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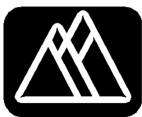


Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Secrets of School Mentoring

A pioneer in school-based mentoring shares 15 tips for successful programs

By Susan Weinberger

Mentoring is a concept that has existed, formally and informally, since the beginning of time. All of us who are successful can think back and remember those individuals in our own or extended family, as well as in the community, at work, or in our churches and synagogues who have been there for us. These special people have guided us, provided us with unconditional love, protected and nurtured us, and sent us a very important message: "You count and I will always be there to support you." These individuals are mentors.

Over the past two decades, school-based mentoring has emerged as a most popular approach to improve the self-esteem, attitudes, attendance, and achievement of school-aged children. Its instant success can be attributed to the program's basic principles. It matches caring adults in the community with youth who could benefit from the attention and long-term relationships. The time commitment is only one hour a week in a safe, monitored, and supervised environment, namely, the school. Mentors like the safety factor, and one hour is very doable. Together, the mentors and mentees decide on the activities in which they will engage.

This initiative has now become a critical intervention in schools across this country. And the benefits are not one-directional. The mentors benefit as much from the experience as their protégés. School-based mentoring is one of the most powerful initiatives I have ever witnessed in my 38-year career in the field of education.

It is impossible for a volunteer mentor to walk into a school with no preparation or training—no matter how good his or her intentions—and expect that the mentoring experience will be a positive and meaningful one. It is equally unfair to presume that a program will be successful unless a well-organized infrastructure has been established to monitor and evaluate the effort.

See 15 TIPS, Page 8

Tapping a New Volunteer Pool

A recent study from P/PV finds early signs of promise in the school-based approach

School-based mentoring is one of the most promising and rapidly expanding approaches to mentoring nationally, says Carla Herrera in a recent report published by Public/Private Ventures. "Yet because they are relatively new," she adds, "we know very little about these programs."

To begin answering that need, the report takes a critical look at two school-based programs sponsored by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA)—one in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and one in Jacksonville, Florida. School-based programs are a new addition to BBBSA, which has run community-based ones for years. The report, School-Based Mentoring: A First Look Into Its Potential, sought answers to questions such as these: Who is served by school-based mentoring in these two cities? Who volunteers and how much support do they receive? What occurs in the relationships that are built? How do conditions and results differ from community programs?

See STUDY, Page 7

School-based Programs Can Take Many Shapes

Program designs vary to meet many needs

Mentoring programs in schools come in a variety of formats. Some focus on academic achievement, others on providing a role model for troubled youth. When planning a school-based program, administrators should keep in mind that there are several different styles to choose from:

■ **Lunch-Buddy Programs—**These programs involve an adult from the community (or a staff volunteer) coming into the school and having lunch with a child at least once a week. All of the mentor/mentee contact is supervised to some degree. The pair can engage in activities such as reading or doing homework, or the relationship can be more friendly and informal. These types of programs are an excellent way of partnering with businesses in the community, giving employees a way to get involved without sacrificing much time out of their workday.

■ **Vocational Mentoring Programs—**The focus here is on training and preparing students for the world of work. Skilled professionals can volunteer in the classroom, lending their expertise to student projects while forming mentoring relationships. These programs can also involve students spending time at an off-campus worksite.

■ **Peer Mentoring Programs—**Peer programs are increasingly popular as a way to reach students, especially those who distrust adult authority. These programs are often used to integrate new students into a school or to offer academic support from an older student. These programs can be organized by a school counselor or teacher, or developed through a student group.

■ **Tutoring Programs—**These programs focus primarily on academic achievement, with the mentoring relationship being more of a natural friendship rather than a formal component. Bringing in adult volunteers from the community to assist in classrooms and study halls is a great way to facilitate these informal mentoring relationships, while helping students meet academic goals.

■ **Telementoring Programs—**An increasingly popular way to reach youth is telementoring, in which a class or an individual student partners with an adult via e-mail and other electronic means. Mentors can assist with homework or projects, or offer guidance. Strict monitoring of interaction by teachers/staff is essential for risk management in these types of programs.

