Using Mentoring Research Findings to Build Effective Programs

Collected Training Supplements and Materials from the MRC Web Seminars on Mentoring Research

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*Mp3 audio recordings, Power Point slides, and all handouts for these presentations can be downloaded from the MRC Web site at http://www.edmentoring.org/seminar2.html

Introduction

The practice of youth mentoring has become increasingly complex and rigorous in recent years, as research illuminates the program models and approaches that are likely to lead to successful results. But with this increase in applied research has come confusion: What research is critical? How do I translate research findings in to changes in my program? How do I research my own program's effectiveness?

In February of 2007, the Mentoring Resource Center offered a series of Web seminars designed to address some of these issues. These Web seminars combined teleconference presentations by some of the leading youth mentoring researchers in the country with a series of training supplements designed to get practitioners thinking about research and the impact it can have on how they deliver mentoring to the youth they serve. This book combines these training supplements and the materials from the presentations into one resource.

The two presentations were provided by Dr. Thomas Keller (Portland State University) and Dr. Michael Karcher (University of Texas-San Antonio), respectively. The MRC thanks these researchers for sharing their insights and expertise with our audience.

The Power Point slides, complete handouts, and mp3 audio files of each presentation are available for download on the MRC Web site at: http://www.edmentoring.org/seminar2.html.

Guide to Key Mentoring Research: Evaluations, Reports, and Syntheses

As youth mentoring programs have flourished throughout the nation, there has been increasing interest in how program evaluations and research into effective practices can be translated by mentoring program staff into improved services to youth. Funding agencies and policymakers are consistently requiring programs to follow evidence-based best practices when designing and implementing programs and to compare their impacts to those found in other studies. However, this trend toward research-derived programming requires that mentoring staff have the time, tools, and skills to locate mentoring research, interpret the results, and apply relevant findings to the design of their programs.

This section is designed to give Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) mentoring programs a brief introduction to many of the research reports and program evaluations that make up the core of what we know about youth mentoring. The findings from these evaluations and various data analyses may provide new directions or approaches for your mentoring program. They may provide ideas on how to best make the case about your program's success. Or they may simply prove useful when making the case about mentoring to a prospective funder, partner, or volunteer.

The research discussed in this guide is divided into two categories: primary research (direct evaluations of mentoring programs) and research syntheses (collections or additional analysis of mentoring program evaluations). For each research report or study we have provided a summary of the methodology and findings, as well as information on how you can obtain a copy for your program. The reports referenced here are only a starting point—we encourage OSDFS grantees to explore additional research that can inform their programs, especially in related areas such as education, volunteer management, and youth development.

Primary Research

Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters

Author(s): Joseph P. Tierney and Jean Baldwin Grossman, with Nancy L. Resch
Publisher: Public/Private Ventures
Date: 1995, revised in 2000

About the study: A dozen years later, this research report remains one of the cornerstones of youth mentoring research. In fact, many of the "best practices" used in mentoring programs today are the result of the eight years Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) spent researching Big Brothers Big Sisters. The Impact Study is one of several research reports derived from P/PV's research of BBBS, but it is by far the most frequently cited because it deals with the data everyone is most interested in: the outcomes.

For this study P/PV studied 959 youth, ages 10–16, who applied for a mentor at eight BBBS agencies around the country. Roughly half were matched with a volunteer, with the others forming a control group to compare results against. The researchers did a pre-post analysis consisting of interviews and other self-reported data examining the impact of the mentoring services in six areas:

- Anti-social activities
- Academic performance, attitudes, and behaviors

- Relationships with family
- Relationships with friends
- Self-concept
- Social and cultural enrichment

Findings: The findings from this study are perhaps the most widely quoted in the field. Participants:

- Were 46 percent less likely to initiate drug use
- Were 26 percent less likely to initiate alcohol use (that number reaches 50 percent for the girls in the programs)
- Were 33 percent less likely to hit someone
- Skipped half as many days of school
- Showed modest gains in GPA (3 percent gain over control group)
- Reported improved parent and peer relationships (this was especially true among boys)

Participants showed no substantial changes in perceptions of self-worth and self-confidence, participation in social and cultural activities, or participation in other educational activities, such as homework completion and college planning.

Since their original publication, these statistics have been used as some of the strongest evidence that mentoring is effective. But perhaps more important than these outcomes is the study's investigation into the programmatic context that produced them. To their credit, P/PV illustrated that anyone hoping to achieve similar results needs to build similar program structures to those found at the BBBS agencies. Specifically, the Impact Study recommends that programs implement a one-to-one model where matches are made in a structured way based on common interests and other factors. It also recommends that programs provide rigorous screening, training, and match support for mentors, and frequent contact with youth and parents as the match prnogresses.

Other P/PV studies would further explore the program and relationship characteristics that define successful mentoring, but this study was a tipping point in the creation of mentoring best practices. The question shifted from "can this be successful?" to "how do we ensure good results?"

How to get a copy: The full text version of the research report (plus several other pub lications investigating the BBBS model) can be downloaded from the P/PV Web site at:http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/111_publication.pdf.

Building Relationships With Youth in Program Settings

Author(s): Kristine V. Morrow and Melanie B. Styles
Publisher: Public/Private Ventures
Date: 1995

About the study: Another critical piece of research from the P/PV examination of BBBS, this study focused on 82 matches from eight BBBS sites (four of which were also participants in the Impact Study). The matches, which had been meeting from four to 18 months, were studied over a nine-month period. Participant interviews and surveys were the main forms of data collection.

Findings: This study had major implications for how we now define the role of a mentor. P/PV found that the approaches mentors took in working with their mentee could be easily divided into two categories: developmental (with the mentor providing broad emotional support and building the relationship around youth goals) and prescriptive (in which the mentor attempted to address specific behaviors through targeted activities or even brought their *own* goals to the match). The results for these two groups were remarkably different.

Youth reported being much more satisfied with the developmental relationships. They felt closer to their mentors and were more likely to seek out their support and advice. Since other research has demonstrated that mentoring outcomes are closely tied to relationship quality, this study provides valuable insight into the styles of mentoring that produce close, supportive relationships. Developmental mentors spent more time building trust with the youth, gave the youth a prominent role in setting goals and deciding activities, regularly engaged in activities that were simply "fun," and listened more while judging less. Prescriptive mentors were less likely to do these things and their youth reported far less match satisfaction.

A surprising 22 of the 28 prescriptive matches had significant problems or closed outright over the course of the study, while 50 of the 54 developmental matches continued to develop.

These findings do not mean that mentoring relationships should not spend time addressing specific behaviors, nor does it mean that youth are in the driver's seat regarding activities and other aspects of their participation. But it does mean that mentoring programs must create matches that put the relationship, the bond between adult and youth, first and purposeful activities second. The positive impacts of mentoring start with the friendship and role modeling a mentor provides, a theme that is further explored in Dr. Jean Rhodes' model of mentoring (see page 16). Keeping mentoring matches grounded in close friendship and broad personal development is one of the mentoring field's big challenges as it is increasingly viewed as a means of addressing serious educational and health-related youth issues.

How to get a copy: The full text version can be downloaded from the P/PV Web site at: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/41_publication.pdf.

School-Based Mentoring: A Closer Look

Author(s): Carla Herrera
Publisher: Public/Private Ventures
Date: 2004

About the study: This excellent bit of P/PV research focused on the program practices and outcomes of a school-based mentoring model. The study consisted of surveys of youth, mentors, teachers, and case managers from three BBBS school-based mentoring programs. Youth participants and teachers were surveyed at the beginning and end of the 1999–2000 school year—the other groups only at the end of the year. A total of 212 youth participants, grades 3–5, participated in the surveys.

Findings: This study had many significant findings in the areas of program structure, relationships, and youth outcomes.

- There were several positive impacts, especially for matches that had lasted nine months or longer: improvements in peer relations, social skills, classroom behavior, and school attitude, combined with a reduction in fighting and other disciplinary incidents.
- Youth in matches that had met six months or less typically got *worse* in all these areas.
- The study did not show any improvement in attendance, grades, parent-youth relationships, or relationships with other adults.
- Youth who felt their mentors took their preferences into account (in other words, a developmental approach) were more likely to show improvement in their behaviors and attitudes.
- Somewhat surprisingly for school-based services, the matches spent most of their time on social activities. Eighty-five percent of mentors reported spending time on social activities

while only half the mentors said they spent any time on direct educational activities, such as homework help. This implies that school-based mentoring has the potential for providing non-academic support even though matches are meeting in the school environment.

- Seventy-five percent of mentors said that there were often other youth around when they met with their mentee. On the one hand, this may imply that a group mentoring model might prove beneficial in settings where there is little private space for matches to meet. However, it could also indicate that school-based matches may have a hard time building closeness or discussing personal issues in an environment with other youth close by.
- In fact, only 20 percent of the mentors in this study reported feeling "very close" to their mentee. This number fell far short of the percentage indicated by mentors in a P/PV study of community-based programs, 45 percent of whom reported feeling "very close" to their mentee.[1] About two-thirds of the mentors in this study felt "somewhat close" to their mentee. Only 11 percent chose "not very" or "not at all."
- The youth, however, had much higher perceptions of relationship closeness. Seventy-five percent said they felt "very close" to their mentors. Teachers' and case managers' reports of match closeness matched the youth's perceptions more than the mentors, indicating that these relationships were indeed finding meaningful levels of personal connection.
- The race and gender of matches did not have an impact on relationship closeness, however, staff and teacher support of mentors did correlate with increased relationship closeness and higher levels of positive emotional engagement with the mentee.
- There were several meaningful comments by mentors regarding the structure of school-based mentoring programs. Specifically, mentors wanted convenient meeting spaces, access to school resources, structured communication with teachers, more feedback and dialogue with parents, and clearer definition of the roles and communication patterns between the mentor, the school, and the program itself.

These findings show that school-based mentoring has the potential to impact many areas of school connectedness and relationship development. They also illustrate the importance of a developmental framework that can lead to match closeness, as well as the need for schools to better define how services are delivered on site and how the volunteer will interact with teachers, case managers, parents, and other adults in the students' lives.

How to get a copy: The full text version can be downloaded from the P/PV Web site at: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/180_publication.pdf.

An Evaluation of the Long-Term Impacts of the Sponsor-A-Scholar Program on Student Performance—Final Report to the Commonwealth Fund

Author(s): Amy W. Johnson
Publisher: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.
Date: 1998

About the study: The Sponsor-A-Scholar program in Philadelphia offers an innovative and ambitious approach to school-based mentoring:

[1]Herrera, et al., 2000. See page 9 for a discussion of this study.

- Mentors serve youth for five years, from ninth grade through the first year after high school
- Students who complete the program are provided with $6,000 in financial assistance for college expenses (as a supplement to other financial aid)
- The program provides a wide variety of other academic enrichment services, such as tutoring, college exploration opportunities, and assistance applying for available financial aid.

The overarching goal of the program is to increase the college attendance of participating youth, helping them overcome many of the financial and personal obstacles that keep so many young people from entering or completing higher education. The services combine traditional school-based mentoring relationships with specific activities and other practical youth supports. SAS may serve as a model for other school-based mentoring programs that wish to expand the scope of their goals and the supplemental services they provide.

The evaluation of SAS examined its impact on 434 students from 1994–97. It examined grade point average (during high school), the rate of college acceptance and attendance within one to two years of high school completion, and the rate at which students remained enrolled in college, among other data related to how services were delivered. SAS participants' outcomes were compared to a control group of non-mentored youth.

Findings: The SAS program was able to demonstrate some academic successes, mostly by preventing participants from regressing in several academic areas compared to the control group. SAS participants' grades had decreased some by the end of grades 10 and 11, but around 50 percent less than the control group. These higher grades no doubt helped many participants qualify for college acceptance or financial aid.

The program also demonstrated success in improving college attendance. Eighty-five percent of the SAS participants attended college the year after graduation (64 percent for the control group) and 73 percent were still in college two years after high school graduation (57 percent for the control group). They also sought more academic assistance once in college.

Obviously, the financial aid SAS provided is a considerable factor. But 50 percent of the SAS students said that it was the support of their mentor that was primarily responsible for their higher education success, not the financial support.

The SAS model and evaluation results hint at an emerging theme in mentoring: providing a volunteer mentor to coordinate or supplement a transitional service. This approach is growing in popularity for programs targeting youth aging out of foster care and juvenile offenders re-entering communities after incarceration. Clearly there are opportunities for school-based programs to address transitions between K–12 settings (from middle to high school, for example) and into the post-high school world. There is also tremendous potential for school-to-work transitional mentoring, building on existing apprenticeship models and other career development services for youth. Future research may refine strategies and best practices for these models.

How to get a copy: The full text of the original evaluation report can be ordered for a fee from Mathematica (http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/). It may also be retrieved (often free of charge) through the full-text document delivery services of your local public library. Ask your library's reference staff how to access full-text electronic documents. An excellent summary of the evaluation can be downloaded from the Harvard Family Research Project Web site at: http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/afterschool/mott/sas.pdf.

These findings are also discussed extensively in *Contemporary Issues in Mentoring*, available from the P/PV Web site at: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/37_publication.pdf.

YouthFriends: Outcomes from a School-Based Mentoring Program

Author(s): Sharon G. Portwood, Penny M. Ayers, Kelly E. Kinnison, Robert G. Waris, and Daniel L. Wise
Publisher: Journal of Primary Prevention, Vol. 26, No. 2
Date: March 2005

About the study: YouthFriends serves K–12 youth in school settings across Kansas, Missouri, and Michigan. This study examined the impact of services on the attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of 102 students grades 4–12. Sixty-five percent were in grades 4–6. The researchers focused on four primary objectives of the program: 1) improving values, attitudes, and behaviors about substance abuse; 2) improving attitudes and behaviors about school; 3) improving school connectedness; and 4) improving participants' attitudes about themselves, their futures, and the adults in their lives. The study featured an experimental design with a control group of 106 similar students.

Findings: The YouthFriends evaluation found higher levels of school connectedness in mentored youth. It found no real impact on substance abuse attitudes or behaviors (not surprising, given the large number of participants in elementary school). Boys participating in the program showed significant improvements in self-esteem.

The program had the most benefit for participants whose baseline scores in the areas studied were lowest to begin with. Those students showed substantial gains in community connectedness and goal setting.

Unfortunately, the evaluation did not show an impact on the overall grades of participants. However, students who entered the program with a 2.00 GPA or lower *did* show statistically significant improvement in their grades compared to similar youth in the control group. Overall, the YouthFriends model seemed to have the biggest impact on the youth who needed improvement the most.

In addition to these results, the YouthFriends study is also significant in that it speaks to some of the difficulties in evaluating school-based mentoring programs. The researchers found that it was very difficult to measure the *amount* of mentoring that was happening. Mentoring sites collected data differently or sparingly, resulting in the researchers being unable to shed light on the amount ("dosage") or style of mentoring that was leading to these outcomes. The other evaluation obstacle was the small sample size. Two hundred eight total study subjects sounds like a lot, but data sets of that size make it very difficult to run many types of statistical analysis that would demonstrate meaningful impacts or illuminate keys to success. School-based programs may conduct more useful evaluations by partnering with other school-based programs for larger-scale joint evaluations with increased sample sizes.

How to get a copy: The full text of the journal article can be ordered for a fee through the publisher (http://springerlink.metapress.com/content/1573-6547). It may also be retrieved (often free of charge) through the full-text document delivery services of your local public library. Ask the library's reference staff how to access full-text electronic documents.

Mentoring School-Age Children: Relationship Development in Community-Based and School-Based Programs

Author(s): Carla Herrera, Cynthia L. Sipe, and Wendy S. McClanahan, (with Amy J.A. Arbreton and Sarah K. Pepper)
Publisher: Public/Private Ventures
Date: 2000

About the study: This P/PV study connected the worlds of school- and community-based mentoring in innovative ways by examining the similarities and differences between the two models. P/PV surveyed 1,101 mentors in 98 programs, eventually focusing on 669 one-to-one matches. The survey was designed to investigate relationship characteristics and quality. Further analysis determined benchmarks for successful relationships and examined the impact of school and community models on mentoring relationships and outcomes.

Findings: This wonderful piece of research is filled with meaningful numbers and conclusions about how mentoring is best delivered across settings. Overall, the data say less about the differences between the models and more about what quality mentoring looks like regardless of where it is delivered. Among the meaningful findings:

- More evidence for the developmental approach—mentors who engaged in social activities and let the youth have a voice in setting goals and making decisions had closer relationships than those who did not. This was true in both school- and community-based programs.
- The second largest predictor of relationship closeness was common interests between the mentor and mentee.
- Other prominent factors in match closeness were the frequency and duration of match meetings. But as mentioned above, what matches *did* when they met was the most critical factor.
- Mentors who received six or more hours of pre-match training reported the closest and most supportive relationships with their mentees.
- One interesting aspect of the study examined the "dosage" issue discussed previously. The study found that community-based programs provided about twice as much contact between the mentor and mentee. However, analysis of program characteristics revealed that community programs cost about twice as much to operate as school-based programs. School-based programs may be less expensive, but they tend to provide less actual mentoring. Further analysis of the financial aspects of mentoring programs can be found in the discussion of "The Cost of Mentoring" later in this guide.

