

# momentum



## The Momentum Pilot Explained

### Introduction

This document introduces the Momentum pilot project. Momentum is a development programme for local infrastructure networks working with children and young people. It was developed by the National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) with the support of VCS Engage. Initially, Momentum was called Fit4Purpose. Momentum is unique in that it presents a holistic approach to building quality local networks.

NCVYS wishes to pilot Momentum in three locations across England. In each location or *pilot site* there will be a learning mentor (Momentum mentor) who will provide support to three local infrastructure networks going through the Momentum pilot. It will be the role of the mentors to support networks in identifying, meeting and reflecting on their learning needs.

### Background information

#### VCS Engage

VCS Engage is a national programme funded by the DfES voluntary sector infrastructure and capacity building fund, a £3m investment covering the children, young people and families sector. The purpose of the fund is to develop the voluntary and community sector's (VCS) capacity to engage better in the delivery of services and especially with children's trusts. It is led by the National Children's Bureau (NCB), which is the body accountable to the DfES for the successful delivery. VCS Engage brings together a whole range of different activities under one umbrella. Many different organisations take part in the development and delivery of these activities. A website has been developed to disseminate information on the whole programme ([www.vcsengage.org.uk](http://www.vcsengage.org.uk)).

NCVYS is responsible for the delivery of activities under the Youth Programme strand of the programme.

## NCVYS

The National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (NCVYS) is the independent voice of the voluntary youth sector in England. NCVYS supports voluntary and community organisations that work with young people through a diverse network of over 160 members. We inform and influence public policy; support our members to improve the quality of their work; and raise the profile of the voluntary and community sector's work with young people.

Our members are voluntary organisations and networks working with young people at a local, regional or national level. With the help of 500,000 paid and voluntary workers, they provide direct support to approximately five million young people.

NCVYS aims to ensure the development and recognition of a vibrant, sound and diverse voluntary and community sector which involves, empowers and meets the needs of all young people.

## The Momentum Pilot

In many local authority areas there are networks of VCS youth organisations. These networks, often known as Councils for Voluntary Youth Services (CVYSSs) or Voluntary Youth Organisation Networks (VYONs), have experience of working with local authorities in creating the right local conditions for the sector to work effectively with young people.

Local networks now face significant challenges posed by the reorganisation of services to children and young people and the emergence of children's trusts. Where they are well resourced and positioned, networks play a central role in making sure that VCS organisations working with young people are involved in the development of children's trusts. This is crucial in ensuring that the provision for young people increases rather than decreases.

Momentum is focusing on helping networks to grow and develop, becoming more effective in supporting organisations and engaging with children's trusts. It is a development programme that will not only work with paid staff but also with trustees and active members of local networks. It will use a variety of approaches, such as consultancy, workshops and action learning sets. The process should help build the capacity of local networks to not only respond to new developments locally but also help lead on them.

## **The Momentum approach**

As a result of initiatives such as ChangeUp, VCS Engage and Every Child Matters there are many opportunities to participate in a variety of training events and programmes but how does a hard pressed local network know what would be best options? How does a network ensure that any learning is used to develop the network as a whole rather than individuals?

## **The Mentor**

At the heart of the momentum approach is the role of the mentor. The mentor engages with a local network; facilitating the network in adopting a more strategic approach to learning and development.

The learning mentor will work with the local network to assess the learning needs and match it with learning opportunities, thus creating a bespoke learning programme for each local network. These learning opportunities will be presented as menu options.

## The Momentum Menu

The Momentum Menu is a menu of learning opportunities that each local network will be able to access with the help of the mentor. It has three dimensions or three menu options: the Core Menu made available nationally by NCVYS, the National Menu provided by a range of national providers of learning opportunities, and the Local Menu provided by a range of local providers of learning opportunities.

# Momentum Menu



## The Core Menu

The Core Menu consists of the learning opportunities provided directly by the NCVYS. It is divided into five priority themes which emerged as the most relevant from the learning needs analysis undertaken for the programme:

- Workforce development
- Commissioning
- Policy and influence
- Networking
- Diversity

The learning opportunities will be made available in different formats and therefore can be accessed in a manner that suits the circumstances and the learning styles of the participants, using:

- Web based learning
- Workshops
- Peer support groups
- Coaching

## The National Menu

This will consist of relevant learning opportunities offered through national programmes provided by a range of national agencies/organisations such as NAVCA, the Performance Hub, and others. As part of the piloting process, NCVYS will negotiate with national providers that their training and learning opportunities can become part of the Momentum Menu.