Administrators and organizers of programs may wish to implement a combination of these various styles: a lunch-buddy program augmented by e-mail correspondence and support, for example. A successful program will design a model that fits the needs of the students while taking available resources (volunteers, staff, money, etc.) into account. The possible rewards for students, just like the variety of program components, are limitless.

—Michael Garringer

Schools Host Mentor Projects From Coast to Coast

Across the United States, school-based mentoring is getting promising results

Mentoring projects for children of every grade level are taking root from the West Coast to the East. Here we report on four programs, from the national to the local, which show just how diverse they have become.

"Short-term projects can actually do harm. I believe in long-term intervention."

The Kansas City YMCA's Aim for Youth mentoring program, established in 1968, was initially community-based, providing mentors to middle or high school age children who had been involved with the judicial system. In 1997, the focus shifted from the larger community to the local school. "Mentors still function as role models and friends," says Cindy Hoffecker, program director, "but now they also function as advocates for the children at their schools."

Mentors meet their charges at school for at least an hour a week, but the pairs may also spend time together outside the school setting. Some take advantage of free memberships offered by the YMCA, which also occasionally sponsors group activities.

"My goal is to set up 60 lasting matches over the school year," says Hoffecker. "So far this year I have 40." Some of the matches are unconventional. "We know young men need relationships with older guys, but that isn't always possible," she says. "Some of the best relationships have been between White women and young African American men. One young guy, since grown up, reestablished relationships with his family and joined the Navy, and still occasionally calls his former mentor from his Navy vessel."

The YMCA program benefits from community alliances. For three years, a pharmaceutical company near an alternative school where mentoring occurs provided funding and volunteers. In addition, the Kansas City government and a number of corporations offer release time to employees to become mentors.

"It's very rewarding," says Hoffecker, "although some volunteers, especially younger ones, want to see overnight success, and they rarely do. To support them, we start with inservice training and we do lots of celebrating. We send them notes; we have an annual dinner and a summer picnic. We also recognize the staff in the schools that we work with."

Helping One Student to Succeed (HOSTS), based in Dallas, Texas, is one of the largest mentoring programs in the United States. With operations in 42 states and El Salvador, HOSTS supplements classroom instruction to improve language arts and math performance for all grade levels, including adults in community colleges and elsewhere.

HOSTS's computerized database contains the curriculum and standards for each state. When a mentor works with a student, supplementary work is available that relates directly to skills being addressed in class. "Or if we're working with a community group, we test for reading and interest level and learning style, and tailor the work accordingly," says Ted Woolery, CEO of HOSTS.

See COAST, Page 6

Learning to Love reading

A half hour a week with the right mentor turns a troubled student into an enthusiastic learner

SUCCESS STORY

"Anthony is now reading above average for his level."

When Scott Crabtree first met Anthony, the seven-year-old African American boy was quiet and shy. "And when I finally got him to start talking to me, he expressed some concern about our differences," says the very blond, blue-eyed Crabtree, the vice president of a computer software firm.

Anthony is a student at Boise-Eliot school in Northeast Portland, one of the district's largest and poorest elementary schools. Beside getting Title I assistance (federal funds for disadvantaged learners), the school qualifies for just about "every kind of grant money that's available," says Wendy Douglas, Boise-Eliot's voluntary reading coordinator.

Douglas coordinates the SMART (Start Making a Reader Today) program at the school, and it was she who matched Crabtree and Anthony. SMART is a statewide program in Oregon that offers reading support to struggling students from kindergarten to second grade. "Anthony started with Scott in the beginning of first grade," Douglas reports. "Anthony was recommended for SMART because he had low test scores in reading and some speech delays."

Crabtree's commitment was to pick up Anthony at his classroom and spend a half-hour reading with him in SMART's reading room down the hall every week. (A second mentor also works with Anthony.) For the first several months, Crabtree just sat next to the student on a couch and read picture books to him. "I tried to engage him, and very gradually got some conversation going," Crabtree recalls. "At first he would just hold the book or turn the pages. He didn't volunteer much."

By the end of the first year, Anthony began to emerge from his shell to show a playful side. "We were reading a book about different kinds of fruit," says Crabtree. "He told me, 'Oh yes, we have lots of strawberries in our yard, and blueberries.' I said, 'Oh? What else?' 'Watermelon, peaches....'Or we'd read a book about whales, and he'd say, 'I have a pet whale at home. No, I have 40 pet whales!'

