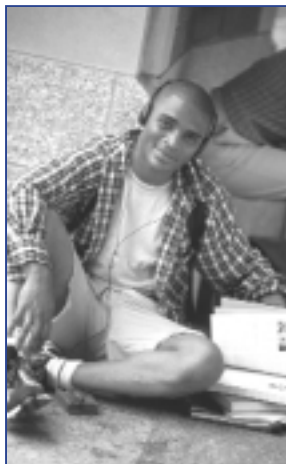




NATIONAL MENTORING CENTER

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Strengthening Your "Agency Capacity"

Proper organizational structure and resources are crucial to quality services

By Michael Garringer

What makes a mentoring program successful—effective volunteer recruitment? Mentor training? Appropriate screening procedures and risk management? Mentoring programs often focus on these service-oriented components, the methods of day-to-day operation. Although adopting "best practices" in these areas is obviously important, another huge factor figures prominently in the success of any mentoring program: its "agency capacity."

Agency capacity refers to the overall soundness of the structure and framework supporting the program. Simply put, does your mentoring program have the support systems necessary to deliver high-quality services over time? You can have the world's most solidly designed mentoring program, but without the proper organizational support, staffing, community partnerships, and funding, it may prove difficult to deliver quality services. The National Mentoring Center (NMC) has found that this agency capacity is just as crucial to a program's long-term success as its conceptual design and day-to-day operating procedures.

The NMC has identified 10 key components of effective agency capacity. Together, these components make up the foundation on which to build your program's services. Some may seem very common sense. But many agencies neglect or overlook these components. It's easy to gloss over these components in the usually hectic daily reality of running a program. But whether your program is just getting started or has been around for a while, it's important to look at these organizational components and see how well they are being implemented. Keep in mind that it's

not just newer programs that have deficits; even well-established programs may find that they are lacking structure in some of these key areas. (See Page 6 for a list of self-assessment questions that can help your program think about its agency capacity).

1. A WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND A LONG-RANGE PLAN

Too often, mentoring programs try to be all things to all people. A program whose efforts are spread too thin and whose long-range plan is too ambitious runs the risk of offering watered-down services.

To provide clear focus and direction, your program needs a written mission statement that drives all

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New JUMP Grantees Named

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has awarded more than \$14 million in grants as part of the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). The 65 funded programs reflect the wide variety of program types and youth populations that characterize the field today. Included in this rich tapestry are programs that work with youth from a wide range of cultural and ethnic groups, youth in foster care, youth of incarcerated parents, youth in special education, and homeless youth.

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OJJDP

Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention



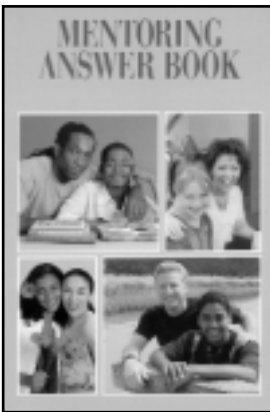
Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory

Book Gives Answers to Tough Questions

The *Mentoring Answer Book* tackles mentor-mentee relationship issues

By Michael Garringer, NMC Resource Specialist

BOOK REVIEW



Mentoring relationships are never easy. Even matches that have progressed beyond the initial stages of establishing familiarity and trust face a myriad of issues that can threaten the health of the relationship. Case managers and other program staff are often bombarded with questions from mentors on how to handle situations ranging from fairly simple (the reticence of a mentee, for example) to serious (abuse or mental illness).

Big Brothers Big Sisters of McHenry County, Illinois, was no exception. Mentors had lots of questions. Caseworkers needed to provide answers. So staff began to track frequent questions from mentors and to come up with definitive answers. What began as a resource for their own caseworkers has evolved into one of the best publications in the field for strengthening mentoring relationships: the *Mentoring Answer Book*.

Published in May, the publication provides answers to more than 40 questions that typically arise in mentoring relationships. The answers are drawn from the experience of mentors in the BBBS program, along with the input of program staff, psychologists, and school personnel.

