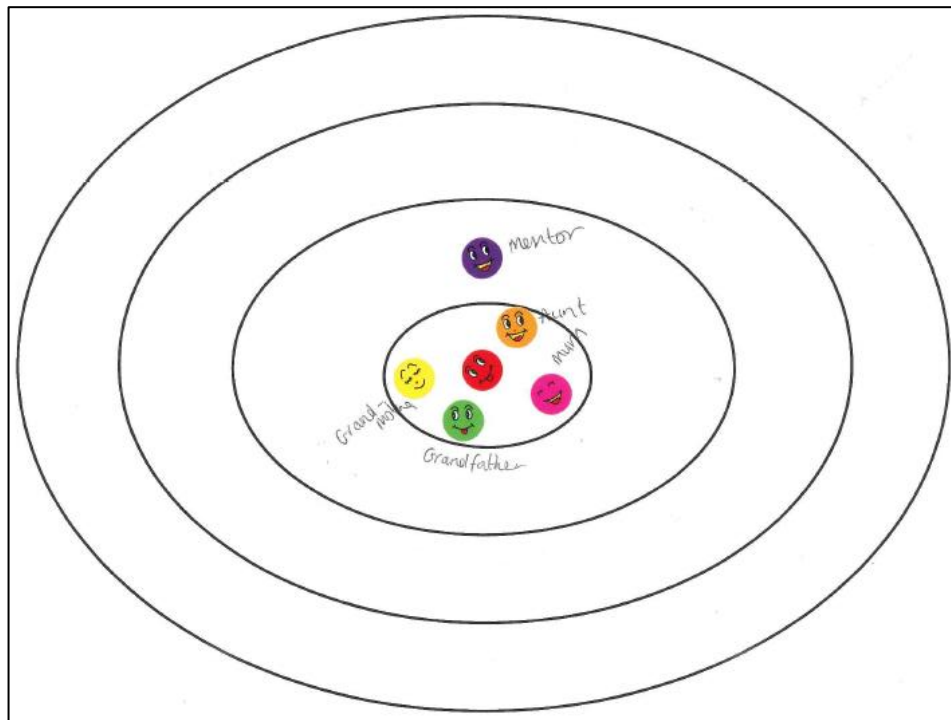
Figure 4: Kai's graph of significant adults in his life

This depiction of the mentees extended family is something that is usually missing from youth mentoring research. As demonstrated in the literature review, youth mentoring is often characterised as an intervention to support young people whose parental relationships are seen as lacking, but within this conception other relationships with adults that the young person may have are ignored.

6.2.3 Community Ties

Kids Company imagined the communities that their service users came from as dangerous places that children needed to be protected from (Kids Company could be their safe space). Kids Company did not explicitly engage in discussions about race, but by reinforcing negative stereotypes regarding their service users' neighbourhoods, they could also be seen to be reinforcing negative racial stereotypes regarding Afro-Caribbean communities. The mentors did not seem to have much cause to discuss their mentee's community within the mentoring records, as the one-to-one relationships did not really cross over into the mentee's wider social networks.

For the young people who came from these stigmatized areas that Kids Company served, other studies have shown how such stigma can influence a young person's sense of self. For example, looking at young people's experiences of being from Brixton, Howarth (2002) describes how identity can be seen as co-constructed through the 'shifting dialectics of self-other relations' (p245), and thus by understanding how others see Brixton, a young people's sense of self can be negatively impacted. In addition to adversely affecting young people's self-esteem in Howarth's study, these negative representations also have an influence on their experiences when they leave Brixton. In Howarth's study, a Head Teacher at a Brixton school described how distressing it was for students as they attempted to enter the world of work, as this was the first time that they encountered the 'full

extent of institutionalised prejudice towards people from Brixton' (p248). In the case of black boys especially, the Head Teacher also suggested that if they managed to get an interview or make some kind of contact with an employer, the employer would be 'amazed' that the boy was 'human, polite, and looks nice' (p248).

Some parallels of this experience can be seen in Robert's accounts of his relationship with Lex. At Lex's request (because he wanted 'opportunity in life'), the pair spent many of their meetings visiting different places of work. Whilst Lex did not encounter any negativity in these environments, the way that Robert wrote about these meetings could suggest that Robert had been worried that Lex might. For example, their second workplace visit was to a London Underground station office, and Robert sounded quite relieved about how well it went;

> The 2 employees at Stockwell station were BRILLIANT and totally cool and relaxed and loved having Lex there (Robert Meeting Record 8)

Similar to the Brixton Head Teacher, Robert also seemed keen to express that Lex was nice and polite, and that this was how the employees had experienced him too. Thus, Robert may have not only been aware of the prejudices that people could have had towards Lex, but was also aware that Lex was successfully subverting these prejudices. For example, in the same London Underground meeting, Robert seemed pleased at both how charming Lex was and how the station staff responded to this;

> Lex was … extremely relaxed in their company. In fact, they were all flirting with each other outrageously! It was great fun to watch and I think it is safe to say Lex enjoyed how much interest they showed - asking him all about school, kids co, his haircut!! (Robert Meeting Record 8)

As these records were written with the assumption that the mentoring staff would read them, there is also the possibility that Robert was so enthusiastic about Lex's experiences because he also wanted to highlight Lex's prosocial skills to the mentoring staff, as this is in contention with the image of mentees that they presented in the training sessions.

In a study by Reynolds (2013) detailing the lives of young people living in areas of London that were deemed as 'black neighbourhood' (such as Brixton and Peckham), the young people acknowledged that a 'street culture', that conformed to negative representations of such areas did exist. However, they suggested that the pull of joining this culture was due to the difficulty of finding success through institutions, where their awareness of their potential to be stigmatized made them feel uncomfortable. As such, some young people preferred to seek success through the route of 'the streets' as they felt that they could gain respect and achieve status within this environment. However, the young people suggested that an alternative form of cultural belonging also existed within their neighbourhoods. Those who did not turn to 'street culture' still felt the effects of social exclusion and stigmatization, but they suggested that their communities contained social resources that offered them a sense of collective and cultural belonging. These culturally specific social resources included Afro-Caribbean night clubs, pubs, hairdressers and barbers; restaurants and take-aways selling African-Caribbean food; exhibitions focusing on Black cultural events; and shops selling products for Caribbean and African markets. The young people expressed that these resources provide them with a feeling of acceptance, reciprocal trust and solidarity (Reynolds, 2013). Whilst the mentors did not generally share in these social resources, there was one occasion when Lex took Robert to his favourite restaurant, and Robert described how enjoyable it was to see Lex in a situation where he felt 'confident and at home';

Talk about being in his element! Lex loved showing off his favourite Vietnamese restaurant, taking time to explain the menu and some of the preparation techniques and clearly very proud that the staff knew him and knew his dad. It was a pleasure to be in his company when he was feeling so confident and at home. (Robert Meeting Record 14)

Although Lex seemed adept at accessing cultural resources in his area, for other children, even if cultural resources did exist in their community, there may have been a question of whether they could access them. Through a drawing exercise that the mentees took part in within our interviews, many of the mentees suggested that the things that stood out for them in their thoughts about Kids Company were the opportunities to have fun, and also the access Kids Company gave them to things within their centres, such as art supplies and a music studio, and things outside of the centres such as bowling alleys, gyms and residential holidays. This is demonstrated in Jayden (David's mentee)'s drawing below.
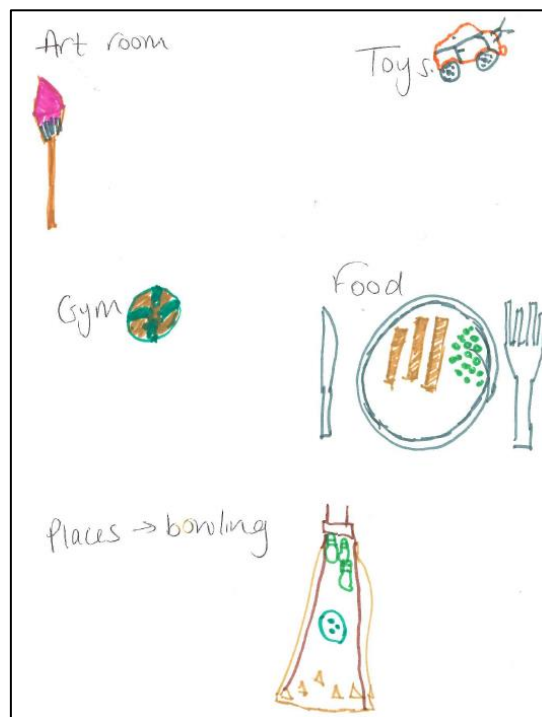
Figure 5: Jayden's representation of images when he thinks of Kids Company

Thus, although I have been quite critical of Kids Company and their conception of communities, it is important to highlight that Kids Company did provide their service users with access to resources that they may not have had access to otherwise. Furthermore, one of the mentees, Hayley (who was matched with Sarah) also suggested that Kids Company was a place where she could feel safe, relaxed and free;

Figure 6: Hayley's representation of images when she thinks of Kids Company

Overall, it seems that although the figure of the imagined mentee was quite strong for mentors, to the extent that they viewed their own mentee in relation to this figure at the beginning of relationship; as relationships progressed the mentors began to see how their mentee differed from this figure. However, despite offering glimpses of alternative ways to view their mentee's families and communities, mentors did not seem to engage with these elements of their mentee's live enough to really diverge from Kids Company's representations. By looking at Robert's accounts of Lex's experiences both outside and within his community, it is interesting to consider how stigmatizing representation of the mentee's communities influence their experiences, and how mentoring does not fully address this.

Conclusions:

The mentoring programme imagined the Kids Company mentee as a child who had been damaged by their relationships and their environment. Like Mignon, this child figure was intended to be emotive and compelling to mentors. By re-figuring the imagined mentee so that their brain development was the most important element of their identity, and suggesting that mentors could rectify impeded brain development by forming an emotional bond with their mentee, the mentoring programme was able to make the idea of youth mentoring seem relatively straightforward and manageable to the mentors. In addition, by presenting the figure of the mentee in this way, the mentoring programme was able to circumvent the complexities of the mentee's life. They were able to allude to negative stereotypes to create an image of 'traumatic home environments' and 'traumatic communities' that had caused this damage to the mentee, but they did not have to engage in the reality of these representations, because mentoring was only concerned with the dyadic mentoring relationship and the influence that this could have on the mentee's psyche. Kids Company as a whole also presented their service users in a similar way.

However, looking at the mentors' experiences of 'real-life' mentees revealed that although they initially saw them in line with the imagined mentee, their conception of mentees changed over time to show them as active, agentic and funny. Additionally, while the mentors' representations of parents did seem to conform to ideas regarding social exclusion, the mentors seemed to recognise to greater extent than the mentoring programme did, the challenges that parents faced regarding

structural and economic inequalities. Whilst the mentors did not depict their mentees communities in great detail, Robert's representation of Lex offered some insight into what it was like for the mentees to leave their communities (and be at risk of discrimination) and what it was like for mentees to enjoy living within their communities.

In the next chapter I will discuss how Kids Company's mentoring programme can be understood as a case of compensatory mentoring, as defined by Philip and Spratt (2007). I will then explore how the adoption of a strength-based approach to mentoring, rather than a compensatory approach, could be beneficial for other mentoring programmes that follow similar assumptions to Kids Company's programme. Whilst Kids Company's service users were deliberately simplified in the way that they were imagined by Kids Company, and their families and communities were largely left out of this construction (and only talked about in negative terms when they were mentioned), a strength-based approach could allow for mentees to be understood in terms of their own strengths, as well as the strengths within their families and communities, thus allowing for a more complex figure to emerge that is closer to the 'real-life' mentees that were represented by the mentors.

Chapter 7: Discussion

The purpose of this study has been to explore a case of youth mentoring as a unique and situated intervention. The study aimed to challenge the conception that youth mentoring is an uncomplicated and 'off the shelf' method of working with vulnerable young people. The mentoring programme in question was delivered by the children's charity Kids Company, which worked in inner-city London. Due to the sudden and unexpected closure of Kids Company, this thesis also became an exploration of what Kids Company was a case of, considering the rise and fall of the organisation and its relationship to social policy.

The previous empirical chapters detailed Kids Company's approach to working with young people and the model of its embedded mentoring programme; how the mentoring relationships were experienced temporally in relation to the mentoring model; and how the figures of the mentee, their family and their community were constructed within both the mentoring programme and the organisation as a whole. The aim of this chapter is to bring these elements together and consider them in terms of the issues highlighted in the literature review in two ways. Firstly, it will discuss what Kids Company was a case of by detailing how it viewed children and childhood, in relation to historical and cultural perspectives of childhood and contemporary social policy. Secondly, it will discuss what Kids Company's youth mentoring programme was a case of by understanding it in terms of Philip and Spratt's (2007) description of compensatory mentoring, and Kids Company's specific programme practices. The chapter will conclude by considering how mentoring programmes that fall into the category of compensatory mentoring may benefit by adapting to a strength-based approach to youth mentoring. Through this change, mentoring relationships could be considered as *complimenting* existing strengths within mentees lives, rather than *compensating* for perceived deficits, and allow for a more complex image of mentees.