How to get a copy: A full text version can be downloaded from the P/PV Web site at: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/34_publication.pdf.

The Test of Time: Predictors and Effects of Duration in Youth Mentoring Programs

Author(s): Jean B. Grossman and Jean E. Rhodes
Publisher: American Journal of Community Psychology, Vol. 30, No. 2
Date: April 2002

About the study: This study made a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge about mentoring by fully exploring the impact of match duration on mentoring outcomes. Esteemed researchers Dr. Jean Grossman and Dr. Jean Rhodes studied 1,138 youth in eight BBBS agencies. The study, which also featured a control group of youth, focused on the youth's parent relations, school attitudes and feelings of scholastic competence, grades and attendance, and feelings of self-worth. The researchers also examined the relationship between the quality and duration of the mentoring matches.

Findings: The study showed a strong relationship between relationship length and quality of outcomes. Youth who had been matched for 12 months or longer showed significant improvements in self-worth, feelings of social acceptance, feelings of scholastic competence, improved parent relations, with decreases in drug and alcohol use.

Conversely, youth whose matches had terminated before three months (for a wide variety of reasons) showed significant *regressions* in self-worth and feelings of scholastic competence. They actually wound up worse in these areas than youth in the control group. This finding highlights the critical nature of the early months in mentoring relationships and places heightened importance on the match support services programs provide.

Overall, youth whose matches did not last six months showed no positive impacts. They did, however, show an *increase* in alcohol use.

There were several factors that influenced these results:

- Youth from abusive backgrounds were more likely to have their matches dissolve. This may indicate a need for more formal training tailored to the background and needs of specific youth and perhaps increased access to other youth services through strategic partnerships.
- Matches serving older youth (13–16) were more likely to terminate than matches serving younger (10–12).
- Married volunteers were much more likely to terminate, perhaps indicating that family needs limited mentors' flexibility and availability for meeting times.
- When looking at the factors that predicted match duration, relationship quality was by far the biggest influence—no surprise in light of much of the other research covered in this guide.

The impact of this research can be seen in the OSDFS grants themselves: applicants were required to provide services over 12 months, not the usual nine of a school year. They were also required to provide plans for transitioning middle school participants to high school programs. School-based programs of all types can enhance mentoring outcomes by exploring new and creative ways of keeping matches together over multiple school years and across school settings.

How to get a copy: The full text of the journal article can be ordered for a fee through the publisher at http://www.springerlink.com/content/ 1573-2770/. It may also be retrieved (often free of charge) through the full-text document delivery services of your local public library. Ask your library's reference staff how to access full-text electronic documents.

"The Cost of Mentoring" in *Contemporary Issues in Mentoring*

Author(s): Douglas L. Fountain and Amy Arbreton (Jean Grossman, Editor)
Publisher: Public/Private Ventures
Date: 1999

About the study: This chapter of P/PV's *Contemporary Issues in Mentoring* considers an important issue for mentoring programs: cost. From policymakers to program coordinators, everyone in the mentoring field wants to know how much an effective mentoring program costs to implement and what resources are needed (and from what sources) to make mentoring sustainable.

This study examined the budgets, staffing, and other characteristics of 52 sample programs from around the country. The programs had a wide range of budgets (from $500 to $6 million/year) with an average program budget of $324,000/year.

Findings: Perhaps the most significant conclusion of the study is that actually calculating the total cost of a mentoring effort is exceedingly difficult. Mentoring programs make use of many types of support, from volunteer hours to donated goods and services, which complicate determining true operating costs. The discussion of the research findings explores these nuances, particularly around calculating the cost of volunteer staff time (the study found that the average program has one FTE volunteer staff person for every

25 youth served).

The researchers did, however, find several key pieces of information about the cost of mentoring:

- The average program in the study served 291 youth at a cost of $1,114 per youth per year.
- When one factors in in-kind goods and services, the *true cost* of mentoring is $2,289 per youth per year. Programs on average receive one dollar in-kind for every dollar in their actual budget.
- Surprisingly, the cost per youth does not decrease as more youth are served. In fact, the researchers found that very large programs may be more expensive because of the additional infrastructure and staffing required to deliver services.
- Corporate donations were by far the largest financial contributor to large-scale mentoring programs. Individual donations were the primary funding source for the smallest programs. United Way funding and fundraising events were the most prevalent sources of funding for local programs as a whole.

While these findings provide a framework for funding programs at the local level, coming years may see an increase in cost-benefit analysis of mentoring programs, comparing the money spent on them to the impact they have on society. Such comparisons of mentoring's impact to the initial costs will have tremendous implications for how future efforts are funded and evaluated.

How to get a copy: The full text version of *Contemporary Issues in Mentoring*, which features other chapters that will be informative for OSDFS grantees, can be downloaded from the P/PV Web site at: http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/37_publication.pdf.

Research Synthesis

Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs for Youth: A Meta-Analytic Review

Author(s): David L. DuBois, Bruce E. Holloway, Jeffrey C. Valentine, and Harris Cooper
Publisher: American Journal of Community Psychology, Vol. 30, No. 2
Date: April 2002

Type of analysis: As with the BBBS Impact Study, this meta-analysis by Dr. David DuBois and colleagues had major ramifications for mentoring programs in the United States. Instead of looking at the practices of one program or one model, this research looked at the methods and results of many programs and attempted to examine the effectiveness of mentoring at more of a macro level.

The meta-analysis began with a literature review that identified and codified existing scientifically valid program evaluations. The researchers narrowed the field to evaluations of one-to-one mentoring programs that offered pre-post data or a control group. The programs also had to serve mentees 19 or younger for inclusion in the analysis (likely leaving out many programs that offered services transitioning youth into careers or higher education). In all, the researchers identified 55 separate research reports containing 575 instances of reported effect sizes (i.e., changes in the youth served). The researchers also examined characteristics of the various program models, the youth they served, and their mentoring relationships. All these data were then categorized, aggregated, reorganized, and generally subjected to a seemingly endless assortment of data analysis procedures—with rather surprising results.

Findings: Overall, the news on the impact of mentoring was good: the authors concluded that formal mentoring programs *could* reproduce the positive benefits that natural mentor-

ing relationships had been known to provide. However, the meta-analysis also showed that while these programs were, overall, having a positive impact, the impact itself was rather small. The effect size for mentoring (1.8, for those who like data) was far short of the effect sizes reported for other psychological, educational, behavioral, and mental health treatments for youth. In fact, the authors indicated that it may be exceedingly difficult to say that mentoring "works" across the board because of the many specific program and participant factors that moderate impact and outcomes.

Needless to say, this news was somewhat unsettling for the mentoring community. This was not a study of one program's specific model. This was an analysis of a wide cross section of mentoring programs that reached the broad conclusion that mentoring, as currently provided, was not fostering huge changes for the nation's youth compared to other interventions. An effect size of that stature might spell trouble in any future cost-benefit analyses that might be performed. But those who dug a little deeper into the meta-analysis found the road map for changing all that.

The real value in the DuBois study is in those moderators of impact—the personal traits, program structures, and relationship characteristics that improved outcomes. When one looks at those moderators, a much brighter picture of youth mentoring emerges:

- The programs in the study that provided ongoing training for mentors, offered matches structured activities, set firm requirements around frequency of mentor-mentee contact, offered mentor support services, or found ways to increase parent involvement showed a greater impact. All these factors were strong predictors of higher outcomes for youth.
- The programs where youth felt most positive about their relationships also had higher effect sizes.
- The impact of mentoring seemed to be greatest for youth who were most at-risk. There was evidence that mentoring helps those who need it most.

Viewed through this lens, the meta-analysis is actually a call for program quality. The below-average impact was produced not by inherent problems with mentoring as a strategy, but by the number of programs not following what are now considered "best practices" for delivering services. Restricted to programs that followed a structure based on today's body of research, the analysis might have painted a much rosier picture. But by including a wide variety of programs, both good and not-so-good, the analysis offered a realistic portrait of how mentoring was being delivered, while also illuminating a set of program features that could lead to improved outcomes.

The practice of youth mentoring has come a long way in the last decade. It will be interesting to examine overall impact sizes in future meta-analyses. With an ever-increasing body of knowledge about youth mentoring, and the translation of that knowledge into the services at the program site level, one would expect that future "big picture" analyses of mentoring outcomes would find improved results.

In the end, the meta-analysis offered as many questions as answers: how do individual children's circumstances affect outcomes? Does mentoring have a lasting impact after matches end? As comprehensive as this analysis was, it only represented the tip of a very large iceberg of questions.

How to get a copy: The full text of the article can be ordered for a fee through the publisher: http://www.springerlink.com/content/1573-2770/. It may also be retrieved (often free of charge) through the full-text document delivery services of your local public library. Ask your library's reference staff how to access full-text electronic documents.

Mentoring Programs and Youth Development: A Synthesis

Author(s): Kristin A. Moore,
Susan Jekielek, and Elizabeth C. Hair
Publisher: Child Trends
Date: 2002

Type of analysis: This collection of research findings offers an excellent starting point for those running mentoring programs. This synthesis examined experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental evaluations of 10 programs in an attempt to gauge the scope of mentoring's impact. Several of the programs mentioned elsewhere in this guide, such as BBBS and Sponsor-A-Scholar, are included here. Unlike the DuBois meta-analysis, data were not aggregated or further analyzed, but the synthesis did organize demonstrated outcomes into meaningful categories. It examined youth outcomes related to educational achievement, health and safety, social-emotional development, and feelings of self-sufficiency. It also examined the program practices associated with these outcomes, as well as the characteristics that shaped long-lasting and high-quality mentoring relationships.

Findings: The synthesis found several compelling outcomes in most of the areas examined. Among the highlights:

- ***Educational achievement.*** There was evidence that mentoring led to fewer absences, better school attitudes and behavior, and increased college attendance. There was little evidence of impact on grades.
- ***Safety and health.*** Mentoring did appear to decrease drug and alcohol use, especially for minority participants.
- ***Social-emotional development.*** There was evidence that mentoring improves parent and peer relations. It also improves attitudes about adults in general and the desire to help others. The researchers hypothesized that these improvements in relationships with parents, peers, and the community as a whole in turn lead to improvements in the youth's self-esteem and sense of self-worth. The idea that relationships with others mediate the outcomes of mentoring is further explored in Dr. Jean Rhodes's model of youth mentoring (see page 16).
- ***Program characteristics.*** The synthesis found many of the common program structures discussed previously in this guide to be critical to mentoring outcomes (thorough screening and matching, pre-match and ongoing training, mentor support, etc.). Family and parent involvement in mentoring, or at least increased contact between mentor and parent, also seemed to be tied to improved outcomes.
- ***Relationship characteristics.*** The synthesis found evidence for a developmental mentoring approach, high rates of interaction between mentor and mentee (lots of "dosage"), and use of shared interests between mentor and mentee as a critical, if not primary, factor in making matches.

What really makes this synthesis valuable for mentoring programs is not necessarily the content (all of which is available in the original evaluation reports) but how it is presented. The publication features excellent tables that break down information about these findings into easy-to-relate-to categories. For each outcome, charts provide clear answers to whether "mentoring works," "does not work," or has "mixed reviews." The charts related to program characteristics feature caveats and tips for implementation in other programs. It even includes all the details about the 10 programs and their original evaluations in easy-to-read tables. Because of the ease of finding meaningful data and conclusions, this synthesis is an excellent resource for tasks like proposal writing and developing presentations. It is a handy, easily referenced collection of mentoring research.

How to get a copy. The full text of this research synthesis can be downloaded from the Child Trends Web site at: http://www.childtrends.org/files/MentoringSynthesis FINAL2.6.02Jan.pdf.

Understanding and Facilitating the Youth Mentoring Movement

Author(s): Jean E. Rhodes and David L. DuBois
Publisher: Social Policy Report, Vol. 20, No. 3
Date: 2006

Type of analysis: This recent journal article offers a clear, concise overview of current mentoring concepts, research, and practice. It combines a review of "what we know" about mentoring with policy analysis and a discussion about the expansion of youth mentoring. The policy elements are not directly related to this guide, but the summary of mentoring research findings is very comprehensive.

Findings: The discussion of research findings covers the full range of program practices and mentoring models, but a few of the key, research-derived findings presented include:

- **Relationship closeness.** Research indicates that the impact of mentoring hinges on this factor.
- **Mentoring approaches**. Mentors must provide a role model of relevant skills (and not negative ones). There is strong evidence that a youth-centered (developmental) approach seems to work best. However, matches do need structured activities and meaningful goals. Successful mentoring relationships cannot be *entirely* unstructured and friendship-based.
- **Consistency and duration of meetings.** Regular, stable meetings for one year are most likely to produce results. There is also strong evidence that programs should do everything they can to keep matches from terminating prior to six months.
- *Coordination with other services and supports.* There is evidence that improved interaction and coordination of mentoring activities with parents, teachers, counselors, case workers, and other adults in the mentee's life can enhance mentoring outcomes.

This article nicely summarizes many of the key concepts discussed in this guide. Practitioners interested in public policy and funding decisions related to mentoring will likely enjoy the discussion of how this body of knowledge on mentoring influences (or should) the expansion of youth mentoring in the United States and its use as a strategy to address serious youth and societal needs.

How to get a copy: The full text of this report can be downloaded from the Society for Research in Child Develop-ment Web site at: http://www.srcdorg/documents/publications/spr/spr20-3.pdf.

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This initial tour through key mentoring research provides compelling evidence that youth mentoring, done properly, can be a powerful, positive influence on our nation's youth, especially for some of its most disadvantaged. We encourage all programs to continue to contribute to this body of knowledge by conducting rigorous evaluations of their services and outcomes and by sharing those results with others. Conducting these evaluations not only adds to the research base, it provides the most compelling evidence to funders, policymakers, partners, volunteers, and other stakeholders that *your* program is effective and worthy of support.

The next section highlights several existing program evaluation instruments that OSDFS mentoring programs might use to enhance their own research into their models' effectiveness.

OSDFS grantees should also note that they can access many of the research reports mentioned here through the Mentoring Resource Center (MRC) Lending Library and that the reference staff of the MRC is available to help them identify and interpret research that can improve their programs.

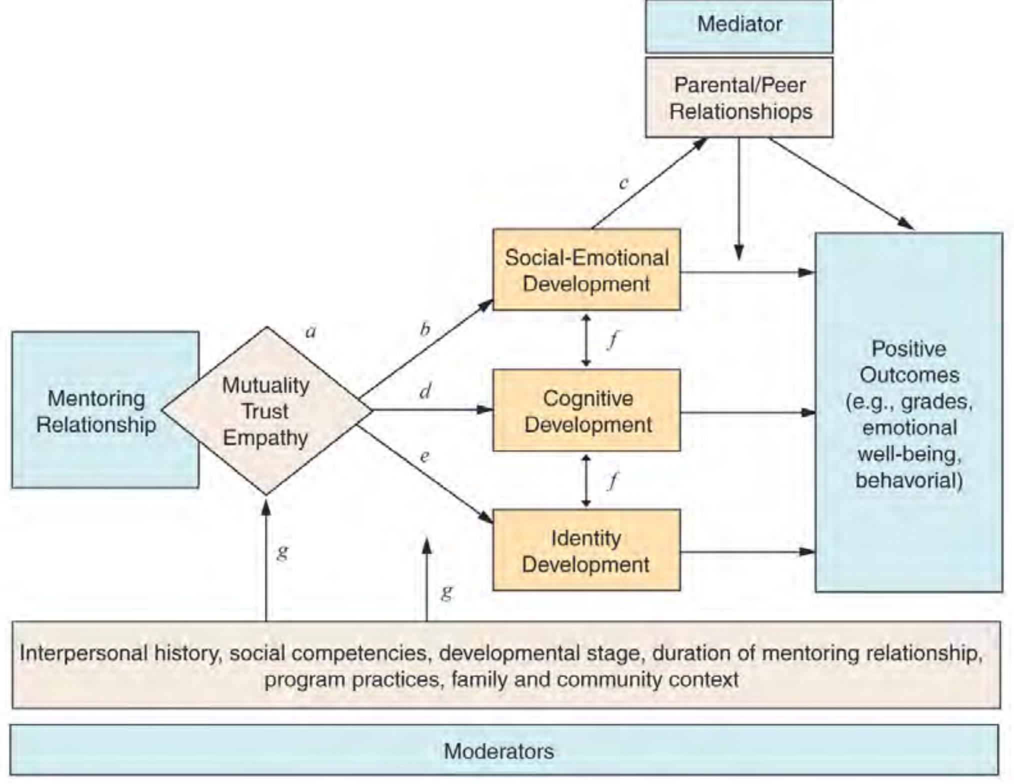
The Definitive Guide to Current Mentoring Research: *The Handbook of Youth Mentoring*

The Handbook of Youth Mentoring, published in 2005, is by far the most comprehensive and detailed collection of research about mentoring available. Edited by Dr. David DuBois and Dr. Michael Karcher, the *Handbook* covers the full spectrum of mentoring theories, models, and outcomes. Over 36 chapters, leading researchers examine characteristics of mentoring relationships, the efficacy of specific program types (peer, group, one-to-one, etc.) and settings (school-based, faith-based, worksite, etc.). There are also sections addressing the impact of mentoring on specific youth populations (juvenile offenders, pregnant and parenting adolescents, youth with disabilities, etc.) and on policy issues, such as cost-benefit analyses.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of the *Handbook* is the inclusion of research from other fields in the discussion of just about every topic covered. The authors go beyond examining just mentoring program evaluations. They put those evaluations in the context of what we know about other types of youth work, other educational services, and other clinical and psychological interventions. As a result, a much clearer picture emerges about how mentoring works—and more important, how it works with other youth supports. For practitioners looking for a realistic, scientific, comprehensive, and evidence-based review of youth mentoring, this resource is a must.

