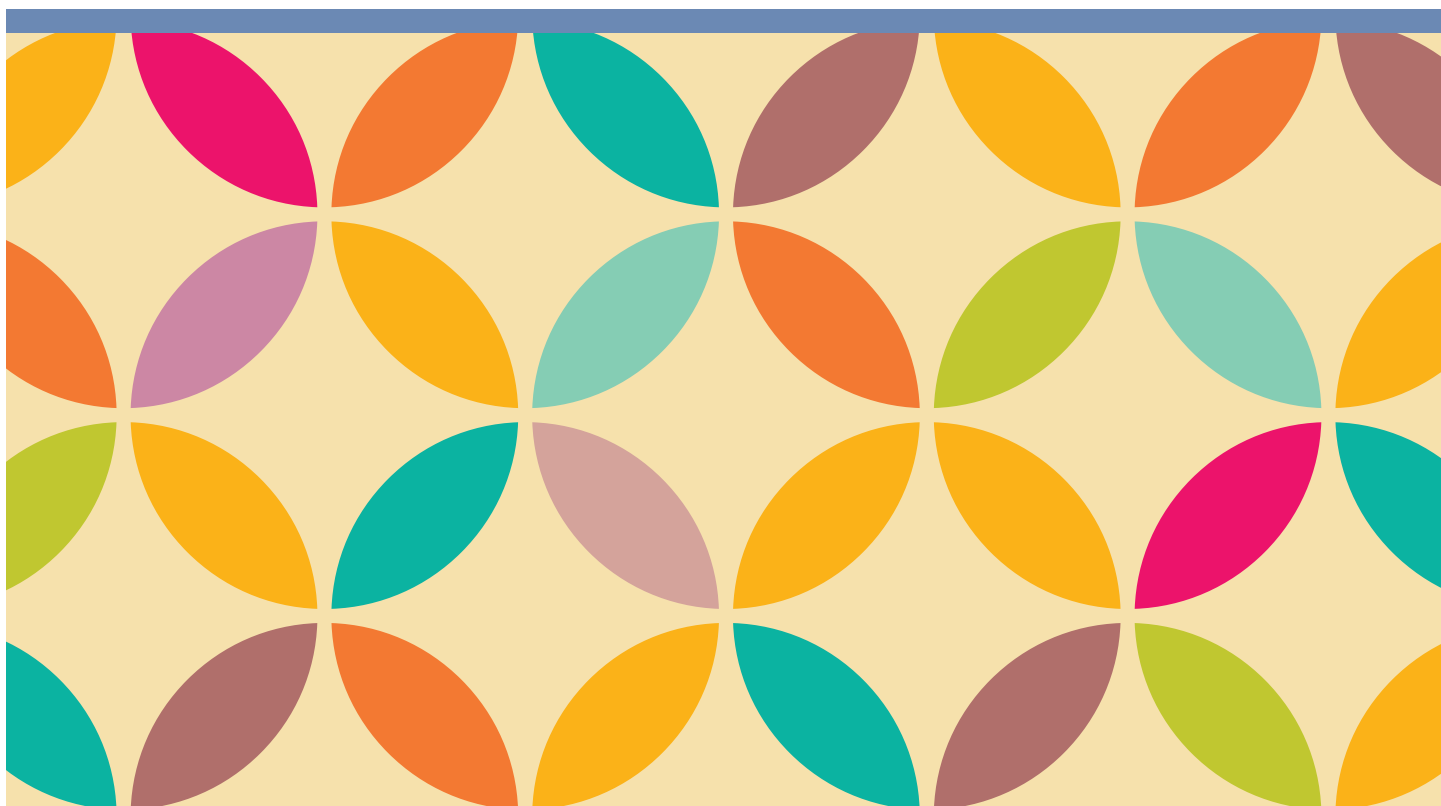


Mentoring Programs

Resource Guide

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

PREVENTION FIRST
Building community capacity to prevent substance abuse



Mentoring Professional Development Resource Guide

Welcome

We hope you can use this Mentoring Professional Development Resource Guide to meet the needs of your organization. While it is a requirement, and we strongly encourage that you attend our classroom-based *Foundations of Successful Mentoring Programs* training offered by Prevention First, we realize you may need some guidance and assistance ahead of time. If you have been to Prevention First's *Foundations of Successful Mentoring Programs* training, this resource guide will provide you with key points that can assist you in the planning and implementation of your mentoring program.