7.1 What was Kids Company?

Kids Company closed down suddenly and unexpectedly while I was conducting the fieldwork for this study. Prior to this doctoral collaboration with Kids Company my knowledge of the charity centred around their attachment-based approach to youth work and the level of attention that the charity, and Batmanghelidjh in particular, received from the British press. As discussed in the methodology, Blumer (1969) suggests that the basic operation in studying society is the production and refinement of an image of the 'thing' that we are studying. Following the events of Kids Company's closure, I realised that my image of Kids Company was not as clear as I had thought. As the mentoring programme was heavily embedded within the organisation's values and practices, I felt that it was necessary for this study to explore the organisation as a whole in addition to the mentoring programme and as a way of better understanding the mentoring programme. In this section, I will discuss my understanding of Kids Company's ideas about childhood, and highlight how their approach to working with young people aligned with agendas within social policy. In addition, I will detail how Kids Company constructed the image of their service users and consider the work that this imagined service user did in terms of influencing Kids Company's public image and their position within the cultural landscape.

7.1.1 Kids Company and Ideas of Inner-City Childhood

In Chapter 2 (literature review) I used a historical and cultural perspective to understand the origins of youth mentoring. Youth mentoring first emerged as part of the 'child-saving' movement of the

late 19th and early 20th century, and modern youth mentoring is considered to have many parallels with youth mentoring in its original forms. Such parallels are apparent in Kids Company's mentoring programme, due to its focus on compensating for the perceived negative influence of working-class parents and communities. Looking at Kids Company's model of work as expressed through commissioned reviews (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013; Lemma, 2010), I would argue that the organisation in its entirety (along with the mentoring programme embedded within it) can be viewed within the 'child-saving' tradition. This is important because externally, through its campaigns, Kids Company presented itself as a very 'modern' charity.

Kids Company's approach involved fostering strong relationships between staff and young people which were described as being based on love (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013). The idea behind this was that such relationships would promote secure development, in attachment terms, meaning that the young person would develop a more positive sense of self and of their relationships with others. Kids Company aligned itself with contemporary debates informed by a version of neuroscience which suggests that secure development also improves brain functioning, which in turn supports pro-social behaviour. In his historical work on childhood, discussed in Chapter 2, Cunningham describes how the idea of showing vulnerable young people love to encourage them to reduce delinquent behaviour was also apparent in the 19th century. According to Cunningham, in 1850s England, Mary Carpenter (a well-known social reformer of the period) suggested that treating disadvantaged children with love was a 'simple' way to reduce delinquency. Carpenter's views on childhood were in line with the romantic ideas of the time that imbued childhood with a sense of innocence and purity, and led to the belief that childhood must be protected from the contamination of the outside world. As such, Carpenter and other 'child-savers' believed that children who displayed delinquent behaviour were lacking in the characteristics associated with childhood and had to be 'turned again into a child' (Cunningham, 2005, p148). Carpenter believed, therefore, that showing a delinquent child love allowed them to be a child again. Carpenter also argued that to truly restore a child back into their rightful position of childhood, the child had to be placed in a family because families, it was thought, offered dependency and protection, and avoided children's separation from adults and freedom from rules. If the child's own family was not suitable, then a substitute family was an acceptable alternative (Cunningham, 2005). As documented in Chapter 4, Kids Company positioned themselves as a substitute family for vulnerable young people, part of which involved characterising the families of their service users as lacking. Thus, I would argue that there are strong parallels between Carpenter's approach and that of Kids Company.

It has also been suggested that the current dominant discourse that 'childhood is in crisis' is itself a repeat of the moral panics of the 19th and early 20th century (Kehily, 2010), and it makes sense that a charity that echoes 19c themes of child saving would also become popular. What is particularly interesting about Kids Company was that they incorporated specific theories to further justify this approach, and the theories that they utilised resonated with social policy of successive Governments. As described in Chapter 2, Gillies (2005; 2011) argues that current social policy views parenting as a fundamental determinant of children's future life chances, marginalising the importance of the social and economic factors that contribute to inequality. Kids Company's approach was complicit with this view, their use of attachment theory attributing the source of their service users' difficulties in parents' inability to raise securely attached children. Furthermore, social policy was heavily influenced by the zero-to-three years early intervention movement (Bruer, 2010), that also emphasised the role of parenting influence on brain development. In line with this, Kids Company also incorporated neuroscience into their approach. Crucially, Kids Company subscribed to a theory of the neuroplasticity of the brain, thus suggesting that Kids Company could

're-wire' their service users' brains through the experience of positive attachment relationships (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013).

Since Kids Company's closure, reports such as those by the House of Commons (2016) and the National Audit Office (2015) have explained Kids Company's downfall as a result of financial mismanagement. The organisation relied on Government grants rather than establishing a self-sustaining model of funding, and its cash flow and reserves were seen to be inadequately managed by trustees. However, these reports also highlight that one of the reasons that the charity was able to operate in this way, and receive such a large amount of Government funding, was because of the 'unique, privileged and significant access' that Kids Company had to senior Ministers and Prime Ministers (House of Commons, 2016, p.4). The reason for this access was said to be due to Batmanghelidjh's personality and her ability to create 'spin' for the charity. However, it is important to note that the ideas and arguments that the organisation was 'spinning' were already strongly aligned to popular ideas in social policy. As such, it could be argued that the reason that the charity became so successful was because it was telling the Government what it wanted to hear. Furthermore, Kids Company's construction of their service users was also very emotive, resonating with both the contemporary moment of 'child saving' encapsulated in social policy, itself an echo of the construction of vulnerable children in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In the next sub-section, I will discuss the influence that this construction had on the public.

7.1.2 Kids Company and its Service Users

In an article by Beresford (The Guardian, 03/08/15) discussed in Chapter 3, he argued that Kids Company did not create an environment in which their service users could speak for themselves and be listened to. At the same time, the journalist Camilla Long suggested that it was curiously difficult to gain access to Kids Company's service users when she visited one of their centres. However, whilst the 'real' service users seemed to be obscured, Kids Company was adept at creating a compelling image of their imagined service user. This archetypal Kids Company kid was presented to me in my interviews with the practitioners ('so full of trauma and anger and blame'), acted out to the mentors through role-play in the training sessions, and presented in Kids Company's controversial advertising campaign. I have shown in Chapter 6 that this imagined child is similar to the damaged child-figure of Mignon. Like Mignon, the Kids Company kid's damage was caused by their relationships with adults and their experiences in their environment, however, for the Kids Company kid, this damage was located within the brain. It is likely that this imagined Kids Company kid was compelling to the Government because it conformed to the construction of the child in social exclusion policies. However, there is also a question of what kind of work this imagined Kids Company kid did in the public as well as political sphere.

A relevant source for developing this point is the work of Nunn (2004), who looks at how the children's charity Barnardo's has used photographic imagery in advertising. Barnardo's originated as a charity for destitute children within the Victorian philanthropic social reformer movement. Part of the 'child-saving' movements discussed in Chapter 2, Barnardo's was concerned with providing moral guidance, education and institutional guardianship as a means of socially reforming the impoverished conditions of the working-class (Nunn, 2004). Within this approach, childhood was viewed in romantic terms, and thus there was concern for the role of the child and their place in urban industrial life. Nunn cites John Tagg (1988) to describe Barnardo's use of photography for self-promotion in the late 19th and early 20th century. During this period Barnardo's used photographs of the children that they served in a form of 'before-and-after' advertising campaign, depicting children looking dirty and dishevelled when they arrived at Barnardo's, and clean and tidy following a period of time spent at the children's home. In Victorian times, Nunn suggests that these 'before' pictures

provided a powerful symbol of the eradication of childhood innocence that dominated the fears of middle-class society. Nunn suggests that the images of the 'before' pictures held connotations of a the dirty, prematurely-knowing child which made the viewer uncomfortable because it collapsed the necessary boundary between adult and child. The 'after' pictures suggested that Barnardo's could restore this boundary and provide the child with a suitable childhood. As Nunn points out Barnardo's website suggests that the founder Thomas Barnardo used these images 'to actively court discomfort amongst Victorian patrons from which he sought financial support'.

As I explore in Chapter 2, this romantic construction of childhood is closely related to the creation of 'interiority' and a new kind of adulthood, as people began to place importance on events in one's childhood to understand their subsequent lives. Nunn suggests that the Barnardo's 'before' images influenced potential funders by arousing a number of different emotions ('horrified fascination, compassion, admiration for the charity's work') whilst invoking the 'adult fantasy of the child as image of futurity' (p. 276). The Barnardo's child was therefore positioned as an investment for the future of society, to the 'spectator-donors' (p. 276) that the advertisements were targeting. Nunn describes these advertisements as part of an emerging mass-commodity culture, and as a result, the child can be seen as 'both recipient of charity in these images, but also a product being labelled and sold to would-be benefactors' (p. 276).

Importantly, Nunn points out that within these advertisements the viewers are always reminded that the image that they are looking at is of a child (even if the child looks knowing and dishevelled), and that through charity, the child can be 'returned' to childhood (as reinforced by the 'after' pictures). Nunn observes how Barnardo's returned to a similar style of advertising with the 1999-2000 campaign 'Giving children back their future'. Within this series of print advertisements, images of small children were depicted in disturbing adult settings, such as homelessness or drug use, with the intention of drawing a connection between child disadvantage and the consequences that can be experienced in adulthood. These images were shocking, intending to catch the attention of 'time-pressurised individuals and crowded media environments' and to ensure that the charity's 'limited budgets cut through the clutter and build instant awareness and empathy' amongst potential donors and fundraisers (Barnardo's 1999 campaign sheet; cited in Nunn, 2004).

I would argue that Kids Company's approach to constructing the imagined Kids Company kid (within the mentoring programme, but also within their advertising campaign discussed in Chapter 6) was similar to the way Barnardo's constructed their service user within their advertising. Like the Barnardo's service user in the Victorian 'before' pictures, the Kids Company kid was presented as being without childhood innocence. This was achieved through an association with adult experiences such as violence and drugs (for example, the advertisements that depicted a 'knife-wielding thug' and 'kids who can kill', and the mentor training exercise that asked mentors how they would respond if their mentee disclosed that they had used crack). However, as with Barnardo's 'after' pictures, the intended 'spectator-donor' of the imagined Kids Company kid was always reminded that these constructions were children (the 'knife-wielding thug' is also a 'bed-wetting boy', and the extreme examples role-played by Nathan in the training session also invoked a bed-wetting child). Similar to the assumption that the work of Barnardo's could restore the boundary between adult and child, allowing the child to have a childhood, Kids Company asserted that their approach of 'parenting-by-proxy' (Jovchelovitch & Concha, 2013) could also return children to their correct position in childhood, by placing them within a substitute family. Barnardo's deliberately employed shocking imagery in their contemporary advertising campaign for the purpose of quickly grabbing attention and building 'instant awareness and empathy'. Kids Company's constructions of their service users (such as the 'knife-wielding thug) were also shocking in themselves, but in

addition, the organisation employed images of negatively developed brains in both their advertising and mentor training sessions. In Chapter 6 I discuss the use of such imagery in the mentor training sessions, and how this presented mentees in a simplistic and manageable way, whist still being emotive. For the wider organisation, I would suggest that this use of brain imagery was intended to grab the attention, in a similar way to the Barnardo's advertisements, while resonating with contemporary cultural images of personhood (Rose and Abi-Rached, 2013).

Whilst Kids Company's model of youth work aligned with social policy and Kids Company's construction of their service users was compelling, the influence that the organisation had on their 'real' service users was unclear. In a different article, Beresford suggests that while Kids Company 'had enormous skill in knowing which buttons to press to gain funding and visibility' they may have lost sight of 'the day-to-day rights and needs of those that it was set up in good faith to serve' (The Guardian, 29/10/15).

Overall, Kids Company's approach to working with young people can be seen within a tradition of child saving interventions from the late 19th and early 20th century. Kids Company's model of working with young people - providing them with a substitute family because their own family was viewed as unsuitable, with the idea that this would improve their sense of self and enable them to overcome their environment - chimed with popular ideas within social policy and could be seen to account for their popularity with successive Governments. Another contributing factor to Kids Company's popularity was the compelling image that they constructed of their service users. As a consequence, however, their real service users were obscured. It should also be noted that whilst Kids Company operated within a specific community, it was not embedded within the South London community where the charity was geographically located. This was highlighted by Jim Minton, the Director of Membership and Communications for Youth London, a community youth organisation network, in an article for the Guardian (26/08/2016). Minton contrasted the work of Kids Company against other community organisations in Brixton, and suggested that Kids Company's Brixton centre had 'not truly been a part of the local infrastructure'.

