

**Developed by
Susan Weinberger, Ed. D.
for HUD's
Office of Native American Programs**



mentor consulting group

Children Learn What They Live

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.

If children live with ridicule, they learn to feel shy.

If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel any.

If children live with shame, they learn to feel guilty.

If children live with encouragement, they learn confidence.

If children live with tolerance, they learn patience.

If children live with praise, they learn appreciation.

If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.

If children live with sharing, they learn generosity.

If children live with honesty, they learn truthfulness.

If children live with fairness, they learn justice.

If children live with kindness and consideration, they learn respect.

If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those about them.

If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to live.

Dorothy Law Nolte Copyright 1972

Strengthening Native Community Commitment through Mentoring Guidebook

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About Strengthening Native Community

Commitment Through Mentoring Guidebook

The Strengthening Native Community through Mentoring Guidebook was created by Dr. Susan G. Weinberger, President, Mentor Consulting Group. It has been designed specifically to assist individuals who wish to begin a youth mentoring program in a community, school, workplace or church or want to expand and improve an already existing initiative. Within these pages, you will find important information to serve as a resource and to help you achieve your goals.

About the Mentor Consulting Group

Mentor Consulting Group (MCG) was founded by the author in 1998. The company is located in Norwalk, Connecticut, and offers assistance to schools, businesses and communities. Its services include training in how to establish, maintain and evaluate mentor programs; train the trainer modules; and training for mentors. MCG also conducts strategic planning for organizations that wish to implement the elements of effective mentoring. In 2004, MCG designed the National Native American Mentoring Program for the Department of Health and Human Services.

About the Author

Dr. Susan G. Weinberger, a national consultant on mentoring, offers training and technical assistance to local programs throughout the United States and the world in developing effective mentoring initiatives.

In 1986, Dr. Weinberger designed and developed the Norwalk (CT) Mentor Program, one of the first school-based mentor programs in America. She was the Director of the widely acclaimed and presidential award-winning initiative during its first twelve years from 1986 through 1998.

Dr. Weinberger received her bachelors degree from Carnegie-Mellon University, her master's degree from Monhattanville College and her doctorate from the University of Bridgeport. Her publications on mentoring include *Strengthening Native Community Commitment through Mentoring: My Mentor & Me Series; Guidebook to Mentoring; The Mentor Handbook How To Start A Student Mentor Program; and Q/A: Mentoring*. She has written numerous articles for journals and newsletters on mentoring.

The author is a member of the Board and Chairman, Public Policy Council of National Mentoring Partnership, and a founding member of its Technical Assistance Corps. Her numerous achievements and awards include the Sara A. Davis Memorial Staff Development Award from the National Association of Partners in Education, the Lifetime Achievement Award for Citizenship and Community Service from the Miss CT Pageant and the 25th Anniversary Partnership Award from the Urban League of Southwestern Connecticut, Inc. Dr. Weinberger received President Clinton's Volunteer Action Award at a White House ceremony for the Norwalk Mentor Program in 1993 and was selected as a Community Hero Torchbearer in the 1996 Olympic Torch Relay.

Introduction

Guidebook to Mentoring was written originally by Dr. Susan G. Weinberger in 1998 to provide communities, corporations, youth organizations, churches, and school districts with the tools they would need in order to begin, maintain, and evaluate quality mentoring programs for youth.

Strengthening Native Community Through Mentoring Guidebook builds on the original document and provides additional enrichment materials to assist Native Americans in North America to establish mentoring programs which are suitable for their own communities.

As part of revising the Guidebook for this audience, participants in several Native American workshops sponsored by HUD's Office of Native American Programs—during 1998 in Albuquerque, New Mexico; and in 1999 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Chicago, Illinois; Anchorage, Alaska; and Denver, Colorado —provided invaluable feedback.

In addition, Anna M. Latimer joined the project at this juncture, providing expertise which enriches the document and encouraging “indigenous” thinking and acting. Anna is the former Executive Director of the National Association for Native American Children of Alcoholics (NANACOA). Anna is currently working as a facilitator and consultant to create positive change in areas of diversity, community development, and the healing process for individuals and families.

Latimer 's letter to the reader follows. Enjoy it and your mentoring experience.