The book is divided into groups of questions that cover everything from the initial steps of the relationship to serious behavioral and health issues. Special attention is paid to issues with the mentee's parents and siblings, academic performance, and financial situations. The "Dollars and Sense" chapter, for example, illustrates the types of real-life questions that the book tackles. Mentors often have questions about how much money to spend on activities. The *Mentoring Answer Book* tells mentors that while this issue depends "on your finances and comfort level," it is important to remember that "being a mentor is not about lavishing gifts on a child or whisking them off on grand, expensive outings." The book adds, "Again and again, mentors and mentees agree that their favorite get-togethers have been low-key matters: a bike ride, a walk in the park, or a trip to the local student art exhibit. These kinds of outings set the stage for talking, for sharing concerns or enthusiasms, and for offering up those precious words of encouragement and advice."

Another financial concern can arise when the youth's parent asks the mentor to buy things. The book advises mentors not to leave their comfort zone or take on more than they can handle. While the family may have very pressing needs—their power's been shut off or their medicine is too expensive—it is beyond the scope of the mentor's role to provide significant financial assistance. The book advises mentors to remember that they are within their rights to say "no," and encourages them to contact program staff, who may be able to help the parent find assistance and support on a more long-term basis.

Other questions focus on difficulties in establishing a relationship early in the match. Still others deal with serious circumstances around substance abuse, suicide, sexuality, and juvenile delinquency. Comments and quotes from actual mentors back up the advice given in the book. Hearing the words of someone who has been in the same situation makes this book even more helpful and powerful for mentors.

Sooner or later, program staff will encounter virtually all of the book's questions in their own agencies. "We're very excited about the feedback we've been getting," says Mary Lawrence, Director of BBBS of McHenry County. "A lot of people are telling us that the book accurately reflects the volunteer experience and things that really come up."

Not only can the *Mentoring Answer Book* be valuable for guiding mentors individually, but it will also be useful for staff in designing both initial and ongoing training for their mentors. All in all, it's a very useful resource that gathers the wisdom of those on the "frontlines" of mentoring and makes it available to the entire field.

You can learn more about the online at: www.mentoringanswerbook.com ♦

Staffing Strategies Help Ensure Success

In a tight job market, nonprofits work hard to keep top employees

By Mark Fulop, NMC Director

Whether you are starting a new mentoring program or have been managing a program for several years, you likely know all too well that finding, hiring, and retaining program staff is one of your greatest challenges. Although the salary gap between the business and nonprofit sectors is narrowing, many nonprofit agencies still find themselves struggling to offer competitive salaries and benefits. Recognizing this limitation, program managers will want to look even more carefully at their employee hiring and retention practices in order to lower staff turnover.

Below is an overview of staffing basics developed by the National Mentoring Center (NMC) with insights from Information Technology International (ITI), which conducts the national evaluation of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). Taken together, these tips represent the foundation for a solid staffing plan.

The Right Job

Effective hiring and retention of staff begin with a clear and accurate understanding of the skills and expectations associated with the position. Programs that fail to have precise, written job descriptions are more likely to hire applicants without the right qualifications. Poor performance and higher staff turnover are often the result.

Begin by conducting a job task analysis. That means answering the question, What will this person need to know, do, and believe to be successful in this position? In their work with JUMPs, the NMC and ITI have found, for example, that there are at least three nonnegotiable competencies (skills, knowledge, and experience) that a mentoring program coordinator must possess:

- Working with youth, preferably in the context of a mentoring program
- Coordinating volunteers and volunteer activities
- Developing interagency partnerships and community organizing

To further clarify these competencies, identify a set of supporting components for each competency. Extending our example, then, if "coordinating volunteers" is a competency, the supporting the

components might include having experience recruiting and training volunteers, establishing clear communication, and even understanding issues of risk management.

The next step is to put the results of the job task analysis in writing as formal job descriptions. This process of "creating the right job" and job description is not simple and often takes several iterations. However, by investing the time in developing clear expectations and job descriptions, you will improve your chances of hiring qualified staff who will understand the roles and responsibilities of the position they are expected to fulfill.

The Right Tools

Staff members also need to be given the right tools to understand the expectations, timelines, and resources related to the program they are working on. For grant-funded programs, a new staff member should read the grant application along with other background materials to gain an understanding of program goals. Ideally, the tools will also include written policies and procedures that govern program organization and operations, and an explanation of the communication structure (staff and team meetings, for example, and routine program and fiscal oversight). When they get stuck or have problems, staff members should have access to supports such as staff development and training, technical assistance providers, and peer sharing through state or regional mentoring partnerships or the Mentor Exchange listserv (see back cover).

