



Office of Juvenile Justice
and Delinquency Prevention

NATIONAL MENTORING CENTER BULLETIN



Mentoring is Good Medicine

A young Bosnian immigrant finds help and direction at Barnes-Jewish Hospital

ST. LOUIS, Missouri—For Dzenan Taslamán, it was a matter of being at the right place at the right time. The year was 1995, and the Taslamán family had recently arrived in the relatively peaceful city of St. Louis from their native, war-torn Bosnia. Dzenan was in the seventh grade and was experiencing, as one would expect, a certain amount of difficulty with the transition.

with my schoolwork in the program, but I wasn't sure what to expect."

Dzenan, now a 12th-grader, did receive help with his schoolwork. But he also received something he says he's likely to carry with him and draw from for the rest of his life: mentoring.

The program to which Dzenan was referred is known, quite simply, as the Youth Mentoring Program. Housed at Barnes-Jewish Hospital—one of the country's top-rated medical facilities—the program is designed to shepherd students through their high school careers while giving them an up-close look at the world of work.

Students are recruited in the seventh grade, and enrolled at the beginning of the eighth. They are

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"My counselor called me in and told me I could be in the program if I wanted to be," he says now, as he attempts to condense the ground he's covered in the past five years before rushing off to his part-time job at McDonald's. As if surviving adolescence weren't challenging enough, imagine immigrating halfway around the world, learning a brand new language, and absorbing a foreign culture without getting lost in it. "Anyway," Dzenan says in his near-perfect English, "my counselor told me I would receive help

GENDER ISSUES IN Mentoring

Mentors should "confirm and enhance" girls' prior experience and knowledge

One-size-fits-all" programs for girls are less effective than programs that take into account other factors. Is the girl from a poor or middle-class family? What racial or cultural group does she belong to? Does she have a disability? Does she speak a native language other than English? These factors influence how girls interact with others, not only within their own community but also in the larger society.

Harvard researcher Carol Gilligan did some landmark studies in the 1980s, showing that as girls mature, they gradually lose their self-esteem and "voice"—that is, the power to forcefully express

themselves. They lose confidence in their intellectual abilities and social skills. But a 1991 report from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) asserts that this plunge in self-esteem and self-expression does not cut across groups. The AAUW study discovered that adolescent African American girls do not fit this picture—they do not suffer the drop in self-esteem that Gilligan observed among middle-class White girls. This example illustrates how lumping girls into a general category can hide the experiences of girls of diverse races, ethnic and cultural groups, or backgrounds.

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Northwest Regional
Educational Laboratory

Mentoring School-Age Children: A Classification of Programs

P/PV study finds most programs meet BBBSA benchmarks for quality

RESEARCH NOTES

Find the complete study, *Mentoring School-age Children: A Classification of Programs*, on the Web at www.mentoring.org/images/ppv.pdf

The number of mentoring programs has increased substantially in recent years, Public/Private Ventures has found in a two year study. Nearly 40 percent of the 700-plus programs surveyed had been operating less than five years.

The study—commissioned by The National Mentoring Partnership's Public Policy Council and funded by the U.S. Department of Education—was designed to survey the mentoring landscape and characterize the types of programs currently operating. P/PV collected data from 722 programs ranging from traditional one-on-one programs to group mentoring to school-based programs.

Programs have a variety of goals and expect youth and mentors to engage in a variety of activities. Most programs hope to have a positive impact on youths' personal development, and nearly two-thirds expect to influence youths' academic behavior or performance. About 70 percent expect matches to spend time in social and recreational activities, and nearly 80 percent expect that mentors and youth will spend time on academic activities.

The majority of these programs match one mentor with one youth. But a substantial number (about 20 percent of this sample) match one or more mentors with multiple youth who meet together as a group. And many newer programs are site-based; in these programs mentors and youth are restricted

to meeting in a location determined by the program, most commonly the youth's school. Site-based matches tend to engage in a narrower range of activities—focusing on academic, life-skills, and career-related activities—than traditional community-based programs that are more likely to include social and recreational activities.

Because many mentoring programs that began operating during the 1980s lacked the infrastructure needed to foster positive relationships, a major focus of this study was documenting the level of infrastructure being offered across programs using different mentoring configurations. The data suggest that most are meeting the benchmarks for quality programming exemplified in Big Brothers Big Sisters of America national standards.

