

11th Biennial
International Conference

Promoting Equality
Through *Family Support*

13 - 14
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UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre,
University of Galway



Social Benefits of Mentoring Relationships with Migrant Children and their Families

Òscar Prieto-Flores

Universitat
de Girona



IMAGINATION
A MANIFESTO

RUHA BENJAMIN

NORTON
SHORTS



“Scientific inquiry, it turns out, is situated as much in the realm of imagination as it is in the realm of reason. This led me to wonder: Why can we imagine growing heart cells from scratch in a lab, **but not growing empathy for other human beings** in our everyday lives, and even more so in our institutions? Even well-resourced schools where young people are encouraged to dream big fall short when it comes to cultivating moral imagination”
(Benjamin, 2024, p.40)

IONBHÁ

The Empathy Book for Ireland



“We need empathy in schools just as we need empathy in the world right now”
–CILLIAN MURPHY, Actor and Patron of the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre

Edited by CILLIAN MURPHY
PAT DOLAN, GILLIAN BROWNE & MARK BRENNAN

“**Empathy** (...) is also the mechanism for applied humanity enabling social support, kindness, awareness raising and the advocacy fight for human rights [and justice]. Utilising the platform our various crafts provide to us, through our work, we can act on behalf of others, meet their needs, enable positive change and present alternatives for a better world to a wider audience. **This is not just to the benefit of others, but is in all our interests** (Dolan and Brennan, 2023, p. 337)”





BUILDING WALLS VS SOLIDARITY

STIPENDI Perché per far ripartire l'economia bisogna aumentarli

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Un'Italia senza italiani

Dai ghetti di Campania e Puglia alle «banlieue alla francese» di Milano e Roma, dove l'integrazione è ormai impossibile tra degrado e criminalità. Al di là delle polemiche sulla «sostituzione etnica», vince la realtà. Ecco la mappa di un Paese in cui l'immigrazione disordinata o clandestina ha strappato il tessuto sociale.

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NUDGE, NUDGE

You'll soon be a Sir, Rod jokes to Becks

SEE PAGE 15



DR MICHAEL MOSLEY

This charming and gifted man changed lives

JAMES RAMPTON SEE PAGES 22&23



TORY AMBITION TO DEPORT 100,000 ILLEGAL MIGRANTS

By **Sam Lister** and **Steph Spyro**

RISHI Sunak has fired up the election by promising to slash legal migration in half with a Tory plan emerging to deport as many as 100,000 illegal immigrants.

Unveiling his manifesto, the Prime Minister shifted firmly on to the front foot by vowing deportation flights to Rwanda will take off within days if the Conservatives are returned to office.

Tory sources revealed the manifesto plans meant as many as 100,000 illegal migrants could be sent to Rwanda and a series of other countries considered for deportations in "an uncapped scheme". The PM

TURN TO PAGE 4





"We have already given up hope of going back to our country, but we have to hope that we will be able to rebuild our lives here,"

"We want to be able to adapt to the country and make our contribution."

A THEORY OF HUMAN NEED



LEN DOYAL AND
IAN GOUGH



“It is for this reason, that we prefer the distinction between **autonomy** as **freedom of agency**, which is compatible with relatively high levels of critical reflection, and the higher degrees of **critical autonomy** which are entailed by **democratic participation** in the political process at whatever level. For critical autonomy to be a real possibility, individuals must have the opportunity to express both *freedom of agency and political freedom* (cf. Doyal, 1990, pp. 1-13). Without both types of opportunity, they will again be objectively disabled, even though their levels of understanding (Doyal and Gough, 1991, p.68)”