Although I have been critical of Kids Company's approach to working with young people, it is also important to highlight that when I interviewed the mentees, they were all very positive about Kids Company. Although the mentees had only been participating in their mentoring relationships for a short amount of time when I spoke to them, they had all taken part in other Kids Company services and made use of the centres. When I asked the mentees what images popped to mind when they thought about Kids Company, they suggested that it was fun, it provided them with opportunities to hang out with other children, to use resources within the centres and to go on trips and residential holidays. In addition, as mentioned in Chapter 6, Hayley suggested that Kids Company made her feel safe. Thus, despite the issues that surrounded Kids Company, it is important to remember that some very positive work also took place there.

7.2 What was Youth Mentoring within Kids Company?

One of the main purposes of this project has been to take an in-depth and situated look at the mentoring programme within Kids Company. The aim of this was to better understand how youth mentoring was experienced in relation to the intervention's programme practices (and the theories that underpinned them), the motivations and expectations of the participants, and the environments in which the mentoring took place. Youth mentoring is often constructed as a straightforward 'off the shelf' intervention (Meier, 2008); I want to problematize this understanding. Philip and Spratt (2007) began to challenge this conception by developing a typology of youth

mentoring to highlight the array of different types of mentoring currently happening in the UK, noting that there is a large 'diversity of aims, programmes, styles, target groups, methods, timescales and forms of relationship' (p63). Working from a realist evaluation perspective (Pawson and Tilley, 1997) Philip and Spratt attempted to categorise the many differences in approach, based on the underlying theory that each approach seemed to be drawing on. In the conclusion of their review they suggested that more work is needed to fully understand how different theoretical underpinnings interact with 'mentoring themes and practices over time' to influence experiences. Nevertheless, their emergent typology of mentoring approaches suggests that Kids Company's mentoring programme was most closely aligned to what Philip and Spratt refer to as 'compensatory mentoring'. The following section will consider how this form of mentoring was enacted and experienced over time in relation to theories of attachment, resilience and social capital (the theories said to underpin compensatory mentoring). It will then take a closer look at how specific programme practices encouraged by Kids Company influenced the mentoring experience.

7.2.1 Compensatory Mentoring in Practice

Compensatory mentoring is referred to as such because it is seen to compensate for the mentee's unsatisfactory parental and community relationships. Thus, attachment theory is used to conceptualise how a secure youth mentoring relationship can improve a young person's sense of self, resilience theory is used to suggest that mentoring can help a young person to navigate the risks that they face within their community and wider society, and the concept of bridging social capital is used to conceptualise how mentoring may enable a young person to move up and out of their community through the acquirement of capital (such as new connections with people outside of their community). Kids Company's mentoring programme conformed to this characterisation of mentoring, as mentees were positioned as being in need of positive relationships to counteract the 'damage' done by unsatisfactory parental relationships and experiences within communities that were described as both 'insular' and 'traumatic'.

Kids Company's model of mentoring drew heavily on attachment theory positing that mentors would become attachment figures for the mentees, and would thus play a role in modifying the mentees internal working models. Also, important elements in the Kids Company model of mentoring were resilience and social capital, which were viewed as pathways to stability and guidance for the mentee at the same time as broadening the mentees' horizons. Looking at the mentoring relationships through a temporal lens, it is interesting to think about how these elements of the mentoring relationships operated in practice.

In terms of attachment theory, there did seem to be something important about the mentors consistently 'being there' for the mentees. Jo had suggested that a mentor spending time with a mentee could improve a 'negative core belief' within a mentee. Dallos and Comley-Ross (2005) refer to this as a form of 'cognitive dissonance', where the mentee, who views herself as unlovable and unworthy, questions why a mentor wants to spend time with her and eventually begins to realise that it is because she is nice to be around;

> This almost appeared to represent a form of 'cognitive dissonance' or puzzlement for the young people along the lines of: I have low self-esteem and think of myself as unlovable not worthy of affection. Yet, the mentor spends a lot of time with me but does not get paid for it. Why? Even when I test them and am difficult they stay with me. Maybe I am not so bad after all? Or are they a bit weird? But actually, they are OK and not really weird. Oh, well maybe I am OK, it's alright to like myself a bit? (Dallos & Comley-Ross, 2005, p379)

Dallos and Comley-Ross suggest that this 'puzzle' of why a mentor wants to spend time with a mentee has to stay with the mentee long enough for her to discount other possibilities, so that the only answer left is the positive one about her own worth; thus, there may be a question of whether a young person can reach this stage within the one-year mentoring model. Relatedly, Gilligan (2006) suggests that an adult does not have to be the most important person in a young person's life to be considered an attachment figure, but they do have to be available over time, and associated with 'everyday interactions' and 'mundane daily rituals' rather than artificially engineered or occasional visits. Thus, if the Kids Company mentors did become attachment figures for their mentees, it would have likely been during the middle phase when relationships became relaxed and were defined by routines that the pairs had established, rather than the beginning phase where mentors were concerned with taking their mentee on cultural visits to tourist attractions.

As this project was unable to capture the opinions of the mentees as their relationships progressed, I cannot say whether the mentees came to view their mentors as attachment figures. However, there is an ethical question with regards to the positioning of mentoring relationships as attachment relationships, when the relationship is likely to end after one year. Within Kids Company's mentoring model, it was stipulated that relationships had to last for at least one year, but as shown in chapter 5, of the six mentoring relationships presented in the meeting records, four of them ended at the mentors' request, very soon after reaching the one-year mark. Evaluation literature has shown that young people who experience premature endings display no gains, and sometimes even decrements, in the observed measures (Grossman & Rhodes 2002; Britner & Kraimer-Rickaby 2005; Grossman et al. 2012). However, little attention has been placed on how mentees feel once their relationship has come to an end following the completion of the stipulated time period.

In terms of resilience, mentoring has been described as a 'steeling' mechanism, meaning that in aiding the mentee to overcome adversity within the duration of the mentoring relationship, this can help to strengthen the resistance of the mentee later on during other difficult times (Rutter, 1999; Werner, 1990, cited in Philip, 2008). This is said to involve the development of coping strategies for dealing with negative experiences. Within the Kids Company relationships, the mentors supporting the mentees through difficulties was a prominent element of the middle phase. It is difficult, however, to ascertain whether the form of support provided by mentors can be understood in terms of resilience. The representation of support presented within the meeting records centred around offering the mentees an opportunity for respite from stressful situations. Within this, mentees were not presented as wanting to talk about issues with their mentor, and instead appeared to use the mentoring meetings to relax. Thus, to better understand mentor support in terms of resilience, more investigation would be needed both within mentoring relationships (to explore whether coping strategies are being developed) and post mentoring relationships (to explore whether the young person uses these strategies when faced with other challenges). However, it is important to note that reaching the middle phase of the relationship was important in terms of the mentor supporting the mentee through difficulties.

Regarding social capital, the idea that youth mentoring can offer a form of 'bridging capital' (Putnam, 2000) seems relevant to Kids Company's form of mentoring. Bridging social capital within youth mentoring can involve mentors introducing young people to broader social networks and helping them make connections with people who may have the capacity to offer them opportunities (Brady et al., 2015). Within the Kids Company sample, this was most apparent in the relationship between Robert and Lex, as Robert enabled Lex to visit different places of work. Bridging social capital can also involve broadening a young person's horizons and encouraging their ambitions (Philip, 2008), thus the experience of visiting cultural attractions at the beginning of the mentoring

relationships may also be considered as enabling social capital. In addition, some of the activities that took place in the middle phase of relationships such as visiting cafes, restaurants and sporting facilities may have also generated social capital for the mentees, as the mentees may not have had access to these resources otherwise. Through the provision of these resources, possible feelings of social exclusion may have been reduced and the mentee may have been encouraged to feel comfortable, and maybe even to 'belong', in places that they would not usually visit. There is thus a question of how well mentees would have been able to continue to maintain the social capital that they had acquired through their mentor once the mentoring relationship came to an end.

Looking at youth mentoring in this way highlights that attachment theory and theories of resilience and social capital may all be relevant in understanding mentoring processes. However, with the exception of broadening the mentee's horizons through cultural visits at the beginning of the relationships, it appears that these theories were most salient within the middle phase of relationships. Once the relationships had reached the middle phase, the mentee appeared to associate the mentor with everyday routines, consistent support and access to opportunities and community resources. It is thus important to consider how mentoring relationships can reach this middle phase successfully. In the next sub-section, I will discuss how the programme practices within Kids Company's mentoring programme may have helped or hindered this process.

7.2.2 Kids Company Specific Programme Practices

One of the most striking things about Kids Company's mentoring programme was how necessary the structure of a formal programme was for maintaining the mentoring relationships, as all but one relationship from the interview sample ended after Kids Company closed down. Not only did mentors require support from the mentoring team in terms of maintaining contact with their mentee and their mentee's family, but the legal and institutional context within which the formal programme grounded the mentoring relationships was also important. The interviews with the mentors following Kids Company's closure revealed that the mentors felt that the formal programme contributed to feelings of legitimacy and protection, as they were covered by Kids Company's insurance. After Kids Company closed down the mentors felt that they were vulnerable to accusations of wrongdoing either from the public or from the mentees themselves, which only under Kids Company's protection could they successfully address. Thus, Kids Company were successful in scaffolding relationships that would not have happened otherwise.

In the previous sub-section, I noted how the middle phase of the mentoring relationships were important, as this phase was defined by consistency, support and access to resources. Looking at the mentoring programme's specific practices, there are a number of elements that may have encouraged relationship development in this way. Firstly, the expectation that mentoring interactions should be empathic and attuned may have encouraged mentors to get to know their mentee and gain an understanding of what their mentee wanted from the relationship. The mentors came to the relationship with a number of pre-conceived notions about their mentee (based on their own previous experiences with young people, and also the construction of the Kids Company mentee that they were presented with in the training and likely had encountered before through the images that Kids Company circulated in the public domain), and a number of motivations and expectations for the relationship. However, the instruction that mentors should be open and not judge their mentee may have helped them suspend judgement, and contributed to the effort exhibited by the mentors in the meeting records to get to know their mentee as an individual. Secondly, the practice of completing a meeting record following each mentoring session may have

encouraged a level of reflexivity that the mentors would not have otherwise put into the relationship. During the initial phase of relationships, the mentors utilised the meeting records as a space to consider their mentee's personality and needs. At first these representations somewhat conformed to the imagined mentee presented in the mentor training, but quite quickly these representations began to change to reflect a more multi-faceted representation of their mentee. Without this reflexive space, it may have taken a longer period of time for the mentors to move away from this association between the imagined mentee and the mentee that they were matched with.

Whilst the expectation for mentoring interactions to be based on empathy and attunement may have been helpful for relationship development, the associated rules that mentors should not offer advice or take practical action may have been somewhat detrimental. It is likely that these boundaries were helpful for initial interactions, as they would have reassured mentors that they were only expected to do a limited amount of work with their mentee, should anything emerge from their interactions with the mentee it was easy for them to pass the issue on to the mentoring team. However, as the relationships progressed and mentoring pairs began to feel closer to each other, the idea of what was and was not within the mentoring remit seemed to get messier. At the same time, the mentoring practitioners expected the prescribed boundaries to remain. Thus, the rigidity of the boundaries could be seen to hamper the mentors' development of their role and their ability to handle the grey areas that they encountered. This was exemplified by Hannah regularly seeking permission and clarifying boundaries with the mentoring team throughout the entirety of her mentoring relationship with Amirah. Furthermore, in a qualitative study exploring the experiences and opinions of mentees, Philip (2008) summarised the mentees conception of the mentoring relationship as a 'professional friendship', meaning that it has some of the qualities of a friendship but with certain boundaries. However, the mentees felt that it was important that these boundaries were flexible, as when boundaries were too rigid they felt that they were being treated like 'a case' rather than an individual.

A further element that could have hindered relationship development was how the mentors experience of the 'real-life' mentees did not match the conception of the imagined mentee presented to the mentors in the training session. In Chapter 6 I discussed how the mentors were presented with an emotive figure defined in part by impeded brain development. While this may have motivated mentors, it also obscured the complexities of the mentee's life. Thus, the mentee's need for a mentoring relationship was presented as compelling but also manageable. The procedure of being approved as a mentor and then being matched with a mentee was a relatively lengthy process, as it involved the completion of an application form, an interview, the two training sessions, and then a period of waiting while the mentoring team selected an appropriate mentee. As such, this conception of the imagined mentee may have been successful in discouraging the mentors from giving up on this extended process, as they felt engaged by the idea of this mentee. However, when the mentor did meet their matched mentee, the mentee did not really align with this conception of the imagined mentee. This was expressed through the mentors' initial attempts in the meeting records to 'fit' their mentee into the same mould as the imagined mentee (for example Eve tried to interpret Isiah's drawings as a sign of internal conflict), that were quite quickly dropped to present a more multi-faceted interpretation of their mentee. It should be noted that this mismatch between the real and the imagined mentee did not appear to be detrimental to relationship formation, but I would argue that this was because the instruction that mentors should follow a non-judgemental approach, and the practice of using the meeting records as a space for reflexivity, enabled the mentors to manage this mismatch effectively. Had these practices not been in place, however, the

mentors may have been at risk of getting stuck in the initial process of trying to 'see' damage within their mentee, that may not have been there.