The Author

“Whether indigenous or modern cultures, there are two things people crave: the full realization of their innate gifts and to have those gifts approved, acknowledged and confirmed. “

—From *Healing Wisdom of Africa* by Malidoma Patrice Some

Dear Reader,

If you are thinking about starting a mentoring program in your tribe, village or community, you have joined thousands of other Native Americans in North America who want to create and build programs for youth that are based on ancient traditions and cultures. Leaders, elders, scholars, cultural activists, and community workers have joined forces to integrate into the community those resilient cultural factors that preserve and protect health and well being. Mentoring is one of them.

The indigenous world view is based on values and beliefs that are steeped in a profound understanding of how to keep a community alive and thriving. Mentoring underscores the preservation of a way of life that is based on spirituality, sacredness, reciprocity, education, and social responsibility. In this world view, often referred to as a “natural system” children are viewed as valuable resources and the “heart” of a community. Without children, a community would fail to thrive and it would die - a catastrophic thought and unimaginable in the indigenous mind.

The Tadodaho, Leon Shenandoah, in ‘Wisdomkeepers: Meetings with Native American Spiritual Elders’ describes a mentor. He says:

These words of the Creator were given to the first United Nations, the Haudenosaunee, over one thousand years ago: The chiefs of the Haudenosaunee shall be mentors of the people for all time. The thickness of their skin shall be seven spans; which is to say that they shall be proof against anger, offensive action, and criticism. Their hearts shall be full of peace and goodwill and their minds filled with a yearning for the welfare of their people. With endless patience, they shall carry out their duty. Their firmness shall be tempered with a tenderness for their people. Neither anger nor fury shall find lodging in their minds, and all their words and actions shall be marked by calm deliberation.

Malidoma Patrice Some, from the Dagara people of West Africa, poignantly continues in the same vein as Tadodaho, in his book, [The Healing Wisdom of Africa. Finding Life Purpose Through Nature](#). Ritual and Community, He states that:

There are certain things without which young people cannot survive and flourish, and mentoring is one of them. Westerners see adolescents as fundamentally naive about life. By contrast the tribal mentor sees a youth as someone who already contains all of the knowledge that he or she needs, but who must work with an older more experienced person to “remember” what they know. A mentor therefore is not a teacher in the strict sense of the term, but a guide who shows the way, working from a position of respect and affinity, addressing the knowledge within the young person. The pupil is not an ignorant person in the eye of his or her mentor. The pupil is seen as a storehouse, a repository, of something the mentor is quite familiar with and very interested in, something the mentor himself has and knows very well. The mentor perceives a presence knocking at a door within the pupil, and accepts the task of finding, or becoming, the key that opens the door. There develops a relationship of trust between mentor and pupil motivated by love and without which success would be unlikely. (p. 101-102)

In both the African and Native American tradition, mentoring evolves from a community obligation to awaken the gifts, knowledge, power, or “genius,” (as Mr. Some says) within the developing

child. “Mentoring”, Mr. Some states, is aimed at increasing security, clarity and maturity in the young person, It seeks to develop the genius within a young person so that the youth can arrive at his or her destination - the sharing of one’s gifts within the community .. in Africa, the journey of a young person through adolescence is taken with the help of a mentor, so that the young person may grow into the mature adult who can live out his or her purpose in the community, giving one’s own genius and receiving, in turn, the help of others.” (p. 102)

In the indigenous world view, community is the emphasis and is stressed over and over. In the non-indigenous world view, the emphasis is on the individual. Among tribal people, individuals are highlighted in the context of community not the other way around. The Alkali Lake reflect this belief in the title of their video, ‘The Pain of One Is the Pain of All. The Honor of One is the Honor of All.’”

Dr. Some stresses this very important point when he says, “a mentor distinct from a community is very hard to conceive of in the indigenous mind. The point is that there is no use delivering something to a destination where there is nobody to receive it. The very purpose of mentoring is twofold. One is to recognize and awaken; the other is to facilitate the delivery of the genius to the community. In a culture, where community matters more than anything, mentoring becomes an essential social responsibility.” (p. 103)

Summary

Mentoring, is indeed, an old idea that works. Mentoring of our youth at the community level is based on the ‘natural systems” model found in indigenous communities. It is a circular world view rather than linear. This training attempts to combine these two systems in the design of a mentoring program that will strengthen community while awakening the gifts held within each young person. Historically, ‘natural systems” are usually ignored in workshops or guidebooks because a “natural system” falls outside the rational, analytical framework of mainstream models and are more holistic rather than atomistic. For these reasons, their usefulness in trainings, process design, and intervention have not been generally recognized. We have attempted to recognize natural systems in the Guidebook.