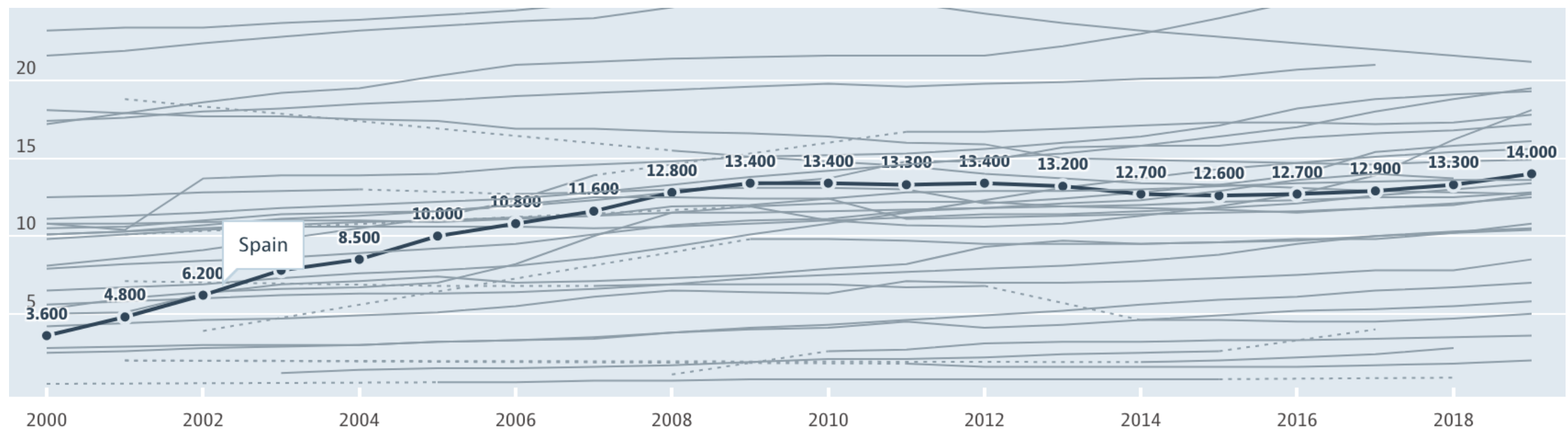
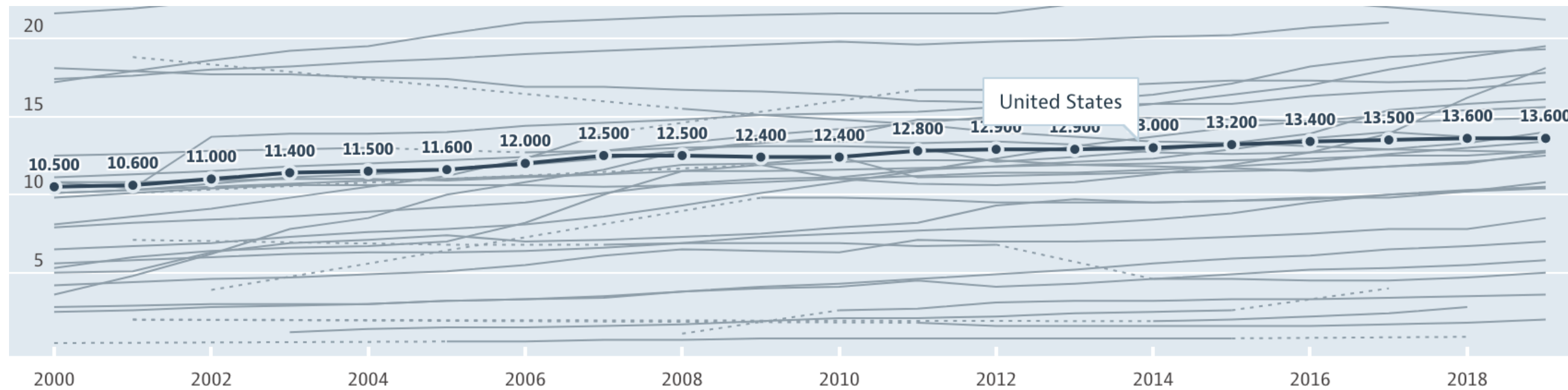


Foreign-Born Residents of Spain, by Nationality, 1998-2022



(Migration Policy Institute, 2023)

