



Elaine Isadora Thomas

Overview

Elaine Isadora Thomas is the Founder and CEO of The Mentoring Lab.

Elaine is a trailblazer within the youth sector, championing equity-led approaches to improving the quality of youth mentoring and addressing the inequalities and barriers affecting the development and progression of black and marginalised youth.

ABOUT ELAINE

Timeline

Early Years

Born in 1979 and raised by the Windrush generation of St. Albans, Hertfordshire, Elaine has always valued the power strong communities have in shaping lives.

During her childhood, a family called The Thomas's looked after the well-being and development of all of the young within their tiny Caribbean community. They were their go-to; everybody knew it, and that was their duty for decades.

Adolescence

However, as a teenager in the 90s, she struggled with identity, society's racial prejudices, and contextual safeguarding issues. The Thomas' support was not there. Raised in a single-parent family, her mum worked 18 hours a day, her extended family lived far away, and she was struggling. Any trained eye would know that her negative behaviour was an unarticulated, desperate cry for help.

Academic Studies

Moving to London in 1998 to study Social Research and Caribbean Studies at what was then called the University of North London, Elaine was inspired by Diane Abbott London Schools and the Black Child initiative and conferences and made a commitment to upskilling herself to a position where she could make a positive contribution to the safety of young people's lives.



ABOUT ME



Timeline

Early Career

- Although Elaine became a lone mother at 25, now living in London and isolated from family, she undertook multiple strategic measures to keep her son safe from Hackney's contextual safeguarding issues, including moving to Jamaica to live in the safety of her family and community there.
- **In 2000**, Elaine was in the first cohort of learning mentors working under the EIC Government Initiative.
- **In 2017**, we set up the Mentoring Lab to improve the quality of youth mentoring.
- **In 2019**, Elaine Set Up The Mentoring Lab Community C.I.C to offer free Youth Mentoring to marginalised youth.
- **In 2025**, Elaine launched **The Association of Youth Mentors and Mentoring for Youth**, a digital mentoring platform.

Achievements

- 20+ years of experience in youth mentoring.
- 10+ years of experience in managing borough-wide mentoring programmes.
- Metropolitan Police Award for Outstanding Youth Engagement
- Author of The Youth Mentoring Tool Kit

ABOUT ME

Timeline



Bridging gaps

During her mentoring career in education, youth, and the Social Care Sector, Elaine saw why The Thomas' from St. Albans were unable to offer her their support when she (and later her younger brother) needed it most. She also realised why many community organisations are currently unable to offer sustainable support to their community's youth.

Common issues such as poor organisational skills, lack of structure, partnership with the broader society, and an absence of youth voice cause a lack of direction, funding, and commitment from the team, ultimately putting its beneficiaries at risk. The Mentoring Lab was built on the foundation of Elaine's childhood experience and Thomas' and Diane Abbott's passion for our youth.

Merged with a strong vision to create a sound, sustainable, community-based youth organisation, The Mentoring Lab provides professional youth mentoring solutions delivered by expert youth mentors. TML connects with the mainstream, is culturally competent, offers safe spaces for growth, and supports parents as their child navigates how to travel safely from adolescence into adulthood.

YOUTH MENTOR



Elaine has mentored over 3,000 young people across England and the Caribbean, with a career spanning 25 years. Her youth mentoring journey began in 2000 when she was recruited as a learning mentor at Dormers Well School in Southall under the newly launched Excellence in the City Government initiative that aimed to improve the attainment levels of 'inner city' youth in seven areas across the UK.

Elaine still delivers one-on-one and group mentoring sessions to young people in her commitment to remove barriers to progression. She is currently supporting the Met Police and the National College of Professional Policing in their efforts to improve trust and confidence with African and Caribbean communities. Regularly holding events to share youth voices on critical issues within statutory services.

Book Elaine:

Elaine is available to deliver 1:1 or group youth mentoring sessions

SOCIAL FOUNDER

Elaine founded The Mentoring Lab Community C.I.C and the Association of Youth Mentors in England to help improve the quality of mentoring delivered to young people, especially those living in marginalised and underserved communities.