The use of the meeting records to monitor the mentee's family and report back to the mentoring team was also an interesting element of the mentoring programme's practice. In some cases, this was an effective route for families to communicate with Kids Company, for example Antonio's mother was able to communicate through Charlotte her desire for extra support in terms of Antonio's educational attainment. In other cases, however, the mentors seemed overly vigilant. There were numerous examples of the mentors reporting very small details about parents throughout the mentoring relationships. As such, whereas the mentors' representations of their mentees moved away from the representation of the imagined mentee, mentors' representations of parents remained in line with the mentoring programme's representation of them.

Although the mentoring programme had a specific procedure to manage relationship endings, these were sometimes mismanaged. The practitioners expected endings to be planned out in advance, so that the mentee could have an experience of a relationship ending in a safe and managed way. An element of this process involved encouraging the mentee to look back at the relationship positively and recognise it as an achievement. Approaching relationship endings in this way is in line with recommendations from Zilberstein and Spencer (2014) who used attachment theory to suggest how positive closure in youth mentoring relationships can be achieved. Zilberstein and Spencer suggest that endings should be 'planned, growth promoting, process-oriented and clear' and should involve participation from the mentor, the mentee, programme staff and the mentee's family (2014, p6). In the case of mentor-initiated endings, Zilberstein and Spencer suggest that planned endings offer the mentor a chance to clearly convey their reasons for ending the relationship, so that the mentee does not attribute the ending to a character flaw or failure on their part. Regardless of who instigates the ending, Zilberstien and Spencer highlight the importance of sticking to a plan, once it has been established. Within this, mentoring pairs can consider how they would like to mark the ending of their relationship, such as engaging in a favourite activity one last time or an activity they had always planned to do. To ensure the successful implementation of the ending plan, mentoring programme staff may be involved, input may also be sought from parents so as to pre-empt and prepare for possible vulnerabilities that the ending may trigger. For mentees who have experienced non-secure attachments in particular (as the Kids Company mentees are characterised), Zilberstein and Spencer suggest that planning can give the mentee a sense of control over the process. In terms of the relationship ending being growth-promoting, Zilberstein and Spencer advise that mentoring pairs should focus on accomplishments, and the termination of the relationship should be framed as a transition rather than a loss. With regards to endings being process focussed, Zilberstein and Spencer suggest that the mentee should have an opportunity to review and celebrate the work that the mentoring pair have done together. The ending process should also be clear, meaning that all parties should know when the mentoring relationship will end. It should also be understood that there will be no further contact between mentor and mentee from that point, thus, allowing the mentee to move on and build new connections.

Whilst it seemed that Kids Company's mentoring programme did intend mentoring pairs to follow a similar process as described by Zilberstein and Spencer (and the representation of Charlotte and Antonio's experience of the relationship ending had parallels with this); of the six mentoring pairs in the meeting records sample, three relationship endings were mismanaged. This was due to programme staff telling the mentee and/or the parents that the mentor was ending the relationship, before the mentor had been able to tell the mentee, and without letting the mentor know that the mentee had been informed. Thus, this may have created a space where the mentee had an

opportunity to question whether the ending have due to a character flaw or failure on their part, as Zilberstien and Spencer warned against.

In summary, Kids Company's mentoring relationships could be understood as compensatory mentoring. Within this, theories of attachment, resilience and social capital were all relevant. However, there are questions as to whether it is ethical to frame a mentoring relationship as an attachment relationship if the mentee is considered to be experiencing relationship insecurity in other parts of their life, if the mentoring relationship is expected to end after only one year. Relatedly, there are also questions as to how well a mentee may utilise resilience and capital built up over the course of the mentoring relationship once the relationship is over. Looking at these relationships temporally highlights how important the middle phase of the relationships was, as they were characterised by everyday routines, consistent support and access to community resources. Kids Company's mentoring programme consisted of specific programme practices which influenced relationship development and how the mentor viewed their role, their mentee, and the mentee's parents.

7.3 Strength-Based Youth Mentoring: complementary rather than compensatory mentoring

In Philip and Spratt's (2007) description of compensatory mentoring, they state that the underlying assumption of this form of mentoring is a deficit model of young people, and the overall emphasis is that this form of mentoring is intended to compensate for unsatisfactory relationships in a young person's life. However, at one point Philip and Spratt write that these mentoring relationships can 'be complementary to or compensatory for existing family relationships' (p14). Whilst in this context the terms complementary and compensatory may have been used interchangeably, it is interesting to consider what youth mentoring relationships might be like if the focus was on complimenting the young person's existing relationships (and thus considering the strengths of these relationships), and if a deficit model was not the underlying assumption. Whilst such an approach may still engage with theories of attachment, social capital, and resilience, other theories that specifically focus on enriching and appreciating the positives in young people's lives, such as a strength-based approach could also enhance this type of youth mentoring.

7.3.1 Strength-Based Approaches to Youth Mentoring

Nissen (2006) describes the strength-based approach as an 'organising principle' for a range of theories which emphasise the 'generally untapped gifts, positive attributes, and under-developed capabilities of persons, families, and even communities, who are in some way compromised in their abilities and/or seeking help for problems' (p41). Within this, the challenges faced by an individual are addressed in terms of the individual's 'skills, interests, and support systems', and these are seen as a foundation from which the individual can grow and achieve positive change (Nissen et al., 2005, p41).

In terms of youth mentoring, the Alberta Mentoring group have developed a framework for strength-based mentoring that follows some of these principles by encouraging mentors to focus on their mentees 'strengths, interests, abilities and capacities', rather than 'their deficits, weaknesses or problems' (Alberta Mentoring 2010). In this way, the mentoring relationship is seen as a collaborative process in which the mentor is the 'facilitator' and the mentee is the 'director' of 'their own social capacity building story' (Alberta Mentoring 2010). Whilst this approach is interesting as its construction of the young person appears to be in great contrast to Kids Company's construction

of the 'child in need', it still seems to operate in abstraction from the rest of the young person's life, as the mentee's family and community are not explicitly viewed as strengths.

A different strength-based mentoring approach that embraces the young person's family and wider social network is Youth Initiated Mentoring (YIM) (Schwartz et al., 2013; Spencer et al., 2016). This form of mentoring involves the young person being supported by a mentoring programme to choose an informal mentor from their existing social network (such as a relative or neighbour). Collaboratively, the mentor, the mentee, the mentee's family and a mentoring practitioner then discuss the challenges the young person and their family are facing, describe productive solutions that acknowledge the strengths of the family as a whole and the family members as individuals, and form a plan of how each person can contribute to the desired situation and how the mentor can support this. The model thus not only focuses on strengths, it is also highly situated, as it devises a plan for each specific family and acknowledges that the mentor may offer different forms of support depending on the 'capacities, needs and interests of both the mentor and the juvenile, the individual and family problems and the type of support the juvenile needs, and the fit between two persons' (van Dam et al., 2017, p1770).

7.3.2 Lessons from Youth Initiated Mentoring

Whilst compensatory mentoring programmes such as Kids Company's programme recruit 'formal' mentors from outside of the young people's social network, rather than 'informal' mentors from within, such mentoring programmes could still adopt certain principles from the YIM approach. Although Kids Company imagined their mentees to be lacking in positive family relationships, this did not appear to be the case when I asked the 'real-life' mentees to represent the adults that they felt close to on a graph (as described in Chapter 6). All of the mentees expressed that they felt close to one or both of their parents. In addition, several of the mentees suggested that they also felt close to aunts, uncles and grandparents. However, within the meeting records, when the mentors offered glimpses into the parents' everyday lives, these representations highlighted the complexities of the parents' lives, as they navigated many challenges associated with working-class life, such as low paid shift work, complex child-care arrangements, and insecure housing situations. As such, if Kids Company's programme had adopted a strength-based approach similar to that of YIM, the mentoring practitioners could have acknowledged the strengths within the mentees families and encouraged mentors, mentees and families to work together, so that the mentee and their family could better deal with such challenges. For example, it could be explicitly discussed that mentors may provide mentees with opportunities to have fun and access community resources while parents worked, or provide emotional support and respite when parents were stressed or facing particularly complex challenges (as these are things that mentors were represented as doing in the meeting records but did not seem to explicitly acknowledge the importance of). As with YIM, practitioners could have helped mentoring pairs develop a situated approach to their specific relationship. In this way, the meeting records submitted by mentors, which were already being used as a method of reflexivity, could have been used to discuss with Kids Company mentoring staff the types of support that mentors were offering and whether these needed to be changed or adapted for the situation. Furthermore, rather than using the records to monitor parents, they could be employed as a way of creating a bridge between families and the wider organisation if and when needed.

Conclusions

From a historical and cultural perspective, Kids Company's success owes something to the way it echoes models of work and approaches related to the child-saving movement of the late 19th and early 20th century. The current dominant discourse that childhood is 'in crisis' can be seen as a repeat of the previous moral panics that influenced the child-saving movement (Kehily, 2010); thus, as the current fears about childhood mirror those of the late 19th and early 20th century, it makes sense that a charity that mirrored approaches of the time would become popular. In addition, Kids Company utilised popular versions of neurobiological explanations to express their model of work and underpinning logics were strongly aligned to a current idea in social policy that was critical of bureaucratic statutory provision and invested in the personalisation of social problems through a focus on parenting. A further element that contributed to Kids Company's popularity was the compelling image of their service users that they constructed. However, whilst the imagined Kids Company kid was a compelling figure, the voices of 'real-life' service users were obscured.

Kids Company's model of mentoring was understood as a form of compensatory mentoring by the organisation, as it conceptualised its mentees as being damaged by their parental relationships and their experiences within their 'insular' and 'traumatic' communities. Looking at the mentoring relationships temporally, the theories that are said to underpin compensatory mentoring (attachment, resilience and social capital), could be identified within the mentoring relationships. However, it is notable that such interactions were most prominent during the middle phase of relationships, which were defined by everyday routines, consistent support and access to opportunities and community resources. Certain practices within Kids Company's mentoring programme influenced mentoring experiences. Positive characteristics of the Kids Company mentoring model were that it encouraged mentors to approach their mentoring relationships in an empathetic and non-judgemental fashion, and that the process of completing the meeting records offered the mentors a space for reflexivity. This encouraged the mentors to get to know their mentee as an individual and to let go of previous expectations or motivations that did not fit with the mentee's needs. Elements of the model that were less strong included the rigidity of the boundaries imposed on the relationships, the difference between the conception of the imagined mentee and the 'real-life' mentees, and the mismanagement of some of the relationship closures. At the same time, Kids Company represented the young people who come through the organisation's doors as being in insecure parental attachments. I have raised an ethical question of whether the mentors should have been positioned as attachment figures in the first place, considering the relationship would likely last for one year only, and the mentee could therefore be distressed by the experience of the attachment relationship ending. Finally, I have discussed how a strength-based approach could have been beneficial for Kids Company's mentoring programme as it could have allowed mentees and their families to be understood in terms of their strengths rather than their deficits.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

My interest in youth mentoring research stemmed from a perceived mismatch between my own experiences as a volunteer youth mentor and the results of youth mentoring evaluation studies. In my own experience, I felt that I had formed a valuable and enjoyable relationship with my mentee. The few qualitative studies that have explored mentees' opinions and experiences of youth mentoring (Dallos & Comley-Ross, 2005; Philip, 2008), also reflect that mentees highly value their mentoring relationships. However, the majority of evaluation literature, which splits young people into a mentored treatment group and a non-mentored control group to then compare their performance on various outcomes measures, consistently finds that mentored young people only show very small (if any) improvements compared to non-mentored young people (Dubois et al., 2002; DuBois et al., 2011). It was my contention that the evaluation literature did not adequately capture what happens within youth mentoring relationships.

My aim for this research has been to explore the experiences of those who take part in youth mentoring, but to do this in relation to the relevant contexts shaping mentoring – for example the particular practices involved (and the theories that underpin them), the lives and motivations of the participants, and the environments in which the mentoring relationships take place. The primary purpose of this thesis has been to shed light on the mentoring experiences that are not captured through evaluation studies, and to counteract the conception of youth mentoring being a context-free and catch all intervention.