Some data for context



OECD (2023), Foreign-born population (indicator). doi: 10.1787/5a368e1b-en



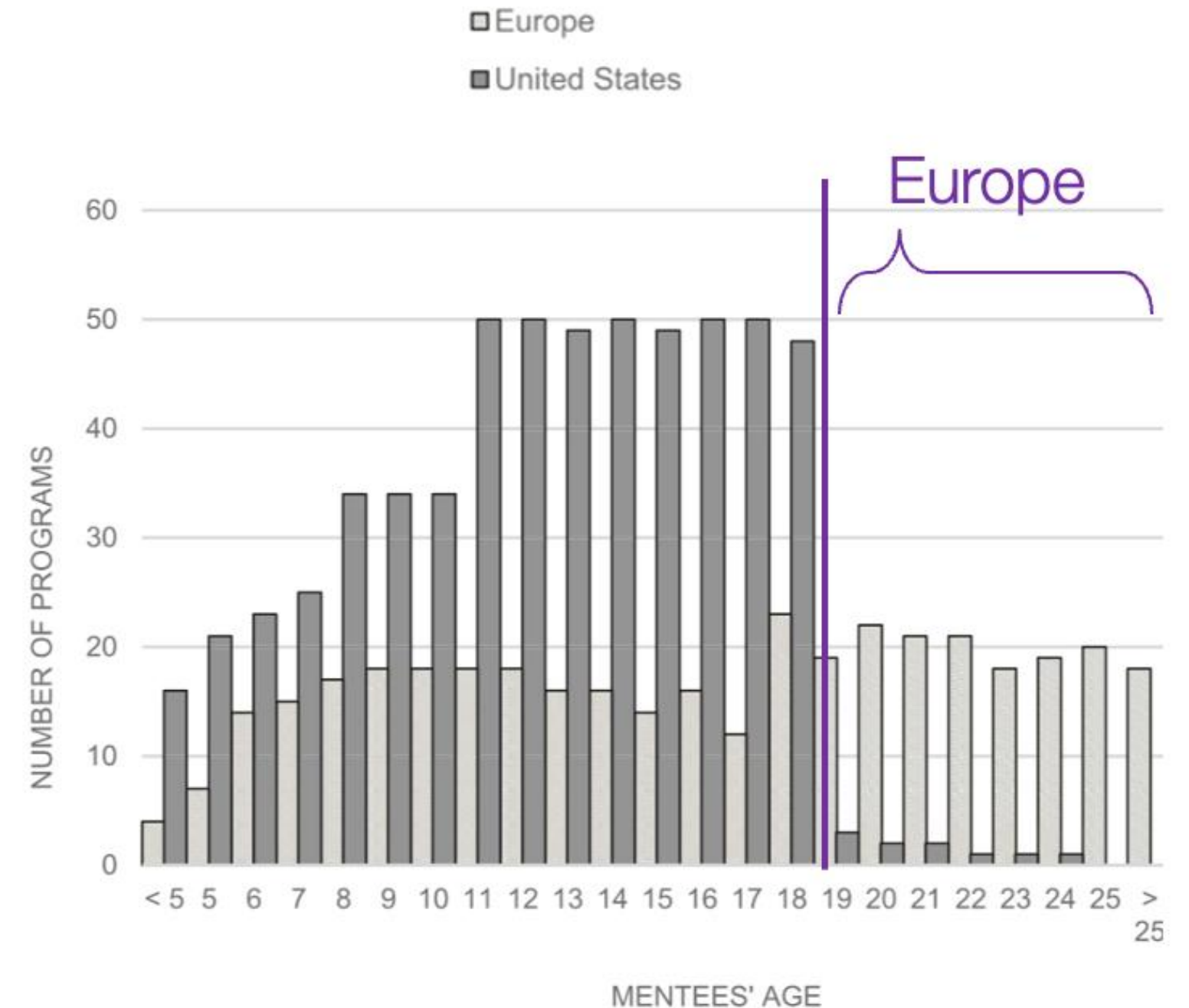
**60% OF SOCIAL MENTORING
PROGRAMMES STARTED SINCE 2015**



Figura 1.
Localización de los programas de mentoría social en España

¿What do we understand for social mentoring?