Using her lived experience to demonstrate the power of mentoring and how to develop teams, youth leaders, and the community using youth mentoring tools and techniques.

Bridging the Gap

However, most young people from black and marginalised communities cannot access solid, reliable guidance on how to focus their skills and talents to help improve British industries' most pressing issues and improve all of our futures.



SOCIAL FOUNDER

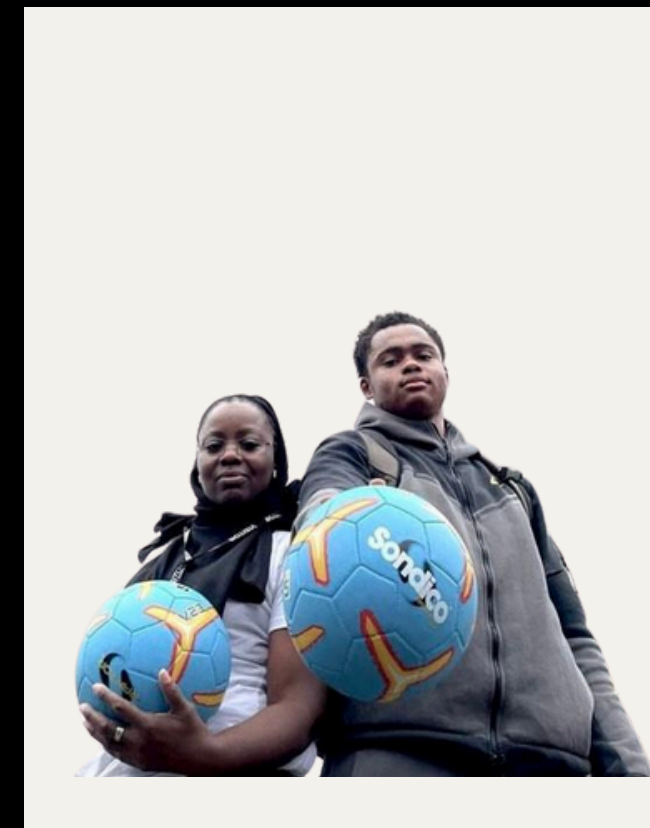
A Youth Mentoring First Organisation

That's where youth mentoring and amplifying its impact come in.

The Mentoring Lab is an inclusive black-led youth organisation that, through the use of mentoring tools and techniques, enables and equips young people from black and marginalised communities via:

- 1:1 and group mentoring
- Peer Mentoring
- Youth Leaders Programme
- On social housing estate holiday clubs
- Advocacy

Learn more about The Mentoring Lab Community by visiting www.tmlcommunity.org



THOUGHT LEADER



Elaine focuses on youth mentoring as a practice, how to amplify the real youth voice to improve statutory services, and rethinking grant-giving and philanthropic policies, practices, and procedures to improve outcomes, access, and the dismantling of inequities.

With two decades of youth mentoring practice, Elaine's staying power and commitment to youth mentoring have led her to be seen as the No. 1 leader and voice within youth mentoring.

Sharing expertise :

Elaine is available to speak at events and conferences on Youth Mentoring.

AUTHOR



Elaine is the author of two books and is currently writing her autobiography.

The Youth Mentoring Toolkit is a handbook and guide for practitioners supporting young people with evidence-based mentoring, coaching, and leadership tools and techniques.

Your Tool Kit. A self-guided version for young people wanting to make independent change and progression in their lives.

Elaine is currently writing her second book, *Lost in St. Albans*. An autobiography of her life growing up in the Windrush Community of St. Albans.

Buy a copy:

Elaine's Youth Mentoring Tool Kit is available in print and to download at www.thementoringlab.co.uk

SPEAKER



Elaine is an ex-radio presenter and producer with over 8 years of experience delivering community radio shows for Black community stations, including Colourful Radio (DAB).

Elaine uses her public speaking skills to inspire and challenge audiences.