A small number of copies of *The Handbook of Youth Mentoring* are available from the MRC Lending Library: http://www.edmentoring.org/lending_library.html. Programs can purchase copies through the publisher, Sage Publications, at: http://www.sagepub.com/book.aspx?pid=10596.

Jean Rhodes's Model of Youth Mentoring



Source: Rhodes, J.E. (2005). A model of youth mentoring. In D.L. DuBois & M.J. Karcher (Eds.) *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (p. 32). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Dr. Jean Rhodes's model of mentoring offers a wonderful framework for understanding how the work of a mentor, all those little interactions and conversations, translate into meaningful changes in the lives and personalities of mentees. Her model is discussed at length in her excellent book *Stand by Me: The Risks and Rewards of Mentoring Today's Youth* (a small number of copies of which are available from the MRC Lending Library). But there are two interesting aspects of the model that highlight some of the concepts discussed in this guide:

1) The entire model hinges on the development of mutuality, trust, and empathy that the mentoring relationship creates. That development is moderated by a whole host of other factors, such as personal history, length of the match, and the youth's family and community environment. But the reality is that programs need to develop close, trusting, valued matches in order to make this model work and achieve their desired outcomes.

2) The outcomes from a mentoring relationship—whether improved grades, increased self-esteem, or declines in risky behavior—are mediated by the youth's parent and peer relationships. The youth may develop in the three areas Rhodes identifies (social-emotional, cognitive, and identity) but those improvements may not translate directly into positive outcomes unless those relationships with others improve as well. Thus, mentoring can be viewed as something other than a direct intervention—it's not a straight line from relationship to outcome. The mentor may develop the young person in several ways, but how that newly developed young person in turn interacts with the world around him or her is what determines the ultimate outcomes.

Programs should take the time to examine Rhodes's model and think about its implications for their own programming. They may find an increased emphasis on parent involvement or social activities is in order. Or they may be better able to explain to funders or partners exactly how their program is having an impact on the youth they serve.

Other models that may be of interest to OSDFS mentoring grantees include:

❖ The proposed model of how youth mentoring can effectively work in conjunction with other youth services found in the chapter "Integration of Mentoring With Other Programs and Services" found in the *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*, pp. 314–333.

❖ The model of how mentors interact with parents, caseworkers, other youth service providers, and the policies and procedures of mentoring programs themselves developed by Dr. Tom Keller. His model examines the role of all these elements to create a more holistic model of mentoring. This model is discussed at length in the journal article:

Keller, T. E. (2005). A systematic model of the youth mentoring intervention. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 26*(2), 169–188.

Frequently Asked Questions About Conducting Research and Evaluation

Mentoring professionals are well aware of the importance of being able to identify and report on program outcomes. Not only is this information helpful for internal planning and for making programmatic improvements, but it is also required by funding sources and is instrumental in developing community support and long-range sustainability. However, the actual task of designing and implementing a research-based program evaluation can be very daunting. Mentoring programs often lack both the time and expertise to design and carry out their own evaluation plan, and they are also limited in the amount of funding available for research activities.

Despite these difficulties, it is possible to conduct research activities that are relatively straightforward and that can truly help your program grow and improve. This section is intended to encourage and support newcomers to evaluation. It answers commonly asked questions about researching and evaluating mentoring programs and explains common evaluation terminology. It also offers additional resources for you to investigate so that you can make informed decisions about conducting research on your program.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q *What's the connection between research and evaluation? Aren't they basically the same?*

The terms "research" and "evaluation" are often used interchangeably but in fact are quite different. Basically, *research* is the systematic process of gathering information in order to learn something. A research plan follows the scientific method of stating a hypothesis, collecting data, analyzing the data, and drawing conclusions. Research seeks to determine facts in order to identify patterns and draw conclusions based on the facts. While researchers may also make recommendations about how their findings might influence practice, their main objective is to shed light on a particular problem or theory.

Program evaluation is any process that gathers and analyzes information of various kinds in order to improve or enhance a program or practice. There are many different ways to conduct a program evaluation. It can be as simple as counting the number of people actually receiving a service and comparing this number to how many people you had planned to serve. It can be as complex as finding out whether participants in a program have changed their behaviors as a result of being in the program. An evaluator often uses research techniques and instruments to gather accurate information. But you don't need to be a researcher to evaluate your program.

Both research and evaluation activities start by clearly stating:

- What is to be studied and why
- What the study or information-gathering activity is intended to achieve

- How information will be gathered
- How the results will be used

Q What is a logic model and what does it have to do with evaluation?

The most basic logic model is a systematic picture of how you believe your program will work. It uses words and diagrams to describe the sequence of activities that are intended to bring about change and how these activities are linked to the results the program is expected to achieve. When a logic model is used as a tool for planning programs and services, the result becomes the framework for program implementation, evaluation, and future planning.

A basic logic model looks like the following:

Need ➡	Resources/ Inputs ➡	Activities ➡	Outputs ➡	Intermediate outcomes (1–5 years ➡	Impact/long-term outcomes ➡
The problem(s) your program will address	Program ingredients, such as funds, staff, volunteers, partners, etc.	Specific activities and services the program will provide	Specific evidence of services provided (numbers)	Positive changes that will take place as a result of services	Lasting and significant results of your program over the long term

Be sure that your logic model is as specific as possible when it comes to the types of activities planned, evidence of services provided, and the outcomes you expect to achieve. A logic model that offers enough specific information can help drive the evaluation process because the items you need to evaluate—and their measures—are already identified. If your current logic model lacks specificity, is out of date, or does not reflect what you are actually doing, be sure to update it before starting the evaluation process. The resources section of this supplement includes tools for constructing a logic model, but the basic structure is simple—and logical! It requires only the patience to identify all the important pieces, put them in order, and be sure that your anticipated outcomes make sense for the activities you are providing.

Q What types of evaluation do people usually conduct?

The field of research has grown dramatically in recent years, and with that growth has come an explosion of theories, methodologies, systems, tools and instruments, and multi-level approaches that can intimidate anyone approaching evaluation for the first time. However, programs wishing to develop a simple evaluation plan, whether by hiring an outside evaluator or doing a self-evaluation, should focus their attention on the two primary types of program evaluation: *formative* and *summative*.

Formative evaluation collects data about programmatic issues, operations, and functions for the purpose of planning services and improving the way they are implemented. It may be conducted early on in the program planning process. For example, conducting a needs assessment to help determine what services to offer is a type of formative evaluation. Formative evaluation is often called *process evaluation* because it evaluates the manner in which programs and activities are being carried out, rather than the impacts that the program is having on participants. Process evaluation asks such questions as:

- How should our program deliver services to best address the problem or issue?
- Are the systems we have in place to deliver activities and services working and effective?

- Are the planned numbers being met? The intended populations being served?
- Are participants and other stakeholders satisfied with the way activities are delivered?

A process evaluation is useful in deciding whether to make programmatic changes during the course of the project in order to improve effectiveness and efficiency. Programs can use process evaluation to decide how to plan for budgetary changes by pointing out possible ways to save money or by identifying systems or services that are not effective. A process evaluation can also yield useful information to share with a funding source or in a grant application to show that your program is effective in carrying out its planned activities. For example, you could evaluate how many potential volunteers actually become matched with a mentee. If the results show that you are doing a great job in that area, you can use that information to recruit more volunteers and demonstrate your efficiency to funders.

Summative evaluation is designed to gather conclusive data that indicate how effective the overall program is in achieving its outcomes, and thus is often called *outcome evaluation*. This kind of evaluation gets at the heart of a program's reason for existence: the effect that you are having on the participants you serve. Outcome evaluation helps programs determine if the activities being offered are actually having the impact intended. It is less concerned with how many youth were served and more concerned with how the youth changed as a result of program involvement.

Outcome evaluation requires that you know enough about your participants before they enter services to be able to see if change really occurred as a result of the service. It also requires that you establish measurements that are clearly linked to the activities you have provided and outcomes you have identified. This is perhaps the most challenging part of an outcome evaluation and one that may require expert assistance in developing. Luckily, there are tools and instruments available that can help measure such seemingly intangible outcomes as "increased self-reliance" or "improved connectedness to family." The resource list at the end of this supplement provides information about where to find some of these evaluation tools.

Evaluators generally use one of the following strategies to measure outcomes in participants:

- *Pre- and post-test*, in which measurements are taken at two different points in time—before and after the intervention.
- *Post-test-only*, in which the measure is taken only once—after the intervention has occurred.
- *Experimental*, in which the group of people receiving services (*experimental group*) is compared with another group who is not receiving that service (*control group*). Participants are randomly assigned to the groups and both are measured, using the same instruments, before and after services are delivered.
- *Quasi-experimental*, in which the experimental group is compared to another group already in existence, such as a waiting list group. Both groups are measured, using the same instruments, before and after services are delivered.

The chart on page 21 offers a brief summary of these different approaches, including their strengths and limitations. If you plan to set up an evaluation using either an experimental or quasi-experimental design, you will need the assistance of someone with research or evaluation experience to ensure your study is properly designed and implemented.

Outcome evaluation that shows how your program is making a positive difference provides important information for funding sources, community partners, local and state elected officials, potential and current volunteers, and your participants and their families. It also helps you learn where your limi-

tations lie, where you can modify services to improve outcomes, and ultimately, whether the outcomes you have established are realistic given the services you are providing. It's important not to shy away from the less positive results of your evaluation. Remember that your purpose in conducting evaluation is not to prove that everything you are doing is right but to *improve* on what you are doing.

Q *What are the different kinds of data collected during an evaluation?*

Most research and evaluation activities collect two distinct kinds of data: *qualitative* and *quantitative*. Researchers use these two kinds of data for different purposes and they gather the data with different kinds of tools, but both are useful in both formative and summative evaluations.

Quantitative data can be counted, measured, and reported in numerical form and can answer questions such as who, what, where, and how much. For example, a quantitative evaluation of your school-based mentoring program might use daily attendance records to note changes in attendance for mentored students. Other examples of quantitative data include test scores or grades, dropout rates, results of surveys or pre-post tests, number of participants in a program, incidences of negative behaviors, and so on. Quantitative data can be used in both process and outcome evaluations.

Some advantages of collecting quantitative data include the following:

- Data collection instruments can be used with large numbers of study participants
- Data collection instruments can be standardized, allowing for easy comparison within and across studies
- Data are easily compiled for analysis
- Findings can be presented succinctly
- Findings are more widely accepted as being scientific and applicable than those from qualitative evaluations

Qualitative data capture thoughts, feelings, and insights about programs not generally possible through a strictly quantitative approach. Examples of qualitative data include written descriptions of program activities, comments about how a program was or was not helpful, case studies, open-ended comments on surveys, and results from focus groups, interviews, and direct observations. Qualitative data are hard to summarize and analyze, but can bring to light significant findings that a quantitative approach might not. For example, a program that simply counts the number of male and female volunteers might show only that more males are needed in the program, but interviews with prospective male volunteers might find that male applicants feel uncomfortable with group orientation activities and therefore don't complete the application process.

Benefits of collecting qualitative data include the following:

- It helps develop understanding of how people feel about the program
- It may shed light on unanticipated outcomes
- Stakeholders, funders, policymakers, and the public may find quotes and anecdotes easier to understand and more appealing than statistical data
- It can generate new ideas about how to make the program work better

The ideal evaluation combines quantitative and qualitative methods. Such a mixed-method approach offers a range of perspectives on a program's processes and outcomes, allows you to look at the same issues in different ways, and promotes a greater understanding of the findings overall.

Comparison of Evaluation Designs

Model	Characteristics	Strengths	Weaknesses
Pre- and post-test	Compares one group of individuals at two times: before and after an intervention	Easy to implement Needs only one group	Hard to show conclusively that the intervention caused the damage Does not meassure other possible reasons for change
Post-test only	Looks at one group *only* after the intervention has occurred	Only needs to have access to the group once Good for use with transient clients that may not be available for repeated measure	Does not measure change; allows few, if any, conclusions to be drawn about effectiveness of the intervention
Experimental Design	Looks at two groups whose members were randomly assigned One group receives intervention and one does not Measures both groups before and after intervention	Allows for control of differences between groups Can measure change and draw conclusions about the effectiveness of interventions	Random assignment is difficult to implement in social service settings May involve withholding potentially beneficialservices from one group Costly to track and measure both groups
Quasi-Experimental Design	Similar to experimental design, but uses an existing group for comparison rather than random assignment to two groups Measures both groups before and after the intervention	May be easier than experimental design to implement because groups are not assigned randomly Can measure change Allows for limited conclusions about the effectiveness of the intervention	Harder to control for differences between groups Harder to show conclusively that intervention caused the change rather than pre-existing difference between the groups) Costly to track and measure both groups

Q What are the best methods of collecting data as we research our program?

There are several common data collection methods and instruments that are frequently used by youth mentoring programs as part of both formative and summative evaluations:

- *Surveys and questionnaires*. These can be as simple as a participant satisfaction survey or as complex as a pre-post questionnaire designed to demonstrate the entire impact of a program. Generally, surveys are used to gather data and feedback on how program services are delivered, but they can also be used to gather qualitative information related to outcomes, such as feelings toward homework or relationships with teachers. Match-related surveys, like the one offered in *Measuring the Quality of Mentor Youth Relationships: A Tool for Mentoring Programs* (see the **Resources** section at the end of this section), are also increasingly common. They can help pin-

point matches that may need additional support or identify larger issues with the strategies employed by a program's mentors.

- *Interviews and focus groups.* These can also be valuable sources of data, especially for qualitative data. The key to these methods is to design questions that are not leading or that needlessly restrict the answers they elicit. It is also important to select interviewees or focus group members who are representative of all participants. These techniques are generally used to gauge attitudes about participating in the program.

- *Direct observation.* This technique is not used frequently in mentoring programs as it can be difficult to give matches the privacy they need while closely observing them and because it can be difficult to interpret or categorize the actions one observes. But observation may be useful in analyzing program procedures, such as how mentors react to training sessions or how easily they move through the screening and matching process.

- *Tracking raw numbers*. Sometimes the best research results come from the simplest comparison of numbers. Programs can find all kinds of evidence of success by comparing data about their participants to other groups. For example, a program may find that only three of its 100 student mentees dropped out of school in a particular year, while the district average was 12 out of every 100. That may not tell you why the mentees had a lower dropout rate, but it does hold meaning, especially when combined with other data that help explain the difference. (Note that in this case a comparison group has been identified of non-mentored students, thus using a quasi-experimental approach to measure outcomes.) Among the raw numbers that may be of interest to Office of Safe and Drug-Free (OSDFS) mentoring programs are:

  – Grades

  – Standardized test scores

  – Dropout rates

  – College attendance rates

  – Incidents of school discipline

  – Other statistics related to school attendance or delinquent behavior.

  By becoming familiar with other available data—such as that collected by schools, districts, and other youth-serving agencies or government agencies—mentoring programs gain a powerful means of comparing their mentees to other similar youth groups.

The types of data collection instruments you use should be driven by the questions you want answered through your research. For example, direct observation might be useful if you wanted to know if mentored students participated more in classroom activities. But it's unlikely to tell you much about mentors' perceptions about how their matches are going.

When selecting data collection instruments, take into account how the data will be analyzed and used. Interviews and focus groups are unlikely to yield data that could be analyzed using advanced software, such as SPSS—they are more likely to simply gather a collection of specific quotes or illustrate general themes or opinions. However, a survey that gathered, say, match activity data and outcome-related data could be perfect for a software-driven analysis (which may show that activity X seems to result in outcome Y). Programs often use different methods to collect data about the same topic, such as conducting focus groups and administering a year-end survey to attitudes about program participation. Using multiple methods to examine the same research question builds reliability into the results.

Q ***There are so many factors to consider. How do I decide what kind of evaluation to conduct and what methods to use?***

All OSDFS-funded mentoring programs are already conducting both process and outcome evaluations in order to meet the GPRA indicators established by the U.S. Department of Education for this grant program. For example, determining how many matches are sustained for 12 months is a kind of process evaluation, asking if the activities are being carried out according to plan. Measuring how many mentored students improve in core academic subjects as a result of their participation shows the impact mentoring has had on helping students improve, and ultimately whether the program will help these students achieve success in the future. These evaluation activities are valuable in helping program leaders make ongoing improvements to make sure their services are effective and outcomes are being achieved.

But many programs want to learn more about how well their program is doing. For example, a program that is primarily serving a particular segment of the eligible population—such as Hispanic youth or youth with learning disabilities—may want to develop an outcome evaluation to see if the activities provided are meeting the needs of this population. A program that is having significant difficulty attracting mentors may want to conduct a process evaluation to find out how it can improve its outreach efforts. These additional evaluation activities need not be overwhelming and can yield valuable information for program improvement.

