

It's Masterchef time for young mums

YOUNG mothers and pregnant women can find a mentor and get stuck into a *Masterchef*-style cooking class with the Bump program.

Started by the Young Love Foundation, a non-profit organisation caring for the health and wellbeing of youth on the North Shore, the Bump program is for mothers aged under 23.

The young mothers are paired with "experienced mums" as mentors, Young Love director and Mosman resident Vicki Condon said.

The program, which ran for the first time last year, involves one-on-one mentoring for an hour a week, and a free monthly workshop for all the young mothers and their mentors.

"It builds a support group around the (young) mums," Ms Condon said.

"The workshops have two different types of activities.



Mentor Vicki Condon.

The first hour is about life skills. The second hour is purely about me time."

The next workshop on April 19 will be a *Masterchef* activity, including health and nutrition tips and a cooking class.

Ms Condon, a mother of three, said the program was a great way to battle the loneliness that young mothers often felt.

"They all feel a bit left out," Ms Condon said. "Then suddenly you meet a whole bunch of other girls the same as you and the loneliness starts to dissipate."

This year the free workshops will include massage, skincare and styling, and there is free babysitting.

Thirteen pregnant and parenting girls graduated from the program in November. Eighteen mentors have been trained for this year's program, many of them from Mosman.

"We've been inundated with volunteers," Ms Condon said.

"We're still looking for about 10 more young mums (to participate)."

Young mothers can refer themselves, or be invited to participate by community workers. For details visit younglove.org.au

— by work experience student Samantha Bowers