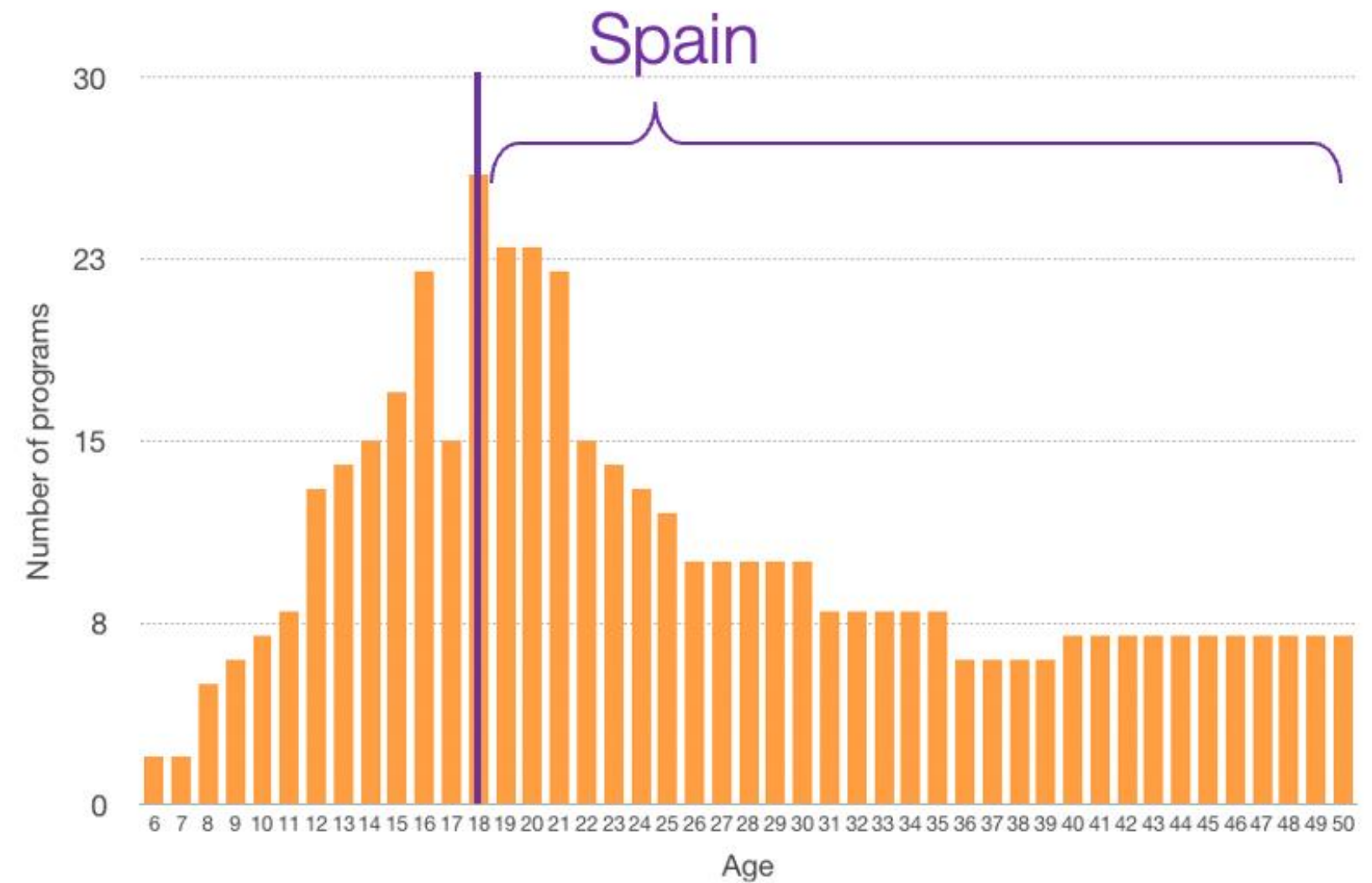
The concept of mentoring for young people (**youth mentoring**) seems to us to limit mentoring to only one stage of life and excludes others. While it is true that the majority of existing social mentoring programs target adolescents or young people, increasingly, mentoring programs are emerging that are aimed at the inclusion of the foreign or adult refugee population, at combating the loneliness of people over 65 years of age, at assisting those over 45 to gain employment, at helping disabled persons, etc. In this sense, we prefer to use the concept of social mentoring because it is more inclusive. (Prieto-Flores y Feu, 2018)