If you want to develop additional evaluation activities, don't worry about the specific type of evaluation or the methodology that you will use. Just start by determining what you want to know and why. It may help to ask the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the evaluation: what do you want to do with the results you obtain?
- What pressing issues are facing your program and how will an evaluation help inform your decision making?
- Who are the audiences, the people you want to inform about the results?
- What data do you want to gather in order to make informed decisions about your program?
- What sources do you want to use to collect data (staff, volunteers, participants, parents, schools, partner agencies, etc.)?
- Will you be able to gather the data from the sources you identify in a reasonable fashion and with sufficient success to be useful?
- How much time and other resources do you have to devote to this effort?

With any new evaluation effort, try to build on what you are already doing and draw on the information you are already collecting rather than having to start from scratch.

Once you know what you want to achieve with your evaluation, deciding what the focus of the effort will be, the methods and designs you will use to conduct the evaluation, and what tools you will use to collect data will be easier. You will probably also be clearer about whether you need to hire an outside evaluator or not, which will depend a lot on the scope and complexity of what you want to undertake. It is always a good idea to consult with someone with evaluation experience before moving forward, just to be sure you are on the right track.

Deciding what evaluation design to use will depend not only on what you want to measure and why but also on your available resources, time constraints, budgetary issues, and other programmatic and logistical issues. For example, even though you might get better results by establishing an evaluation design that uses a control group, you

may lack access to such a group and would not be able to measure their outcomes due to lack of staff time. Refer again to the comparison chart of evaluation designs on page 21 to help decide what design you can reasonably put in place for your evaluation.

Q *What will it cost to research our program's effectiveness?*

With such a wide variety of data collection methods and instruments available, the cost of evaluating a program can vary widely. A good rule of thumb is that a thorough program evaluation will cost roughly ten percent of a program's operating budget. This amount of money will usually cover the costs of hiring an evaluator and conducting research at a level that is appropriate to the size of the program.

Obviously, researching your program can be more or less expensive than this depending on the types of data collected and the level of sophistication used in its analysis. There are many types of research, such as participant surveys and focus groups, which programs can conduct for little cost. These types of research strategies work well when a program simply wants to get feedback or identify areas for improvement. Research becomes more expensive when it attempts to answer the larger questions of "Is our program having an impact?" and "How is it having an impact?" These questions may require extensive data analysis and comparisons to other groups of youth and usually require the services of a professional evaluator.

Q *How do I find someone to help research my program?*

The graduate schools of colleges and universities are excellent sources of evaluation talent. Many graduate students conduct evaluations of educational and youth development programs as part of their thesis work. Departments of education, child psychology, social work, and health are all likely to have students who might be available to design and implement your evaluation or interpret data you've already collected. Graduate students are likely to cost far less than hiring a professional evaluator.

If a graduate student is not available, programs can always turn to a professional evaluator. The costs for hiring professional evaluators can fluctuate, so some shopping around may be required to find one that fits your budget and data needs. The box below offers links to online directories of evaluation professionals. The Resources section that follows further resources that can help you identify and work effectively with an evaluator.

Online Resources for Finding a Program Evaluator

What Works Clearinghouse—Registry of Outcome Evaluators
http://www.whatworks.ed.gov/technicalassistance/EvlSearch.asp

American Evaluation Association—Find an Evaluator Database
http://www.eval.org/find_an_evaluator/evaluator_search.asp

Western Michigan University's Directory of Evaluators
http://ec.wmich.edu/evaldir/index.html

Tips for Preparing To Conduct an Evaluation

It's easy to feel like only an expert can conduct research or set up and carry out an evaluation plan. While it is true that researchers and trained evaluators are best able to set up and carry out significant research projects, program managers can—and frequently do—set up internal program evaluations that help them determine how well their program is achieving its goals.

In order to get ready to evaluate your program you will need:

1. A reason. You should know up front why you are evaluating your program. Are you doing it to satisfy a requirement of your funding source? Do you want to find out which parts of your program are most effective and efficient in order to make programming decisions? Do you want to show your community that your work is having an impact? Identifying clear goals and a set of questions you want to answer will help you focus your evaluation efforts. If your time and expertise is limited, keep your goals simple and your questions to a minimum.

2. A completed logic model that provides a dynamic "road map" for both your program's operations and for tracking and measuring outcomes. The logic model will gather together some of the key elements needed for effective evaluation, including:

- Information about what your services and activities actually are and how they are delivered. This is especially important if one of your goals is to do a process evaluation to determine if your program is actually providing the services it planned to provide. It's hard to know why your program was successful (or unsuccessful) if you don't know exactly what you are providing.
- Written and measurable program outcomes. If you have not reviewed your written outcomes since your grant was turned in, now is the time. If you have made program changes or added new components that you want to evaluate, be sure that you have established outcomes for these. Similarly, if you have outcomes that you really don't think are relevant or measurable, you can modify your logic model (check with your program officer before making any significant changes to your original plan, however).
- Specific measures for the outcomes you have established. All your outcomes should have specific measures to determine if they have been achieved, and tools or systems must be in place to gather and track the information you need.

3. A basic understanding of research and evaluation principles. Numerous useful manuals, workbooks, and other kinds of guides on how to conduct your own evaluation are available; many of these are listed at the end of this supplement. These resources provide detailed help that will make your evaluation easier to set up and carry out. If your program can contract with an evaluation consultant, borrow an evaluator from a partner agency, or find a volunteer with evaluation experience, so much the better.

4. Resources (time, equipment and supplies, and a budget). You will need to know how much time you and other staff have available to do the work required to plan and implement an evaluation of your program. Even if you can't afford to hire an outside evaluator, you will have costs associated with the evaluation, such as computer upgrades or software, printing, and administrative support. (See page 7 for more discussion of evaluation costs.)

Resources for Conducting Research and Evaluation

From the MRC Lending Library:

OSDFS mentoring grantees can borrow items directly from the collection. Further guidelines for using the library can be found online at:

http://www.edmentoring.org/lending_library.html

What's Working: Tools for Evaluating Your Mentoring Program. (2001). This resource offers tools for conducting and scoring mentor and mentee surveys, focus groups, and interviews. It also offers advice on planning an evaluation and interpreting and acting on results to increase program effectiveness.

http://www.nwrel.org/resource/singleresource.asp?id=14034&DB=res

Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach. (1996). This comprehensive guidebook, originally written for United Way programs, offers many evaluation strategies and tools that could be adapted by mentoring programs. It is especially helpful for helping users determine appropriate outcomes to measure and develop specific instruments and data collection systems related to those outcomes.

http://www.nwrel.org/resource/singleresource.asp?id=10270&DB=res

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook. (1998). This excellent resource covers the spectrum of evaluation: determining which outcomes to measure, setting an evaluation budget, locating and hiring a professional evaluator, interpreting and reporting results to stakeholders, and everything in between. It is especially helpful in helping programs create a logic model illustrating how their services lead to outcomes, a critical step for any evaluation hoping to demonstrate scientifically valid results.

http://www.nwrel.org/resource/singleresource.asp?id=14328&DB=res

(Also available for download online at: http://www.wkkf.org)

Understanding Evaluation: The Way to Better Prevention Programs. (1993). This guidebook focuses on programming that attempts to reduce alcohol and substance abuse, but the overview of evaluation methods and instruments will be valuable for any type of prevention program. It also features examples of data collection instruments that programs could adapt.

http://www.nwrel.org/resource/singleresource.asp?id=12393&DB=res

Measuring the Difference Volunteers Make: A Guide to Outcome Evaluation for Volunteer Program Managers. (1997). This guide offers a nice overview of how to conduct an outcome evaluation. It covers pre-evaluation planning, data collection methods, and techniques for analyzing data. It also offers great tips for converting evaluation findings into outcome statements that can promote your success to clients and other stakeholders.

http://www.nwrel.org/resource/singleresource.asp?id=13330&DB=res

Knowing You've Made a Difference: Strengthening Campus-Based Mentoring Programs Through Evaluation and Research. (1990). This guidebook, designed specifically for mentoring programs, focuses on how evaluation can lead to increased participant satisfaction, improved outcomes, and positive program changes. It features a few sample data collection instruments and an excellent set of questions that mentoring programs may choose to try and answer through their evaluations.

http://www.nwrel.org/resource/singleresource.asp?id=15928&DB=res

Resources for Conducting Research and Evaluation (cont.)

Online Resources:

Evaluating Your Program: A Beginner's Self-Evaluation Workbook for Mentoring Programs. (Published by Information Technology International, 2000). This excellent resource offers a comprehensive guide for planning and conducting a local evaluation. Designed specifically for mentoring programs serving at-risk youth, it provides many useful tips and sample data collection tools.

- The full guidebook is available at: http://www.itiincorporated.com/_includes/pdf/SEW-Full.pdf

- Appendix D: Standardized Instruments. This section of the workbook lists existing standardized evaluation instruments that programs can use to measure their impact on things like depression, alcohol and drug use, relationships with adults and peers, perceptions of self-esteem and self-worth, attitudes about school and learning, and a whole host of other youth-related outcomes. For each instrument details about its administration and availability are provided.

  The appendix can be downloaded separately at: http://www.itiincorporated.com/_includes/pdf/17-Append_D.pdf

Measuring the Quality of Mentor Youth Relationships: A Tool for Mentoring Programs. (Published by the National Mentoring Center, 2001). Provides a simple youth survey which can help identify matches that need additional support and give programs a deeper understanding of the overall quality of the matches they are making. Blank surveys and scoring instructions are provided.

The full guidebook is available at: http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/pack-eight.pdf

W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Resources. The Kellogg Foundation offers a number of resources for evaluating all types of nonprofit and youth-serving organizations. The following and other free downloadable publications that might interest OSDFS mentoring grantees are available at: http://www.wkkf.org

- Evaluation Toolkit
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook
- Logic Model Development Guide

Online Evaluation Resource Library. This comprehensive online resource features sample evaluation plans, a searchable database of data collection instruments, and even examples of evaluation reports that illustrate how findings can be presented to stakeholders.

- Main site: http://oerl.sri.com/home.html
- Searchable database of instruments: http://oerl.sri.com/search/instrSearch.jsp

Planning & Evaluation Resource Center. This Web site is an excellent starting point for youth workers who are new to evaluation. It features several tutorials and a collection of links to many other evaluation tools, including blank logic models, sample surveys, and other data sources where researchers can find comparison data.

http://www.evaluationtools.org

Outcome-Based Evaluation: A Training Toolkit for Programs of Faith. (Published by FASTEN, 2004). While originally developed for faith-based programs, this guidebook offers a great overview of evaluation basics and some solid strategies that could benefit OSDFS grantees. The full guidebook is available at:

http://www.fastennetwork.org/Uploads/2F3325EC-7630-425B-8EDF-847AAA69BE76.pdf

Learning from Logic Models in Out-of-School Time (published by the Harvard Family Research Project, 2000). This handy little primer offers a nice overview of logic models and how their concepts apply to youth work and afterschool settings. It also includes a blank worksheet for developing a logic model.

The full article is available at:
http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/content/projects/afterschool/resources/learning_logic_models.pdf

Guidelines for Data Collection Methods (published by Social Policy Research Associates). These materials offer simple guidelines for conducting several types of research that will be common to mentoring programs, especially those conducting in-house evaluations:

- Guidelines for Focus Groups
  http://www.evaluationtools.org/files/Guidelines%20for%20Focus%20Groups.pdf

- Guidelines for Interviews
  http://www.evaluationtools.org/files/Guidelines%20for%20Interview.pdf

- Guidelines for Observations
  http://www.evaluationtools.org/files/Guidelines%20for%20Observations.pdf

- Guidelines for Survey Development
  http://www.evaluationtools.org/files/Guidelines%20for%20Writing%20Survey%20Questions.pdf

User's Guide to Evaluation for National Service Programs. (Published by Project Star). This online guide was originally designed for Corporation for National and Community Service projects, but has wide applicability to any youth-related programming.

The full guide is available in individual chapters here: http://nationalserviceresources.org/resoures/ online_pubs/perf_meas/usersguide.php

The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation (published by Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). This online guide offers another framework for understanding and conducting program research and evaluation. It features particularly useful advice around planning for an evaluation and working with an external evaluator.

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other_resrch/pm_guide_eval/reports/pmguide/pmguide_toc.html

Appendix A

Relationships in School-Based Mentoring Programs*

by Dr. Thomas Keller, Portland State University

*An mp3 audio recording and Power Point slides of this presentation can be downloaded from the MRC Web site at http://www.edmentoring.org/seminar2.html

Relationships in school-based mentoring programs

Thomas E. Keller, Ph.D.
and Julia M. Pryce, Ph.D.

Mentoring Resource Center Teleconference
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1

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Program:
Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Metropolitan Chicago

2

Introduction and overview

- Background and significance
  - Conceptual framework
  - Review of literature
- Study of school-based relationships
  - Study description
  - Research methods
  - Findings
- Conclusions and implications
- Practice issues

3

Background

"Conceptual models proposing how individuals might benefit from mentoring necessarily begin with the assumption that some type of relationship exists between the youth and mentor.

Nevertheless, the development of the mentoring relationship itself rarely has been the object of study.

A better understanding of the processes involved in the formation, maintenance, and conclusion of mentoring relationships holds promise for more effective intervention."

4

Basic Model of Mentoring

Individuals (mentor, student) → Relationship → Outcomes

Program → Individuals

Program ⇢ Relationship

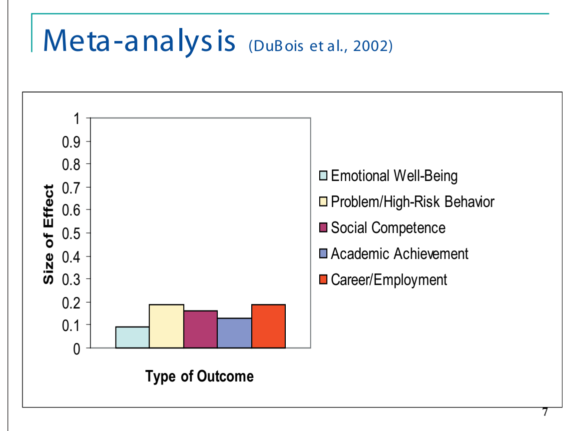
5

Does mentoring achieve outcomes?

- Evidence suggesting benefits
  - Literature on resilience
  - Rigorous evaluations
    - PPV study of BBBS (Tierney, et al., 1995)
    - Across Ages (LoSciuto, et al., 1996)
    - PPV study of school-based programs (???)
  - Meta-analysis (DuBois, et al., 2002)
- Unequal effects
  - Not all programs effective
  - Works better in some individual cases than others

6

Meta-analysis (DuBois et al., 2002)



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Does relationship quality matter?

