

MENTORING matters

summer 2011

MPSWPA Offers Snapshot Quality Review for Local Agencies

Quality is an important consideration in anything we do in life...and mentoring programs are no exception. Research has shown that high-quality mentoring programs make a difference and are better equipped to provide services to our young people and to meet the needs of the community more efficiently.

To promote quality among local programs, MPSWPA utilizes the Elements of Effective Practice, a set of standards for mentoring programs that reflects the latest in research, policies and practices. These standards were developed in 1991 by The National Mentoring Working Group, convened by the United Way of America and MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership. The 3rd edition of the Elements was completed in 2009 and provided a streamlined outline that focuses on six critical areas: screening; training; matching; monitoring and support; and closure. As part of a national effort, several mentoring partnerships across the country are working to provide their programs with a way to demonstrate how they incorporate these standards into their daily work. By doing this, programs can review their processes, ensure their adherence to best practices and deliver the highest quality services to their mentors and mentees.

MPSWPA is one of only a handful of mentoring partnerships in the U.S. that is incorporating this opportunity for local mentoring programs to recognize the measures of quality they have in place. While the Elements of Effective Practice have been an integral part of our toolkit for years, we're excited to

offer the Quality Review Assessment. This three-step process provides an overview of the standards that are considered vital to quality and gives programs the opportunity to showcase their dedication to quality through implementation of these standards.

To participate, agencies first complete an online Self Assessment. This survey asks specific questions about each of the six Elements and how the program's activities correspond with them. The second phase of the review involves a meeting with staff from MPSWPA and a representative from the agency to review the survey results. Finally, MPSWPA produces a snapshot document that provides an overview of key strengths and areas for continued improvement.

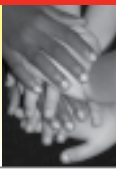
"We've worked very hard to ensure this process is as easy as possible for local agencies," said Arlene Sparks, Director of Training and Community Partnerships, MPSWPA. "By helping programs measure the level to which they meet the established best practices, we're ensuring that their mentoring matches have the best possible chance of being successful. We've received a lot of positive feedback on the process and the agencies are very appreciative of the support."

To date, almost 40% of the local mentoring programs have begun the Quality Review process.

"For the past 15 years, MPSWPA has been leading the way in promoting quality mentoring in our region," said Colleen Fedor, Executive Director, MPSWPA. "This Quality Review is just one more service we're proud to offer to local programs that are working so hard to make an impact on our community and its youth."

For more information on the Quality Review Assessment and how to participate, please contact Arlene Sparks at asparks@mentoringpittsburgh.org.





MAKE A CONNECTION. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



MENTORING SPOTLIGHT

Profile on: The First Tee of Pittsburgh

Professional golfer Peter Jacobsen once said, "One of the most fascinating things about golf is how it reflects the cycle of life. No matter what you shoot – the next day, you have to go back to the first tee and begin all over again and make yourself into something." Marc Field can definitely relate to the parallel Jacobsen made between golf and life.

The First Tee is a national organization dedicated to influencing the lives of young people through golf. Field is the Executive Director of The First Tee's Pittsburgh chapter, which supports the overall mission to use golf as a platform for teaching kids valuable life skills. Why golf, you ask? The First Tee bases its programming on nine core values and, while you can't teach core values, "you can give kids experiences to use them in everyday life," says Field.

First Tee used these core values to identify four main areas for life-skill development, including: interpersonal skills, goal-setting, self-management and resilience skills. From these four areas, First Tee developed lesson plans that

integrate golf and life skills content to teach children important concepts that will help them improve themselves – both on and off the golf course.

From a national perspective, First Tee has put an increased emphasis on the importance of mentoring, training more than 60 of its U.S. chapters on how to run effective mentoring programs. The Pittsburgh chapter was one of the pilot programs chosen to participate in mentor training.

Following its mentor training, First Tee Pittsburgh partnered with the East End Cooperative Ministry (EECM) to offer the mentoring program to its youth. The program meets every other Tuesday for a total of 32 sessions. Each meeting starts with a group mentoring clinic and is followed by a nutritious meal. As the program progresses, kids are matched with mentors so they can finish their sessions in one-on-one mentoring relationships. The mentoring component of First Tee Pittsburgh officially launched this year and currently has 10 kids and eight mentors involved.



"We're so excited to add mentoring as a building block to our core First Tee program," Field says. "Mentoring is all about relationships and we already know through our work at First Tee that the relationships are the key driver of success for all of our kids."

Love golf? Looking to make a difference in the lives of local kids? First Tee Pittsburgh could be the perfect volunteer opportunity for you! For more information on First Tee Pittsburgh and how you can get involved, visit www.thefirstteepittsburgh.org

EVENT/NEWS

Recap of: Highmark Walk

On Saturday, May 21st, more than 60 local non-profit organizations converged on Heinz Field for the 8th annual Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community. MPSWPA was thrilled to participate for the second year, providing an opportunity for hundreds of attendees to learn more about mentoring.

The weather cooperated and there was plenty of sunshine and fun to be enjoyed by all. Plenty of walkers were on-hand to show their support for mentoring and even some of our favorite four-legged friends joined the cause. Thanks to teams like Shilo's Super Stars, Kristan's Happy Feet and the Pittsburgh Job Corps, as well as the individuals who joined us, MPSWPA raised \$800 that will support the delivery of services to local mentoring programs.



The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community began as a way for non-profit organizations to work together to raise funds to support their goals. Since its inception in 2003, the Walk has expanded to other cities, including Erie, Bethlehem, Harrisburg and Johnstown. These events have raised more than \$3.5 million for 150 non-profit organizations across the state.