(Preston, Prieto-Flores, and Rhodes, 2019)

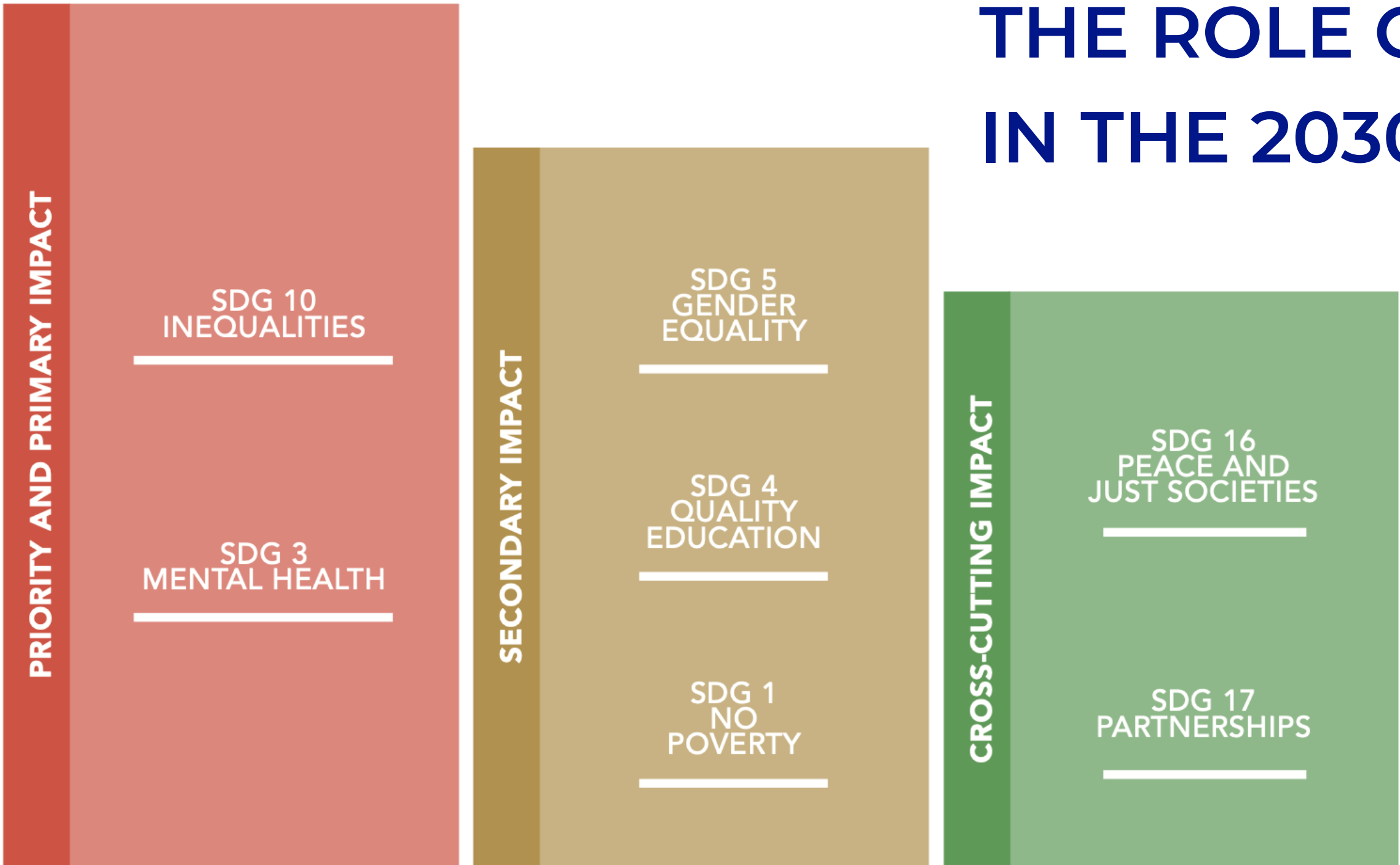
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(Prieto-Flores et al., 2021)