The Right Environment

Also critical is the creation of a supporting work environment. This includes not only the obvious basic provisions—desk, chair, dedicated computer equipment, Internet access—but also such factors as adequate supervision and coaching, and supporting agency policies and procedures. Integrating the mentoring program into the overall agency vision, mission, and operation is also key. You would be surprised at the number of agencies that fail to give their mentoring program what we would call a "dedicated place" on the agency organizational chart. Without a supporting environment, staff

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“IT’S EASY TO
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PROGRAM.”

programmatic activities, as well as your short- and long-term goals. Your mission statement should be fairly short and to the point, yet still answer the question, Why do we exist? It should reflect the needs of your community, yet remain focused enough to be achievable. Remember: Your program cannot solve every problem in your community. Make your mission an attainable goal that meets real needs. Even if your program already has a mission statement, you should take the time to review it to make sure it meshes with the current activities of your program.

Developing a long-range plan is also crucial for finding focus in your program. Most programs start the planning process by conducting a needs assessment that looks at the issues facing youth in the community, the availability of other services, and the opportunities for community partnerships that may exist for your program. This assessment will give you the big picture of your town or city, and help you zero in on service gaps your program might fill.

Many programs implement their strategic planning process by developing an advisory council or steering committee composed of community leaders; representatives from formal partner organizations and other youth-serving agencies; and parents and youth from the community. An advisory council is a great way to foster community partnerships while getting the guidance your program needs to better serve the community.

Most importantly, your long-range plan must be not only focused, but flexible. As with your mission statement, your plan should not be overly ambitious. Timelines and scope of service need to be realistic. And your plan must be adaptable to new funding streams, changing partners and stakeholders, and evolving needs in the community.

2. CONSISTENT SUPPORT FROM THE PARENT AGENCY AND BOARD

Mentoring projects in larger youth-serving agencies can easily be lost amid juggled priorities and a multifaceted scope of work. Often, parent organizations simply look at a mentoring project as an additional source of dollars, without having the tools or ability to effectively implement a high-quality program. It is essential that mentoring projects in larger organizations have a demonstrated, ongoing commitment from their parent organization’s management and board. Otherwise, they risk the same fate as a smaller program that fails for lack of resources.

If your mentoring program is part of a larger sponsoring agency, the commitment of supplies, equipment, managerial oversight, and strong, ongoing communication with program staff means that your project is a welcome and integral facet of the overarching agency mission and goals. The parent organization should also commit secretarial and fiscal management support as needed. This organizational commitment is crucial. Without it, programs attached to large organizations are *just as susceptible to failure* as smaller, stand-alone programs.

The biggest factor in getting the organizational support your program needs comes from the involvement and engagement of the agency’s board of directors. It is important that your program communicate regularly with the board. The board needs to be informed as to the progress, challenges, and successes of your program. It must take an active role in your long-term planning, community partnerships, and awareness public awareness efforts. Too often, boards are disconnected from the mentoring program’s activities. To be successful, your program must establish a relationship and pattern of communication with your agency’s board that fosters support, development, and advocacy for your mentoring efforts among members.

3. A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

If your program has formal partnerships with schools, juvenile courts, businesses, or other youth-serving agencies, it is important that all the entities involved have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This is especially important if your program has entered a joint venture as part of a grant or other funding opportunity. This shared understanding ensures that all stakeholders are able to articulate, understand, and carry out the work that has been agreed upon.

All partner organizations should sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that spells out which aspects of program operation, oversight, and implementation they are responsible for, and the repercussions for failing to comply. Your program should also develop a process to monitor these partnerships to ensure that the obligations in the MOU are met. Because of the high rates of employee turnover in youth services and schools, it is especially important to develop a process for ensuring that responsibilities are still understood and met in spite of any loss of staff at partner agencies.

4. QUALIFIED AND TRAINED STAFF

Of the many resources that will make your program successful, your own staff is among the most important. These are the people who interact daily with the volunteers, youth, parents, teachers, and community members. By carefully selecting, training, and investing in these individuals, your program is building the foundation for a strong, consistent, and sustained program. Your staff members will directly determine whether you achieve your program goals.

Your agency should have written job descriptions for all staff, including minimum qualifications for knowledge, skills, and experience for each position. New staff should be given an orientation that includes an introduction to the program's mission and goals, any grant or funding obligations, and your policy and procedures manual. Your program should also create an ongoing staff development plan, which includes opportunities for networking with other professionals in the mentoring and volunteer management fields, as well as continued training and reflection activities.