"We have a little ritual that when I pick him up, I always ask him, 'How are you doing? What're you up to?' But a couple of times I forgot to ask him, and he asked me those same questions, just the way I ask him."

Crabtree began asking Anthony to find letters in the text that he had recently studied in class. First letters, then words, then longer words. "SMART is very good about passing information on to us," says Crabtree. Each child has a folder in which it is noted what a child is studying in class, so mentors can work in tandem with classroom instruction.

"It's been an amazing transformation," says Crabtree. "We went from more and more words to simple sentences, then I heard him shadow reading, just audible, a half-second behind me. Then he read a page for every page I read.

"It was a highlight for both of us when one day he picked up a stack of 14 books. He read all 14 that day, and he was blown away that he could do that."

Reports Douglas: "I've had two reading specialists come up to me this year, and say that whoever that man is who is working with Anthony is doing a great job. He has another mentor, but Anthony's face doesn't light up the same way when he shows up. He is now reading above average for his level, and that just doesn't happen very often."

Crabtree likes the SMART program because although he doesn't have much time to spare, he really likes children and wanted to be involved. "SMART is a very simple, direct program," he says approvingly.

The ultimate highlight for Crabtree came recently when Anthony presented him with a card he had made himself. On the envelope, the student had written his name and drawn 14 boxes, each labeled 'book.' On the inside, he had drawn two stick figures sitting on a couch, and a heart, and he had written 'I can read,' and 'I love you.'

Wendy Douglas is also thrilled. "Now Anthony loves to read," she says. "And for the last two years, he's been in a class for kids who are behind, and who have behavior problems. But I know in third grade he won't be placed in that class."

—Maya Muir

The Top 10 Reasons

Why agencies should begin school-based mentoring programs

1. **More children served.** School-based mentoring is an additional way to provide caring adults in the lives of children in need.

2. **New sources of volunteers.** School-based mentoring programs attract new categories of volunteers who would not apply for the community-based program.

3. **New opportunities to serve children.** Children who would not be brought to the program by parents may be referred by their teachers.

4. **Cost effectiveness.** School-based mentoring tends to be cost-efficient through group or cluster recruitment, screening, training, and supervision.

5. **New matching opportunities.** Cross-gender, cross-racial, and intergenerational matching can often occur more comfortably in the school setting than in the community at large.

6. **Strengthened schools.** Teachers and schools can no longer address the increasing needs of school-aged youth alone; they need screened, trained, supervised volunteers.

7. **Agency public relations.** Mentoring service is more visible in schools than in the community. Therefore, school-based mentoring provides potential new marketing opportunities.

8. **New funding streams.** Federal, state, county, and municipal entities are supporting school reform and a variety of prevention efforts housed within school programs.

9. **Shared resources.** Partnerships with corporations, manufacturing plants, high schools and colleges, and other affiliation organizations may bolster revenue, in-kind donations, and other specific support to expand your program in addition to providing volunteers.

10. **More community-based Bigs.** School-based mentoring may increase the number of volunteers in the community-based program, due to increased visibility and some conversion among school-based mentors to the traditional Bigs.

Adapted from Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, School-based Mentoring: Elementary Lessons, 1999.

> "Mentors still function as role models and friends. But now they also function as advocates for the children at their schools."

COAST: (continued from page 3)

Started by volunteers in 1971, HOSTS became a nonprofit in 1977, incorporating as a for-profit organization in 1984. "As it grew, it became too big for a handful of investors to do from the goodness of their hearts," says Woolery. "Now we sell our program to whatever schools or community groups need our services."

HOSTS's many corporate partnerships advance its work. For example, in cities where it has manufacturing facilities, the Kellogg Company commits 18 percent of its workforce as mentors. USA Today delivers a newspaper to each HOSTS student, plus a brief electronic lesson on one news item predigested for mentors. The newspaper goes home with each student, "where," says Woolery, "it is often the only printed matter families have."

Before taking over at HOSTS, Woolery was the superintendent of public schools in Dallas when HOSTS started a pilot project there. "I had my doubts," he recalls. "But we put it into 15 of our toughest schools and got instant results. It was tremendous."