THE ROLE OF MENTORING IN THE 2030 AGENDA GOALS



SOCIAL MENTORING AND THE 2030 AGENDA: STRENGTHENING TIES

**SDG 3
ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES.**

- Social Mentoring relationships lead to significant improvements in the psychosocial well-being of those involved.
- This well-being is directed specifically at the mentored person, but mentoring volunteers also gain psychosocial benefits.



(Source: Baketik Foundation, 2024, p.8)

SUPPORTING/BECOMING FAMILIES THROUGH SOCIAL MENTORING

Dyadic relationship (recently arrived children with young adults or adults) with close contact to family

Dyadic relationship (unaccompanied minors/youth in foster care with adults)

Mentoring Families (an established local family helps support a newly arrived family)





SENSE OF BELONGING, MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

- A strong sense of belonging can offset risk factors such as high levels of trauma and low educational attainment in immigrant and refugee populations (Ellis et al., 2016)
- Having a low sense of belonging associated with psychological distress in adolescent youth – partially mediated the relationship between adverse child experiences and psychological distress (Corrales et al., 2016)
- Sense of belonging was a significant predictor of mental health outcomes in refugee and immigrant youth (Beiser & Hou, 2017)
- Establishing a sense of belonging early for refugee youth is a critical component of well-being (Correa-Velez, Gifford, & Barnett, 2010)



The Model for Recently Arrived Children (last 3 years)

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.567 ^a	.32	.31	6.033	.32	30.824	1	65	.000
2	.713 ^b	.51	.48	5.258	.19	7.853	3	62	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sense of Belonging Index

b. Predictors: (Constant), Sense of Belonging Index, (Youth Mentoring Relationship Scale) When I am with my mentor I feel safe, Domain of

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	15.429	4.092		3.771	.000
	Sense of Belonging Index	.577	.104	.567	5.552	.000
2	(Constant)	18.617	7.836		2.376	.021
	Sense of Belonging Index	.470	.100	.462	4.695	.000
	Age	-.911	.403	-.223	-2.262	.027
	Domain of catalan/euskera index	.325	.208	.140	1.561	.124
	(Youth Mentoring Relationship Scale) When I am with my mentor I feel safe	2.772	.704	.353	3.937	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Sense of Belonging Index





SENSE OF BELONGING, MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

		Trouble remembering things?	Thoughts of ending your life?	Feeling blocked in getting things done?	Did you feel alone?	Did you feel sad?	Feeling no interest in things?
Sense of Belonging at Post-test	Pearson Correlation	-.187	-.442**	-.180*	-.329**	-.176*	-.277**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035	0.00	0.04	0.000	0.05	0.00
	N	127	127	127	127	127	127



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Article

Mentoring for Improving the Self-Esteem, Resilience, and Hope of Unaccompanied Migrant Youth in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area

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APPLYingMentoring
Innovaciones
sociales y tecnológicas
para la inclusión de las personas
inmigrantes y refugiadas

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ACUP Obra Social "la Caixa"

Citation: Alarcón, X.; Bobowik, M.; Prieto-Flores, Ò. Mentoring for Improving the Self-Esteem, Resilience, and Hope of Unaccompanied Migrant Youth in the Barcelona Metropolitan Area. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* **2021**, *18*, x. <https://doi.org/10.3390/xxxxx>