Many mentoring programs, especially programs in the start-up phase, are prone to high rates of turnover for program coordinators and other key staff positions. One indicator of program success is the development of *consistent* services to youth, which can only occur through consistent staffing patterns. Staffing losses can severely disrupt the support of mentoring relationships, ultimately harming the sense of trust your volunteers and youth feel toward your program. Programs can minimize this staff turnover by actively recruiting qualified individuals, effectively screening applicants to ensure that they have the necessary skills and training for the job, and offering ongoing support to employees—absolutely essential for staff retention. Mentoring programs often cannot offer staggering salaries and perks. But if employees are given open avenues of communication and opportunities for professional development, they will know your program values them and their work. (See the accompanying article on Page 3 for more tips on hiring and retaining quality staff).

5. AGENCY REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY OF THE COMMUNITY AND YOUTH SERVED

Your program has a responsibility to be representative of the diversity found among the youth and volunteers in your program and the community you serve. By increasing the diversity of your program staff, board members, funding sources, and volun-

teer base, you prepare your program to meet the specific needs of different cultures and populations you serve. You are also better positioned to build partnerships, respond to shifting community needs, access funding opportunities, and position yourself as a “bridge-building” agency in the community.

Your program can start the process of building in diversity by examining the language and cultural references used in your nondiscrimination employment policies, mission statement, affirmative action plan, and policies and procedures manual. Questions to ask include, Are these written statements welcoming? Are you inadvertently alienating any group(s) of people? Make sure all policies and procedures are fully inclusive. In that way, you build the foundation for a program that welcomes and invites people from all walks of life.

Be sure that your marketing efforts reflect this diversity, as well. Pay close attention to the language and images in your public service announcements, recruitment materials, Web site, public presentations, and training sessions.

6. WRITTEN POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL THAT REFLECTS RECOGNIZED QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS

Your program should have a policies and procedures manual that addresses recruitment, orientation of volunteers, eligibility screening, training, matching strategies, support and recognition of volunteers, closure of matches, and program evaluation. It should spell out practices for creating and sustaining safe and effective mentoring relationships, and it should provide guidance for hiring and other personnel issues, confidentiality, record keeping, and service delivery. Your mission statement, philosophy, program-specific appendices, organizational chart, and other useful materials should also be included.

The manual should reflect the recommended program components found in the National Mentoring Partnership's *Elements of Effective Practice*, as well as any quality-assurance standards developed by your state's mentoring partnership or initiative. In developing and implementing this detailed operations manual, you instantly create a sustainable resource for your program, providing guidelines and direction for current and future staff. Make the manual part of new-employee orientations, and keep it continually accessible to all program staff for review. This manual must be your North Star, guiding your operations and service delivery at all times.

See CAPACITY, page 8

“AN ADVISORY COUNCIL IS A GREAT WAY TO FOSTER COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS WHILE GETTING THE GUIDANCE YOUR PROGRAM NEEDS TO BETTER SERVE THE COMMUNITY.”

Program Self-Assessment:

Getting a Fix on Your Agency Capacity

The following questions can help your mentoring program think about the agency capacity issues discussed in this issue. While many programs will have some of these program components in place, the real issue is: Exactly how much attention is being paid to them? These self-assessment questions offer a chance to examine your program's infrastructure and organizational health.

1. A Written Statement of Purpose and a Long-Range Plan

- Does our program have a mission statement?
- How do our current program practices mirror the values and goals stated in our mission statement?
- Is our mission statement appropriate for our specific clients, stakeholders, and the community we are working in?
- Has our program conducted a community needs assessment?
- If so, was the assessment process effective in gathering the information we needed?
- What information did we learn about our community and youth?
- How has information gathered in the needs assessment been incorporated into our program practices and goals?
- Has our program implemented a strategic planning process?
- How did we construct our planning process?
- How often will we review and revise our plan?
- Which stakeholders and community members were involved, or should be involved, in our planning process?
- What priorities has our program established as a result of this initial planning?
- How will our program use the answers to these questions to create a viable, inclusive long-range plan?

2. Consistent Support From the Parent Agency and Board

- How closely does our mentoring program fit with the mission and goals of the larger organization?
- How frequently does program staff communicate with senior management of the organization and the board?
- Does program staff have decisionmaking roles within the larger organization?
- Is our mentoring program permanently written into all agency planning documents and noted in the agency organizational chart?
- Does our mentoring program receive appropriate space, equipment, management oversight, secretarial support, and fiscal support from our parent agency?
- Is our board of directors involved with and informed about our program?
- What can our program do to address any gaps in agency support?