Start Making a Reader Today (SMART) is a statewide organization in Oregon dedicated to improving reading in the youngest students (K- 2). "We try to replicate the living room experience," says Valerie Anderson, project manager for SMART in the Portland Metro region. "Many kids come to kindergarten having been read 1,000 to 1,500 picture books; others come with exposure to only 10 or 25. They already feel like failures! Our goal is to create a nonpressurized environment and nurture relationships that make reading less risky for the inexperienced child."

Children may be recommended by their teachers for inclusion if there has been upheaval in their lives, if English is their second language, or if they are in the lowest 25 percent of their class in reading. Children not yet served by programs of this type may be included if, with support, it is believed they'll catch up with their classmates.

In SMART, children find someone who will read with them, celebrate what they can already do, and gently nudge them to achieve more. Students may select 14 books each year to keep, which encourages sharing books with family members and strengthens the culture of books and reading in the home.

SMART was started in 1982 by former Portland mayor (later Oregon Governor) Neil Goldschmidt, when he turned over $80,000 raised for an aborted reelection campaign to start the Children's Foundation which sponsors SMART. "Goldschmidt wanted to do something about the school dropout rate," says Anderson. "But high school and middle school teachers told him that the problem starts even younger." Now in nearly 170 Oregon schools, the program aims to reach 10,000 young students this year, and within three years, to double the number and be in every county in the state

Project RAISE (Raising Ambitions, Instilling Self-Esteem) in Baltimore, Maryland, is loosely patterned after the "I Have A Dream Foundation" established by New York philanthropist Eugene Lang, who offered to fund a college education for students completing high school.

The Abell Foundation, which sponsors RAISE, makes the same commitment to its students; after all financial aid and loans have been obtained, it will make up gaps in college tuition. However, for most students and their parents, that commitment is initially less compelling than the mentoring RAISE provides, staff members report.

One of two projects of the Baltimore Mentoring Institute, RAISE started in 1988 with 411 sixth-graders at inner-city schools who were a year or two behind in reading or math. RAISE made a commitment to mentor them until they graduated.

RAISE has a staff coordinator who monitors the relationships and serves as a caseworker. Volunteers spend a minimum of one hour every two weeks with their mentee. But many of them spend more time, says Richard Rowe, Director of the institute. RAISE seeks a sponsoring organization such as a bank, university, or fraternity to supply some funding and volunteers for each group of students.

"Out of the first 'class,' 57 percent graduated on time," says Rowe. "Given the problems they face and a dropout rate of about 70 percent in the control population, that's very good. But in the second round, we've started even earlier, and we're predicting a 70 percent success rate."

The second RAISE class started in 1990 with six groups: two in sixth grade, one in fifth, and three in second. That's a long commitment, says Rowe. But he believes in that. "Short-term projects can actually do harm. I believe in long-term intervention."

—Maya Muir

STUDY: (continued from page 1)

From the P/PV study, one clear advantage of programs based in schools emerged: They attract volunteers who could not or would not volunteer for community-based mentoring. The small sample size—16 mentors—must be taken into account. But for these volunteers, at least, the shorter time commitment (one hour minimum versus the four hours required for traditional programs) was key. Some of the volunteers, particularly men, worked at corporations located near the schools. In general, it appeared that the "known" school setting felt safe and comfortable to many mentors because it was structured and familiar. They were more apprehensive about the idea of meeting kids on the child's home turf—in unfamiliar neighborhoods or in homes where family dynamics are an issue.

Most of the children in both programs under study were in elementary school, and many were minorities. Staff referred the most needy children to the programs. In contrast, community-based programs require parents to make the initial contact and application—a requirement that prevents many kids from from ever being identified for mentoring. Many children directly benefited from their mentor's advocacy and participation within the school. Some mentors attended parent-teacher conferences, went to science fairs, and/or met with principals. Mentored students often seemed to get a boost in status among their peers from the presence of "their" adults.