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Received: 16 April 2021

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Abstract: In the last few years, the number of unaccompanied youths arriving in Europe has increased steadily. During their settlement in host countries, they are exposed to a great variety of vulnerabilities, which have an impact on their mental health. This research examines the effects of participation in a mentoring programme on the psychological and educational outcomes among unaccompanied migrant youths who live in the Barcelona metropolitan area. Data in this mixed-methods study were obtained from 44 surveys with mentored (treatment group) and non-mentored (control group) male youths who had recently turned 18, as well as through thirty semi-structured interviews with mentored youths, their adult mentors, and non-mentored youths. Our findings indicated that participation in the mentoring programme improved the mentored youths' self-esteem, resilience, and hope, as well as their desired or expected educational outcomes in this new context. We conclude that well-targeted and problem-specific mentoring programmes have positive and marked effects on unaccompanied migrant youths' mental health. The social and political implications of these outcomes are also discussed, providing information on how interventions can offer effective networks of support for the settlement and social inclusion of unaccompanied migrant youths.

Keywords: unaccompanied; migrant youth; mental health; mentoring; resilience; mixed methods



Table 2. Participation in the mentoring program and well-being outcomes: descriptive statistics, repeated measures ANOVA with between-subject (group) effect, and paired *t*-tests per group.

Variable	Group	Time 1		Time 2		<i>CI</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>	Test ¹	Comparison		
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>						<i>F</i> _(1, 42)	<i>p</i>	η^2
Self-esteem	Mentoring	2.87	0.23	3.01	0.30	<i>[-0.27; -0.02]</i>	-2.41	0.026	0.55	1	1.03	0.316	0.02
	Control	2.86	0.33	2.86	0.30	<i>[-0.12; 0.12]</i>	-0.08	0.941	0	2	3.16	0.083	0.07
Resilience	Mentoring	9.95	1.40	10.76	0.44	<i>[-1.40; -0.22]</i>	-2.88	0.009	0.74	3	2.80	0.102	0.06
	Control	9.96	1.52	10.04	1.33	<i>[-0.68; 0.51]</i>	-0.30	0.765	0.05	1	1.24	0.273	0.03
Youth hope	Mentoring	5.10	0.73	5.52	0.60	<i>[-0.81; -0.04]</i>	-2.33	0.031	0.58	2	4.94	0.032	0.11
	Control	5.45	0.83	5.25	0.82	<i>[-0.10; 0.51]</i>	1.39	0.179	-0.22	3	3.21	0.081	0.07
Psychological distress	Mentoring	4.95	2.64	4.76	2.84	<i>[-0.61; 0.99]</i>	0.50	0.623	-0.09	1	0.04	0.846	0.001
	Control	4.96	2.69	5.17	2.37	<i>[-1.14; 0.70]</i>	-0.49	0.630	0.11	2	0.94	0.339	0.02
										3	7.33	0.010	0.15
										1	0.08	0.779	0.002
										2	0.01	0.964	0
										3	0.48	0.494	0.01

Note. Mentoring group: *n* = 21, control group: *n* = 23. *M* and *SD* represent means and standard deviations, respectively. ¹ ANOVA contrasts in the following order: 1 = group's effects; 2 = time' effects; and 3 = interaction effects (group * time). To calculate Cohen's *d*, we used a procedure described in Morris and De Shon (2002, p. 111), who suggest estimating the effect size for single-group pre-test-post-test designs by taking the correlation between the pre- and post-test into account. Statistically significant effects are in bold and marginally significant ones are in italics.

Table 4. *Participation in Mentoring Program and Educational Expectations: McNemar Test*

Variable	Group		Low educational expectations (Time 2)		High educational expectations (Time 2)		<i>p</i>
			<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	
Educational expectations	Mentoring	Low educational expectations (Time 1)	3	14.30%	10	47.60%	.002
		High educational expectations (Time 1)	0	0.00%	8	38.10%	
	Control	Low educational expectations (Time 1)	11	47.80%	5	21.70%	.727
		High educational expectations (Time 1)	3	13.00%	4	17.40%	

Note. We repeated these analyses excluding participants who responded “I don’t know” to the question about educational expectations. In this case, the McNemar test was also statistically significant in the mentoring group ($p = .016$), whereas it was non-significant in the control group ($p = .453$), with 18 participants in each group.