Thanks to Highmark for including us in this year's race and to everyone who joined us...we look forward to building another great team for next year's Walk!

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

Following B.E.S.T. Practices: Keys to a Successful Mentoring Relationship

Maps are important. They guide us and ensure that we reach our destination. You wouldn't plan an important trip without mapping it out first. So why would you embark on a mentoring relationship without having a roadmap to keep you on track?

All relationships go through stages and mentoring relationships are no exception. Most mentoring relationships go through four phases, known as the B.E.S.T. stages:

- Building trust
- Enhancing the relationship
- Sustaining the relationship
- Transitioning or continuing the relationship

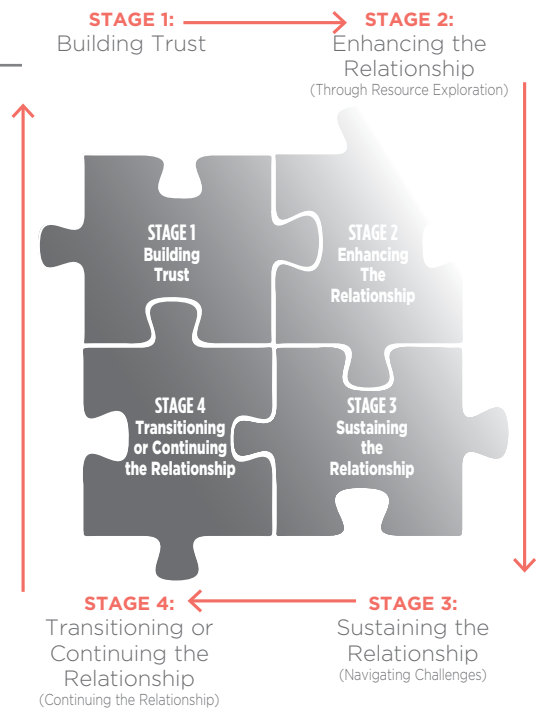
These stages are not often clear-cut and they sometimes overlap. This is all part of the normal development of a mentoring relationship.

Building Trust

The start of a new mentoring relationship is an exciting time - you get to meet your mentee and learn about them and what they hope to get out of the relationship. But it is also a crucial time to instill a level of trust and reliability. The beginning of a relationship can be filled with uncertainty or even anxiety, so as a mentor, it is your job to explore mutual interests and find common ground. Talk to your mentee and reassure them that you are excited about this new relationship. And always end each and every session in a positive note. That will give you both something to look forward to for your next meeting.

Enhancing the Relationship

As you begin to feel more comfortable with the relationship, your mentee will start looking to you as a resource and will feel empowered to take a more active role in your sessions. This is a great time to begin setting goals together. These goals should encompass activities that each of you wants to complete, both on a short-term and long-term basis. For example, an immediate goal might be learning about time and money management. This goal could include learning how to track expenses and keeping a daily calendar. A long-term goal might be learning how to prepare for a college interview. This could include rehearsing interview questions or



building a resume. Create a goal chart to track your progress against each of these goals. Revisit the chart occasionally so you can both enjoy crossing each goal off the list as it is completed.

Sustaining the Relationship

As you sustain your relationship, your mentee sees you as more than just a resource. He sees you as a friend, guide and advocate. Goal setting will continue to take center stage in this phase as your mentee opens up about problems or challenges he may be facing. This can often mean that you'll need to navigate these challenges together. This is a great opportunity to help with problem-solving skills. Help your mentee assess the problem, identify solutions, review implications and make a decision. Focusing on life skills like problem solving and critical thinking will empower the mentee to put these processes to work on his own the next time he encounters a challenge.

Transitioning or Continuing the Relationship

Continuity of a relationship is dependent upon you, your mentee and the strength of your existing relationship. Reflect on accomplishments and setbacks you may have encountered during your relationship and openly discuss whether or not to continue the relationship. If you choose to end your relationship, plan a final activity with your mentee to celebrate the progress you've made. If you choose to continue your relationship, take time to review past goals, set new ones and continue to build upon existing experiences.



We Moved!

As of June 1st, MPSWPA has a new home! We moved from our Strip District location to One Hope Square, a co-location of non-profit organizations located on Centre Avenue just up the street from the Consol Energy Center. *Please take note of our new address...and stop by for a visit sometime!*

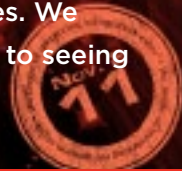
The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania
 One Hope Square
 1901-15 Centre Avenue
 Pittsburgh, PA 15219

2011 THE MAGIC OF MENTORING RECOGNITION

Just a quick reminder to save the date for our 2011 Magic of Mentoring Recognition Event, being held on Wednesday, November 2nd at Heinz Field. As always, we're looking forward to an evening full of fun as we celebrate mentoring in our region. This year, we will be honoring Jim Rohr, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, The PNC Financial Services Group, with the Thieman Award for his dedication to youth in our community.

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Visit our website for more information on sponsorship opportunities and other ways you can support the magic. And stay tuned for information on ticket sales. We look forward to seeing you there!



The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern PA

What We Do

- Help start mentoring programs
- Provide technical assistance to ongoing programs
- Assist in recruiting mentoring volunteers
- Train mentoring volunteers
- Bring together mentoring staff and volunteers

What You Can Do

- Be a mentor
- Host a mentor recruitment presentation
- Offer financial support

Get involved today by contacting us at:

The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania
 One Hope Square | 1901-15 Centre Ave. | Pittsburgh, PA 15219
www.mentoringpittsburgh.org
info@mentoringpittsburgh.org

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