8.1: Research questions revisited

To approach this research aim, the study had three main goals. The first was to look at Kids Company's mentoring programme in terms of its practices and the theories that underpinned them. The purpose of this was to illuminate how the design and implementation of youth mentoring programmes can influence the form of mentoring that takes place. Within this, I was concerned with understanding how such practices came about in relation to the organisation as a whole, and in relation to a particular social policy context. The second aim was to explore how this form of mentoring was experienced. As Kids Company closed down before I had finished my fieldwork, I was not able to fully capture the voices of the young people who were participating in the mentoring relationships. However, looking at how mentors represented their mentoring relationships within the meeting records revealed how mentors saw their role, and how they perceived their matched mentee to be experiencing the relationship. The third aim was to explore how the child, their families and their communities were positioned within both Kids Company and youth mentoring. My understanding was that Kids Company's construction of the child, their homes and communities, and their needs were related to particular ideas about childhood and resonated with contemporary social policy discourses. Thus, I wanted to explore this and highlight how the resulting constructions helped to guide and justify the form of mentoring that they offered.

These goals were translated into research questions which I will now revisit. The first research question was:

1) *What is youth mentoring, and what is youth mentoring within this organisation?*

Ultimately, youth mentoring is an intervention situated in time and place. Kids Company's youth mentoring programme was understood by the organisation as a form of compensatory mentoring (Philip & Spratt, 2007) as it was an intervention aimed at compensating for the service users' unsatisfactory parental relationships and their experiences within their 'traumatised' and 'insular'

communities. This approach to youth mentoring was strongly related to Kids Company's approach as a whole. Using a historical and cultural perspective I have suggested that Kids Company's approach can be understood as part of the history of 'child-saving' interventions which aimed to help young people overcome their urban environments, as it was felt that working-class parents did not have the capacity to adequately support their children.

The theories that underpin compensatory mentoring are attachment theory, resilience, and the bridging of social capital. I have suggested that such theories are relevant in understanding the design of Kids Company's mentoring programme. The programme was most strongly influenced by attachment theory. Mentors were expected to become attachment figures in the mentee's life, and the experience of this secure attachment was expected to positively influence the mentee's internal working model, thus improving their sense of self and their relationships with others. The mentoring programme had particular guidelines that mentors were expected to follow. This involved interacting with mentees in an empathic, attuned, and non-judgemental fashion. At the same time, the programme prescribed a number of rules for mentoring relationships (which the practitioners referred to as boundaries). This included the mentor not giving advice to their mentee, and not taking any practical action in their mentee's life. If situations occurred in the mentoring relationship where the mentor felt such action was needed, the mentor was expected to pass this on to the mentoring team to attend to.

At the same time, I have argued that viewing mentoring as complementary, rather than compensatory, offers several advantages. Within this conception, through the adoption of a strength-based approach, the mentee and their family can be viewed in terms of their strengths rather than their deficits, and the mentor can be understood as a situated form of support to help them face the challenges in their lives.

2) *What is happening inside these youth mentoring relationships?*

The mentoring relationships had a strong sense of temporality as evidenced in the analysis of the meeting records. The initial phase involved a high level of labour on the part of both mentor and mentee to get to know each other, and to work out what the mentoring relationship would be like. The guidelines that mentors should interact with their mentee in an empathic, attuned and non-judgemental fashion may have aided this process of getting to know each other. This initial process was followed by a middle phase, in which mentoring pairs felt relaxed and comfortable together. It was during this stage of the relationship when the theories that underpin compensatory mentoring seemed most salient as mentoring interactions were defined by everyday routines, consistent support and access to opportunities and community resources. Once relationships had moved through the initial stage, the way that the mentors represented their matched mentee was very different to the way that Kids Company represented the imagined mentee. The imagined mentee was constructed as damaged by their relationships and environment. While the 'real-life' mentees did experience difficulties in their lives, this was presented as just one aspect of them, and they were also represented as fun and happy. Again, the guideline to approach the relationship in an empathic, attuned and non-judgmental way may have aided the mentors in recognising that their matched mentee was different to the imagined mentee. As mentoring pairs began to feel closer, it became harder for mentors to identify what was and was not within their remit as a mentor, in relation to the boundaries placed on the relationships by the programme. As such, it was sometimes difficult for mentors to deal with certain issues in their mentees' lives and the grey areas that these created within the relationship.

Once mentoring pairs had been matched for one year, the relationships would come to a close at the mentors choosing. Kids Company's mentoring programme aimed to support mentoring pairs to end the relationship in a way that could encourage the mentee to look back on the relationship as an achievement, and to view the ending as the completion of a successful relationship that would aid them in moving on to new relationships. However, endings were sometimes mismanaged, and this was experienced as distressing by the mentee. Looking at these relationships through a temporal lens, it is important to note that although mentoring relationships were intended to last for at least one year, the initial 'getting to know you' phase lasted for several months. When managed correctly, the ending process of celebrating and looking back over the relationship also took several months. Thus, the middle phase, which seemed particularly valuable, was relatively short.

3) *What are the contexts of youth mentoring and how is the child, their families, and their communities positioned within both Kids Company and youth mentoring?*

Within Kids Company's mentoring programme, the imagined mentee was presented as being damaged by their relationships with their parents and experiences within their 'traumatic' and 'insular' communities. Looking at the mentoring programme and the organisation as a whole from a historical and cultural perspective, this figuration of the imagined mentee can be seen to be related to ideas about children and what constitutes a 'good' childhood. Figurations of parents and communities were in line with social policy related to social exclusion. Thus, parents who are poor were represented as 'poor parents', and communities were represented as dangerous. Such representations ignore the everyday lives of working class parents, and the positives within working-class communities. The representation of the damaged mentee was focussed on their perceived impeded brain development, and it was suggested that the influence of the mentoring relationship could have a positive influence on this. Thus, there was an assumption that the mentoring relationship would be simple and manageable as it was not necessary for the mentor to engage with the mentee's family or community.

The mentors' representations of the 'real-life' mentees were different to the conception of the imagined mentee. As discussed, the 'real-life' mentees were presented as multi-faceted individuals. Whilst the mentoring relationships did make use of community resources (such as cafes and parks), the relationships were somewhat detached from the community, thus the mentors did not portray the communities to a great extent in the meeting records. The meeting records did, however, offer glimpses of parents' everyday lives. Within this, parents were represented as engaged in their child's life, whilst also dealing with complex situations such as low paid shift work, unreliable childcare arrangements, and insecure housing situations.

Overall, in relation to my original motivation to shed light on the mentoring experiences that are not captured through evaluation studies, this study has highlighted a number of issues. Firstly, the practices of mentoring programmes can influence the experience of mentoring relationships in a number of ways, for example, through the implementation of guidelines and rules for interactions, and through the way that it conceptualises its service users. Secondly, mentoring relationships go through phases. Within this, the middle phase is particularly valuable, however, within the one-year model it is relatively short. Relatedly, there is a question of how much the work done during the middle phase will then influence the mentee's life once the relationship is over. Thirdly, although there were patterns that could be identified across all of the mentoring relationships within the study, the relationships were all very different. Within the same mentoring programme one mentoring pair (Robert and Lex) were focussed on visiting different places of work, while another

mentoring pair (Eve and Isiah) stuck quite rigidly to a routine of going to the same café, whereas other mentoring pairs preferred to punctuate local routines with occasional cultural visits. In addition, while many of the mentees went through some form of difficulty that required support from the mentor, these difficulties covered a wide range of issues. Capturing this complexity within a single programme would be difficult using quantitative and quasi-experimental evaluation methods as is currently preferred by the mentoring evaluation community.

8.2 Contribution

This study has made a number of contributions to the field of youth mentoring research. To problematize the dominant view that youth mentoring is a catch all, context free intervention, the study has taken a historical and cultural perspective to ground youth mentoring in time and place. This approach has highlighted how mentoring programme practices, figurations of service users and their families, and the wants and need of 'real-life' mentees, can influence the mentoring experience. Such understanding challenges the largely vacuous definitions of 'context' and 'generality' found in existing research and policy understandings of youth mentoring. In addition, the study has approached this task using a methodological approach that is unusual for the field of youth mentoring. Through the use of several interpretative methods such as participant observation, archival analysis, and interviews, the study has been able to engage with representations and processes of youth mentoring to offer an in-depth understanding of a youth mentoring programme.

This project has also extended the work of Philip and Spratt (2007) and the typology of youth mentoring developed by them. Philip and Spratt suggested that the typology was a tentative model, and that more work needed to be done to fully understand how different theoretical underpinnings interact with 'mentoring themes and practices over time' to influence experiences. Thus, the study has shown that the theories that underpin compensatory mentoring (attachment, resilience and bridging social capital) are particularly salient during the middle phase of mentoring relationships. In addition, I have queried the ethics of positioning a mentor within a one-year model of mentoring as an attachment figure, and questioned how well a mentee can make use of the resilience and social capital built up over the course of the mentoring relationship once the relationship has come to an end.

Although Kids Company is no longer operational, I have highlighted the strengths and weakness of the mentoring programme's model, which could benefit service development for similar mentoring programmes. The strengths of the model were that it encouraged mentors to approach their mentoring relationships in an empathetic and non-judgemental fashion, and that the process of completing the meeting records offered the mentors a space for reflexivity. This encouraged the mentors to get to know their mentee as an individual and to let go of previous expectations or motivations that did not fit with the mentee's needs. The elements of the model that were less strong included the rigidity of the boundaries that the mentoring staff imposed on the relationships, the difference between the conception of the imagined mentee and the 'real-life' mentees, and the mismanagement of some of the relationship closures.

Ultimately, this study has shown that that youth mentoring practices are deeply embedded in time and place, and that the actual practice of youth mentoring is messy, enjoyable and challenging. It has highlighted that youth mentoring requires an institutional framing in order to take place and succeed, however, this framing needs to be open and needs to embrace the liminality of mentoring relationships. Within this, mentoring pairs should be encouraged to have the confidence to define their relationships and some of the boundaries for themselves.

At the same time, the project has also contributed to telling the story of Kids Company, exploring its rise and fall, that will form part of a historical record that may be revisited over time by those interested in understanding the history of British welfare and politics.

8.3 The Reflective Practitioner

Before moving on to discuss the limitations of the study and possible future directions, I would like to further discuss how the thesis may be useful for current mentoring practitioners. Whilst I have detailed the strengths and weaknesses of Kids Company's model, which could hopefully offer insights for programme design and development, I would like to emphasise some areas in which mentoring practitioners may want to reflect on their own practice to thoroughly consider what form of mentoring they are providing. In terms of service users, it may be useful for practitioners to consider how they imagine the child who uses their service, and why they imagine them in this way. Additionally, how does this imagined child relate to the 'real-life' children who use the mentoring service. Such understanding can illuminate underlying assumptions of the mentoring programme that practitioners may not have consciously acknowledged, and can also reveal if there is a mis-match between the service users and the service being provided. Relatedly, it is important for practitioners to consider what the problem that they are trying to solve through mentoring is, and if mentoring is the most appropriate method to solve it, as mentoring is sometimes deployed in inappropriate situations due to its characterisation as a catch-all intervention. More practically, it may be useful to consider how to extend the middle phase of relationships (and some of Kids Company's practices may be useful in this). It may also be important to consider how endings are handled within the youth mentoring relationships, and what is expected to happen once the relationships are over.

In terms of understanding young people and their families in terms of their strengths, rather than their deficits, and conceptualising mentoring as a relationship that can complement rather than compensate for other relationship in their lives, the concept of social pedagogy may be useful. Social pedagogy is a theory, practice and profession of working with people, that originated in Germany in the nineteenth century, is used in many areas of Europe (Fielding & Moss, 2011). The term is somewhat difficult to translate into English, but Boddy et al, 2005 describe it as;

> An approach to work with people in which learning, care, health, general well being and development are viewed as totally inseparable, a holistic idea summed up in the pedagogical term 'upbringing'. The pedagogue as practitioner sees herself as a person in a relationship with the child as a whole person, supporting the child's overall development. (Boddy et al., 2005, p3)

Within this, the mentee could be appreciated as a whole person rather than in relation to their deficits, and the mentoring relationship could be understood as an integrated element of the young persons 'upbringing', rather than being conceptualised as completely separate to the rest of the young person's social network.

8.4 Limitations of the study

The main limitation of the study is that it does not fully capture the voices of the young people who took part in mentoring relationships. While I have tried to include some elements from the interviews that I conducted with the mentees after they had been initially matched with a mentor, these interviews were quite slight. In the second interviews that I was able to conduct with the

mentors, John had suggested that he felt his relationship with Ash had not been developing successfully before it came to a premature end due to the closure of Kids Company. Thus, it would have been particularly interesting to explore this relationship further from Ash's point of view. In addition, I have suggested that the form of mentoring demonstrated within Kids Company's programme should be positioned as complementary, rather than compensatory, mentoring. The reason for this is that during the interviews with the mentees I asked them to demonstrate, on a graph of concentric circles, how close they felt to their mentor and how close they felt to other significant adults in their life (as shown in Chapter 6). The mentees expressed that they felt close to one or more parent and a number of aunts, uncles and grandparents. Unlike the figure of the imagined mentee, the 'real-life' mentees appeared to have a number of positive relationships in their lives. My intention for the planned second and third interviews with the mentees (that did not take place due to the closure of Kids Company) was to revisit these graphs to explore how the mentees' feelings of closeness to their mentor and other significant adults had changed and developed over time.