Many volunteers in the programs were recruited through employers, high schools, or colleges. The focused nature of this recruitment required less time from BBBS staff, and allowed easier targeting of particular demographic groups, such as men. Training was similar in community-based versus school-based programs. But the levels of screening and supervision differed: In school-based programs, screening was less rigorous, while supervision was tighter than in community-based programs. Because mentors in school settings typically are not alone with the child, screening can be less intense, while supervision can be more intense. And the school setting allows for communication with teachers and other school personnel. This adds up to more information about the child and more support for the volunteer. At the same time, this easy access to children and information allowed case managers to take on significantly larger caseloads. Mentors—who want to know that they are making a difference—greatly appreciated the intensive supervision and the feedback from teachers that is not possible in a community setting.

Although there was some concern that the reduced time mentoring in the school setting would not be sufficient for the development of real relationships or for a positive impact on children, neither fear was borne out in practice. (In fact, many mentors put in more than the required one hour.) About half of the parents said they saw academic improvement resulting from mentoring. Improvements in confidence and behavior also resulted, but Herrera stresses that these changes do not happen immediately.

Important questions raised by the results of this study include:
• What incentives do companies have for collaborating in mentoring projects?
• How can these collaborations best be sustained?
• How do agencies forge strong relationships with schools?
• Can the gains won by school-based mentoring survive beyond the relationship?

The answer to one question—are these programs affordable?—is clearly yes. Average costs range from $1,000 per year for a community-based match, compared to $600 per year for a school-based one.

Finally, Herrera cautions that the two programs examined were well-established and exemplary, with extremely involved case managers. Also, the number of staff, mentors, and children interviewed was small, and investigators did not speak with people who might have been more critical of or disaffected from the program. ■

How Mentors Can Boost Learning

One volunteer met with outside professionals about his mentee's physical health and attended parent-teacher conferences. Another set up meetings with the principal to discuss his mentee's difficulties in the classroom.

A case manager in Tulsa confirmed that several of her volunteers are involved in parent-teacher conferences, science fairs, and other school events, especially when parents fail to get involved.

By working closely with the child, mentors may also see difficulties that would otherwise be missed.

A teacher told us about a mentor who discovered his mentee's dyslexia; the teacher had not seen any symptoms because her students do not read out loud in class.

—Carla Herrera

15 tips: (continued from page 1)

I am asked frequently what are the most critical factors that will enable a school-based program to flourish over time rather than fizzle and die. After 15 years in the field of mentoring, I believe that the two most important components are: (1) a strong infrastructure in the school district that embraces the program, and (2) reliable mentors who show up when they say they will. I offer the following tips to ensure optimum success in a school-based program:

"Recruit only mentors who are caring, committed, and patient."

15 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING

Tip 1 When establishing a mentoring program, make sure that everyone in the community involved with youth is part of the planning. The "table" should include members of the school board, superintendent, all school staff, parents, top officials in business and civic groups, union officials, parent-teacher organizations, advisory councils, churches and synagogues, and all programs in the community that are involved with youth.

Tip 2 Selecting the first school to begin a program is critical. Make sure that it has an outstanding principal, a cohesive staff, and a friendly secretary. Unwilling schools should be put on a waiting list! The school board should craft a written policy on mentoring and have it approved at a public meeting. Make sure to check and see if the school district has any strict requirements to become a volunteer. Does the district have an insurance policy that covers all volunteers in a school building? Do they require a tuberculosis test to work with kids?

Tip 3 Gather demographic and dropout statistics. Conduct focus groups, interviews, surveys, and meetings with teachers to determine the right grade level to begin a program.

Tip 4 When recruiting mentors, do not forget those dedicated volunteers from business who are already involved in your active partnership programs. They should be approached first to consider becoming involved as mentors.

Tip 5 Recruit only mentors who are caring, committed, and patient. They should be good listeners who keep appointments, like kids, have an outstanding employment record and a good sense of humor. They should also be free of alcohol and drug problems. All others should not apply! Mentors can be recruited from many different sources. A few that come to mind include corporations; retirement communities or other senior citizen groups; fraternal, social, and civic organizations; church and synagogue groups; government, fire, and police agencies; institutions of higher education; health agencies; the IRS and FBI; United Way; mass media organizations; and labor organizations.

Tip 6 Conduct a thorough screening on all prospective mentors. This includes criminal background checks, reference checks, personal interviews, and examination of employment history. Many school districts pay for background checks on new teachers and will include mentors in the budget. Other schools do not have the money to cover the cost of the background checks. When this is the case, other options are available. In some districts, the chief of police works closely with the schools and offers free or reduced cost for the checks. In other communities, businesses will pick up the cost for their own employee mentors. If none of these options are available to you, ask the mentors to pay for the check. It will be their only out-of-pocket cost.