3. A Shared Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities With Partner Organizations

- How are staff, senior management, school and community partners, and agency board members made aware of the

requirements associated with our program's grants and funding streams?

- Does our program have written "memoranda of understanding" (MOU) documenting that each stakeholder is aware of, and is able to fulfill, his or her roles and responsibilities?
- What process do we have in place to ensure grant awareness of roles and responsibilities when turnover occurs in our partner organizations or in the staffing levels of our mentoring program?
- What is our process for ensuring compliance with an MOU?
- Is there a process in place to deal with a partner not fulfilling the agreed-upon MOU?
- Is there sufficient communication with partner agencies regarding the progress of the program and the fulfillment of funding-related objectives?

4. Qualified and Trained Staff

- Does our program have written job descriptions for all positions, which include minimum qualifications for knowledge, skills, and experience?
- Does our program require program coordinators to have a background in youth development work, volunteer management, and youth mentoring?
- Do we diversify our advertisements for job openings within the program in order to receive the largest possible applicant pool of qualified candidates?
- What is our process for screening qualified candidates to ensure that they are a good match?
- Do we screen staff members for safety and liability factors?
- How do we orient new staff members? Have we developed a written staff orientation guide?
- What type of initial training do we offer staff?
- What ongoing professional development opportunities does our program make available to staff, including networking, training, and reflection?
- Has our program experienced staff turnover that has impacted the quality of services in the past?
- If so, have we implemented support services in an opportunity to minimize future turnover?

5. Agency Reflects the Diversity of the Community and Youth Served

- How does our organization value diversity?
- Does our program have nondiscrimination hiring policies and practices?
- Do our mission and statement of purpose contain specific language that refers to how our organization values and

supports a diverse workplace?

- How do our staffing and volunteer patterns reflect the diversity of the youth we work with and of our community as a whole?
- How diverse is our board or advisory committee?
- In what ways can our recruitment efforts and community involvement be enhanced by increasing and utilizing the diversity of our organization?
- Is our program aware of diversity in all forms of communication generated by our program, including forms, recruitment materials, and Web site?

6. Written Policy and Procedures Manual That Reflects Recognized Quality Assurance Standards

- Do key staff members in our program have a working knowledge of the National Mentoring Partnership's "Elements of Effective Practice"?
- Does our state also have a list of recommended best practices that we need to be aware of?
- Has our program developed a written policy and procedures manual?
- Does our policy and procedures manual include explicit written policies and procedures on: mentor/mentee recruitment; orientation of volunteers, parents, and youth; eligibility screening; training mentors and mentees; matching and support strategies; recognition of volunteers; closure of matches; and program evaluation?
- Does our operations manual reflect commonly accepted elements of effective practice?
- Does our operations manual also include policies and procedures around employment, personnel, confidentiality, record keeping, and service delivery?
- How does our program orient new and current staff to the contents of our policy and procedures manual?
- Is our policy and procedures manual accessible?
- How often is this manual used or referred to when your staff has questions about the policies and procedures of your organization?

7. Access to Training and Technical Assistance Services

- What training and technical assistance are available to our program's staff, administrators, board members, and volunteers?
- Have we identified the local, state, and national mentoring organizations that may be able to provide assistance to our program?
- Which local, state, and national mentoring organizations have we worked with recently to strengthen our organization's services to youth?
- What type of technical assistance have we received previously (publications, Web resources, participation in listservs, phone or e-mail consultation, training, onsite visits, etc.)?
- Does our program have a designated "library" that contains research, publications, and written contact information and Web addresses for mentoring assistance?

- Does our program encourage program coordinators to work with other mentoring professionals or assistance providers as a part of ongoing professional development?

8. Community Awareness of the Agency and Program

- What is our program's reputation in the community?
- How are we assessing the community's perceptions of our program (focus groups, community surveys, etc.)?
- What type of media and community outreach are we, or should we be, engaged in?
- What are the strengths and selling points of our organization, and have we identified these traits?
- How will we improve the marketing of our agency?
- What resources in our community are available to help us communicate our message and promote our program?
- Is there anything that our program is particularly known for? What is our "niche"?
- How are our funding, recruitment, and community involvement strategies connected to our ability to make others aware of the program's successes?