Whilst the meeting records were a very rich source of data, and I was lucky to have access to them, the limitations should be noted. The sample was relatively small (which was necessary due to the amount of records produced by each mentor), and the sample was chosen by the mentoring practitioners, creating the possibility that they were selected to paint a particular picture. This limits the level of generalisation that can be made. Furthermore, as I was concerned with tracking relationship over time, I only looked at meeting records of mentoring relationships that had lasted for at least one year. Thus, all of the relationships reflected the successful transition from the laborious initiation phase to the relaxed middle phase, meaning that understanding of the factors that inhibit successful development are limited.

The closure of the organisation during fieldwork accounts for a further limitation, as I was unable to take my findings back to the mentoring programme, or the mentors and mentees, for further discussion and checking of interpretations. Whilst the organisation no longer being there meant that the study was perhaps less constrained (as I will discuss in the next section), it is unfortunate that the research was not able to conclude the dialogue that was started with the organisation.

8.5 Reflections of the Process as a Researcher

During my time embedded within Kids Company, members of staff would often refer to their experiences of working within the organisation as chaotic. When I asked the mentoring staff how best to categorise differences between mentees in the sample, they suggested to do this in terms of the mentees level of chaos. My own experience of doing this research project could also certainly be described as chaotic. Whilst the sudden closure of Kids Company was challenging, it is interesting to think about how the project would have been different had the charity not closed down. The project would have been a straightforward exploration of a case of youth mentoring, and whilst this could have helped the mentoring team with their service design and development, the goal to provide the mentoring team with such insights may have also constrained the project, as it would not have encouraged me to step back and consider Kids Company as a whole. Thus, if the project had followed the original plan it is likely that I would have taken Kids Company as an organisation at face value, rather than question its relationship to social policy and its position within historical and cultural contexts. Furthermore, as described in the methodology chapter, whilst embedded within the organisation, I was struck by how strongly attachment theory influenced staff, but this meant that I did not notice what this focus on attachment theory obscured. In discussing the challenges of participant observation in ethnography, Shah (2017) uses the metaphor of 'swimming in other

people's sea' and either remaining in the sea, and thus presenting their experiences without scrutiny or 'swimming back to shore' and thus incorporating political and theoretical ideas to question their experiences. Whilst embedded within Kids Company during my data collection, it is fair to say that I did not think about being back on shore, and if the organisation had not folded, and I had not been repositioned as an outsider, I may have remained in the sea throughout the project. Ultimately, I feel that this chaotic experience has contributed to me becoming a better researcher, as it encouraged me to be adaptive, to deal with uncertainty, and to have more awareness of what is not said as well as what is.

8.6 Further directions

In addition to increased focus on the voices of young people, there are two areas of further study that have emerged from this research. Firstly, in relation to the suggestion that theories of attachment, resilience and bridging social capital underpin youth mentoring, further study is required to explore what happens once a mentoring relationship has come to an end. In terms of attachment theory, there are questions as to whether the mentoring relationship did have a positive influence on the mentee's sense of self and their relationship with others, and if this continued once the mentoring relationship was over. In terms of resilience, there are questions regarding whether the mentee was able to develop coping strategies during the mentoring relationship, and then able draw on these strategies during difficult situations post-mentoring. In terms of bridging social capital, there is a question as to whether the mentee was still able to make use of the connections and the resources that the mentoring relationship provided them with, without the presence of the mentor.

Secondly, with regards to the idea that youth mentoring relationships could be re-framed as complementary rather than compensatory mentoring, further investigation is necessary in a number of areas. More understanding of the intended mentees' current relationships is needed to ensure that they do already have secure primary attachments. In addition, a more thorough and complex understanding of both the positives and negatives of the mentees' relationships and environments would be required, so that mentoring practitioners understand which areas of the mentees' lives may require complementary support. Relatedly, mentoring programmes would need to find a way to construct an imagined mentee that is still compelling enough to encourage people to volunteer and take part in mentoring relationships, but is not defined in terms of 'damage', and instead recognises some of the complexity of their lives, their family and community lives.

Overall, youth mentoring has potential to be powerful and productive for all involved. However, the messiness, complexity, and variety of youth mentoring relationships needs to be recognised and valued.

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Appendix 1: Practitioner Interview Topic Guide

1) <u>The person, their role and the organisation</u>
   a) Can you tell me a little bit about yourself – your professional background and experience, how long you have been working at Kids Company etc
   b) How would you describe working at Kids Company? How does it compare to other organisations you've worked for?
   c) What is a typical day like for you?

2) <u>Hopes and Aspirations</u>
   a) Imagine yourself in 5 years time, what would you hope that the mentoring programme has achieved? What about 15 year's time?
   b) What would help you achieve these aims? What do you think would hinder achievement?

3) <u>History and evolution of the mentoring programme</u>
   a) Can you tell me a bit about the background to the mentoring programme at Kids Company, when it was first set up and why?
   b) How has the programme developed since its inception? What would you say are the main changes and why?
   c) What has stayed the same about the programme?

4) <u>Theories in practice</u>
   a) How would you describe mentoring to the person on the street?
   b) The Kid's Company website states that the charity's approach is "grounded in attachment theory" Can you tell me a bit about how you understand attachment theory and how you feel it relates to the work you do in the mentoring service?
   c) Is the mentoring service influenced by any other ideas or concepts?

5) <u>About the mentors</u>
   a) Who are the mentors? Can you describe a Kids Company mentor to me?
   b) Why do you think people want to be mentors?
   c) What kind of support do mentors seek from you? Does the kind of support they seek change as relationships develop

6) <u>About the young people</u>
   a) Who are the young people? Can you describe a Kids Company mentee to me?
   b) How do young people sign up to have a mentor?
   c) Why do you think young people want to have a mentor?

7) <u>About the relationship</u>
   a) How do you match a mentor with a young person?
   b) Where does the young person's family typically fit into the mentoring process?

8) <u>Closing questions</u>
   - I have asked you a lot of questions about you, the organisation and the mentoring programme. Is there anything that we haven't covered that you think is important to mention?

Appendix 2: Mentee Interview Topic Guide

Overview of the Relationship:

1) Close your eyes and think about Kids Company. What images come into your head?
2) What do you think a mentor is?
3) What do you think a mentee is?
4) Can you remember the first time you met your mentor? What were your thoughts and feelings at the time?

Mentoring Practices

5) What is your favourite thing about having a mentor?
6) What is your least favourite thing about having a mentor?
7) Have you got a friend who you think needs a mentor? Why do you think they need one?
8) Have you got a friend who you think does not need a mentor? Why don't they need one?
9) Do you feel like your mentor understands you? When did you first feel like this?
10) Has having a mentor ever caused any tension with family members?
11) Has having a mentor ever caused any tension with your Key Worker or other Kids Company staff?

Relationship with Self and Others

12) Drawing exercise – graph of concentric circles:
   - where would you put your mentor in relation to you?
   - where would you put any other significant adults in your life?

Appendix 3: Mentor Interview Topic Guide 1

Overview of the self and mentoring

1) Close your eyes and think about Kids Company. What images come into your head?
2) Can you tell me about your journey that brought you to Kids Company and your decision to be a mentor?
3) Have you ever volunteered for anything similar? How does it compare to Kids Company?

Mentoring Practices

4) If I had to be a mentor for a day, without any training, what do I need to know to do it properly?
5) Can you remember the first time you met your mentee? What were your thoughts and feelings at the time?
6) What is your favourite thing about mentoring so far?
7) What is your least favourite thing about mentoring so far?

Thinking about the future and closing question

8) We're going to talk again in six months time. What are your hopes and concerns for your relationship until then?
9) Is there anything that we haven't covered in this interview that you would like to talk about?

Appendix 4: Mentor Interview Topic Guide 2

Overview of Relationship:

1) Can you describe how your mentoring relationship developed and changed between when we last spoke and Kids Company's closing?
   Prompts:
   - Reminders from last interview
   - Types of activities
   - Frequency
   - What was that like/how did that feel etc.

2) Can you tell me about your experience of Kids Company closing?
3) How did you come to the decision of whether to continue with your mentoring relationship?
4) (If relationship has continued) Do you feel that there are differences in your relationship since the closure of Kids Company?
5) What are your hopes for your relationship as it continues?
6) Do you think you will end the mentoring relationship when you get to the 1-year mark? Have you thought about how you will go about ending the relationship?
7) Have you spoken to your mentee about the ending process?

Mentoring Practices:

1) **Defining the role:** I don't know if you remember a Channel 4 programme a few years ago called Faking It? [if yes: then you can proceed to ask the next bit; if no: it was a programme where someone was given a month to work on 'passing' as somebody they were not, so a DJ, fashion designer, graffiti artist) Well, I have a 'Faking it' question for you! If someone were to replace you in your mentoring role what would they need to know and do to fake it as a mentor?
   - Does the role feel ambiguous for you?

2) **Training examples:** When you did your training to become a mentor you may have done some exercises where you were given a mentoring scenario and you had to think about how you would respond. I wanted to read you some of the scenarios that I was given when I did the training. It would be great if you could tell me how you think you might respond to these situations if it were your mentee.
   - **Boundaries:** Your mentee tells you: "I want to go to university, but my mum doesn't want me to go and won't sign the student loan form"
   - **Confidentiality:** Your mentee tells you: "I have a secret attic room where I go to hide from everyone"
   - **Conflicts:** You have been to McDonalds with your mentee where you bought him/her a Happy Meal. You have just left, and as you pass a toy shop on your way home, your mentee insists on going inside. You follow your mentee, and he/she picks up a toy and insists you buy it for him/her. It costs £20. What do you do?
   - Do you feel like your responses are different to how you would have responded in the training?

3) **Reflexivity:** Did you visit the life lounge at Kids Company? Can you tell me a bit about it?
   - What kind of space was it?
   - What was it like going there?

4) Did you talk to others about your mentoring experiences outside of Life Lounge?
5) (If the relationship has continued)Where do you go for support now that Kids Company has closed?
6) Did you complete the Meeting Notes after each meeting? Can you tell me a bit about how you went about completing them?
   - when
   - where
   - how long did it take you?

7) How would you describe the information you included in the notes? If your notes were a book or a film or a song what genre would they be and who would be their author? (prompts: short and to the point, more extensive, did you talk about yourself and your feelings, was it quite a practical report?) Can you tell me a bit more about that?
8) **Key Workers:** How did you understand your role as a mentor fitting in with the rest of Kids Company's work?
9) **Support/Boundaries:** was there ever a time where you struggled to support your mentee or felt that it was not your role to support them?

Relationship with self and mentee:

1) How would you say your mentoring relationship differed to other relationships in your life?
2) Have you ever been mentored yourself?
   - What was that like?

3) Do you feel like you achieved what you sought out to do when you first decided to become a mentor?
   - Remind them of their initial reasons for mentoring

4) Your mentee has a number of relationships in their life, and the mentoring relationship is/was one of them. Has there ever been a time when the mentoring relationship has clashed with another one of their relationships?
5) Would you say that your mentee has changed over the course of your mentoring relationship?
6) Do you feel like you have changed?
7) What do you think you will take away from this relationship?

Appendix 5: Thematic Analysis of Practitioner Interviews and Participant Observation

Following Attride-Sterling's (2001) model of thematic analysis:

Global Themes	The Mentoring Model			Expected Mentor Approach			Mentee Characteristics		
Organising Themes	Working Models	Holding and Containing	Parents	The Kids Co Ethos	Counselling Skills	Mentor Qualities	Theoretical Mentees	Extreme Examples	Inclusion in Childhood
Basic Themes	Mentoring improving mentee self-esteem. Mentoring improving mentee confidence. Mentoring creating/ achieving aspirations.	Staff support of mentors/ staff involvement in relationship. Importance of supervision.	Parents – keep separate. Parents – monitor and report.	Mentoring embedded in the organisation. Mentors must take of values. Sticking to boundaries/ staying within role.	Mentors non-judgemental. Mentors non-shaming. Specific interactions (no advice, no action).	Between professional and personal. "Typical" mentor. Similar to mentee/ different to mentee.	Negative attachment. Negative brain development. Bad behaviour not mentee's fault – empathy.	Role – play. Safeguarding. Concerns of mentee violence. Concerns of mentee drug use.	Mentee lack Mentee small worldview Isolated communities.