Topics

Elaine is available to speak on;

- Resilience
- The power of failing
- The power of mentoring
- Black female leadership
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Youth development and participation
- Youth barriers and issues and, of course, youth mentoring.

Past speaking engagements



CONSULTANT



With over 20 years of experience scoping, planning, delivering, and evaluating youth projects, programmes, and services, Elaine's expertise is grounded in equity-led youth participation models, evidence-based approaches, and youth ice.

She ensures every client's vision is valued so that their voice, life experience, and sector expertise become the cornerstones of their development and success.

Elaine's consultancy offers;

- Youth Organisation start-up support
- Grant writing
- Youth Mentoring programme management

WORKPLACE MENTOR



Elaine's mentoring style boosts performance and commitment, bringing a fresh perspective on mentoring, goal setting and removing barriers to innovation, belonging, and growth.

Book Elaine:

Elaine is available to deliver online or face to face, 1:1 or group workplace mentoring.

BOOK ELAINE

Elaine is available for various engagements, drawing from her extensive experience in youth mentoring and leadership. Her areas of expertise include:

Speaking Engagements

Elaine can speak on topics, subjects and issues impacting young people. Ready-made speeches include, Timing Resilience, The Power of Failing, Mentoring, Black female Leadership, Diversity In Inclusion, Youth Development and Participation, Barriers Impacting Youth.

Youth Mentoring

With over 25 years of experience and having mentored over 3,000 young people across England and the Caribbean, Elaine is available for one-on-one and group youth mentoring sessions.

Executive Mentoring

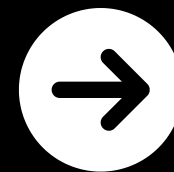
Elaine offers a fresh perspective on goal setting and removing barriers to innovation, performance, and growth for C-suite executives.

Consultancy

Elaine provides expertise in youth organisation start-up support, grant writing, and youth mentoring programme management.

Training

She offers training sessions on Youth Mentoring practices, which have been highly praised by educators and professionals in the field.



Book Elaine Today

☎ 02081588500 or 07412640174

✉ info@thementoringlab.co.uk

🌐 <https://thementoringlab.co.uk/consultancy/>

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

KATE BERESFORD-MILLER

Elaine Thomas' training is completely inspiring and an absolute must for anyone involved in Youth Mentoring in any capacity. I came to this course with more than 15 years experience in teaching and I learned so much to inform my roles as teacher, Head of Department and form tutor. Building on the strengths and knowledge I already had, Elaine was able to reignite my passion for mentoring and supporting young people as well as give me tools to improve my mentoring sessions. For any schools seeking to improve the mentoring they offer young people or anyone interested in supporting young people (shouldn't this be the whole of society?!) Elaine's training is an absolutely essential part of your journey.

MARIA THOMAS

Elaine Thomas' three-day training was incredible and inspiring. Elaine is an excellent trainer, who is passionate about Youth Mentoring and as a retired teacher, Elaine was able to reignite my passion for supporting young people as well as giving me all the tools to go forward with youth mentoring. This training was not only very useful but an absolute must for schools, colleges and community mentors who need to improve the mentoring they offer young people. I learnt so much about myself and gained skills to enable me to mentor and support young people.

DANIEL DWUMFOUR

Elaine is amazing and you can tell that she is passionate and experienced. She is determined to change the mindset and destinies of young people; the system, and any false views society has about youths in general. Finding The Mentoring Lab is one of the highlights of my year.

Thank you Elaine and team.

ABDULAI KAMARA

Dear Elaine Thomas,

As a youth mental health nurse and I wanted to thank you for the training today. It has greatly expanded my knowledge, skills, and ability to make a positive impact. Your expertise and dedication are truly commendable. Thank you for everything,

GET IN TOUCH



02081588500 or 07412640174



office@thementoringlab.co.uk



[www.tiktok.com/elaineisadorathomas](https://www.tiktok.com/@elaineisadorathomas) ^{new!}



www.facebook.com/thementoringlab/



www.instagram.com/thementoringlab/



www.linkedin.com/thementoringlab/