9. Written Long-term Funding and Sustainability Plans

- Does our agency or program have a plan for its future financial sustainability?
- Have we created a resource development committee?
- What businesses, community foundations, government, and individual funding sources are we aware of that we might tap into for future funding?
- Are these funding sources represented on our advisory board?
- Who is responsible for securing these funds, and what is this individual's role in the agency?
- Are we aware of technical assistance providers or print and Web resources that can guide us in our fundraising efforts?

10. Use of Evaluation Data for Agency Purposes

- How does our program assess its services?
- What is the value of evaluation?
- How can our program benefit from participating in local and national evaluations?
- What are the evaluation requirements of our funding sources?
- What working system do we have in place to evaluate our services?
- Who are the program staff responsible for performing assessments and how do they communicate the results to other staff and stakeholders?
- How has our program utilized evaluation data to improve its services, marketing, and community relations?
- Do we have appropriate staffing necessary for data collection and input? ♦

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It is the best way to ensure quality and consistency in the services you provide to youth and volunteers. At the same time, it should not be rigid. Review your manual regularly and update it to reflect your current operating procedures and new ideas as your program evolves.

7. ACCESS TO TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Take advantage of the many free and low-cost assistance resources available to your mentoring program. Your program should build a list of the organizations that can assist with your mentoring services, volunteer management, and nonprofit development.

Many local, state, and national mentoring organizations provide training, technical assistance, publications, data collection, recruitment assistance, and networking opportunities for you and your staff. Many of these organizations provide phone and e-mail consultation and materials free of charge and offer very inexpensive training opportunities. If your state has a mentoring partnership or initiative, it may be able to help you identify possible assistance providers. Be sure to join free listservs, ask questions, and gather resources that can assist you now and in the future.

By learning about, and taking advantage of, the expertise of local, state, and national training and technical assistance organizations, you save yourself time, money, and energy that is better spent on direct service to your mentors and mentees. Your staff won't have to reinvent the wheel every time you want to improve your program's operations.

8. COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF THE AGENCY AND PROGRAM

What is your program's reputation in the community? What do people know about your efforts? What distinguishes the work you are doing from other programs? By examining these questions, you can learn a great deal about:

- How successfully you are attracting volunteers
- Agency strengths and selling points for marketing purposes
- Potential for collaboration with other agencies

By sharing success stories and innovative practices, and by communicating with partners and community members, you build awareness of your efforts and gain that all-important factor for long-term success: name recognition. You can increase community

awareness of your program through newsletters, public service announcements, and presentations and appearances at community events. In these ways, you reach supporters and community advocates, potential volunteers, and possible sources of funding. While *you* may know what a fantastic program you are running, sharing your program's successes will bring in critical resources such as volunteers, grants, and in-kind donations that allow you to serve more youth.

You can greatly enhance community awareness of your program by creating a "brand" for your program. You'll need a logo, color scheme, and descriptive language that make your program easily identifiable. This program brand should be clearly visible on everything that goes out from your organization—flyers, business cards, letters, e-mails, Web information, media ads—so that you create a consistent visual and verbal association in the minds of community members.

9. WRITTEN LONG-TERM FUNDING AND SUSTAINABILITY PLANS

No matter if your program is large or small, new or well established, continued and sustained funding is going to be an issue. Every program knows this. Yet many do not have a solid plan for identifying and going after additional funding streams. It is important that your program develop an effective, written plan to address your funding and sustainability needs.

Developing this plan starts with the heavy involvement of your agency's executive director, board, and steering committee or advisory council. It is essential that these parties be informed of your program's current funding status and future needs, and that they play a role in the identification and procurement of grants and other sources of funds.

Your program should also create a resource development committee that manages the process of finding dollars and in-kind donations. Board members, program staff, representatives from partner agencies, and other key stakeholders should sit on this committee. Over time, your resource development committee should produce a comprehensive, balanced, sustainability plan. Your plan should assess your current funding needs and determine the potential for expansion of services if appropriate funding can be found. The plan should include a wide variety of funding sources—everything from large grants and awards to in-kind donations and individual giving.

"PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE LANGUAGE AND IMAGES IN YOUR PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS, RECRUITMENT MATERIALS, WEB SITE, PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS, AND TRAINING SESSIONS."