Tip 7 All mentors must be trained before beginning in the program. School staff— particularly guidance counselors, psychologists and social workers—should participate in the training. Offer volunteers the skills to become good mentors, including strategies for building self-esteem in children; instruction in being a good listener; familiarity with the policies and procedures of the district, including mandated reporting of abuses; strategies for each session to assist them in their role; and insight into the typical profile of the child with whom they will be working. Invite the superintendent of schools to address and thank the new mentors. At the end of the session, give new mentors a table tent to put on their desk that says: "I am proud to be a mentor." It is also a great recruitment tool for new prospects.

Tip 8 Parental permission must be obtained for all children who enter the program. If the family speaks a language other than English, make sure the permission form is in their first language.

Tip 9 The school principal, teachers, and support staff comprise the committee that recommends and matches mentors and mentees. It is very important to match a diverse group of youngsters as the program begins. Typically, the kids who are selected have poor self-esteem, are hostile and angry, do not take risks or get along well with their peers, are socially and emotionally detached at school, and lack a safety net and support system in their lives. The youth selected should include those from one parent as well as from two-parent families; those who are rich and those who are poor; those who are minorities and those who are not. These deliberate matches send a critical message to the community from the beginning of the program. Mentoring benefits all kids in a school, not just a few. If we label just a certain few for the program, we will lose in the end.

Tip 10 Identify one person at each school who is the liaison for the program. The individual is typically a guidance counselor, social worker, nurse, psychologist, or teacher. Each business or organization identifies one person to be their company or agency liaison to work with the school staff to ensure success of the program.

Tip 11 Weekly sessions include activities that mentors and mentees decide together. On the elementary level, these may include reading, working on the computer, doing an arts-and-crafts project, writing stories or poems, playing basketball in the gymnasium, learning a foreign language, or just walking outside or sitting under a tree and talking. On the middle school and high school levels, activities might include doing a community service project; taking a career-interest inventory; or learning how to interview, write a resume, and dress appropriately for a job. It also could include searching the want ads and exploring careers, post-secondary education, and financial aid and career opportunities. Schools and mentees understand and should be flexible if a mentor has to cancel a session. If mentors are unable to make a scheduled meeting, calling the school is one way to communicate the change and to reschedule. Another is to fax the youth and have the message delivered straight to their classroom. In my experience, the kids like this fax almost as much as the real live person!

Tip 12 Mentors cannot work in a vacuum. At regular intervals in the program, schedule brown-bag lunches. The mentors come together to discuss how they are doing and what additional assistance they require from school staff. Allow mentors to communicate with teachers by notes and telephone calls. Input from staff provides ongoing support and feedback which mentors require in order to stay the long haul.

Tip 13 At year-end, the program hosts a recognition event to thank and encourage mentors. You may wish to consider awards in various categories: to the company that has recruited the most new mentors; the company liaison who is the most enthusiastic supporter of the initiative; the school principal who is the greatest proponent of the program; and the teacher or school liaison who has dedicated him or herself to the program. It is a good idea to recognize and thank a devoted school secretary who assists with the mentoring program, too!

Tip 14 The family can play an important role in the partnership. Invite the family to participate in events at school three or four evenings a year. Mentors and mentees join the youth's family for potluck dinners, a square dance, or other activities. The best way to ensure that the family will be there is to offer them free transportation, food, and child care for younger children.

Tip 15 School-based mentoring takes place during the school year only. Many mentors would like to stay in contact with their mentees during the summer months. Mentors should address and stamp a few envelopes and give them to their mentees. Ask each to write mentors a note or draw a picture and drop it in the mailbox. Mentors can do the same. Swap photos before the end of the school year to remember each other during the summer months. Examine a calendar and determine how many weeks it will be until you see each other again.

Dr. Susan G. Weinberger is President of the Mentor Consulting Group and Chairman of the Public Policy Council of the National Mentoring Partnership. She designed and developed the first school-based mentoring program in America in Norwalk, Connecticut, in the early 1980s.

"It is very important to match a diverse group of youngsters as the program begins."