This Mentoring Professional Development Resource Guide will provide you with general information, guidance, and websites that can be used as resources as you plan and implement your mentoring program.

Prevention First is a statewide training and resource center that is dedicated to the prevention of substance abuse and related issues. Founded in 1980, we reach thousands of youth, parents, educators and others each year through our specialized services. We provide information, education and support to those working to keep our communities healthy and our children drug-free. Our mission is to build community capacity to prevent substance abuse by providing training and technical assistance and raising public awareness.

Visit www.prevention.org to view additional resources and information regarding current training opportunities. For more information about technical assistance or the services we offer, please contact providerservices@prevention.org or call 217-836-5346.

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OVERVIEW

Growing up isn't always as easy as it seems. Even in the best circumstances, young people need someone on their side who is a positive role model. Whether it is someone to listen to them, someone to help them work through a new situation, or someone to give them genuine praise when it matters, children and young people thrive when they make a connection with a mentor.

Not only does the child or young person thrive in the mentoring relationship, but the mentor gains personal satisfaction knowing they have made a difference in a child's life. Supportive relationships with non-parent adults can powerfully influence the course and quality of adolescents' lives. Even the smallest time commitment of one hour per week can make a significant impact in a child's life

DEFINITION

As outlined in the Center for Prevention Resources and Development Background Research, mentoring, pertaining to an inter-generational model in contrast to a peer model, has been defined as “the relationship between an older, more experienced adult and an unrelated, younger mentee—a relationship in which the adult provides ongoing guidance, instruction, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee” (Bellamy et al., 2004).

Responsible mentoring is a structured one-on-one relationship between an adult and youth that focuses on the needs of the mentored participant. The relationship should foster caring and support and encourage individuals to develop to their fullest potential. Mentoring can provide youth the opportunity to develop relationships with experienced and sensitive adults. The voluntary nature of mentoring participation demonstrates to the youth a level of concern for their welfare that may not have been assumed with a caring “professional” (de Anda, 2001). These are all qualities that provide youth the opportunities and resources for personal development and rational life decision making. As a result, mentoring can be particularly effective for the youth during major developmental life transitions (Rhodes et al., 1999).

[Center for Prevention Research and Development. \(2009\). Background Research: Mentoring Programs. Champaign, IL: Center for Prevention Research and Development, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois.](#)

ILLINOIS SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROGRAM STANDARDS

The Illinois Department of Human Services Substance Abuse Prevention Program planning and implementation standards for mentoring programs are the minimum requirements to which providers must adhere.

Planning Phase

1. Develop a youth referral/recruitment and screening plan that includes a commitment from the referral source to identify youth who demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics: (a) single parent family status, (b) low socio-economic status, and (c) lack of positive adult role models.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- A youth referral/recruitment plan has been established.
- At least one referral source has been identified.
- A youth screening plan has been established.
- Each referral source has entered into a linkage agreement with the agency.

2. Identify and secure commitment of mentors. Mentor programs will maintain a ratio of one adult mentor to one youth. Set formal expectations for mentors to commit to at least one hour or class period per week for at least nine months or one school year.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- A mentor recruitment plan has been established.
- The agency acknowledges that each mentor must meet with each youth individually.
- A mentor commitment form has been developed.
- The mentor commitment form includes the expectation of meeting for one hour or class period per week.
- The commitment form includes expectation of maintaining match for nine months/one school year.

3. Develop a formal orientation session for each mentor that includes: (a) overview of roles and responsibilities, (b) key issues for building strong mentor/mentee relationships, and (c) handling difficult situations.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- Orientation materials have been developed.
- Materials include an overview of the mentor roles and responsibilities.
- Materials include key issues for building strong relationships.
- Materials include information on handling difficult situations.

4. Develop a formal screening process which includes: (a) a written description of the mentor's roles and responsibilities, (b) a written statement of the mentor's commitment to the mentoring relationship, and (c) background checks and reference checks.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- A formal screening process has been established.
- A written description of the mentor roles and responsibilities has been developed.