Appendix 6: Example of Narrative Analysis

Pete and Jamie Narrative Analysis

Labov Analysis	
Abstract – what is the story about?	**Pete's Words**
Hanging out, chatting, catching up and finding out about Jamie's week. Routines of playing tennis or going to a café.	We went to Queen's Park to play tennis. He enjoys playing tennis so seemed to have a good time. He seems to have a better memory of the games he wins rather than the ones I do. (Meeting Record 8)
	Then he suggested we had a drink and talk at the café before heading home. As usual we also got an ice cream. We didn't really talk about anything in particular, I did ask him if he like me beard. In great kid style he said no. He also said that he won't even have one, which is good to know! (Meeting Record 9)
	I picked Jamie up from home and we went to the park. It is his first day back at school tomorrow so we talked about that a bit. (Meeting Record 11)
	He seemed in good spirits and we had quite an interesting conversation about girls.(Meeting Record 15)
	We generally have a lot of conversations about what he gets up to and general childhood stories. I normally then tell him some stories from my childhood. (Meeting Record 18)
	I had bought him a travel games set for Christmas as he often wants to go to the café but this would give us something else to do there. So we went to a café nearby. He got his usual food and drink and we decided to play a game. (Meeting Record 23)
	We went to the café again and did the same thing. He is very keen for routines so as soon as we do something he likes to do the same thing again. (Meeting Record 24)
	We went to the park to play tennis, which he was very excited about. As it is the summer

	holidays it was busy so we had to wait a little while for a court. So we sat on the grass and had a chat about the usual stuff, school, tennis etc. (Meeting Record 40)
Interpreting, trying to work out Jamie	On the whole he came across as a fairly normal 9 year old boy. (Meeting Record 1)
	He had kept bring up getting an ice cream after we saw an ice cream van by the entrance. We couldn't find any in the gardens so he wanted to go. I asked him about the tree top walk and that we could go before leaving but he didn't want to. So we got an ice cream after we left and ate it on the bench near the station. He said he enjoyed the day so hopefully he did. (Meeting Record 10)
	He seemed a bit agitated by this as if he didn't want to be left on his own. (Meeting Record 13)
	He seemed a little subdued but generally ok. During the film he kept looking down and playing with his legs at times, then he seemed ok so I didn't say anything (Meeting Record 30)
Sharing more "difficult" information. (For what purpose?)	He was as chatty as the last meeting. We spoke about a few things, he returned to the theme of his dreams, they seem quite violent with him stabbing the monsters or bad men. (Meeting Record 2)
	After I picked Jamie up we went to get the bus to Queen's Park he asked me if I ever had been bullied. I asked him if he was being bullied and he said no but that he had been in the past (a few years ago). (Meeting Record 4)
	He also told me that he knew santa doesn't exist, it came out of nowhere so I didn't know what to say. He then said he his mum had told him so I just said oh ok and left it at that. (Meeting Record 20)
	He also asked if I had a religion. I said I didn't and he said he didn't either (his family aren't religious either). I asked why he brought it up and he just said he was curious. (Meeting Record 38)

	On the way back he asked me if I had ever seen anyone die. I said I hadn't but I asked him why. He said a few weeks ago he had seen a cyclist on the floor (with lots of blood) when he was out with his dad. (Meeting Record 44)
Support through house move	The family hadn't moved yet but they had secured the place they were going to. So we went for a walk to see the new house and explore the surrounding area. We mainly discussed the upcoming house move. (Meeting Record 31)
	He doesn't deal with change particularly well and seemed a little stressed. (Meeting Record 32)
Getting used to the ending	He was also being a bit naughty which he hadn't been before with me. (Meeting Record 35)
	He was playing up a little bit as we walked home though. (Meeting Record 36)
Orientation – who, when, where?	
Who: Jamie	
Upset about parents' divorce. **Experiencing bad dreams.** **Not comfortable in crowds.** Jamie's experience: When: unclear, recently? Where: in the home. Pete's telling: When: after playing Frisbee. Where: in the park	It is obvious that his parent's divorce still affects him and he gets a bit sad when he brings it up in conversation. He spoke a bit about dreams he has been having. He seemed a bit concerned about one dream he keeps having about a monster that he always fights, he said he had told his parents about it. He clearly has a vivid imagination, at one point talking about how he could see the grass and sky on fire. He started to panic himself but it wasn't clear if he was just acting but I got him out of it by getting him to do some cartwheels. He also suggested he was less comfortable around people and crowds. On the whole he came across as a fairly normal 9 year old boy. (Meeting Record 1)
Bad dreams	We spoke about a few things, he returned to the theme of his dreams, they seem quite

	violent with him stabbing the monsters or bad men. (Meeting Record 2)
Jamie's experience: When: regularly? Where: at home. Pete's telling: When: at the beginning of second meeting. Where: on the way to a cafe	
Views the world as scary/dangerous Jamie: When: school trip to BM. Where: on the tube. Pete: When: after playing tennis. During a meeting where P noted that J is feeling more comfortable around him. Where: in the park	He had been on a school trip to the British Museum which he like but he mentioned that on the way back there was a strange looking man in the entrance to the tube. This man said something as they were going down and for some reason Jamie thought he has a gun and was going to shot him in the back so he ran down the stairs. I said that occasionally you come across strange people but they are probably just talking to themselves and won't hurt anyone. (Meeting Record 3)
Experience of bullying. Feels the need to defend himself? Jamie: When: in the past. Where: unclear, at school? Pete: When: outing to queen's park. Where: on the bus	After I picked Jamie up we went to get the bus to Queen's Park he asked me if I ever had been bullied. I asked him if he was being bullied and he said no but that he had been in the past (a few years ago). We then spoke about it and it sounded like isolated incidents rather than sustained bullying and he said he had told his mum and the school and the other kid got told off for it. He mentioned his temper and said that if anyone tried to hit him now he would hit them very hard back. We spoke about violence not being the best solution but I didn't push it too hard. (Meeting Record 4)
Constantly checking feet Jamie: When: throughout the visits.	He has started doing this thing of constantly checking the soles of his feet like there is something there. There isn't and he knows it but he couldn't stop checking. He said how it is in his mind, so we had a chat about how

Where: the park/trip to Wimbledon/Regent's Park	sometimes it feels like there are things on you when there isn't. (Meeting Record 4)
Pete:	The foot thing still seemed to bother him but I didn't mention it unless he brought it up as I didn't want to make an issue of it. (Meeting Record 5)
When/where: observing it at the time	
	He is still checking his feet. (Meeting Record 6)
Doesn't like change, unwilling to try new things	When we were picking a café he seems unwilling to try new things. He wanted to go to the café that he went to with his dad and get the same sandwich. However, they had run out of the sandwich which he wasn't very happy about. I convinced him to go to another café and he managed to find another sandwich he was willing to try. (Meeting Record 12)
Jamie:	
When: lunch time - food.	
Where: cafe that he has been to with dad.	
Pete:	
When/Where: in the cafe	
When:	Every weekend, then reduced to fortnightly and then monthly towards the end.
Where:	Mainly to the park to play tennis or to a local café. Some visits to the cinema or bowling. Occasional visits that seem more like "experiences" e.g. Kew Gardens, Wimbledon, the V&A, the Science Museum, the O2 to watch Andy Murray
Outside/public spaces	
Complicating Action – then what happened?	
Getting Closer/ Establishing a routine/Reduction of bad dreams, "foot thing" etc	Jamie seemed good and is beginning to seem more comfortable around me. We went to the café in the park as he was hungry and got some food and drinks. We then played a bit of Frisbee and then football. (Meeting Record 3)
	He appears to have stopped the thing where he thinks there is something on the sole of his foot, which is good. (Meeting Record 11)
	It was very cold out and Jamie didn't want to go too far from home so we went to a café nearby.

	He is opening up to me more now about his dad and has even started to mention his dad's girlfriend, which he hadn't previously. He had spent half term with his dad so we spoke a bit about that. (Meeting Record 18)
	We went to the café again and did the same thing. He is very keen for routines so as soon as we do something he likes to do the same thing again. I added a few games of dominoes at the end (which I hadn't played before). We then tried to stack all the dominoes up in a line to knock them down. However, we couldn't get them all lined up before they fell. He started to get a bit frustrated with this (but not too badly) so we gave up. We spoke about school a bit and music as he has been listening to his ipod on the way to school. He likes quite old music, stuff his dad plays for him. (Meeting Record 24)
	We went to the café and played draughts. I have been teaching him the tactics and how to play and he has become determined to beat me. So that took up most of our meeting. We had our normal conversations and he seems a happy kid these days, which is good. He hasn't mentioned any strange/violent dreams or anything like that for quite a long time now! (Meeting Record 25)
	He has also been watching Dr Who and as I have seen some of it as well, we spoke about that. I asked if some of the scary episodes ever gave him nightmares and he said that some of them had but none that bad. (Meeting Record 27)
Support through process of moving house	On the walk back he was talking about the house they wanted to get. How they thought they had got it, then they didn't and that they have put in another offer that they are waiting to hear about. He was talking about it very passionately, about how they have to get the house and that he would make it happen. I tried to subtly suggest that some things are out of our control and something even when this

	don't go our way that means that better things can happen later but I tried not to be too negative and talked about 'wait and see'. (Meeting Record 21)
	The family hadn't moved yet but they had secured the place they were going to. So we went for a walk to see the new house and explore the surrounding area. We mainly discussed the upcoming house move. He was looking forward to it. He is going to get his own room so he won't have to share with his brother but he said he didn't mind sharing anyway. We also had a joint moan about the hassle of packing up all of your stuff (I have moved place of times over the last few years so I can sympathise). We stopped off at the shop to get some drinks and snacks. (Meeting Record 31)
	I hadn't seen Jamie in a few weeks because if my holiday. He had moved house since I had seen him last so we explored the area trying to find somewhere new to go. He doesn't deal with change particularly well and seemed a little stressed. We went into one café but he didn't like it, the woman there was too desperate for us to stay apparently (to be fair it was a bit of a strange place). We found another place but they told us they would be shutting in 20 mins. I said that was fine. However, this led to Jamie constantly watch checking and saying how long we had and it seemed to put him on edge. A tried to calm him down, pointing out that they would let us know when we had to go and that there were other people in the café, however it didn't help that they were cleaning up around our feet! In the end I could see it was making him to anxious so we left. I asked if he wanted to go somewhere else but he just wanted to go straight home, which wasn't surprising as once we leave somewhere he never wants to go somewhere else. (Meeting Record 32)
Ending Process	When we got back I spoke to his mum to tell her that I was planning on ending the relationship. She didn't take it too well but she

	said she would speak to Jamie and potentially Kids Company about it. (Meeting Record 34)
	We spoke about the ending and he was clearly upset about it. In a typical boy way he didn't really want to talk about, in an 'it is what it is' kind of way. So I suggested we talk about making a list of things we want to before the ending. It was mainly me suggesting things but he did mention one or two things. He was also being a bit naughty which he hadn't been before with me. Acting up a bit, pretending to steal from the café and knocking himself against cars on the way back. I had to raise my voice to get him to stop, which brought a comment of 'I sound like one of his teachers'. I put it down him being upset to the idea of our sessions ending and hoped he would be better once he was more used to the idea. (Meeting Record 35)
	We went to the play table tennis. He seemed much happier than the last time I saw him. We then when into the café by Queen's park station and he got his usual food and drink. He was playing up a little bit as we walked home though. (Meeting Record 36)
	On the whole he seemed happy and there were none of the (fairly mild) behaviour problems of the last few meetings. (Meeting Record 38)
	I took Jamie to the O2 to watch the ATP finals. We were lucky that the match I got tickets for turned out to be for Andy Murray so Jamie was very excited. (Meeting Record 43)
	I had got him a card that I had written a message in for him. He didn't really say much but when we got to his door his mum encouraged him to say more as a goodbye. His mum asked for my address so he could write for milestones in his life etc. I said I wasn't allowed to (I assume this is right?) but that he could sent them to Kids Company and I could collect them that way (is that ok?).