- Relationship duration
  - Matches over 12 months had greatest benefits
  - Matches that ended in less than 3 months had <u>detrimental</u> consequences (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002)
- Relationship contact
  - In evaluation studies, relationships with more consistent contact showed greater benefits (LoSciuto, et al., 1996; Slicker & Palmer, 1993)
- Program expectations for contact
  - Effective programs have guidelines (DuBois et al., 2002)

8

Child characteristics and relationships

- Youth in higher risk situations
  - Programs based on risk status show greater results (DuBois et al., 2002)
  - Youth in foster have differential benefit (Rhodes et al., 1999)
- Youth with identified difficulties
  - Programs based on problem behavior show worse results (DuBois et al., 2002)
  - Youth with identified problems have shorter matches (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002)
- School-based
  - Typically based on teacher referrals for specified issues

9

Thinking about relationships

- Temporal
  - *Social interaction over time*
- Interdependent
  - *Mutual influence*
- Meaning
  - *Mental representations*
- Continuity
  - *Past experiences influence subsequent interactions*
- Discontinuity
  - *Dynamic and multi-determined*
- Moments
  - *Fun, mundane, sad/ insightfulness, vulnerability, achievement*

10

Multiple levels of interaction

(Van Lieshout, et al., 1999)

Domain	***Person***	***Interaction***	***Support***
Cognitive	Thinking	Communicating and interpreting	Advising
Emotional	Feeling	Expressing affect	Comforting
Behavioral	Acting	Regulating behavior	Monitoring
Intentional	Pursuing goals	Supporting or blocking	Advocating

11

Multiple mentoring options

- Life domains
  - *Family, school, peers, hobbies, careers, etc.*
- Contact/commitment
  - *Frequency, hours, duration, etc.*
- Relationship types
  - *Friend, coach, advisor, advocate, teacher, etc.*
- Consequences
  - *Strength: Flexibility, individualized attention*
  - *Challenge: Confusion regarding mentor's role*

12

Multiple relationship trajectories

- Each relationship has a life of its own
- Turning points, transitions, transformations
- Distinctive developmental pathways

13

Relationship framework

- What distinguishes relationships? (Laursen & Bukowski, 1997)
  - Permanence
    - *Voluntary, kinship, committed*
  - Social power
    - *Resources, experience/knowledge, rank*
  - Gender
    - *Male-male, female-female, cross-gender*

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Mentoring is a hybrid (Keller, 2005)

	Permanent (obligation)	Voluntary (mutual)
Unequal social power (vertical)	Parent	Mentor
Equal social power (horizontal)		Friend

15

Review of Literature

- Mentoring style (Morrow & Styles, 1995)
  - Prescriptive mentoring A
    - Transformation goals early, often, consistently
    - Authority and control of decision making
    - Rigid and frustrated
  - Prescriptive Mentoring B
    - Wanted reciprocal partnership
    - Unrealistic expectations for youth to initiate activities
    - Wounded and discouraged
  - Developmental mentoring
    - Relationship-building goals (throughout) and transformation goals (emerging later)
    - Youth-centered, reading youth's cues
    - Flexible, adaptable and persistent

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Review of literature

- Aims of mentors
  (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1992)
  - Level-1: developing a relationship
  - Level-2: introducing opportunities
  - Level-3: developing character
  - Level-4: developing competence
- Hierarchical—Higher level mentors incorporated lower level aims
- Results: Levels 3 & 4 had longer and more successful relationships

17

Looking and Listening: An Intensive Study of School-based Mentoring Relationships

Identifying relationship patterns

18

BBBS school-based program

- One-to-one relationship in group setting
- Students referred by teachers
- Teams of mentors from businesses, organizations
- Regular after-school meetings (1 hr/week)
- School-year commitment
- Activities within schools (e.g. library, cafeteria)

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Study overview

- Intensive study
  - Multiple perspectives, informants
  - Multiple sources, types of data
  - Multiple timepoints, observations
- Exploratory, inductive approach
  - Nature of interpersonal interactions
  - Nature of activities
  - Relationship development
  - Contextual influences

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Study aims

- Reflect complex, multi-dimensional nature of relationships
- Focus on relationship itself rather than predictors or outcomes
- Objectives
  - Description: Explore diversity in nature and developmental course of mentor-student relationships
  - Distinction: Examine systematic variation along dimensions such as communication, emotional closeness, and level of support
  - Combination: Characterize overall patterns of interaction in mentoring relationships

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Three schools

- School A
  - Volunteers: young high-tech professionals
  - Administration: uninvolved
  - Coordinator: hands off
- School B
  - Volunteers: employees of building supply company
  - Administration: principal emphasized test scores
  - Coordinator: hands off
- School C
  - Volunteers: seniors from AARP
  - Administration: very welcoming, supportive (cookies)
  - Coordinator: scheduled group activities/projects every session

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Sample

- Three elementary schools in low-income urban areas
- All program participants asked to be in study
- Enrollment rates: Mentors=95%, Students=85%

	Mentors (n=37)	Youth (n=33)
Age range	25-81	9-13
Gender (m/f)	38% / 62%	45% / 55%
Race		
African American	53%	78%
Caucasian	39%	0%
Latino	5%	12.5%
Other	3%	9.5%

Number of complete matches analyzed: 27

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Perceived needs of students

Category	Characteristics Identified by Teachers	Sample
Disruptive	Short attention span, impulsive, difficulty managing anger, frequent conflict with peers, related academic difficulties	N = 11
Withdrawn	Shyness, social isolation, low self-esteem, failure to engage with peers or academic work	N = 7
High-Potential	High potential for leadership and achievement paired with lack of environmental or familial supports	N = 8

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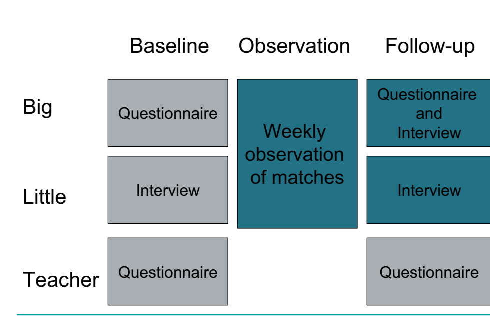
Research design: 3 school sites



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Relationship dimensions

- Developed three analytic dimensions:
  - Interpersonal tone (affect)
  - Activity orientation (content)
  - Developmental trend (trajectory)
- Developed and verified coding scheme based on dimensions

26

Dimension 1: Interpersonal tone

Category & Sample	Characteristics
Engaged (n = 11)	Mutual enjoyment, high level of eye contact, speech, laughter and shared affect.
Tentative (n=7)	Affection and warmth coupled with periodic interpersonal challenges and dissonance, often resulting in uncertainty.
Task-Focused (n = 4)	Activity-based interaction patterns that involved minimal emotional sharing.
Disengaged (n =5)	Disconnection as evidenced by dissonant affect, sporadic eye contact, and halted speech.

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Engaged

- "Like we would give each other a hard time but we knew it was . . . we kind of talked a little bit of trash to each other. He started it but I'm all for it. You know, it was just kind of great, it would be like the first move of a game, he'd be like, "Now who's winning?" I'm like, "I haven't even gone yet! What do you mean, who's winning? Of course you're winning, you were the first one to move!" He's like, "I just want you to remember that!" You know (laughing), so it was good to see him like, know that he felt comfortable enough, to give me a hard time." (Mentor Interview: Tyrone & Andrew)

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Tentative

"When [I] first met her, she was very happy to be with me, all around, can't wait to see me and then something changed. I believe it was like after the first two times, it became…she was always running off and sneaking away. I don't know if it was her form of being funny but it took me some time to get to understand it but I think it was that she needed more social interaction, not just to be with us.

. …she had some issues with her background and we talked just on a surface level and I didn't know how deep we were allowed to get since I don't see her that often. I didn't have a basis so it's hard to dive into something like that and be a real benefit to her." (Mentor interview: Susan & Charlene)

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Task-focused

Big Sister offers specific praise and encouragement as they begin task. Both working well together and very task-oriented, have high standards, are competitive and goal-oriented (Big rewrites completed story in order to get it just right, later stating, "we have the best story!").

Once they are finished with this part of the exercise, they both sit back in their seats simultaneously, satisfied with their accomplishment. In a minute, Little Brother leans forward [toward his Big Sister] and says, "OK, next project!" (Observation: Jacob & Clara)

30

Disengaged

The two have multiple barriers between them, including objects (purse, heavy coat zipped up to nose). . .there were a few times when the Little expressed energy or enthusiasm but the Big seemed to almost stifle this excitement. Neither one really seemed to enjoy the time together. (Observation: LaShonda & Eleanor)

Little walks in, hooded, withdrawn, little eye contact, at 8:15 [15 minutes late]. Big is playing cards with other Bigs, and looks around at Little but does not say anything. . . (Observation: Darian & Morris)

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Mentor reported relationship variables

1.5
1
0.5
0
-0.5
-1
-1.5
-2
Engaged
Tentative
Task-focused
Disengaged
Closeness (p=.03)
Conflict (p=.09)
Wish (p=.02)
Feel (p=.03)
Relationship (p=.04)

P-values from nonparametric Kruskal-Wallis test

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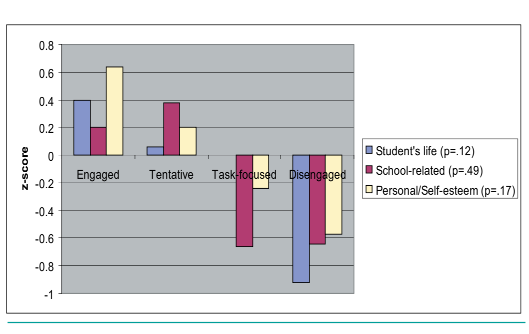
Mentor reported discussion topics



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Dimension 2: Activity orientation

Category & Sample	Characteristics
Friend (n = 11)	Focus alternated between formal learning exercises, games, and some interpersonal sharing.
Counselor (n = 6)	Included relatively high level of verbal sharing; level of other activities varied. Mentor demonstrated sense of protectiveness and offered advice.
Teaching Assistant (n = 6)	Focus primarily on academics and instruction.
Acquaintance (n = 4)	Limited level of activity due to awkwardness and uncertainty.

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Friend

I: Imagine this summer somebody asks, one of your friends asks you what it was like to be in the Big Sister program…

L: I say it was real, real, real nice.

I: What do you remember most about it?

L: I took a picture with her and I had so much fun with her.

I: So, that's what you remember the most, you took a picture with her?

L: And, I miss her. And I wished we still had Big Brothers and Sisters after school.

I: Why do you think Betty wanted to be your Big Sister?

L: Because she loves me and she likes to be my friend. 'Cause I love…I come in there feeling good and stuff, have on my little clothes and stuff, I know she like me'. (Child interview: Chrissy & Betty)

35

Friend

"I just tried to make as much conversation as I could and try to show him that I was interested in him and show him that he could trust me and I kind of related to some of the things that he was interested in. You know, I'm not too far off from where he is. I remember the time when I was his age. And it's not like I'm 50 years old and 'oh yea, I remember way back when…' I remember when I was that old and just tried to relay that to him, not by telling that to him, but by showing him in some different ways and just talking." (Mentor interview: Brad & Derrick)

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Counselor

"Probably a couple things, one being obviously fairly comfortable with other people and the ability to establish rapport with a child which isn't super easy. But also a willingness and ability to be an adult. Really act the adult role, boundaries, be willing to discipline appropriately. In the most limited sense, adjust right and wrong and appropriate behavior. Nothing beyond the scope of the setting you are in. And honestly, for the kids it's great to have someone that is fun and relaxed. Has an idea of what it is like to be a child in their living. . . know something about their life. I think that's probably it. Flexibility I think is very important." (Mentor interview: Sherry & Jane)

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Teaching assistant

I: How does she [your big sister] help you?

L: She helps me with my homework.

I: With your homework, uh huh. Anything else that she helps you with?

L: [Silence—shaking head 'no']

I: Nope, just your homework, OK. Um, why do you think that she wants to be your big sister?

L: To help me read.

I: Do you think more kids, like in your school or in different schools should have big brothers or big sisters?

L: Yes.

I: Why?

L: Because they can learn how to read. (Child interview: Tricia & Anna)

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Teaching assistant

The Big then encouraged the Little to start on her homework. "Let's do this now (pointing to the homework) and then we'll maybe play a game." The Big gave the Little a lot of positive encouragement while she worked, such as pats on the back and clapping a few times when she finished a task, and making statements, such as "You write very neatly," and "You are a very neat colorer." The Big watched her attentively and gave her prompts and guidance when she got stuck on a question.

The Big asked questions about the Little's life between homework tasks, such as, "What are you going to do this weekend?" and "Is there someone at home to help you with your homework?"

(Observation: Tricia & Anna)

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Acquaintance

M: Maybe the third or fourth week, he would come in and, we went to the gym, and he was just running around, the same thing like when he would sit by himself, playing by himself and I would be like, "Why don't you shoot over here?" And he would just be running back and forth, playing by himself kind of thing. So I didn't really feel like I bonded with him.

I: So you were trying to engage him in a game and he was doing his own thing?

M: Right.

I: And how did you feel during that experience?

M: How I felt? Not empty, but wow, what am I going to do here? I'm sitting here and I see everyone else playing with their Littles and I feel like, do something, I don't want to say helpless, but I felt like I didn't know what to do. (Mentor interview: Darian & Morris)

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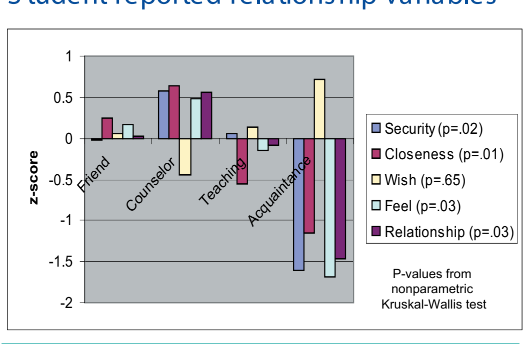
Student reported relationship variables



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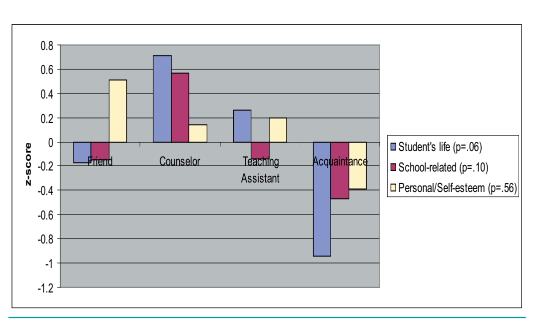
Mentor reported discussion topics



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Dimension 3: Developmental trend

Category & Sample	Characteristics
Progressive (n = 13)	Smooth start, gradual development that steadily deepened over time, variable conflict
Stagnant (n = 8)	Halting start, limited or no development over time, minimal conflict
Plateaued (n = 4)	Smooth start, gradual development that either leveled off or deteriorated over time, variable conflict
Breakthrough (n = 2)	Halting start, uneven development over time, significant conflict served as turning point to enhance quality as relationship progressed

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Stagnant

THREE OCCASIONS THROUGHOUT MATCH

"…**but after a few minutes they had to put it away because it was time to go. While the Little put the game away, the Big filled out his mentoring form for the Big Brother/ Big Sisters program about what they did that day. The Little came back to get his coat and then left without saying goodbye."**

"At the end of the hour, the Little seemed to linger, waiting for an interaction from his Big. He seemed to make a choice at some point to leave without that but walked by his Big on his way out of the room."

"The Big and Little came back to the cafeteria when the bell rang. The Big followed the Little into the room. The Little put on his coat and walked out of the room. The Big didn't see him leave and searched the room for him. He looked around the room, and under the tables, saying, "I lost him again!" After he looked everywhere in the room, he gave up and put on his coat." (Observation: Jason & Joe)

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Breakthrough

"At first I thought I had a young man who had…I will not be able to get through to him because he's uh…maybe he's just not going to be receptive. But I think I put a dent in it, in [Carlos's] life. When the last day came he never wanted to leave, he never wanted to go home."

"[Carlos] wanted me to feel like he didn't care, he didn't like me, and uh, you're not here for my good, and I'm going to do anything I want to do. He was that type, but I saw past that looking for attention. He didn't want to talk about anything other than guns and gangs. But that's not what he wanted to do, that's what he's exposed to. And it was toward the end that I found out [Carlos] was probably the biggest helper you could have. Just ask him to do something and he would break his neck…he wanted to be appreciated. He wants you to see, 'Hey I'm somebody, I can do that!' It was the last two weeks of the program we realized he wanted to help everybody because he know everything, been everywhere, and he's done everything. You know, he's 'God Jr.'!" (laughing) (Carlos & Valerie)

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Breakthrough

"He came and calmed down and I said, 'I want your work to be better than anybody's work in this room today. And the only way you can do it is sit down, be quiet and do it.' I said, 'When [program facilitator] asks questions, I want your hand to go up. I want you to answer it, use some common sense. Don't just say something stupid to make people laugh, because that's not intelligence.' And, he started raising his hand and he started doing things, you know, making things. He made something and I said 'Who in the world are you going to give that to?' And he said, 'Not you!' I said, 'Well that's fine because I'm not going to give mine to you either.' You know, when he finished all of that, he told me, 'This is for you.' It really was touching. And I told him, I said, 'Guess what? This one is for you!' (laughing) He started blushing. I was really touched." (Mentor interview: Carlos and Valerie)

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Composite groups

Match Label	# of Matches	Composite of Primary Relationship Dimensions
Connected	13	Engaged Tone, Friend or Counselor Role, Progressive Trend
Disconnected	5	Disengaged Tone, Acquaintance or Teaching Assistant Role, Stagnant Trend
Intermittently Connected	5	Tentative Tone, Friend or Counselor Role, Plateau Trend
Resilient	2	Tentative Tone, Friend or Counselor Role, Breakthrough Trend
Task-Oriented	2	Task-Focused Tone, Teaching Assistant Role, Stagnant Trend

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Attunement

Category & Sample	Characteristics
Highly Attuned (n = 11)	Consistently seeks to attend flexibly and creatively to verbal or nonverbal signs from youth as to preferences, concerns, and feelings
Moderately Attuned (n = 13)	Inconsistent response to student needs. Although generally attuned, mentor's attention and flexibility varies due to challenges connecting with youth, involvement with other group members, or lack of program support.
Minimally Attuned (n = 3)	Consistently limited in response to youth. Slow or unable to adjust approach based on youth's verbal or nonverbal signs as to preferences, concerns, or feelings.