More than 80 percent of these programs provide mentors with some orientation and training; for nearly half of the programs, training requires a minimum of two hours of the mentor's time. And more than 80 percent of these programs contact their mentors at least once a month to find out how the match is going; a substantial number (35 percent) of programs contact mentors more than once a month. Community-based programs are somewhat more likely to be characterized by high levels of screening and training, but the two program types are similar in terms of the level of support they provide their mentors.

—Jean Grossman

OJJDP Head Shay Bilchik Steps Down

FROM OJJDP

Shay Bilchik, Administrator of the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), left the agency at the end of February to become Executive Director of the Child Welfare League of America. Appointed by President Clinton in 1994, Bilchik was responsible for tremendous growth and expansion of OJJDP's efforts to serve America's youth. Under his direction, the agency has supported preventive strategies for reducing juvenile delinquency, such as mentoring. OJJDP had always administered justice for youthful offenders, but Bilchik made creating positive opportunities for at-risk youth an equal part

of the agency's mission. His efforts to support youth through innovative programs will certainly continue in his new position.

The staff of the National Mentoring Center would like to extend its thanks and appreciation to Shay Bilchik. His vision and leadership was instrumental in the creation of the JUMP program and our Center. We wish him luck in his new position, and will continue his goal of advocating and supporting mentoring as a method of making a difference in the lives of young people.

Find Work-based Mentoring Ideas on Our Web Site

The workplace is an ideal place to build and sustain mentor programs

Work-based learning, as described in our cover story on St. Louis' Barnes-Jewish Hospital program, is an excellent environment in which mentoring relationships can develop. Our lending library offers a number of excellent resources dealing with work-based mentoring and the role mentors can play in the school-to-work transition, such as:

■ Washington State Guide to Planning, Implementing and Improving Work-based Learning: A Guide for Educators at All Levels (1998)

This excellent guide is designed for school instructors and administrators who want to initiate or improve work-based learning. It is also a good resource for employers and others in the community who are interested in providing work-based learning opportunities for students. The guide deals with all aspects of getting a program going, from legal issues to partnering with employers in the community. It is also available online at: http://www.wa-wbl.com/educators_guide/index.html.

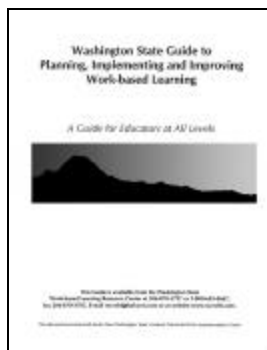
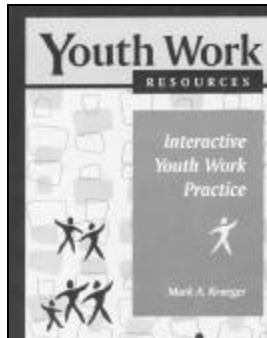
■ Mentorship: The Essential Guide for Schools and Business (1992)

New to our collection, this book describes how mentoring programs can help unite education and business to meet the best interests of individual students. It offers a detailed description of the curriculum, structure, and operation of a work-based mentoring program designed to help students build skills and succeed in an area of interest outside the traditional classroom. This is a valuable resource for showing the potential of work-based mentorship.

■ School-to-Work Shadowing Handbook (1997)

Developed by Pennsylvania's Cambria County School-to-Work Connection, this three-part guide describes a job-shadowing program involving high school students and local businesses. The three sections—"School-based Mentor Handbook," "Student Shadowing Handbook," and "Work-based Mentor Handbook"—emphasize effective strategies for communicating with youth in a work environment. The guide also features sample forms and program development guidelines.

RESOURCE CORNER



■ Creating a Successful Youth Mentoring Program: A Practical Guide for Hospitals (1997)

Often among the largest institutions in a community, hospitals are an excellent environment for work-based mentoring opportunities. This kit looks at some of the best ideas and practices for implementing a career-focused mentoring program. It includes a detailed program development guide, career development and community partnership booklets, and a guide to assess student achievement and experience.

■ Mentoring for School to Work: Fostering Student Success (1997)

This brief guide, developed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, is an excellent overview of the major components of school-to-work mentoring programs. It presents different models of work-based mentoring programs, effective communication strategies, and teaching resources and lesson plans.

■ Best Practices in Workplace Employee Volunteer Programs (1996)

Businesses across America are recognizing the importance of employee community involvement. This short guide focuses on the "Principles of Excellence in Corporate Community Service" as developed by the Points of Light Foundation. It examines the details of creating management support for employee volunteer programs, recruiting participants, and collaborating in the community.

