



# MENTORING matters

spring 2010

## Best Practices for Better Mentoring

You probably already have what it takes to be a really good mentor. But like all endeavors, mentoring has well-established best practices that help foster high-quality mentoring relationships and in turn, promote positive outcomes.

Utilizing national and local research and benchmarks, The Mentoring Partnership supports agencies by spreading a wealth of knowledge and supplying key tools regarding:

- training
- technical assistance
- program design, planning, management and evaluation
- mentor and mentee recruitment and matching
- referrals



### Tabitha's Place

"Without the assistance of The Mentoring Partnership, I doubt that Tabitha's Place would have ever happened," explains Becky Schran, founder of the small program dedicated to teaching young individuals life skills and the importance of religion in one's life. "I had an idea for a mentoring program but had no idea how or where to start. By attending the training sessions and monthly meetings, I learned much of what I needed to know to get Tabitha's Place up and running."

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### MENTEE/MENTOR PROFILE

#### Jack Ligday and Donnie

Jack Ligday, senior vice president of Citizens Bank in Pittsburgh, has been a mentor to 19-year-old



Donnie for three years. Together they grab dinner, attend sporting events and have visited Donnie's prospective colleges.

Ligday and Donnie get together each week at Allegheny Youth Development (AYD) ([www.ayd.org](http://www.ayd.org)). Donnie serves as a AYD junior staff member having been involved himself in the program for several years and Ligday volunteers as a tutor working with children from AYD. They also spend every other week at The First Tee program at the Schenley Park Golf Course. As a First Tee coach, Ligday teaches AYD kids the game of golf and the life lessons that go along with swinging the clubs.

Ligday feels it is imperative for companies like Citizens Bank to encourage employees to get involved with mentoring. "Not only are you helping one person, you're improving our community and don't we all want to live in a better place?" explains Ligday.

### *the* MENTOR moment

"The best mentor experience is that moment when you realize you've truly made a difference in someone's life. It may take some time before it happens, but it will happen," explains Ligday. "My moment came during a First Tee fundraiser when Donnie said during his speech that he wanted to thank me for being the only father figure he has ever had in his life. That is pretty powerful stuff! And an incredible reward for my time as a mentor."



The First Tee program is a chance for kids to learn the game of golf while teaching them nine core values: honesty, integrity, sportsmanship, respect, confidence, responsibility, perseverance, courtesy and judgment. It also teaches participants respect for themselves, respect for others and respect for their surroundings.



MAKE A CONNECTION. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

## Best Practices...continued



Shining a light on the many ways individuals and groups can piggyback off of other mentoring successes and uncover (and avoid) potential obstacles is what The Mentoring Partnership is all about. By constantly sharing the best-of-the-best techniques, the effective mentoring bar is constantly raised. It also opens the door for direct information exchange between fellow mentoring agencies.

"The training sessions have been excellent," Schran continues. "Several times I actually attended the training for a second time and learned even more and got the chance to network with other programs which has helped Tabitha's Place grow larger than I ever dreamed it would be at this point."

### Amachi Pittsburgh

For Anna Hollis from Amachi Pittsburgh, The Mentoring Partnership is a true partner. Her organization started in 2003 with The Mentoring Partnership at the table, and is modeled after Philadelphia's initiative which partners with faith-based, non-profit agencies and other community organizations working with the children of incarcerated parents. Through The Mentoring Partnership, Amachi Pittsburgh is able to provide mentor training and technical assistance year-round and free of charge to the 30 plus congregations and community groups in its network.

"It's vital for our overall success to be able to rely on The Mentoring Partnership," Hollis explains. "We understand the importance of providing ongoing training but our community partners which provide direct service to our children lack the necessary resources. Utilizing training and resources through The Mentoring Partnership helps to fill the gaps. In addition, we really appreciate the professionalism and expertise of its staff. They're on hand to support mentoring organizations like Amachi Pittsburgh as well as mentors individually."

The Mentoring Partnership is able to advance mentoring best practices through your generosity. To ensure this much-needed work continues, follow this link: <http://www.mentoringpittsburgh.org/donate.aspx>. For more details on the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, take a look at the article on the opposite page.

### EVENT

## Get Your **Walking Shoes** Ready!

Now is the time to register to participate with The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania in the Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community presented by **Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield** on Saturday, May 22, 2010 at Schenley Park, Flagstaff Hill in Pittsburgh.

The Highmark Walk for a Healthy Community is a fundraiser that benefits 59 local nonprofit health and human service agencies in Western Pennsylvania, including The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield underwrites the cost of the walk so 100% of the money raised by walkers goes directly to support our goal of expanding the community's capacity to support quality mentoring relationships for youth.

Register now at [www.walkforahealthycommunity.org](http://www.walkforahealthycommunity.org) to join the 5K or One-Mile Fun Walk, and then raise funds to support The Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

For more information, call 412-281-2535 or 866-620-WALK.



## Putting It into Practice: Strengthening Mentoring

In 1991, MENTOR/The National Mentoring Partnership ([www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)) along with leaders from national and community-based, nonprofit organizations running mentoring programs, developed the first edition of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*. Over the past 19 years, significant increases in the number of mentoring relationships and additional research have added to the understanding of what constitutes a high-quality relationship. This keystone publication on mentoring standards has been recently updated and includes the latest research and practice wisdom available to help mentoring relationships thrive and endure. In addition to stand-alone mentoring programs, the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring* can also be used in other positive youth development programs (where there is a mentoring component) such as afterschool programs. Here is an example of insights from the document:

### TRAINING

**Standard:** Train prospective mentors in the basic knowledge and skills needed to build an effective mentoring relationship.

**Benchmarks:**  
**Mentor Training**

- Program provides a minimum of two hours of pre-match, in-person training.
- Mentor training includes the following topics, at a minimum:
  - Program rules;
  - Mentors' goals and expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship;
  - Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles;
  - Relationship development and maintenance;
  - Ethical issues that may arise related to the mentoring relationship;
  - Effective closure of the mentoring relationship; and
  - Sources of assistance available to support mentors.



**Enhancements:**  
**Mentor Training**

- Program uses evidence-based training materials.
- Program provides additional pre-match training opportunities beyond the two-hour, in-person minimum.
- Program addresses the following developmental topics in the training:
  - Youth development process;
  - Cultural, gender and economic issues; and
  - Opportunities and challenges associated with mentoring specific populations of children (e.g., children of prisoners, youth involved in the juvenile justice system, youth in foster care, high school dropouts), if relevant.
  - Program uses training to continue to screen mentors for suitability and develops techniques for early trouble-shooting should problems be identified.



**Mentee Training**

- Program provides training for the mentee and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) (when appropriate) on the following topics:
  - Program guidelines;
  - Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles;
  - Mentees' obligations and appropriate roles; and
  - Parental/guardian involvement guidelines.



The Mentoring Partnership works to ensure that all local mentoring programs understand the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring* and provides the support needed to assist staff as they incorporate them in to their program design and delivery. For more information, contact The Mentoring Partnership at [info@mentoringpittsburgh.org](mailto:info@mentoringpittsburgh.org)



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Join us in reaching out to kids through mentoring.  
You can make a difference ... learn how.



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## 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:

[www.mentoringpittsburgh.org](http://www.mentoringpittsburgh.org) | 412.281.2535

[info@mentoringpittsburgh.org](mailto:info@mentoringpittsburgh.org)

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[www.mentoringpittsburgh.org](http://www.mentoringpittsburgh.org)



Share your **passion**.  
Share your **voice**.  
Share your **talent**.  
Share your **time**.  
**REAP THE REWARDS.**

MAKE A CONNECTION. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.  
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