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Attunement

"I know when she's reading out loud, I notice that she gets, loses interest even though I know she's a very avid reader. And I actually attribute it to the fact that, I don't really like reading out loud, I'm a fast reader and I get bored by the slow pace. So I made a decision, at a certain point I was trying to press us along, read more pages. And I actually sort of realized, I said to her, 'actually maybe it's just that reading out loud can be kind of annoying?' So I made a decision not to push her then because why spoil something she loves?" (Mentor interview: Sherry and Jane)

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Attunement

- Insightfulness, inter-subjectivity, adaptability
  - Identifies issue *(child loses interest)*
  - Notices incongruence *(child avid reader)*
  - Looks to own experience for insight *(I don't like to read out loud)*
  - Considers own role in interactions *(I was trying to press along)*
  - Weighs trade-offs *(important to make progress but not spoil love of reading)*
  - Considers child's perspective and makes adjustment

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Matches, needs, attunement

Match Category	# of Matches	Youth Needs	Attunement
Connected	13	High potential (6) Disruptive (3) Withdrawn (4)	High (8) Moderate (5)
Disconnected	5	High potential (2) Disruptive (1) Withdrawn (2)	Moderate (5) Minimal (3)
Intermittently Connected	5	Disruptive (4) Withdrawn (1)	High (2) Moderate (3)
Resilient	2	Disruptive (2)	High (1) Moderate (1)
Task-Oriented	2	High potential (1) Disruptive (1)	Moderate (2)

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Other observations

- Discrepancies between Bigs and Littles in description of experience
- Lack of themes linking activities over time
- Lack of communication about the relationship itself
- Lack of attention to closure (and future)

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Summarizing

- Mentors influential in relationship development
- Hybrid model
  - Have sense of adult purpose
  - Keep youth voluntarily engaged
- Youth-focused
  - Seek youth input, interests
  - Willing to take different routes to achieve aims
  - Experiment and adjust
- Interpersonal skills
  - Sensitive, attuned
  - Flexible, persistent

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Program and Practice issues

Creating and supporting relationships

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Systemic model of mentoring
(Keller, 2005b)

- Intervention goes beyond mentor-child relationship
- Caseworker, teachers, parents contribute to success or failure of relationship
- Mentoring effects can be indirect, through multiple pathways of influence
- Importance of social context

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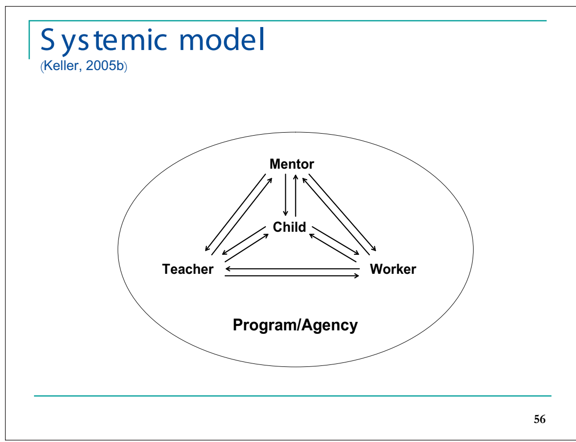
Systemic model
(Keller, 2005b)



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Developmental stages
(Keller, 2005a)

Contemplation

Initiation

Growth & Maintenance

Decline & Dissolution

Redefinition

57

Stage model
(Keller, 2005a)

Stage	Conceptual features	Research findings	Program practices
Contemplation	Anticipating and preparing for relationship	Mentor motivations, expectations, and goals	Recruiting, screening, training
Initiation	Beginning relationship and becoming acquainted	Mentor patience, similarity of mentor and youth interests	Matching, making introductions
Growth and maintenance	Meeting regularly and establishing patterns of interaction	Frequency and nature of activities, mentor style	Supervising and supporting, ongoing training
Decline and dissolution	Addressing challenges to relationship or ending relationship	Mentor and youth characteristics, mentor style	Supervising and supporting, facilitating closure
Redefinition	Negotiating terms of future contact or rejuvenating relationship	Not available	Facilitating closure, rematching

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Final thoughts

- Human beings of all ages are happiest and able to deploy their talents to best advantage when they are confident that, standing behind them, there are one or more trusted persons who will come to their aid should difficulties arise.
  - *John Bowlby*

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Appendix B

The Importance of Match Activities on Mentoring Relationships*

by Dr. Michael Karcher, University of Texas – San Antonio

*An mp3 audio recording, Power Point slides, and full handout for this presentation can be downloaded from the MRC Web site at http://www.edmentoring.org/seminar2.html

The importance of match activities in mentoring relationships

(Or, Reasons to encourage school-based mentors to engage in non-academic activities, & reasons why non-academic activities engage school-based mentors)

Michael J. Karcher, Ed.D., Ph.D.
University of Texas at San Antonio

Principal Investigator of the *The Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment* (SMILE), a 3-year study funded by the W. T. Grant Foundation; Co-editor of the *Handbook of Youth Mentoring (Sage)*

SMILE

1

Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment (SMILE) Project Overview

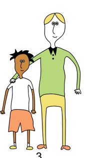
- The first large-scale, randomized study of school-based mentoring
- Conducted in collaboration with the Communities In Schools(CIS) program in San Antonio
- We're following 550 youth for two years across 20 elementary, middle and high schools
- *Key question*: Does mentoring add anything to what staff already provide youth through CIS
- Funded by the W. T. Grant Foundation

2

What is the SMILE Study?

Students who volunteered for or were referred to the CIS for counseling, enrichment, and support services were randomly divided into two groups. The 1st group received a mentor and other CIS services while the 2nd group receives other the CIS services alone.

Surveys are given to students, parents, teachers, and mentors (pre,mid, post) to determine whether having a mentor makes a significant difference in the lives of youth beyond changes resulting from other services available (counseling, tutoring, etc.).



3

A goal of the SMILE: To examine the relationship between school-based mentoring activities and mentors' goals

- What are the effects of 6 months of SBM?
- What roles do race, age and gender play?
- What might be the mechanisms of change?
- What types of activities and discussions should mentors engage in with mentees in SBM?
- Does it matter why adults volunteer to mentor?

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MENTORING A CHILD 34 USA

VALUES · GOALS · SKILLS

5

Our next series of analyses: Examine activities

Styles & Morrow's describe *Prescriptive* (directed, heavy handed) *vs.* Developmental (relationship-based, youth focused)

The Hamiltons' Instrumental (goal-oriented) *vs. Psychosocial*

We contrasted 2 types of activities,* instrumental *vs.* developmental, using Activity Log data

Activities

*Karcher, Kuperminc et al (2006). *American Journal of Community Psychology*

Second Evaluation Question: *Mentor Activity Logs*

- After each visit, mentors completed an Activity Log to note what **they did & talked about** with their mentees

7

Activity Log: Activities

Dev/ Inst	Name of Activity	DuBois	CIS	Pilot Study
Inst	Academics (Help with homework, tutoring, helping with reading, library, computer work, etc .)		CIS	Prior Logs
Dev	Sports or athletic (Basketball, catch, etc.)	DuBois		Prior Logs
Dev	Creative activities (drawing, arts and crafts, reading and writing for fun, photography, etc.)			Prior Logs
Dev	Indoor games (board games, playing cards, chess, computer games, puzzle, etc.)			Prior Logs

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Activity Log: Discussion Focus

Dev/Inst	Name of Discussion Topic	DuBois	CIS	Pilot Study
Inst	Attendance & Stay-in-School		CIS	
Inst	Academics (Grades, school, testing, etc.)		CIS	
Inst	Behavior (Detention, misbehavior, etc.)	DuBois	CIS	
Inst	Future (College, career, goals, dreams, etc.)			Prior Logs
Dev	Casual conversation (Discussion of sports, weekend activities, holiday plans, Fiesta, etc.)	DuBois		
Dev	Social issues (Current events/news, poverty, crime, religious issues, race-related issues, etc.)	DuBois		Prior Logs
Dev	Relationships (Family, teachers, friends, romantic friends, etc.)	DuBois		
Dev	Listening & Learning (Mentee's hobbies & interests, feelings,			Prior Logs

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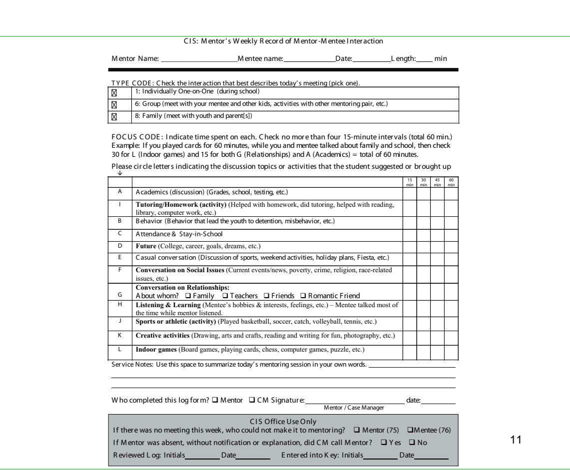
Weekly Activity Logs Completed by Mentors
Record Developmental and Instrumental Activities

Instrumental conversations	Developmental conversations	Activities: Inst. & developmental
Academics (A)	Casual conversation (E)	Tutoring/ Homework (I)
Behavior (B)	Social issues (F)	Sports or athletic (J)
Attendance & Stay-in-School (C)	Relationships (G)	Creative activities (K)
Future (D)	Listening & Learning (H)	Indoor games (L)



CIS: Mentor's Weekly Record of Mentor-Mentee Interaction

Mentor Name: ____________ Mentee name: ________ Date: ______ Length: ____ min

TYPE CODE: Check the interaction that best describes today's meeting (pick one).

☒	1: Individually One-on-One (during school)
☒	6: Group (meet with your mentee and other kids, activities with other mentoring pair, etc.)
☒	8: Family (meet with youth and parent[s])

FOCUS CODE: Indicate time spent on each. Check no more than four 15-minute intervals (total 60 min.) Example: If you played cards for 60 minutes, while you and mentee talked about family and school, then check 30 for L (Indoor games) and 15 for both G (Relationships) and A (Academics) = total of 60 minutes.

Please circle letters indicating the discussion topics or activities that the student suggested or brought up ↓

		15 min	30 min	45 min	60 min
A	Academics (discussion) (Grades, school, testing, etc.)				
I	**Tutoring/Homework (activity)** (Helped with homework, did tutoring, helped with reading, library, computer work, etc.)				
B	Behavior (Behavior that lead the youth to detention, misbehavior, etc.)				
C	Attendance & Stay-in-School				
D	**Future** (College, career, goals, dreams, etc.)				
E	Casual conversation (Discussion of sports, weekend activities, holiday plans, Fiesta, etc.)				
F	**Conversation on Social Issues** (Current events/news, poverty, crime, religion, race-related issues, etc.)				
G	**Conversation on Relationships:** About whom? ❑ Family ❑ Teachers ❑ Friends ❑ Romantic Friend				
H	**Listening & Learning** (Mentee's hobbies & interests, feelings, etc.) – Mentee talked most of the time while mentor listened.				
J	**Sports or athletic (activity)** (Played basketball, soccer, catch, volleyball, tennis, etc.)				
K	**Creative activities** (Drawing, arts and crafts, reading and writing for fun, photography, etc.)				
L	**Indoor games** (Board games, playing cards, chess, computer games, puzzle, etc.)				

Service Notes: Use this space to summarize today's mentoring session in your own words. ________

Who completed this log form? ❑ Mentor ❑ CM Signature: ____________ date: ______
Mentor / Case Manager

CIS Office Use Only
If there was no meeting this week, who could not make it to mentoring? ❑ Mentor (75) ❑Mentee (76)
If Mentor was absent, without notification or explanation, did CM call Mentor? ❑ Yes ❑ No
Reviewed Log: Initials______ Date______ Entered into Key: Initials______ Date______

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Volunteer Function Inventory: What need does mentoring meet?

The Motivations for Volunteering to be a Mentor

Values function (to express or act on important values)

Understanding function(to learn more about the world)

Enhancement function (to grow and develop)

Career function (to gain career-related experience)

Social function (to strengthen social relationships)

Protective function (to reduce negative feelings: e.g., guilt)

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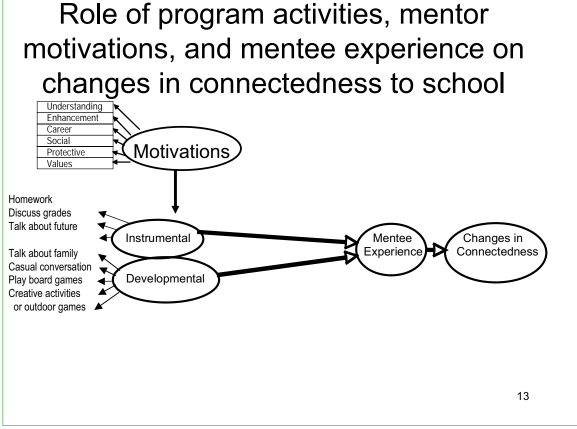
Role of program activities, mentor motivations, and mentee experience on changes in connectedness to school



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Mentors in the SMILE Study

- Mentors were 54% Latino, 35% Caucasian, 5% African American, and 6% "Other".
- 70% were college students, 13% were military personnel, 15% full-time employed adults, and 2% "Other."
- Forty-three percent spoke Spanish;
- 78% were female;
- 71% mentored all year.

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Youth in the SMILE Study

525 youth between the ages of 10 and 18, most from families earning less than $20,000 a year. There were more males in Elem/MS (n = 108) than in HS (n = 63) (χ^2 = 8.66, *p* = .004), but balanced numbers of females in Elem.MS (n = 170) and HS (n = 175).

There was not a significant difference in the gender distribution of participants across treatment and control conditions (χ^2 = 2.36, *p* = .14) and youth in the treatment and control conditions did not differ in age (*F* =.60, *p* = .43).

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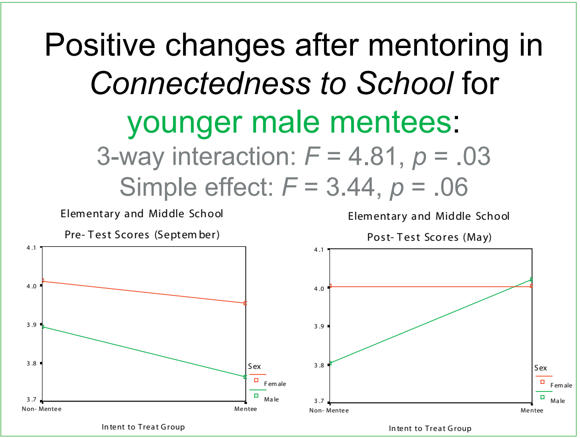