■ Interactive Youth Work Practice (1998)

This Child Welfare League of America publication promotes the theory that youth develop valuable skills through interactions and cooperative communication in a work environment. It examines what can be gained, not only by the student, but by the adult participants as well. This publication is an excellent description and examination of the interaction that takes place in a work-based mentoring environment, and offers many strategies for strengthening those interactions and relationships.

JUMP and SafeFutures programs may request items directly via telephone, e-mail, fax, or through the Resource Collection section on our Web site. Other programs and individuals may request materials through Interlibrary Loan at their local library.

girls: (continued from page 1)

In Harvard's "Understanding Adolescence Study," Amy Sullivan suggests that girls may not desire or seek out what has been referred to as the "classical" or "male" model of the mentoring relationship. This model features a one-on-one relationship between an experienced adult and younger person, in which the mentor seeks to develop the character and competence of the younger person. In this model, the mentor instructs and guides the mentee by demonstrating personal, social, and job skills, and by challenging and encouraging him or her. The kind of mentoring that focuses on teaching, socializing, and role modeling is not "appropriate or sufficient for women in relationships with adolescent girls," Sullivan suggests. Instead, she says, a two-way relationship appears to be more effective with young women. Mentoring relationships, says Sullivan, must confirm and enhance, rather than discount, the knowledge and experience of young women before guidance or instruction can take place.

Group mentoring of young women recently has become popular. Practitioners recognize that females (as well as many cultural groups) greatly value group affiliation. While leaving lots of room to cultivate personal expression and goals, group-oriented cultures place a higher value on family authority, reciprocal obligations, sharing and cooperation, and often include extended family or people with no formal kin relationships in their definition of "family."

Girls of different classes and cultures may react differently to the risks of forming and keeping relationships. And they may display resilience in different ways. For example, African American and lower-income White girls tend to hang on to their ability to speak up, express anger, and disagree with others. African American girls tend to be socialized to resist racism, to be strong and self-reliant, and to expect to work outside the home. Lower-income White girls appear to have more in common with African American girls than with middle-class White girls.

The "Understanding Adolescence Study" found that girls could benefit from a mentoring relationship that:

- Gives advice, not lectures
- Fosters a therapeutic relationship that provides a safe space for speaking one's mind and empowers girls to stop abuse if it is occurring

- Is based on partnership
- Allows girls to voice their concerns about social issues, prejudice, and discrimination (modeled in the relationship of "othermother" for African American women)
- Is aware of what's helpful and what's harmful as the mentor teaches, challenges, and acts as a role model
- Listens to and validates what young women think and feel; shares adult experiences

A study of 47 participants in a Hispanic mother-daughter program found that role models need to talk about the cumulative nature of success, the setbacks they have encountered, and the availability of needed support by others. If they don't, their well-intentioned presentations may have little effect. After three presentations by Latina career role models, for instance, girls in the audience still perceived gender as an obstacle to overcome; felt ethnic discrimination and prejudice were overwhelming and pervasive; felt they were victims of social and peer pressure; expressed a sense of resignation in the face of destiny; and struggled with lack of confidence and fear of the unknown.

Most effective role models for African American girls are similar to the girls in age and social background. For Native American girls, maintaining cultural ties, increasing awareness of career options, and involving relatives are beneficial.

Families that are poor or outside the mainstream of American culture may not encourage or support their daughters' career aspirations. For these girls, support from teachers is especially important. Including mothers in mentoring programs for Latinas may have more enduring effects on their daughter's educational and occupational aspirations than for other groups. Girls from highly patriarchal family structures will probably need special help in goal-setting and problem-solving, working-parent skills, and financial management.

In *Guiding Practices for Female Programming*, published by the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in 1998, juvenile-justice professionals advise mentoring program planners to develop and incorporate effective gender- and culture-specific practices into their programs. Effective programs "are designed to recognize the risk and dangers girls face because of gender, especially a history of abuse or other forms of victimization. They encourage resiliency factors and life skills that help girls make a positive transition to womanhood."

—Barbara Warren-Sams



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HOSPITAL: (continued from page 1)

matched one-on-one with hospital employees, and for the next four years they visit the hospital once a month during the academic year. Their visits consist of activities such as job shadowing, departmental tours, workshops on life skills, personal skills development, vocational and career skills, and health education.