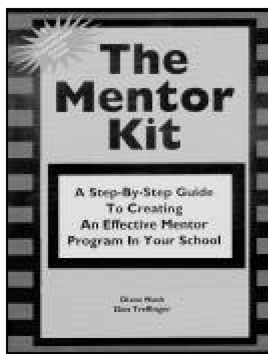
School-based Mentoring Ideas Available on Our Web Site

Find guidance on designing and running programs in partnership with schools

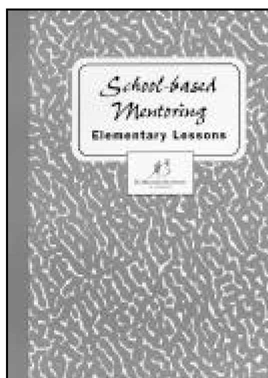
There are many excellent publications available to assist administrators and program developers in designing and implementing an effective school-based mentoring program. These resources are just a few of the titles available for loan from the National Mentoring Center's lending library to clients across the United States. All of the Center's library materials may be requested by OJJDP-funded JUMP and Safe Futures sites by telephone, e-mail, or through our Web site (www.nwrel.org/mentoring). Other programs and individuals may request materials by interlibrary loan through their local library. For further information, contact Resource Specialist Michael Garringer at 1-800-547-6339, ext. 647.

RESOURCE CORNER

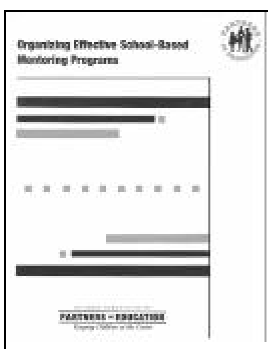
Yes, You Can: Establishing Mentoring Programs To Prepare Youth for College (1998)—This U.S. Department of Education publication is an excellent how-to guide for starting a school-based mentoring program. Chapters cover all aspects of mentoring program development, from need assessment to dealing with unforeseen obstacles. Examples of successful programs from around the country are also included. This publication is also available on the department's Web site at: http://www.ed.gov/pubs/YesYouCan/.



School-based Mentoring: Elementary Lessons (1999)—This kit is a comprehensive guide to developing a school-based mentoring program. Based on research conducted by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, it takes the reader step-by-step through the process of planning an effective program. Particularly helpful is a computer disk (PC) containing a number of sample forms and procedures.



Mentors: Making a Difference in Our Public Schools (1992)—This book by Tom Evans, founder of MENTOR—a program involving mentors from 550 law firms in 20 states—focuses on individuals who have made a commitment to mentoring kids. It is "both an appeal and a guide," according to Fred Hechinger, a senior advisor to Carnegie Corporation of New York who wrote the foreword to the book. Among the mentors the book features are such celebrities as Hillary Clinton, Arnold Schwartzenegger, Bill Cosby, and Ross Perot. Hechinger identifies two "important sub-themes" in the book: "start now" and "start small." "Schools have long suffered from the consequences of bigness," he writes. "Youngsters, submerged in the mass, lose their identity as individuals…. Volunteer mentors can create the essential personal feeling of trust and belonging." The book, he says, "provides a road map for those who want to make a difference in shaping the schools our children need."



Organizing Effective School-based Mentoring Programs (1992)—Developed by the National Association of Partners in Education, this manual is intended to help school administrators and their community stakeholders set up organized programs in which adults will serve as mentors to students identified by their schools as likely to benefit from close and sustained relationships with caring older adults. It is possibly the most comprehensive guide on the topic.

Baltimore City Public Schools Partnership Mentoring Manual (1990)—A nice, concise guide for designing a mentoring program in a school setting. It contains a number of sample forms, letters, and evaluation tools.

Mentor Kit: A Step-by-Step Guide To Creating an Effective Mentor Program in Your School (1993)—This resource focuses on the process of developing the model for a mentoring program in a school. It offers specific advice for the planning committee of the organizing group on how to arrive at a working model and then implement it.

Developing a School-based Mentor Program for At-Risk Youth (1998)—This guide is another excellent resource for starting a school-based program. It covers the model used for Virginia's Chesterfield Communities in Schools program. Program administration and practices comprise the first section, with forms and other resources making up the second.