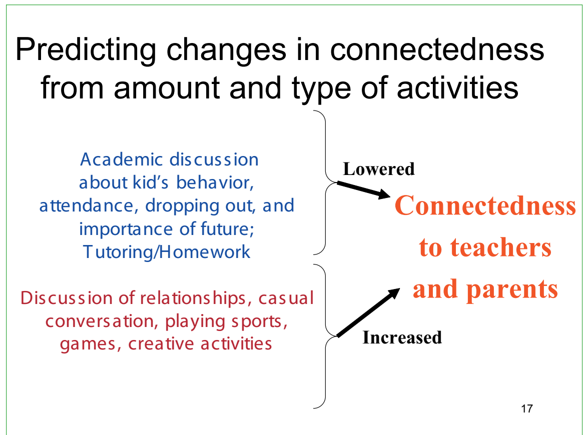

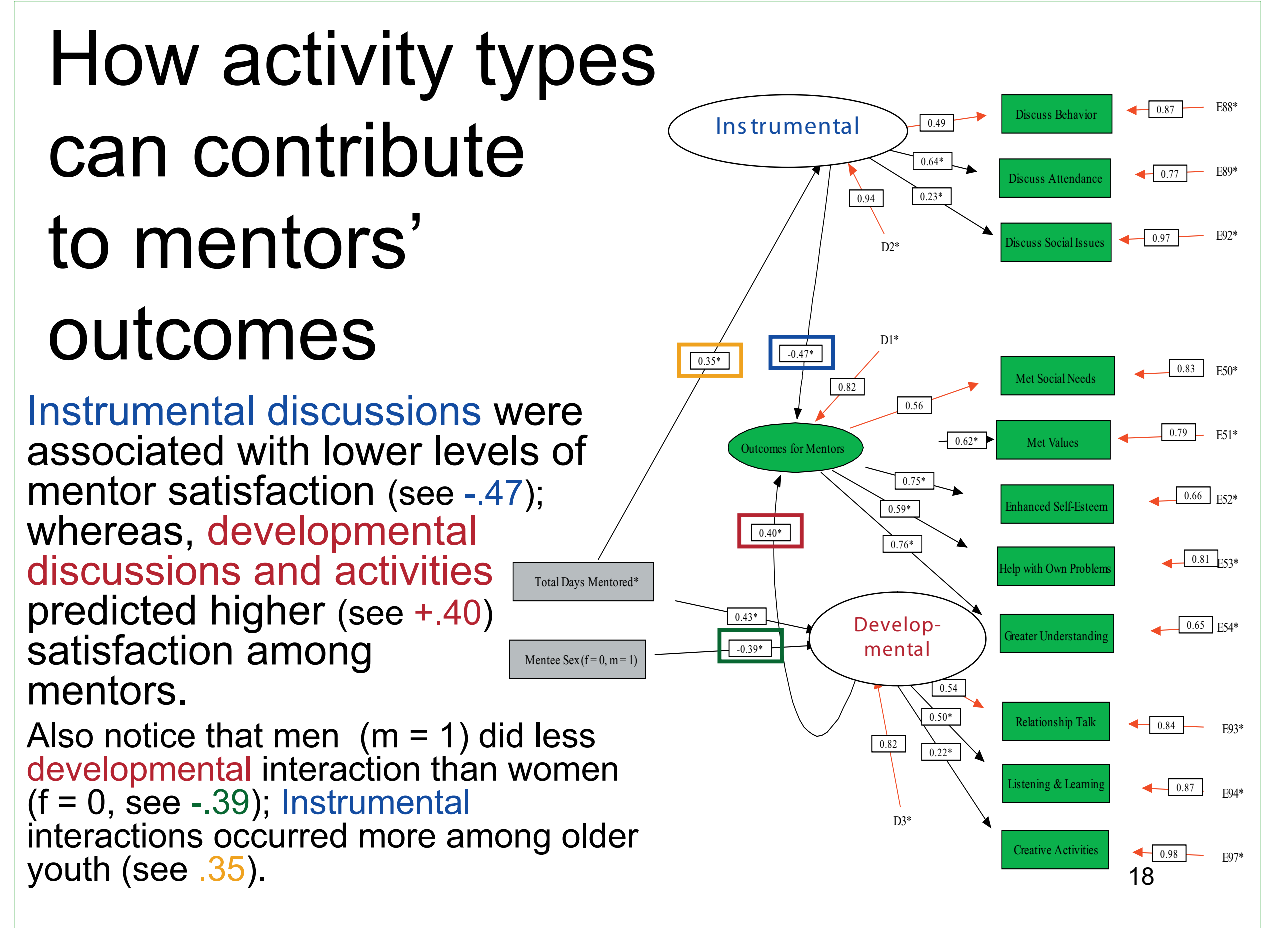

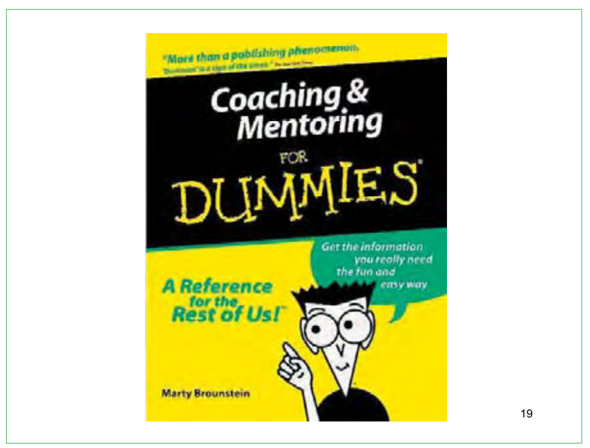

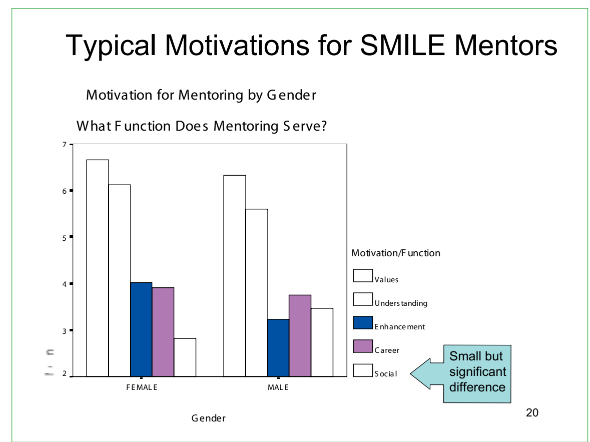

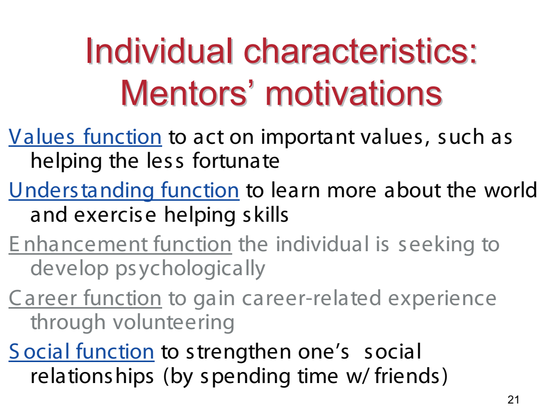

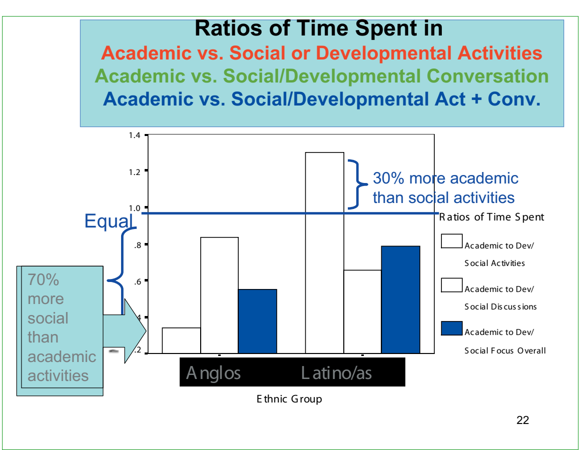

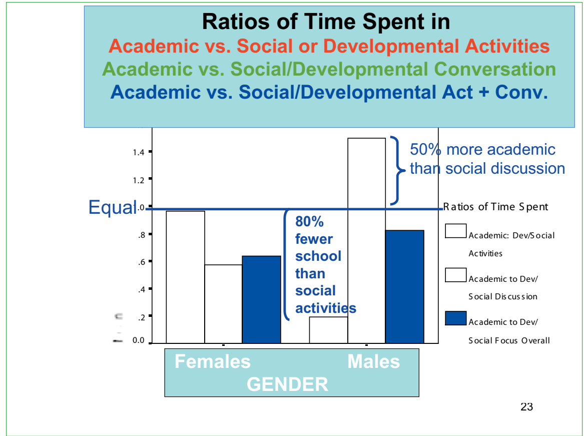

Initial picture & a staff's response

- Mentors were primarily motivated by their Values and their desire for greater Understanding--Focus on these in support.
- Men were more motivated by social motivations, and may need peer support. In the match they primarily discussed academic, goal-oriented discussions, & may need coaching in developmental approach
- Latinas were most likely to engage in academic and instrumental activities; might be encouraged to be more relational too.

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Handbook of Youth Mentoring Co-author & SMILE study consultant David DuBois; For contributions to the field: David DuBois, Jean Grossman, the Hamiltons, Carla Herrera, & Jean Rhodes

University of Texas at San Antonio & University of Wisconsin-Madison for research awards, and Drs. Rich Diem, Art Hernandez, and Jesse Zapata who housed the project.

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Reasons to encourage school-based mentors to engage in non-academic activities

(and how non-academic activities encourage school-based mentors to stay engaged)

Michael Karcher, Associate Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio

One unknown in the practice of school-based mentoring is what mentors should do with their mentees when they meet. There is general agreement that in community-based mentoring psychosocial and developmental activities seem to best support the development of strong mentor-mentee relationships. There also is compelling evidence that in school-to work programs, workplace mentoring, and apprenticeships a more goal-directed, instrumental approach is essential to establishing a satisfying and productive match. School-based mentoring falls somewhere in between these two. While it is not tutoring (and let's be clear about that!), school-based mentoring does take place in schools, where there is increasing pressure to help students, especially those who are underperforming or who are in underperforming schools, develop academic skills, habits, and interests. But to date there has been little research looking at the associations between these two contrasting types of activities—developmental or psychosocial activities vs. instrumental, goal-focused activities—and important outcomes from school-based mentoring, including both psychosocial outcomes (connectedness, self-esteem, social skills) and instrumental outcomes (grades, attendance).

In our time, I want to discuss with you a log (see in the Research Brief) we developed and used to track the types of activities that mentors and mentees engaged in. I'll also share some findings from my own research (www.utsasmile.org) about the relationships between these activities and youth outcomes.

Another unknown, and truly essential question for school-based mentoring, is why mentors choose to assist youth and what they hope to get (or give) through the experience. The mentors' goals, even when mentors are not fully cognizant of their goals or needs, likely are important not just in getting mentors to start mentoring. Whether or not mentors' goals are met likely shapes whether or not they feel effective ("efficacious" or high in "self-efficacy) and whether they choose to persist as mentors.

A second goal of our time is to discuss a model of mentor volunteer motivations developed by Gil Clary (who, by the way, co-edited with Jean Rhodes, a recently published book entitled, "Mobilizing adults for positive youth development"). Understanding the six types of motivations most common among volunteers may help program coordinators better recruit and retain mentors.

Finally, it is likely that what happens between the mentor and mentee also influences mentors' decisions about whether or not to persist as a mentor, and likely has some bearing on whether or not they view their initial goals as being achieved. For example, if a mentor wants to "save" the child academically, but the mentee refuses to discuss let alone engage in academic activities, that mentor is likely to feel frustrated and lacking efficacy (and more likely to quit). Conversely, if a mentor wants to serve as a friend, big brother, and advocate for a youth *and* has little interest in engaging in academic work, then pressure from teachers to tutor or the child's own insistence that they do homework together (in lieu of talking about personal issues) also could be frustrating.

Therefore, given sufficient time, I would like to share some of our recent findings about the relationship between the kinds of activities matches engage in and the level of satisfaction mentors report afterwards. This, I think, can help us more deeply understand the essential role of activities in mentoring, how they affect both mentees and mentors, and why it is important for program coordinators to educate mentors about these processes.

Homework for our Discussion

Look over the attached "Mentor Interaction Log" and think about to what extent each of these types of activities occurs in your schools by your mentors and mentees.

Read the enclosed article from the MRC on mentor motivations and recruitment. Try to link each motivation to a mentor you have recruited (even if you have to embellish or exaggerate that mentors' *real* level of that motivation), so that you can estimate which motivations would be most often reported by mentors in your program. Consider how these motivations might differ along demographic lines. That is, do you think one type of motivation is more common among male than female mentors, among teen mentors compared to elder mentors, or between ethnic minority and majority mentors.

Once you have in mind concrete examples of these activities and of mentors who would embrace these specific motivations, take a look at the Research Brief. While this study uses some complex statistics, you don't need to have a good grasp of statistics to appreciate the findings. In this study, you can see two types of activities (the two I noted above—developmental and instrumental—in circles) grouped together where they each are linked to a different "circle" or factor. This is because these activities correlated with or occurred most frequently with these other activities (those all pointing to one circle). These activity circles or factors represent how often a given mentor engaged in each general type of activity. (FYI: the bigger the number, from small = .01 to large = .99, on the arrows going from the activity to the general activity circles the better that specific activity reflects develop-mental and instrumental activity). The center circle represents a factor called motivation. Linked to it (shown) are those motivations that correlated with for developmental and instrumental activities. We found, the more mentors' reported engaging in developmental activities the more satisfied they were. This positive relationship means that more developmental activities predicted greater satisfaction and fulfillment of those motivations. Conversely, the more mentors engaged in instrumental (primarily academically oriented) activities, the less satisfied they were at years' end and the less fulfilled they were in meeting those motivations.

I want to spend some time talking about what these findings mean for your work. I will say upfront, however, that although one interpretation of these findings is that "academic activities are bad, and non-academic activities are good," this is probably an overgeneralization of these findings. It does not take into account that relationships change over time, and that a balance of both might be better than excessive use of either. But I would like us to talk about and think about what excessive use of either type would look like and feel like to those mentors and mentees, and then we can think about when and how these different types of activities might be most useful in school-based matches.

Having reviewed the materials above should help jump-start our discussion and help us make the most of our short period of time together. If you want to learn more about these motivations and how they come into play in mentor recruitment and retention, then I suggest you read the chapter by Stukas and Tanti entitled "Recruiting and sustaining volunteer mentors" in the *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (Sage, 2005), which David DuBois and I co-edited. This is a promotional code that will provide you a 15% discount on the purchase of the Handbook by calling Sage at (800) 818-7243. This discount code will expire on July 30, 2007. It is S06PLF (This is the number zero- not letter o.)

You can also find out more about the study from which this Research Brief comes at our website, www.utsasmile.org. I look forward to talking with you soon,
Michael Karcher, michael.karcher@utsa.edu

MENTORING FACT SHEET

U.S. Department of Education ■ Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools
Mentoring Resource Center

#8, March 2006

Volunteer Motivation and Mentor Recruitment

DRAFT

Volunteer recruitment and retention are constant worries of mentoring programs; no mentoring program can survive without an adequate supply of individuals willing to volunteer time and energy long term to serve as role models and coaches.

Understanding what drives people to seek out and stay with volunteer activities can help you better target your efforts at finding and keeping mentors. This *Fact Sheet* summarizes some of the key research on volunteer motivation and offers tips on how to use this information to build more effective volunteer recruitment and retention programs.

Research on Volunteer Motivations

Each individual has a unique mix of interests, feelings, and circumstances that can drive him or her to join a volunteer program. However, emerging research on volunteers and volunteerism in America does point to a cluster of motivations commonly found among volunteers. These are best captured in the Volunteer Functions Inventory developed by Clary et al., 1998, as shown in the table at right.

Generativity, community concern, and civic pride are additional influences that may encourage people to volunteer. Generativity is the need to pass on wisdom, lessons, and knowledge to future generations, and some scholars (e.g., Snyder and Clary, 2004; Erikson, 1963) see it as the mark of full maturation among adults. Community concern and civic pride may compel an individual to volunteer because he or she sees a concrete need in the community, or is driven by a simple desire to show pride in the community by being a supportive, engaged citizen (Omoto and Snyder, 1995).

Volunteer Functions Inventory

Function	Description	Example
Values	Desire to demonstrate one's humanitarianism and empathy by getting involved.	"I hear so much about the hard lives these kids have and feel I should do what I can to help."
Career	Enhancing career options or exploring a new vocation.	"I'm considering getting into education and want to see how I get along with children."
Understanding	Desire to better understand society and individuals.	"I know I've lived a sheltered life, so I want to know what these kids are dealing with."
Enhancement	Desire to feel better about oneself or feel needed by others.	"I get such a good feeling when I am helping others."
Protective	Using volunteerism to avoid or work through personal issues.	"I want to give a child the role model I never had growing up."
Social	Volunteering to meet the expectations of, or get approval from, others.	"Two of my good friends are mentors and say I'd be good at it."

Think about the mentors in your program. What reasons do new mentors give for wanting to participate? Are there patterns in the reasons given? If you could classify your mentors' motivations into the Volunteer Functions Inventory, which motivations would appear most frequently? What motivated *you* to work for a mentoring program?

Just as motivations to volunteer differ for each individual, motivations also vary among different groups of volunteers. Individuals are motivated to help those who are most like themselves, whose needs are familiar (Stukas and Tanti, 2005), a tendency borne out in studies (e.g., Carson, 1991) showing ethnic and cultural groups primarily volunteering in capacities impacting their own subgroup. Thus, a complete picture of who mentors and why should include demographic information highlighting the subgroups most likely to participate in mentoring.

A 2005 survey of 60,000 U.S. households conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (White, 2006) indicates that in comparison to other volunteers mentors tend to:

- Be equally likely to be male as female (nationally, more females than males volunteer)
- Be found somewhat more frequently among African Americans than other racial/ethnic groups (whites generally tend to volunteer more)
- Be younger, between 16 and 44 years old
- Have some college education
- Have at least one child under the age of 18 in their home.

A poll of 2,000 adults conducted by MENTOR in partnership with the AOL Time Warner Foundation (MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, 2005) found additional demographic and personality traits shared by those who typically serve as mentors or would consider serving. The 2002 poll found that potential mentors tend to:

- Have household incomes of $50,000 or more
- Have access to the Internet
- Want access to expert help (84 percent) and training (84 percent) before mentoring
- Be willing to mentor a youth online (47 percent)

Think again about the mentors in your program. Do they tend to come from one racial/ethnic or socioeconomic group? What are the average and median ages of your mentors? Do they tend to be employed or retired? Do they have children? What reasons have you heard young professionals give for wanting to mentor, versus the reasons given by middle-aged mentors and seniors? What types of people have responded best to your recruitment outreach, and why do you think that is?

How Your Program Can Use Knowledge of Volunteer Motivations

Knowing your audience—who its members are and what they want—is a fundamental principal of marketing, whether you are selling a cosmetic or the opportunity to change a young person's life. Mentoring programs can improve their volunteer recruitment and retention efforts by identifying potential volunteers' backgrounds, beliefs, and motivations and speaking to these directly in recruitment messages and ongoing support.

The findings described above provide a snapshot of people inclined to mentor and their motivations. You may see some things that apply to your mentors and others that do not. The findings should thus be used as a framework and launching pad for conducting analyses of your own mentors. If you do not already do so, you will want to think explicitly about—and capture data on—who your mentors are and "what's in it for them." The following tips may be helpful:

- **Include motivation-assessment questions on screening or match questionnaires for new mentors.** Ask prospective mentors questions regarding their motivations for participating in your program. Open-ended questions such as "Why do you want to be a mentor?" or "What do you hope to get out of your mentoring experience?" are a great start. Consider developing a set of multiple-choice questions based on common motivations, interests, and goals.
- **Interview long-serving mentors to understand what keeps them involved in the**

program. Unless your program is relatively new, you'll likely have mentors who have participated in it over several years. Asking them what inspires or compels them to continue serving can reveal information that can be used to refine recruitment pitches and retention plans. Depending on your time and resources, you can conduct interviews about mentor motivation on an informal, one-to-one basis or through focus groups. Mentors are likely to cite the personal relationships they've formed with their mentees as the main reason they "stick around," so develop questions that encourage them to be specific about when and in what context they get the greatest sense of fulfillment in their work with their mentees.

- **Collect and analyze volunteer-motivation data to identify clusters of motivation.** Analyzing motivation information collected from your mentors may reveal common drivers among them. Thess data can also be compared with the demographic information you've already collected on your mentors (i.e., race/ ethnicity, employment status, etc.) to see if there are motivations common to mentors from specific types of backgrounds.