- Criminal background checks are part of the screening process for all mentors.
- Reference checks are part of the screening process for all mentors.

5. Develop a process to gain parental consent for youth participation.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- A parental consent procedure has been established.
- A parental consent form has been developed.

6. Develop a plan for communication, supervision, and support for the mentor/mentees.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- A communication/supervision/support plan for mentors has been established.
- A communication/supervision/support plan for youth has been established.

Implementation Phase

7. Deliver a formal orientation session with each mentor that includes: (a) an overview of roles and responsibilities, (b) key issues for building strong mentor/mentee relationships, and (c) Handling difficult situations.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- Formal orientation has been documented for all mentors.

8. Conduct a formal screening process with each mentor that includes: (a) a written description of the mentor's roles and responsibilities, (b) a written statement of the mentor's commitment to the mentoring relationship, and (c) background and reference checks.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- All mentors received a written description of their roles and responsibilities.
- All mentors signed a mentor commitment form.
- Criminal background checks were completed for all mentors.
- Reference checks were completed for all mentors.

9. Gain parental consent for youth participation.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- Parental consent has been documented for all youth participants.

10. Contact mentor/mentee pairs a minimum of once every six weeks.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- Documentation that all mentors were contacted by program staff at least once every six weeks.

11. Mentor pairs must meet at least one hour or class period per week for at least nine months or one school year. The mentoring program will maintain a ratio of one adult mentor to one youth.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- At least 80% of mentor/mentee pairs made at least 80% of their weekly meetings.
- At least 80% of mentor/mentee pairs have been sustained for at least 9 months.
- Ratio of one mentor to one mentee has been documented for all matches.

12. The mentoring program will serve youth who demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics: (a) single parent family status, (b) low socio-economic status, and (c) lack of positive adult role models.

13. Will not use mentor program as a substitute for intensive intervention services, such as mental health counseling, when needed.

Characteristics of Standard Achievement:

- A plan for referring youth to intensive intervention services has been developed

CPRD BACKGROUND RESEARCH AND STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Prevention Research and Development (CPRD) is contracted by the Illinois Department of Human Services Substance Abuse Prevention Program to provide evaluation consultation and data management services that support the community-based substance abuse prevention system across Illinois. CPRD staff work to gather, analyze, and use evaluation data to drive decisions. CPRD's [Background Research: Mentoring Programs](#) outlines research findings for mentoring programs. These findings are based on extensive review of academic journals, government documents, and consensus documents. CPRD background research findings informed the SAPP standards for mentoring programs.

Mentor Recruiting

According to the [National Mentoring Partnership Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring](#), recruitment focuses on engaging appropriate mentors and mentees by realistically describing the program's objectives and expected outcomes. Recruitment strategies should build positive attitudes and emotions about mentoring, and target mentors and mentees whose skills, backgrounds, and needs best match the goals and structure of the program.

A well thought out recruitment plan provides a blueprint to follow. An effective plan includes:

- Clear goals and strategies
- Potential sources of mentors
- The recruitment message
- Staffing patterns
- Budget
- Material requirements

The plan can be used to assess the effectiveness of overall recruitment efforts and individual strategies, allowing programs to make ongoing adjustments. Some additional tips to consider can be found in ["Effective Youth Mentoring Relationships for High School Students"](#)

Mentor Screening

[The National Mentoring Partnership](#) recommends that screening focus on evaluating prospective mentors to determine whether they have the time, commitment and personal qualities to be a safe and effective mentor; and screening prospective mentees to determine if they have the time, commitment and desire to be effectively mentored. Screening emphasizes keeping participants, especially young people, safe in the mentoring relationships.

Responsible mentoring programs need to incorporate many important program elements and policies to promote safe, effective mentoring relationships. Your organization is ultimately responsible for screening mentors and placing them in the most suitable roles. Not every individual you recruit as a prospective mentor will be suited to become a mentor. Careful screening improves the quality of your mentors and helps ensure the safety of the youth in your program, while also managing your organization's level of risk and liability.