Two things are critical in implementing a sustainability plan. First, appropriate staff time must be devoted to your fundraising efforts. An effective, comprehensive plan is useless unless staff members are given specific responsibilities—and enough time to do them. Identifying funding, writing grant applications, and establishing community connections linked to revenue are time-consuming tasks. Make sure that your staff is given the hours and freedom they need to be successful.

Second, your program needs to focus on funding streams that are compatible with program goals. Your program may need money desperately, but if you take on grants (and the requirements and responsibilities that go with them) that do not fit your program, you are likely to create more problems than you solve. Make sure that new funding and services don't water down the quality of your mentoring efforts. Be sure that the funding you seek is a good fit with your existing timelines, your mission and long-term goals, your client demographics, and your service scope.

10. USE OF EVALUATION DATA FOR AGENCY PURPOSES

Often, evaluating and assessing your program may seem like wasted time. Designating staff time to evaluation-related paperwork may feel like a drain on valuable energy, diverting it from your mentees and your direct service obligations.

However, don't underestimate the benefits of devoting time to data collection and analysis. This can be one of the most useful things your program does to improve the quality of direct services. Evaluation and assessment tell you what your program is doing right and how your young people are benefiting from your services. The evaluation process gives you an opportunity to adjust, cater to, and strengthen the relationships

you are building. It can help you polish your marketing and outreach strategies, boosting the public's perception of your program tremendously. These findings are also crucial for funders, both current and future.

You owe it to your youth, volunteers, and stakeholders to run the most effective and caring program that they can participate in. By collecting data and assessing your program's strengths and weaknesses, you demonstrate the commitment to building a program that learns from its past and strives, always, to do better.

Chances are, your program is already implementing several of these components of agency capacity. But it is important to ask yourself: *How strong are they? Can these agency components be strengthened further? Are we really paying attention to these things? Is poor implementation of these components holding back our ability to deliver quality services?*

By continually improving these aspects of agency capacity, your program is laying a solid foundation for success and sustainability.

(Be sure to use the self-assessment questions on Page 6 as a tool for thinking about how well your agency is implementing these components.) ♦

“YOU'LL NEED A LOGO, COLOR SCHEME, AND DESCRIPTIVE LANGUAGE THAT MAKE YOUR PROGRAM EASILY IDENTIFIABLE.”

members often lack confidence in their role and belief in the value they bring to the organization. Unfortunately, low confidence and uncertainty about the value of their job to the agency are the two key symptoms of poorly motivated employees. Higher turnover rates are sure to follow.

One office wag was recently overheard to say, “Management would be easy if it weren't for the people.” How many managers have thought the

same thing at one time or another? But when the vast amount of literature related to hiring and managing people is distilled to the basics, the three categories above—the right job, tools, and environment—sum up the essence of successful staffing. Helping people understand the job and then providing them with support, purpose, motivation, and an empowering environment will go a long way toward building a skilled and committed staff. ♦

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Regardless of target population, all JUMP programs are required to work in at least one of three main focus areas:

- Improved academic performance
- Reduced school dropout rates
- Prevention of delinquent behavior

The new grantees, which are located in 38 states and the District of Columbia, are expected to serve more than 5,000 youths over their three-year funding cycles. Slightly more than half of the new

grantees serve urban populations, while just under a third will bring mentoring services to traditionally underserved rural areas. Several of the grantees will provide mentoring through faith-based organizations. More than 860 applicants competed for JUMP funds this year.

The National Mentoring Center congratulates the 2002 JUMP grantees (listed below) and looks forward to working with them as their training and technical assistance provider.

2002 JUMP GRANTEES BY STATE

STATE	CITY	GRANTEE
Alabama	Holt	The University of Alabama
Arizona	Superior	Luz Social Services
California	Fremont	Bay Area Industry Education Council
California	Butte County	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Butte County
California	Redding	Redding School District
California	Anaheim	Young Men's Christian Association of Anaheim
California	Los Angeles	Assistance League of Southern California Volunteer Center of Los Angeles
Colorado	Pueblo	Pueblo School District #60
Connecticut	New Britain	Nutmeg Big Brothers Big sisters, Inc.
Connecticut	Putnam	Putnam Public Schools
Delaware	Wilmington	Latin American Community Center
Delaware	Wilmington	Volunteers for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention
District of Columbia	Washington, DC	Perry School Community services Center, Inc.
Florida	Miami	Community Crusade Against Drugs
Florida	Gainesville	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Gainesville
Georgia	Rome-Floyd	Rome-Floyd Communities in School
Hawaii	Wailuku	Hui Malama Learning
Idaho	Homedale	Homedale Joint School District #370
Illinois	Decatur	Big Brothers Big Sisters MMCDP, Inc.
Illinois	Henry County	Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Henry County
Illinois	Chicago	Chicago Public Schools Office of Specialized Services
Indiana	Fort Wayne	Big Brothers Big Sisters of NE Indiana, Inc.
Iowa	Clinton	Clinton Community School District
Kansas	Lawrence	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Douglas County
Kentucky	Louisville	YMCA of Greater Louisville
Louisiana	Bogalusa	Dr. Theodore P. Robinson Educational Foundation
Louisiana	New Orleans	Big Brothers/Big Sisters of S.E. LA