	After I left I got part way down the road when I heard footsteps behind me and he had come running down the road and gave me a hug and said thanks and that he would miss me. I said I would miss him too. It was all very emotional! (Meeting Record 44)
Evaluation – so what?	
"Obvious" that Jamie is upset about parents' divorce	It is obvious that his parent's divorce still affects him and he gets a bit sad when he brings it up in conversation. (Meeting Record 1)
Reporting but playing down negatives about Jamie	We played tennis but he wasn't playing very well and got a bit frustrated. Nothing too bad though. (Meeting Record 11)
	On the way to the park he told me that he had been to a sleepover at his friend's place. He said they made a few prank calls. I said they should be careful as they don't want upset anyone. I asked him a bit more about what they did and it sounded fairly harmless. (Meeting Record 14)
	However, we couldn't get them all lined up before they fell. He started to get a bit frustrated with this (but not too badly) so we gave up.(Meeting Record 24)
Interpreting whether or not Jamie had a good time	He said he enjoyed the film and we had a good chat on the way back. (Meeting Record 30)
"Successful" mentoring	I convinced him to go to another café and he managed to find another sandwich he was willing to try. (Meeting Record 12)
	They have this kid craft workshop on some Sundays that I thought he might enjoy but when we got there he said he didn't want to do it (seemingly like most of my ideas!). So we went around the museum instead, which I was worried about because I thought he would get bored. (Meeting Record 16) [J ended up having a good time]
	He seemed to enjoy some of the exhibits, especially the ones that fired stuff into the air, I even managed to get him to build a electrical circuit (that recreates a hand dryer). There are

	also some interactive bits in the energy section so he played one of the games there. He managed to last about 1.5 hours in the museum before he wanted to go, which is about what I expected. (Meeting Record 29)
Pete feels that mentoring can relieve stress at home?	When I turned up his mum told me he had an accident and that he might not be able to play. He was playing on the bed and had fallen off. He had bruise under his arm but he said he would be alright to play. His mum seemed quite stressed though so it was probably good timing that I was coming to pick him up. (Meeting Record 33)
Result – what finally happened?	
Pete notices that Jamie has less bad dreams	We had our normal conversations and he seems a happy kid these days, which is good. He hasn't mentioned any strange/violent dreams or anything like that for quite a long time now! (Meeting Record 25)
	I asked him whether this upset him but he didn't seem too fazed by it. I then asked if he was still having nightmares (he hadn't mentioned any in a long time) but he said he wasn't. He did say he dreamt that he had burnt down the school, and that it was a great dream! (Meeting Record 44)
Pete feels that Jamie may be interacting better with other children now	The reason he wanted to play football as he has been playing at school. I took this as a good sign as he is interacting more with other kids. In the past he didn't like team sports and preferred to be on his own. (Meeting Record 38)
Mentoring relationship facilitates new experiences	So we went into the Arena and Jamie was clearly enjoying the experience taking pictures etc. He also said this was the first time he has been about to see a live tennis match. Murray let us down a bit with his performance but Jamie didn't seem to mind, he said he was just happy to see Murray play. (Meeting Record 43)
Pete seems to be suggesting that Jamie seems happier, and is possibly more resilient/sees the world as a less scary place, at the end of the relationship.	On the way back he asked me if I had ever seen anyone die. I said I hadn't but I asked him why. He said a few weeks ago he had seen a cyclist on the floor (with lots of blood) when he was out with his dad. I asked him whether this upset

	him but he didn't seem too fazed by it. I then asked if he was still having nightmares (he hadn't mentioned any in a long time) but he said he wasn't. He did say he dreamt that he had burnt down the school, and that it was a great dream! (Meeting Record 44)
Coda – sign off/returning to the present	
Very emotional!	After I left I got part way down the road when I heard footsteps behind me and he had come running down the road and gave me a hug and said thanks and that he would miss me. I said I would miss him too. It was all very emotional! (Meeting Record 44)
Parker Analysis	
Agency – Who are the protagonists?	
Pete – looking at the occasions when the mentoring pair ventures further than the usual park/café, it seems that Pete becomes progressively more confident as a mentor/more relaxed in the relationship. **Early in the relationship a trip to Wimbledon almost goes wrong but Pete shows inventiveness by finding a tennis court and salvaging the meeting, yet he expresses a lot of relief that the meeting works out and doesn't really acknowledge his own contribution.**	I picked Jamie up from home and we got the train to Wimbledon. Unfortunately it didn't go to plan, the queue was much longer than it has been in the past (must be the Murray effect) and as there were a lot of retirements that day we couldn't get in. So we sat in the queue for 1-1.5 hours only to be told we wouldn't get in. Whilst we were waiting we sat on the grass and got an ice cream (a recurring theme from our meetings). We were following some of the tennis on my phone. We had started to guess we might not get in but when we found out for definite Jamie was understandably upset and a little annoyed (but not at me luckily). As we were in Wimbledon park though and I saw they had tennis courts and luckily you could hire racquets there as well so we played tennis instead. He dealt with the whole situation well after the initial disappointment, partly helped by him beating me at the tennis. On the way back it was really sweet of him to say that he thinks he joined doing what we did more than if we had gotten in. He suggested that we could go back to the park, however Wimbledon is a long way to go for a park! (Meeting Record 5)

Pete is initially nervous that Jamie is going to get bored, but when he realises that Jamie is having fun, Pete seems to gain confidence and even suggests going to a second museum.	I picked Jamie up from home and we went to the V&A museum. They have this kid craft workshop on some Sundays that I thought he might enjoy but when we got there he said he didn't want to do it (seemingly like most of my ideas!). So we went around the museum instead, which I was worried about because I thought he would get bored. We went past the sculptures first and he thought he saw one that was Poseidon, turns out it was Neptune but I explain why that was basically the same thing, Roman instead of Greek. He knows about the Greek gods from Percy Jackson films/books that he loves We then wandered into the jewelry section and there was a computer in there that showed all the exhibits. He had great fun playing on it, looking up stuff. Of course he looked for weapons and was excited to see the ceremonial swords. I then showed then to him for real in the exhibition. On the way out I thought I'd show him the escalator through the 'centre of the earth' in the Natural History museum which he seemed to enjoy. He then wanted to see the dinosaurs, so we went to see them. (Meeting Record 16)
Pete is now confident enough to take Jamie to a museum that he originally said he didn't want to go to, and has expectations of how Jamie will respond.	I picked him up on Sunday morning and we went to the science museum. He has told me in the past that he doesn't like science but I was confident he would like playing the games in the Launch Pad section of the museum. We walked around for a bit, past all the space stuff but I think I enjoyed looking at the rockets and moon landing craft more than he did. So we went to the launch pad bit. He seemed to enjoy some of the exhibits, especially the ones that fired stuff into the air, I even managed to get him to build a electrical circuit (that recreates a hand dryer). There are also some interactive bits in the energy section so he played one of the games there. He managed to

	last about 1.5 hours in the museum before he wanted to go, which is about what I expected. (Meeting Record 29)
Towards the end of the relationship Pete seems very confident in understanding and reassuring Jamie.	He did his usual 'worry that we were going into the right screen' that he does every time but he is easily reassured. The film was also very long and he was getting a bit fidgety during in but nothing too bad (Meeting Record 39)
Jamie – We only see Jamie through Pete eyes. **This involves Pete doing quite a bit of guesswork**	He looked like he was enjoying the football and Frisbee but it tired him out so we spent about half of the time sitting down talking. (Meeting Record 1)
	He seemed quite quiet at the start of the meeting. Normally he happily talks when we are going places but he was giving me just one sentence responses to questions. He was happier once we were on the boat and seemed to enjoy riding it around. (Meeting Record 9)
Assumptions	It is obvious that his parent's divorce still affects him and he gets a bit sad when he brings it up in conversation.(Meeting Record 1)
"Fairly normal" boy	On the whole he came across as a fairly normal 9 year old boy. (Meeting Record 1)
Interpreting how Jamie feels	We went into the cinema and just before the film was about to start I said I was just going to go to the toilet. He seemed a bit agitated by this as if he didn't want to be left on his own. I said he could come with me if he wanted but that I would just be a minute. He seemed to happy himself and he didn't come with me. (Meeting Record 13)
	He was also being a bit naughty which he hadn't been before with me. Acting up a bit, pretending to steal from the café and knocking himself against cars on the way back. I had to raise my voice to get him to stop, which brought a comment of 'I sound like one of his teachers'. I put it down him being upset to the idea of our sessions ending and hoped he would be better once he was more used to the idea. (Meeting Record 35)

"Tendency to worry"	We also spoke about his tennis. He won a competition at school, so he was happy about that. His tendency to worry came up at the end of the session. He told me that it was expected to snow over the next few days and that then made him realise if it did his tennis session would he cancelled. He was stressing about that but I told him that it does help to worry about things you can't control and that the weather forecasts aren't always right (which it wasn't). That seemed to calm him down a bit. (Meeting Record 19)
Trying to work out Jamie's relationship with his dad	He talks about his dad quite a lot, more so than he did at the start and it sounds like he sees him more regularly. I would say he's a daddies boy so that can only be a good thing. (Meeting Record 23)
Jamie seems to want Pete to buy him presents	We then went to a book shop on the way back as we had some time. He found a new series of books he said he might like about a kid spy. He was initially talking about just looking and getting his mum to get the book later. Then as I said it was time to leave it became clear he wanted to get the book straight away. I said that he should ask his mum about the book and he seemed ok with that. (Meeting Record 7)
	After the tennis he wanted to go to the café by the station again, so we did. He also wanted to go into the bookshop but luckily for me they didn't had the book he wanted as I felt he would have asked me to buy it and I would have to decide if I would get it for him or not. (Meeting Record 37)
Context – social and cultural backgrounds	
Jamie's mum is presented as fairly disorganised, stressed out	Also his mum called about half way through to say she might not be home in time and asked if I could take him to Kensal Rise. I said I would call back when we were on our way back to check where she was. We ended up running late, so she was home by the time we got back. (Meeting Record 6)
	His mum told me to pick Jamie up from the Tree House. However, she had made a mistake

	and the club wasn't running. (Meeting Record 14)
	His mum seemed quite stressed though so it was probably good timing that I was coming to pick him up. (Meeting Record 33)
Pete notes that she tells Jamie that Father Christmas doesn't exist	He also told me that he knew santa doesn't exist, it came out of nowhere so I didn't know what to say. He then said he his mum had told him so I just said oh ok and left it at that. (Meeting Record 20)
Pete seems to present Jamie's dad in a more positive light	His dad had taken him shopping on Saturday so he had some new clothes and shoes, as always it sounds like he enjoyed spending time with him. (Meeting Record 29)
	We spoke a bit about his dad's job, editing films, which sounded interesting. (Meeting Record 28)
	His dad took Jamie and his brother to the 02 for lunch beforehand and I then took Jamie to the tennis while his dad took John to the cinema. It was nice for me to meet his dad as he has spent so much time talking about him. (Meeting Record 43)
Format – how is the story told	
Genre – comedy/humour	He is a chatty boy so there were no problems with talking, there was one amusing conversation where he detailed how much he thought things should cost. The highlight for me being that a house should cost £60. (Meeting Record 1)
	There were two girls from his school playing nearby and it sounded like they were saying Jamie's name to each other. Jamie noticed this and it made him distracted and a little anxious as he didn't recognise them. This led to a few conversations about girls along the lines of he doesn't understand them. I told him that I still don't understand them either which made him smile. (Meeting Record 3)
	We didn't really talk about anything in particular, I did ask him if he like me beard. In great kid style he said no. He also said that he

	won't even have one, which is good to know! (Meeting Record 9)
	He seemed in good spirits and we had quite an interesting conversation about girls. He suggested that he is getting a lot of female attention and he says a lot of the girls fancy him. Apparently they are always pestering him and he has to escape (although I don't think he dislikes the attention as much as he was making out). They are at that age where there are playground 'marriages' going on but he says he doesn't get involved. Apparently one girl was brave enough to tell him outright that she liked him only for him to tell her he didn't like her (poor girl!). I asked him if there were any girls he liked and he said there was one but he wasn't sure if she liked him (isn't it always the way!). (Meeting Record 15)
	We had a conversation about running for trains and he did a great impression of someone who runs on to the train as the doors are closing, forces their way through and then once that are clear carry on as if nothing has happened (you had to be there!). (Meeting Record 30)
	He seemed more talkative today and we spoke a bit about the upcoming Easter holiday and his trip away. He seemed to enjoy the tennis and he played an April fool on me of pretending to be injured. (Meeting Record 33)
	On the way back he told me that he wanted to stay up to watch the world cup and he did a funny impression of how the conversation was going to go with his mum, with her initially refusing then slowly giving more and more ground. (Meeting Record 39)
Brotherly	On the way to the park he told me that he had been to a sleepover at his friend's place. He said they made a few prank calls. I said they should be careful as they don't want upset anyone. I asked him a bit more about what they did and it sounded fairly harmless. (Meeting Record 14)
	He also mentioned that eyesight isn't perfect but when I mentioned glasses he said he just

	wouldn't wear them even if he needed them. I empathised as I have glasses (but I mainly wear contacts) but I hated it when I had to wear glasses as a kid. I was stubborn and didn't wear them as much as possible but I told him I was been silly as I could barely see. He seemed to understand the point I was trying to make. (Meeting Record 27)
Genre: The combination of humour and a brotherly approach reminds me of the film "About a Boy" or the BBC3 comedy "Uncle". Both of these comedy-dramas involve a man befriending a boy how who is struggling in some way/views the world as a scary or dangerous place. Then through forming a relationship that is based on humour/banter/making fun of each other and the man offering advice that doesn't overtly feel like a "lesson", the boy realises that the world isn't as cold as he initially felt it was. However – in these stories, the man is immature/single/scared of responsibility. And while the boy goes on a journey of finding a more positive worldview, the man goes on a journey of realising that growing up/taking on responsibility can be fulfilling. We don't know if Pete has been on this journey, partly because he doesn't seem to use the Meeting Records to reflect on himself or the relationship.	

Appendix 7: Ethical Approval

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