Criminal background checks are critical, but are only one part of a comprehensive volunteer screening process. A robust system of reference checks and interviews of potential volunteers, evaluation of risk and ongoing monitoring should also be part of your organization's regular practice. All mentoring programs funded by IDHS SAPP are required to conduct a four-part background check with all mentors. The four-part background check consists of the following: 1. FBI fingerprint, 2. Statewide repository, 3. Sex offender registry, and 4. DCFS CANTS checks. **The mentor(s) is required to be under the direct supervision of the SAPP staff until either the state or the FBI check results are received and verified.**

Mentor Matching and Support

Matching youth with an appropriate mentor is crucial, not only for the success of that individual match, but for the overall success of your program. As with your recruitment, screening and training efforts, your procedure on making matches should reflect your program's goals and objectives. The first step in creating a matching procedure is the development of matching criteria. Identify the qualities you will look for in your mentors and mentees that will allow you to make a good match. No matter what criteria your program chooses, they should always be viewed through the lens of the needs of the youth. Ask yourself, what does this youth need in a mentor? Are there mentors in our pool who can fill those needs?

Addressing the needs of mentors is also key to a successful mentoring program. Staff/Program Coordinators should have regular communication with each mentor to address questions and identify challenges and solutions. According to U. S. Department of Education Mentoring Resource Center, a program can do several things to support the matches it has made, such as, but not limited to: monitor matches consistently, spot red flags and provide help, offer adequate ongoing training, establish patterns of effective communication, make a special effort to keep care givers involved, recognize and honor participants and, ensure that closure is a positive process.

Forming and Maintaining Relationships

Careful attention must be paid to the development and quality of the mentor-mentee relationship, as this bond is crucial for attaining desired youth outcomes. Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) performed a study for the National Mentoring Partnership that identifies common practices of mentoring programs that foster close and supportive relationships. These practices include regular training and post-match meetings, matching mentors with youth based on common interests and encouraging mentors to spend time engaging in social as well as academic activities.

In the study, mentors who were given ample training and support from program staff, who engaged in social as well as academic activities with their mentee, and who were matched with a mentee with common interests reported having closer, more supportive relationships with mentees than mentors who were not. These findings indicate that staff can facilitate relationship development through the implementation of the specified program practices.

Choosing the right mentors for your prevention program can create a life-changing opportunity for youth in need in your community. With careful attention to the planning phase standards and the implementation phase standards, you can create a mentoring program that provides a positive experience for mentees, mentors, and your organization.

Listed below are websites and resources offering information on mentoring that may be helpful as you plan or implement your own mentoring program.

WEB-BASED RESOURCES

The National Mentoring Resource Center – Tools and resources to improve the quality and effectiveness of youth mentoring across the country.

<http://www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org>

The National Mentoring Partnership – Resources and information for mentoring programs.

<http://www.mentoring.org>

Mentoring Works Washington – Resources and research to support mentoring programs.

<http://www.mentoringworkswa.org/home>

Illinois Mentoring Partnership – Resources and information for mentor programs and mentors of children and youth in Illinois.

<http://ilmentoring.org/index.php>

The Search Institute - Provides catalytic leadership, breakthrough knowledge, and innovative resources to advance the health of children, youth, families, and communities.

<http://www.search-institute.org>

YouthBuild USA National Mentoring Alliance Community of Practice (NMA) – Information about youth mentoring programs at YouthBuild.

<http://youthbuildmentoringalliance.org/about>

Institute for Youth Success at Education Northwest – A collection of podcasts for Mentoring and Youth Development Programs addressing various topics of interest.

<http://educationnorthwest.org/resources/podcasts-mentoring-and-youth-development-programs>

The Chronicle of Evidenced Based Mentoring - An online source for sharing new findings and ideas about youth mentoring.