As you use this Guidebook in your community, it will be up to you to integrate the “natural systems” found in your tribal knowledge and stories. Trust the ancestors and your heart. Our children are depending on us to do this for them.

Our ancestors had the spiritual understanding that it is sacred work to evoke the gifts in our children; that each child is irreplaceable and has meaning and purpose to and for the community. They taught us that interdependence is part of the natural system of life; and that each person is precious. Our natural systems are steeped in the teachings of elders who have instructed us to carry a love for one another and a respect for all things.

Mentoring from an indigenous point of view is based on abundance found in our teachings rather than the lack that is found in our grim statistics. Mentoring was part of the natural systems found in communal life to awaken the sleeping gifts in our most precious resource - our children. Upon awakening, these gifts would be given to the community so that it would thrive and the children would once again remind us that they are the heartbeat in our lives. The children are our center and we must once again give them a place and meaning within the community by honoring ancient knowledge.

Mentoring from an indigenous point of view is based on the belief that spiritual consciousness is the highest form of politics. Today, more than ever before, we are being asked to become conscious of ourselves and our communities and to help our youth develop their gifts so that we might all survive as a people and a race. It comes from the understanding and belief that when people stop respecting and showing gratitude, then all life will be destroyed and human life will

come to an end. The Tadodaho once again reminds us what our social responsibility is to our children today and the children to come when he says:

Look over your shoulder. Look behind you. See your sons and daughters. They are your future. Look further, and see your sons' and your daughters' children and their children's children even unto the Seventh Generation. That's the way we were taught. Think about it: You yourself are a Seventh Generation.

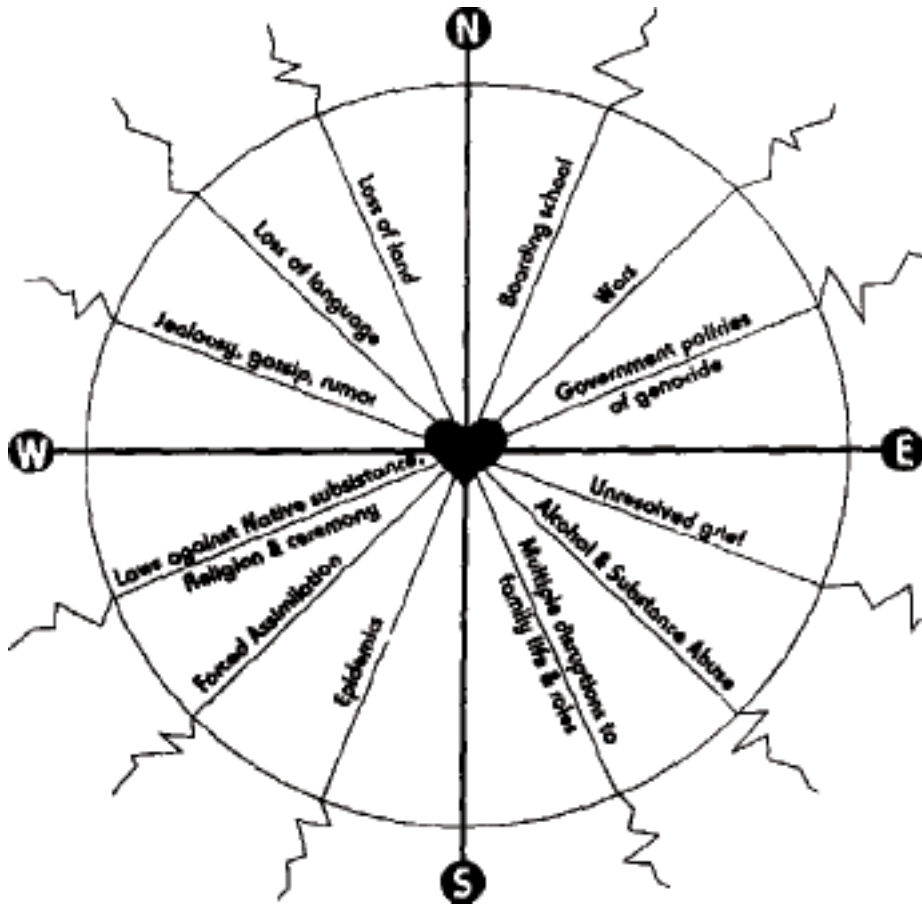
Good luck in your work and thank you for your passion, energy and trust in our natural systems to help our youth today by creating a mentoring program in your village or community.