## The Local Menu

The Local Menu will consist of learning opportunities provided locally and regional, whether these are courses, workshops or conferences. These opportunities are usually much better in helping networks develop local intelligence and are crucial in enabling networks to be effective in strategic planning.

## **The Momentum process**

- Between two and six people from each pilot network participate in the programme.
- These participants should be spread across staff, trustees, and active network members (as a minimum there should be one staff member and one trustee participating).
- All participants in each network will be expected to meet together with the mentor at the beginning of the pilot to explore the developmental needs of the network; the learning opportunities available; and identify for each individual participant the areas in which they would like to develop. Following that process, a shared learning agreement will be written up.
- The mentor will support the network in accessing learning opportunities, coordinating shared activities between the networks and giving specific support in helping to interpret and apply the learning within the network.
- All participants will be expected to meet at the end of the programme to evaluate their own learning as a network and the Momentum process.
- Each participant will be expected to access at least one learning opportunity during the pilot
- All participants will be expected to be actively involved in the ongoing evaluation of the pilot.

## **Piloting Momentum**

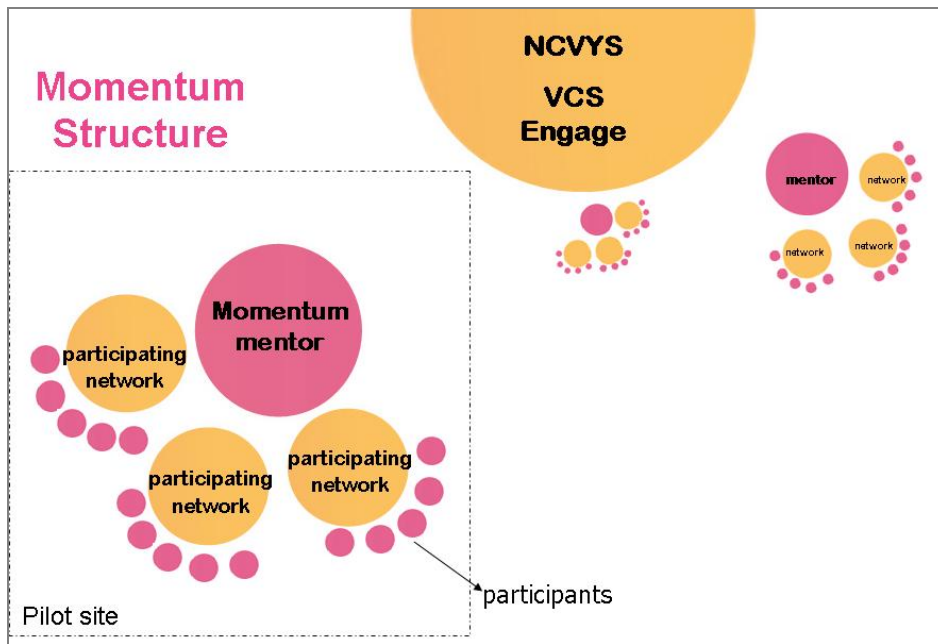
During the piloting of Momentum we are hoping to learn the following:

- how useful is this approach to supporting the development of local networks
- what is the best way in which a bespoke approach to learning can be facilitated nationally
- how can networks maximise and internalise learning so that its core processes and activities benefit.
- What are the implications for individuals taking part in a shared learning process
- What is the added value that a learning mentor contributes to the learning and development of a network/organisation

## **Pilot Structure**

For the purpose of the pilot we are hoping to work with nine local networks who support VCS organisations working with young people.

We will be engaging three mentors who in turn will work with three local networks each. These three local networks will form a cluster and therefore need to be in close enough proximity to have a workable relationship with the mentor and to participate in shared learning activities.



A viable pilot site is one where mentor and participating networks

- are in close enough proximity to work together
- have a willingness and ability to access shared learning opportunities
- cover a diverse range of local contexts i.e. urban, rural, coastal, county, unitary etc.

### Pilot Process

- Four mentors (one mentor role is being shared by two people) and 9 pilot networks have been recruited
- There will be pilot sites in three regions the East of England, North West and the West Midlands
- Mentor training days: will be held in the 2nd week in September 2007
- The pilot starts in October 2007 with the signing of a learning agreement
- There will be a mid-term training day for the mentors
- The pilot ends in February 2008 with an evaluation session
- The pilot will be accompanied with an external evaluation process

NCVYS hopes that the learning from the Momentum Pilot will enable the establishment of a wider and sustained programme that supports the development of strong local networks for VCS organisations working with young people. If you are interested in the pilot and would like to keep in touch with developments send an email to [vicky@ncvys.org.uk](mailto:vicky@ncvys.org.uk)