<http://chronicle.umbmentoring.org>

Articles

University of Illinois at Chicago Institute of Health Research and Policy, (2014) “State of Mentoring in Illinois”. This report describes the rich diversity of mentoring programs, many operating with very limited resources, to serve our state’s youth—many of whom are at high risk with substantial needs. <http://ilmentoring.org/images/pdf/SoM-Full-Report.pdf>

Civic Enterprises in association with Hart Research Associates, (2014) “The Mentoring Effect: Young People’s Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring”. This report shares the findings from the first nationally representative survey of young people’s perspectives on mentoring. <http://ilmentoring.org/images/pdf/MentoringEffectReport.pdf>

Herrera, Carla, David L. DuBois and Jean Baldwin Grossman, (2013) The Role of Risk: Mentoring Experiences and Outcomes for Youth with Varying Risk Profiles. New York, NY: A Public/Private Ventures project distributed by MDRC. <http://ilmentoring.org/images/pdf/resources-roles-of-risk.pdf>

Tools/Materials/Resources

Implementing Effective Youth Mentoring Relationships for High School Students- U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Smaller Learning Communities <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/finalimplem.pdf>

Mentor/Mentee Training and Relationship Support Resources

<http://educationnorthwest.org/resources/mentormentee-training-and-relationship-support-resources>

Mentor Recruitment and Screening Resources <http://educationnorthwest.org/resources/mentor-recruitment-and-screening-resources>

Youth Mentoring Program Planning and Design Resources

<http://educationnorthwest.org/resources/youth-mentoring-program-planning-and-design-resources>

Mentoring Program Sustainability Resources

<http://educationnorthwest.org/resources/mentoring-program-sustainability-resources>

Building Relationship- A Guide for Mentors

<http://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/effective-strategies-for-providing-quality-youth-mentoring-in-schools2.pdf>

Going the Distance- A guide to building lasting relationships

<http://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/going-the-distance.pdf>

Research in Action- Fostering Close and Effective Relationships in mentoring programs

http://www.mentoring.org/new-site/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/RIA_ISSUE_4.pdf

Talking it through communication skills for mentors

<http://talkingitthrough.educationnorthwest.org/>

Mentoring Fact Sheet- Overcoming Relationship Pitfalls

<http://educationnorthwest.org/sites/default/files/resources/factsheet10.pdf>

Toolkits

[Men in Mentoring Toolkit](#)

[Faith-based Mentor Recruitment Toolkit](#)

[Mentor Pre-Match Training Toolkit](#)

[Growth Mindset Toolkit](#)

[How to build a Successful Mentoring Program- Using the elements of effective practice](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can group training sessions be considered mentoring sessions?

Mentoring sessions between mentors and their assigned mentee are one-on-one sessions. Additional time can be spent with other mentor pairings learning skills and/or for group events, however the minimum of a one hour session once a week is time as a mentor/mentee pair.

2. Can a mentor work with more than one youth?

According to the Illinois Substance Abuse Prevention standards there must be a ratio of one mentor to one mentee match, meeting at least one hour a session, once a week. This may mean that a mentor will be allowed to be matched to multiple mentees meeting individually with each for one hour. For example, a mentor may choose to volunteer two times per week to meet with two mentees individually.

3. Should a mentee be screened?

According to best practices and the Illinois Substance Abuse Prevention standards, a youth screening plan must be established. The screening tool will assess the participation interest and commitment of the youth. Several participation and commitment areas include but are not limited to:

- Appropriate age as identified by the program
- Demonstrate a desire and ability to commit to a long-term relationship with an adult
- Commit to at least 1 school year, and at least 1 hour weekly
- Agree to communicate regularly with program coordinator

4. Are mentors required to be mandated reporters?

Just as SAPP providers are mandated reporters, so are the mentors in a SAPP funded mentoring program. Mandatory reporting procedures for mentors within your program must be developed and adhered to. It is imperative that your staff and program participants know what constitutes child abuse and neglect, receive training, and know what to do if such a case arises, including when it is not a recent occurrence.

5. How often should a mentor communicate with a parent?

Involving parents in mentoring services is one of the best things a program can do to ensure its success. Programs whose parents, guardians, and other caregivers work in concert with mentors and program staff are more likely to see positive changes in youth and improved program outcomes. Parents should have a formal voice in the supervision and monitoring of matches. Their opinions should be solicited as frequently as those of volunteers and youth. Making parents part of your scheduled match check-ins lets them know that you are diligent about safety and are interested in their opinions about the match. Communicate in a variety of ways. A program newsletter is a great way to reach the parents of participating youth. E-mail or a Web site can also be effective.



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