Sincerely,

Ya'TaUwhet (Giver of Self)

Anna M. Latimer (Sechelt, &C.), Consultant to the Project

The symbol of the Circle is central to understanding and indigenous world view. It is based on a Way of Life that goes beyond an intellectual concept or symbol. The circle is rooted in indigenous thought and action, teachings, values and beliefs. For this guidebook, we will use it to understand how a Way of Life was ‘broken” and what we must do to ‘mend” the Circle.



This medicine wheel or Sacred Circle of Life includes the four sacred directions. Each of the directions can represent different qualities by different tribes. It also represents the parts that comprise the whole person: the spiritual, the emotional, the physical and the intellectual. At the center of the circle is the human being and at the center of the human being is his heart. This visually tells the story of what has been ‘broken” and what must be mended. The heart of a family or community is the children. This was powerfully portrayed when a grandfather in the Northwest introduced his grandchildren as his “little heartbeats.” Intergenerational pain and trauma have impacted our families and communities. Mentoring is an important part of mending the circle and healing our hearts.

Elements of Resilience*

To overcome adversities, children, youth, and adults draw from three sources of resilience. The five categories under the first source, I HAVE are, in fact, the recognized role of mentors who work with students.

1. People around me I trust and who love me, no matter what.
2. People who set limits for me so I know when to stop before there is danger or trouble.
3. People who show me how to do things right by the way they do things.
4. People who want me to learn to do things on my own.
5. People who help me when I am sick, in danger, or need to learn.

* Grothberg, E.H. (1995). A Guide to Promoting Resilience in Children: Strengthening the Human Spirit. The Hague, Netherlands: The Bernard van Laer Foundation.

An Historical Perspective

Mentoring ... an old idea that works

Mentoring is an old idea that works. The word “mentor” comes from the Greek for “steadfast” and “enduring.” Homer tells us that Odysseus entrusted his friend, a wise man named Mentor, with the guidance of his son, Telemachus. Actually, the ancient Greek goddess, Athena, came up with the concept. She came to earth, disguised as a man to coach the boy! In western thought, the term “mentor” has become synonymous with a wise teacher, guide, and friend.

Surely, Elders have always provided guidance in native communities, to families, youth and on tribal matters. Mentoring was the basis of apprenticeships. Typically an older craftsman would take a younger person under his wing and train him in all aspects of his craft.

On December 3, 1904, Ernest K. Coulter, a court system worker, appalled at the misery and neglect of the youth who came before him, approached the Men’s Club of the Central Presbyterian Church of New York. The Club agreed to sign up the first 39 Big Brothers, the beginnings of the Big Brother/Big Sister movement as it is known today.

The 1970’s and 1980’s heralded the corporate incarnation of mentoring. To climb the corporate ladder of success, employees were often advised to find a mentor within the organization. A front-page article in the Harvard Business Review in 1978 said it best: “Everyone who makes it has a mentor.”

The growing needs of the disadvantaged prompted renewed interest in the concept of mentoring in the late 1980’s. Eugene Lang, a philanthropist, returned to his East Harlem elementary school one half century later with his challenge to the sixth grade class: Stay in school until the end of high school. He offered to give each student a scholarship to college and a mentor to provide support. This notion prompted the creation of the [I Have A Dream Foundation](#) that still exists in many communities today.

In 1986, Dr. Susan G. Weinberger designed the first school-based mentor program in America. Hundreds of children in the Norwalk, Connecticut, Public Schools, lacking in self-esteem and motivation, were in danger of failing or dropping out. That year, one corporation released fourteen of its employees one hour each week to travel to their nearby elementary schools and serve one-on-one as mentors to these students described as “on the brink of success.” Today, the presidential award-winning Norwalk initiative has become the cornerstone of school-based mentoring in America and has been replicated throughout the United States, Canada and Bermuda.