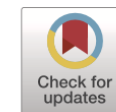
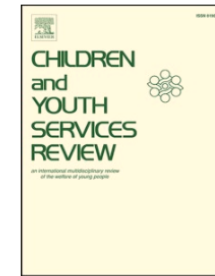




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Transnational family ties and networks of support for unaccompanied immigrant youths in Spain: The role of youth mentoring in Barcelona

Xavier Alarcón^{*}, Òscar Prieto-Flores

School of Education and Psychology, University of Girona, Plaça Sant Domènec, 9, 17071 Girona, Spain

“My mother always gives me advice. She tells me to be calm, to not do bad things to people... [...] She tells me that the people who are with me... that you should always listen to these people, that you should work with these people. [...] For example, where I live now... [she says] “if they give you advice or have told you something, don’t say no, you have to be positive.”

(Aliou, mentored youth)

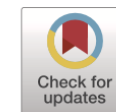
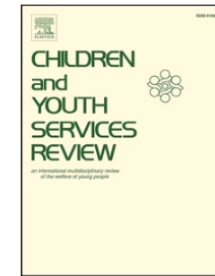




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As I said before, I felt alone in the centre and didn't know anyone from here, from Barcelona or from Spain. I wanted to meet some kind of friend, I wanted to know places, practise Spanish more... [...] She was like a sister, I swear to you. Like I had a sister here. I trusted her, and still [trust her] to explain everything that happens to me. I can explain things to Antonia (his mentor) that I can't explain to my family.

(Hassan, mentored youth)

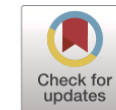
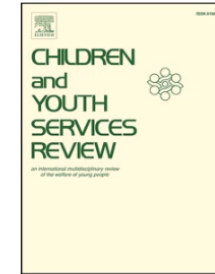




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”They are there and I am here in Spain. And here, Miquel, he’s like my father, you know? Because he teaches me things my parents don’t know. [...]

Speaking, he teaches me a bit to study, to practise the language, Catalan and Spanish, he shows me the city, Barcelona, we are in different places... [...]

When I have problems, I don’t want to tell them to my parents. I don’t want to upset them and make them sad. I tell them to my friends and other people, like Miquel.”

(Nordin, mentored youth)



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BEYOND MUTUAL BENEFITS



There are a lot of people who want to do things and are bored, and we know how important it is to feel integrated, because otherwise we have met a lot of people in this programme who are almost depressed because they sit on the sofa all day without being able to do anything, they have no friends... (Mentor)

"It has given me a different perspective on everything in general. Of course, because I don't have a relationship with people who come from Africa, let's say... So I've been able to see another culture, I've seen another way of doing things, let's say another life, so it's like... And now that we've talked about issues that affect both of us, it's like I have a much broader vision, from a different point of view..." (Mentor)

PONEN EN PRÁCTICA

LA EMPATÍA

OFRECER APOYO
SIN CAER EN PATERNALISMOS

CONOCER OTRA
REALIDAD CULTURAL



CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Mentoring to be included in the **portfolio of social services**, as a **social right** or as "arraigo social" to help migrant families apply for temporary residence (already in Navarra, Basque country and Catalonia).

A balance between professional and informal support; mentoring programmes ARE NOT a substitute for state responsibility.

The need to promote MORE critical awareness, activate empathy and connect people and families through mentoring as **a family support strategy for welcoming families and unaccompanied minors.**



“Imagination is the central formative agency in human society...It’s because we can imagine different futures that we can struggle against the present state of things”

Ngũgi wa Thiong’o

(in Benjamin, 2024, p.90)



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Thank you!

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