The school-year activities dovetail with a more extensive summer program, in which students work on developing pre-employment skills, take tours of local colleges and universities, spend six weeks in an actual work environment with their mentors, and, during their final summer, complete an internship. So far, participants have worked in a broad range of settings, including the gift shop, the security department, the pharmacy, and various administrative offices.

Dzenan, who worked in the pharmacy for four summers, did “whatever needed to be done—ran medicine, stocked shelves, answered phones,” he recounts.

“It’s exciting,” says Cassandra Williams, who has been coordinating the program since its inception in 1994. “I really get to see how the students grow and develop over the years. In June 1999 we got to see our first year of graduates. For me, it was like being a proud parent.”

Williams says it was her personal interest in the growth and development of adolescents that drew her to the program. “We truly present real opportunities for youth, and for me that was enticing,” she says. Initially, the program drew from middle schools around the city. But problems cropped up. For one thing, middle schools in St. Louis disburse students to several high schools, making student tracking difficult. Also, during the mentoring program’s second year, the school district experienced a change in administration, and the mentoring program lost its base of support.

Williams found a home for her program in University City, a close-in, culturally diverse suburb of St. Louis that is home to Washington University, which has close ties to Barnes-Jewish.

“There’s only one high school in University City, so we cut down quite a bit on disbursement,” Williams says.

The students Williams targets for participation in the program fall at neither end of the success spectrum.

“We look for middle-of-the-road students who have potential and can go either way, who with some encouragement can maximize their potential,” she says. “They may have issues with self-esteem. And yes, a lot of our students do come from single-parent families. But once I get to know the students, I realize they come here with lots of different issues.”

Williams says she uses various means to recruit mentors, such as setting up an informational table in the hospital lobby or near the cafeteria.

“As with most things, you have your highs and lows,” she says. “Health care is a constantly changing environment. If people are busy and stressed, then it’s difficult to recruit. But when things are more relaxed, it’s easier.”

Williams notes that, generally, it’s easier to recruit females. One exception, however, is Gordon Evans, who was matched with Dzenan five years ago. Evans missed having a young person in his life after his three sons grew up and moved away.

“Through Dzenan, I’ve been able to maintain a tie to having a kid around,” says Evans, who worked for 34 years as the operations manager of the pharmacy and now serves as a consultant. Initially, the two spent time together only within the program, but over the years their mentoring relationship has blossomed into something that more closely resembles family.

“We’ve become pretty good friends,” says Evans. “He’s been over to my house, and I’ve gone over to his for birthday parties. We’ve gone to ball games together, and I’ve gone to see him play soccer and baseball at his school. I think we just connected.” Dzenan, who will head to St. Louis University next fall, couldn’t agree more.

“I wouldn’t be who I am without him,” he says. “He’s been one of the greatest people in my life. I see where he is—he has a great family, a great job—and I picture myself being there and being a good role model for somebody else someday. He’s always there, always willing to help when I need help. Gordon is my second parent.”

—Patrick Collins

The National Mentoring Center Bulletin

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**NEWS
BRIEFS**

In the coming year, the National Mentoring Center will be holding a number of training events around the country to assist mentoring programs and professionals in creating successful mentoring relationships and services. Training opportunities include:

■ Regional Training Workshops

Between May and November, the Center will hold a series of five regional training workshops. These events, which will be open to all mentoring programs, will focus on the Center's new research-based training curriculum, Strengthening Mentoring Programs. Expert presenters from around the country will join our own training staff to facilitate the workshops. The curriculum, developed for the Center by Public/Private Ventures in collaboration with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, offers valuable information on starting a mentoring program, expanding an existing program, training mentors, and creating community partnerships. The curriculum draws heavily on quality benchmarks identified by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

The workshops will be broken into several areas of focus, or tracks, which allow participants to concentrate on their most pressing needs. Additional speakers and presentations on hot topics in mentoring will also be provided. Likely host cities include San Antonio, St. Louis, Providence, Raleigh/Durham, and Seattle or Portland. Watch for details in future mailings, or call the Center at 1-800-547-6339, ext.135

■ National Mentoring Conference

Next fall, the Center will hold a National Mentoring Conference in conjunction with the National Mentoring Partnership, one of the leaders in mentoring advocacy. The conference will feature experts from around the country; workshops designed to start, enhance, or expand existing programs; and the Center's new training curriculum. It will also provide opportunities for networking and sharing ideas among programs of all sizes, types, and affiliations from around the country. Watch for dates and location in the next Bulletin.



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