



## Centre for health Systems Research & Development

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### **Mentoring children guilty of minor first-time crimes: methods, strengths and limitations**

#### **CITATION**

Steyn F, Louw D & Van Rensburg D. 2012. Mentoring children guilty of minor first-time crimes: methods, strengths and limitations. *Acta Academica*, 44(4): 106-133.

#### **ABSTRACT**

In the absence of evidence regarding the impact of mentoring on child offenders in South Africa, this article explores the strengths and limitations of this approach in a local context. It investigates the theory and methods of mentoring, and presents a case study of the strategy as practiced by the National Youth Development Outreach in Pretoria. Mentoring appears ineffective for children with hardened negative attitudes and chronic offending as their value preferences may contradict those of mentors. Three months are insufficient to establish meaningful relationships and achieve mentoring goals. Reconciliation - a central objective of the Child Justice Act (75 of 2008) - is difficult to achieve given the absence of victims in the mentoring process.