—Michael Garringer

Summer/Fall Conferences Being Held on Each Coast

National Mentoring Center trainings focus on program development and mentor training

The National Mentoring Center will wind up its series of Regional Training Conferences by early fall. The last two events in the 2000 series will be held in Portland, Oregon, and Hartford, Connecticut. These training conferences have been highly successful so far, with hundreds of mentoring programs already participating in events held in San Diego, Miami, New Orleans, and St. Louis. These two conferences are the last chance this year for programs to receive this assistance from Center staff and its national panel of mentoring experts. At this time, the conferences are also the only way to get copies of the Center's new training curriculum for use with local programs.

Portland, Oregon, August 23-25
The Portland event will be similar to the regional trainings that have been held so far this year. It will be based around the recently completed training curriculum, Strengthening Mentoring Programs. The curriculum, developed by Public/Private Ventures in collaboration with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, is a collection of best practices and strategies focusing around two core areas: mentor program development and improvement, and mentor training and relationship support. P/PV has researched mentoring programs for over 12 years, and this curriculum highlights the most effective and proven methods of creating a solid program and solid mentoring relationships.

Throughout the three days, the Center's training staff and mentoring experts from around the country will conduct sessions based on the curriculum. Areas covered include mentor recruitment, building community partnerships, making and supporting the match, and measuring program outcomes, just to name a few. There will also be networking opportunities and interactive sessions in which programs can share successful practices.

The registration cost for this event is $150, and it will be held at the beautiful Embassy Suites in the heart of downtown. The conference room rate is only $105 per night (plus tax). Additional information and a downloadable registration form can be found in our Web site's Training & Conferences section (www.nwrel.org/mentoring/training.html).

Hartford, Connecticut, October 5-7
This event will be a bit different from the other regional trainings. This will be a “train-the-trainers” conference, focusing on making you and your program staff into effective presenters and trainers of volunteers and other stakeholders in your mentoring efforts. Conference attendees will learn the best ways to apply the Strengthening Mentoring Programs curriculum in their own organizations. For mentoring to succeed, mentors need to be well trained and have available support throughout the relationship. This training will help attendees be effective in their training of mentors, and will highlight effective ways of sharing this knowledge with other members of their organization.

Topics covered will include adult learning/teaching strategies, effective communications, and preparing to facilitate, among others. Participants will receive full copies of the training curriculum, including facilitator notes and participant handouts. This is an excellent opportunity for programs to build presenting skills, learn the best ways to implement the methods recommended in the curriculum, and to network with others

The Hartford event will be held at the Crowne Plaza hotel in downtown. The registration cost of this event will be $200. Hotel rooms are available at a conference rate of $91 per night (plus tax). As with all our events, the most current information can be found on our Web site, along with downloadable registration forms.

This has been a very productive and successful year for the Center's trainings. Once these regional trainings are done, we will begin planning our larger national conference, which will be held in early 2001. Throughout the year, we have been able to reach out to programs across the nation and to offer proven methods and ideas to for using mentoring as a strategy to help disadvantaged youth succeed. We hope to see you at one of these remaining events!

—Michael Garringer

The National Mentoring Center Bulletin

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NEWS BRIEFS

acting ADMINISTRATOR named to head ojjdp

In February, John J. Wilson was named Acting Administrator for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention within the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.

Wilson joined the department in 1974 as an attorney advisor in the Office of General Counsel for the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. He served as Senior Counsel to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention from the program's inception in 1974 until 1992, when he joined the office as its full-time Legal Counsel. He served as Acting Administrator for the office from January 1993 to October 1994 and was appointed as Deputy Administrator by the Attorney General in December 1994. He has also served as a member of the U. S. Board on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Before coming to the Department of Justice, Wilson was a program administrator and caseworker at the Michigan Department of Social Services. He served as a member of the Montgomery County (Maryland) Juvenile Court Committee from 1986 to 1992, the last three years as the committee's chair. He has lectured and taught courses in the legal rights of children, juvenile justice, and family law, and has been published in the Children's Legal Rights Journal, the Juvenile and Family Court Journal, and Corrections Today. He also co-authored the office's Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders (1993) and is an editor of A Sourcebook: Serious, Violent and Chronic Offenders (1995).

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