- **Align volunteer motivations with recruitment messages and approaches.** Information you gather on motivations can be used in crafting recruitment messages and retention strategies (i.e., volunteer-recognition offerings). One method for doing this is to create a three-column worksheet listing the motivations you know or think drive your mentors to volunteer (i.e., Volunteer Function Inventory items, generativity, civic pride) in the first column. Title the middle column "How we can take advantage of this motivation," and list ways your recruitment and retention strategies can be better tailored to meet each motivation. Title the third column "Slogans, messages, images, and approaches" and list marketing messages or materials that can be developed to play to each function/ motivation among volunteers. As an example, the National Network of Youth Ministries uses the slogan "They need what you know" in one of its mentor recruitment campaigns, which speaks to the motivations of enhancement, values, and generativity.

- **Test slogans and approaches on mentors.** Test your recruitment pitches and approaches on your mentors to see if they resonate with their experiences and motivations. The strongest and most promising approaches that emerge can then be used in generating recruitment ad copy and graphics.

When time and recruitment budgets are tight—and with mentoring programs, they usually are—you have to spend resources wisely and generate the most "bang for the buck." Understanding volunteer motivations generally, and among your mentors specifically, can go a long way toward making better-informed, targeted recruitment messages and materials.

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Additional Reading and Resources

Print

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Web

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U.S. Department of Education
MRC

The Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment (SMILE): A functional approach to predicting mentor satisfaction from mentoring interactions.

RESEARCH BRIEF

Abstract There are many unanswered questions in the field of youth mentoring. Why do so many mentors quit prematurely? What actually happens in mentoring meetings between mentors and youth? Are male and female mentors differentially effective (DuBois et al., 2002)? What does the burgeoning practice of school-based mentoring look like, and might it provide a format that increases mentor follow-through (Herrera, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000)? We examined the experiences of mentors in school-based mentoring to see which demographic factors and mentoring activities played a role in their satisfaction with mentoring. We also examined (a) the role of sex and ethnic differences in mentors' initial reasons for mentoring, (b) the relationship between mentoring activities and mentors' outcomes, and (c) how mentor and mentee characteristics contributed to the activities they engaged in during their meetings. We found the type of activities varied mostly as a function of the mentee's age and sex. Consistent with the literature on youth mentoring (Karcher, Kuperminc, Portwood, Sipe, & Taylor, in press), two types of activities occurred (developmental and instrumental), and both had different relationships with mentor outcomes.

Introduction Given the fact that most program-based youth mentoring matches end within the first six months (Rhodes, 2002)—most commonly from mentor attrition due to dissatisfaction—it is critically important to learn what mentors "get out of mentoring." Understanding this may help program staff recruit mentors who are more likely to experience their hoped-for benefits through mentoring and thus to persist longer (thereby increasing mentor retention rates). Of course, mentor outcomes (like mentee outcomes) are likely a function of individual (mentor and mentee) characteristics as well as what goes on in the mentoring match (Karcher, 2004).

To understand what happened during matches, we employed the terminology of *instrumental* and *developmental* for characterizing mentoring relationship goals (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1990). In developmental mentoring activities the primary focus is on facilitating the relationship between mentor and mentee as a way of promoting the youth's development. In this form of mentoring, mentors encourage playing games, recreational activities, casual conversations, and discussion of close relationships (activities e, g, h, j, k, and l in Figure 1). In instrumental mentoring activities the primary goal is learning skills (e.g., vocational), achieving specific goals, or thinking critically about issues that may be important to the youth's future (activities a, b, c, d, f, and i in Figure 1). We hypothesized that youth would be more receptive to developmental mentoring and that youths' rejection of instrumental activities might foster frustration among mentors who used that approach.

Figure 1: Activity Log Completed by Mentors After each Meeting

Mentor's Record of Mentor-Mentee Interaction © Karcher, 2004

Name: ______________________ Mentee name: ________________ Date: _________ Weeks met: _______

Only if the Discussion or Activity types below do not include all that you did, describe what happened during your meetings in the space to the right in addition to completing the second below

____
____
____
____

How much of your time did you spend on these discussion topics: none, some, much, or most?

		none	some	much	most
A	**Academics (discussion)** (Grades, school, testing, etc.)				
B	**Behavior** (Detention, misbehavior, etc.)				
C	**Attendance & stay-in-school** (school importance)				
D	**Future** (College, career, goals, dreams, etc.)				
E	**Casual conversation** (Discussion of sports, weekend activities, holiday plans, Fiesta, etc.)				
F	**Social issues** (Current events/news, poverty, crime, religion, race-related issues, etc.)				
G	**Relationships** (talk about)				
	family				
	teachers				
	friends				
	romantic friend				
H	**Listening and learning** (Mentee's hobbies & interests, feelings)				

How much of your time did you spend on these activities: none, some, much, or most? (other than time simple spent in discussion of these topics).

		none	some	much	most
I	**Tutoring/Homework** (Helped with homework, did tutoring, helped with reading, library, computer work, etc.)				
J	**Sports or athletic** (Basketball, soccer, catch, volleyball, tennis, etc.)				
K	**Creative activities** (Drawing, arts and crafts, reading and writing for fun, photography, etc.)				
L	**Indoor games** (Board games, playing cards, chess, computer games, puzzle, etc.)				

Please **circle** the letter(s)(e.g., D, H, or L) indicating the discussion topics or activities **that the student suggested or brought up** (rather than those initiated by you, the mentor).

Signature:________________________________

Mentor

Source: Karcher, M. J. (2004). W. T. Grant funded Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment (S.M.I.L.E.): Year I results. Unpublished report, University of Texas at San Antonio.

We applied the functional theory of adult volunteerism, in which Clary et al. (1998) argue that volunteers seek out specific experiences (goals) and that the achievement of their functional goals is likely to increase the volunteer's persistence. Given the variety of activities in which mentors can engage, there may be an interaction between mentors' goals and their actual interpersonal experiences that may explain much of the benefits that they perceive of being a mentor. This may be a particularly salient issue in school-based mentoring where mentors often feel the pressure from teachers to focus on instrumental activities that may conflict with their intended motives.

Method

Sample. Mentors (n = 151) were enrolled in the Communities in Schools (CIS) program as volunteer mentors assigned to one of 16 middle and high schools in San Antonio, Texas. The mentors met individually with a student (92% Latino; between grade 5 and 12) for one hour a week for an average of three to six months. Mentors were recruited by agency staff at military bases, local businesses, colleges and within local organizations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce). 70% were college students, 13% military personnel, 15% full-time employed adults, and 2% "Other." The mentors included statistically balanced proportions across gender and ethnicity: Latina (n = 54); Latino (n = 18); White female (n = 43); White male (n = 17), though there were more women than men. Each week, after meeting with their students, the mentors completed a log of their activities (see Figure 1 above). Mentors also completed Clary et al.'s (1998) Volunteer Function Inventory (of motivations) before mentoring and the Volunteer Outcomes Inventory (for motivations achieved) afterwards.

Analyses. Three data analysis steps were taken in this study. First multiple analyses of variance (and covariance) were computed to test for effects of mentor and mentee characteristics on engagement in all 12 activities (detailed info available from first author, mkarcher@utsa.edu). Second, partial correlations were conducted between activities and mentor outcomes, controlling for all significant demographic characteristics. Finally, activities that were significantly correlated with mentor outcomes were included into a structural equations model, in which each activity was loaded on one factor reflecting either instrumental or developmental activities.

Results

Activities. There were no main effects of mentors' ethnicity or sex on activities once variance related to mentees' school level and sex were accounted for because youth characteristics explained most of the variance in the types of activities mentors and mentees engaged in together. High school aged matches were more likely than middle school matches to engage in discussions about academics, the future, personal relationships and social issues, and were less likely to discuss mentees' (negative) behaviors, to play games, or engage in creative activities. Girls were more likely than boys to discuss their future and their school attendance with their mentors. We could not test for a sex by grade level interaction because men never mentored girls, and only men mentored high school boys, so there was a confounding of mentees' sex and age with mentors' sex.

Motivations. There were main effects of mentors' sex as well as an interaction of mentors' sex and mentors' ethnicity on their initial motivations. Women (more than men) reported mentoring as a way to feel better about themselves and to live up to their values by mentoring, while men expected mentoring to be socially satisfying. Anglo males expected the greatest social satisfaction, while Hispanic male mentors expected the least social satisfaction (lower than women). Hispanic men also were least likely to view mentoring as being consistent with their values. Anglo women had the highest and Anglo men the lowest expectation that mentoring would help their careers.

Outcomes. At the end of the year, only 121 of the original 151 mentors completed the outcomes questionnaire. This rendered the MANCOVAs as having insufficient power to detect any gender, ethnicity, or interaction effects. These outcomes, however, were correlated with activity types (controlling for mentee age and sex, and mentor sex). There were multiple significant relationships between activities and outcomes (five outcomes had at least two significant correlations one of the six of the activities, see Figure 2). These were further examined in a structural model.

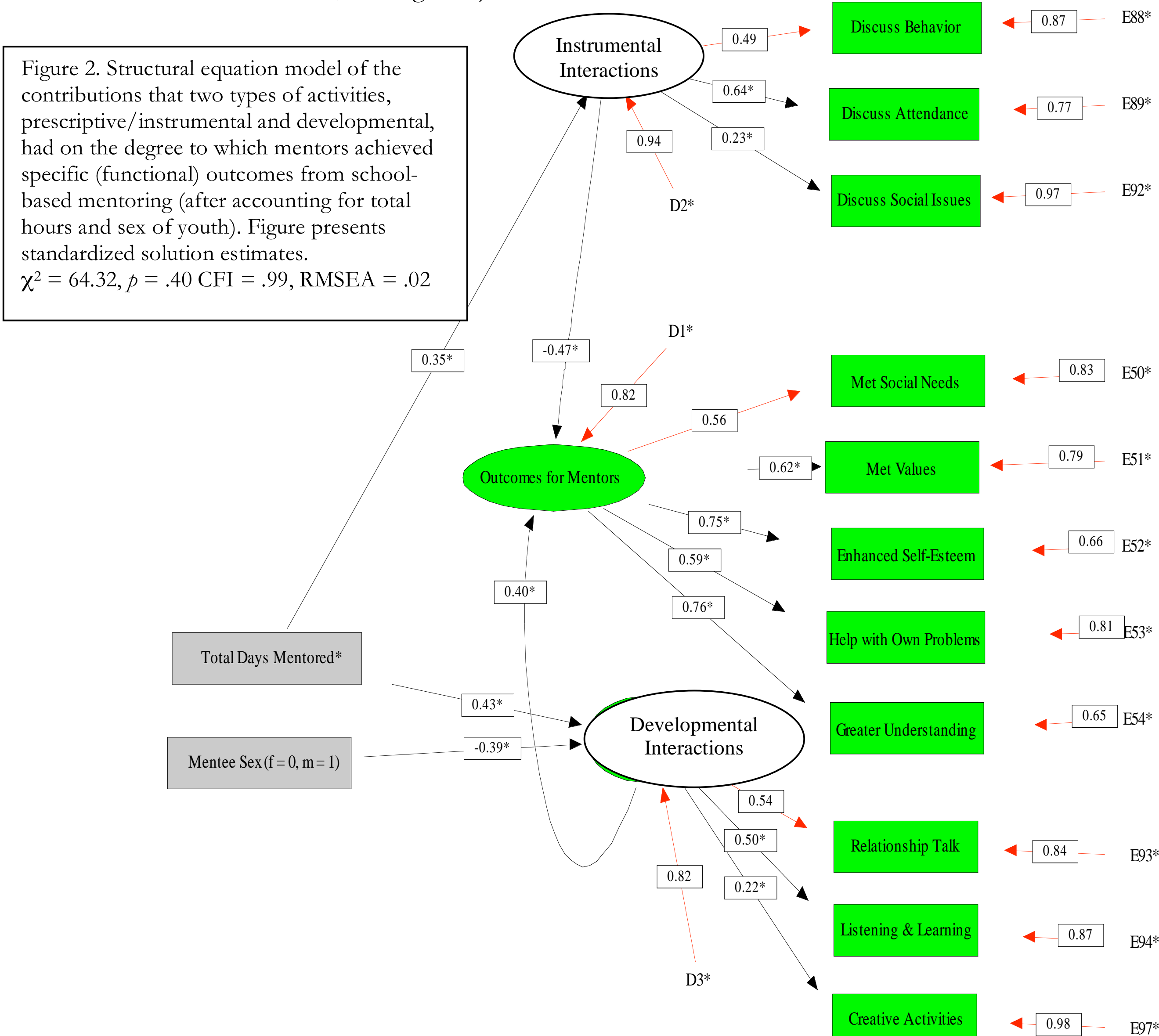

Figure 2. Structural equation model of the contributions that two types of activities, prescriptive/instrumental and developmental, had on the degree to which mentors achieved specific (functional) outcomes from school-based mentoring (after accounting for total hours and sex of youth). Figure presents standardized solution estimates.
$\chi^2 = 64.32$, $p = .40$ CFI = .99, RMSEA = .02

The structural equations model in Figure 2 reveals that the six activities that correlated with mentor outcomes loaded as anticipated on separate factors deemed instrumental or developmental. The instrumental activities were negatively associated with mentor outcomes (see -.47 on path) and developmental activities were positively related to outcomes (see + .40 on path). Neither the addition of mentor sex nor mentee age strengthened the model. Because activities occurred before the mentors reflected on their experiences (goals achieved), it seems activities influenced outcomes.

Conclusion The two types of activities most commonly reported in the youth mentoring literature, instrumental and developmental (Karcher et al., in press), made unique contributions to mentor outcomes. Mentors in matches that engaged in more instrumental activities reported the lowest levels of positive outcomes, while mentors in matches enlisting more developmental activities reported the most positive outcomes. Tests of ethnic and gender differences in outcomes achieved, however, were inconclusive, and although mentors' sex and ethnicity played a role in what activities occurred, mentees' age made a much larger contribution to what activities took place. In addition, because mentors' sex and mentees' sex and age were confounded (see above), it would be unwise at this point to provide men and women different training. However, the relationships between these activities and mentors initial motivations might provide a useful focus for modifications in mentor recruitment and training. Mentors' motivations should be matched with mentees' developmental activity inclinations (e.g., younger mentees play more); but all mentors should be warned of the pitfalls of an overly goal-oriented ("challenging") approach. Finally, further exploration of the meaning of mentors' motivations and how different activities may increase or inhibit the mentors meeting their objectives for mentoring and the mentees' outcomes should be undertaken.

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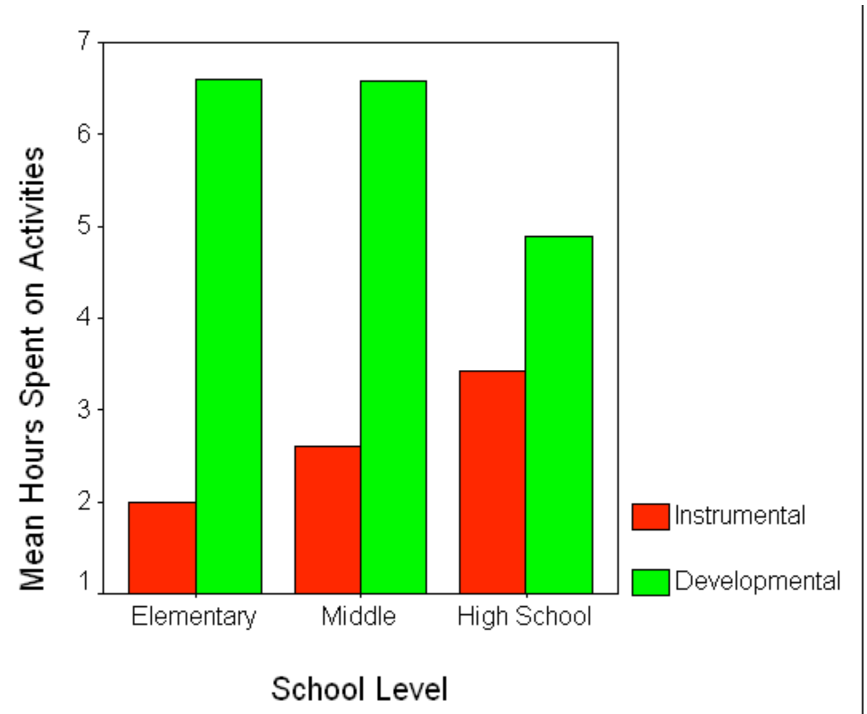
Source: Karcher, M. J., Benne, K., Gil-Hernandez, D., Allen, C., Roy-Carlson, L., Holcomb, M., & Gomez, M. (June, 2006). The Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment (SMILE): A functional approach to predicting mentor satisfaction from mentoring interactions. Paper symposium, 14th Annual Meeting of the *Society for Prevention Research*, San Antonio, TX.

Food for thought: In that same study, in addition to the increased use of instrumental activities by male mentors (with male mentees) and developmental activities by female mentors (especially, but *not just* with female mentees), a developmental trend also emerged. What are the implications of the trend in Figure 3 for (a) mentor retention/satisfaction; (b) match quality, and (c) match supervision?



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