Maine	Old Town	River Coalition, Inc.
Maryland	Baltimore	Alliance, Inc.
Massachusetts	Fitchburg	LUK Crisis Center, Inc.
Massachusetts	Holyoke	Girls Incorporated of Holyoke
Michigan	Grand Rapids	Wedgwood Christian Youth & Family Services
Michigan	Detroit	Tender Loving Care Mercy Ministries
Minnesota	Saint Paul	Lauj Youth Society of Minnesota, Inc.
Mississippi	Starkville	Starkville School District
Nebraska	Omaha	Release Ministries, Inc.
Nebraska	Lincoln	Heartland Big Brothers Big Sisters
New Jersey	Eatontown	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Monmouth County, Inc.
New Jersey	Passaic	Passaic Public Schools
New Mexico	Chama	North Central Community Based Services
New York	Levittown	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Long Island
New York	Schenectady	Boys & Girls Club of Schenectady
New York	Bronx	Gloria Wise Boys & Girls Club
North Dakota	Fargo	The Village Family Service Center
Ohio	Warren	Alliance Community Outreach Program
Ohio	Cleveland	Hispanic UMADAOP
Oklahoma	Hugo	Hugo Housing & Community Services Corp.
Oregon	Redmond	J Bar J Youth Services
Pennsylvania	Lewistown	Juniata Valley YMCA Big Brothers Big Sisters
Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	Big Brother Big Sister Association of Philadelphia
Rhode Island	Central Falls	City of Central Falls
South Carolina	Lancaster County	Communities In Schools
Texas	Houston	Fifth Ward Enrichment Program Inc.
Texas	Fort Worth	Fort Worth Independent School District
Texas	Abilene	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Abilene, Inc.
Texas	Galveston	Gulf Coast Big Brothers & Big Sisters, Inc.
Vermont	St. Johnsbury	Northeast Kingdom Youth Services, d/b/a St. Johnsbury Youth Service Bureau
Vermont	Burlington	Burlington School District
Virginia	Rockbridge	Rockbridge Area Community Services
Virginia	Blacksburg	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Washington	Seattle	Pioneer Human Services
Washington	Walla Walla	Walla Walla County Department of Human Services
Washington	Vancouver	Vancouver Housing Authority
Wisconsin	Fort Atkinson	Opportunities, Inc. of Jefferson County
Wisconsin	Milwaukee	YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee

The National Mentoring Center Bulletin

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News Briefs

■ **NMC Listserv Continues To Grow**—More than 650 mentoring professionals from around the world are now signed up for MentorExchange, the National Mentoring Center (NMC) listserv. MentorExchange acts as a forum for the sharing of innovative ideas, best practices, and resources related to all aspects of youth mentoring. Recently discussed topics include providing scholarships for mentees, preparing youth and volunteers for the end of the match, and offering support to youths on waiting lists. The listserv has been averaging about 35 postings a month and has fostered some very indepth discussions on several topics. You can sign up for the MentorExchange on the NMC Web site at: <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/listserv.html>.

■ **New Titles Added to NMC Library**—The following publications are new to the growing collection of the National Mentoring Center:

- *Rural Youth Outreach: Training Curriculum*
- *Pride and Prejudice: Working With Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Youth*
- *New Directions for Youth Development: A Critical View of Youth Mentoring*
- *To Serve the Present Age: A Basic Guide to Reentry Volunteerism and Mentorship*
- *Elements of Effective Mentoring: A Mentor Training Manual for the In-School Volunteer Mentor*

You can view all recently added titles and search the entire collection on the NMC Web site at: <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/library.html>.



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