In 1988, the Education Commission of the States listed mentoring as one of the five short-term imperatives for reversing the high dropout rate among high school students.

The following year, Bernard Lefkowitz wrote in [Tough Change: Growing Up on Your Own in America](#) that caring adults were an important factor for youth who survived the streets and went on to lead successful mainstream lives.

May 4, 1994, the federal School-to-Work Opportunities Act put in place a national system emphasizing:

- School-based learning to provide students with high level academic skills;

- Work-based experience to transform the workplace into an active component of the education system; and
- Activities connecting the worlds of school and work

As part of the work component, each participating high school student has a mentor to provide crucial support and guidance.

April 28, 1997, marked an historic event in the field of mentoring. President William Clinton, retired General Colin Powell, and all the living Presidents gathered in Philadelphia for the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, now known as America's Promise. National corporations and non-profit organizations became commitment makers.

Chief among the fundamental resources Summit speakers cited as necessary to ensure support for all youth in America were ***ongoing relationships with caring adults***.

Communities need to provide all young people with sustained adult relationships through which they can experience support, care, guidance and advocacy. Support and caring within the family and beyond family ties fosters the development of good social skills, positive values, high self-esteem and an avoidance of destructive behaviors. America's Promise stressed that, in addition to parents, young people need to develop lasting relationships with extended family members, neighbors and parents of friends and neighbors, teachers, coaches, child care workers, employers, and, not surprisingly, mentors. Today, mentoring has become recognized as a powerful intervention in the lives of youth. Many states, including Massachusetts, Delaware, California, Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, and New Mexico have held statewide summits and made commitments to begin mentoring programs.

January is National Mentoring Month across the United States each year. In 2004, funding at the Federal level for mentoring reached its highest Strengthening Native Community Commitment levels.

The Need Facts and Challenges

American Indians are twice as likely to be the victim of violent crime as other U.S. Americans. More than half (52%) of violent crimes committed against American Indians occurred among those age 12-24. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs).

Since 1950, the number of children in mother-only families quadrupled to 20 million homes. The proportion of American Indian families maintained by a female reached 277 in 1990, considerably larger than the national figure.

14 million children are living in poverty. The national poverty rate is 13%. In 1989, 31% of American Indians were living below the poverty level - 51% for those residing on reservations.

1.2 million latchkey children go home to a house in which there is a gun.

38% of Indians ages 6 to 11 years live below the poverty line. The percentage is 18% for all children in this age group.

According to the 1980 Census, only 10% of Indians and Natives are age 55 and over. . . where will the Elders be in the future to provide much needed guidance for the young?

Research-

Mentoring Pays Off

Some children survive traumatic childhood unscathed. Research points to the critical importance of mentoring to support youth during difficult times.

In 1989, a Louis Harris Poll was conducted of 400 high school juniors and seniors in the Career Beginnings program. Students (73%) reported that their mentors helped them raise their goals and expectations; students who were mentored (59%) improved their academic performance and indicated (87%) that they benefited in some way from their mentoring relationship.

The Carnegie Corporation's Task Force on Youth Development and Community Programs asked teenagers in focus groups what they wanted most in their free time. The most frequent response was 'long talks with trusting and trustworthy adults who know a lot about the world and who like young people.'

In 1995, Public/Private Ventures commissioned Joseph P. Tierney and Jean Baldwin Grossman to conduct a major study entitled "Making a Difference: An Impact Study Of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America." The results prove that mentoring positively affects the lives of young people. The study reported that being matched with an adult mentor reduced the likelihood of initiating drug (46%) and alcohol (27%) use; and engaging in physical violence (33%) and negative behaviors. Mentoring improved school attendance, school performance, attitudes toward completing school-work, and family and peer relationships. Being matched with a mentor resulted in positive developments in cognitive and social domains.

A Prison Fellowship study maintains that mentoring reduces recidivism up to 80%. Sociologist William Julius Wilson, in his book The Truly Disadvantaged, writes that a mainstream, adult model *can help keep alive the perception that education is meaningful, that steady employment is a viable alternative to welfare, and that family stability is the norm, not the exception.*

In 'Growing Up Poor,' a study of 900 children, researchers Terry Williams and William Kornblum report that the probability that teenagers will end up on the corner or in a stable job are conditioned by a great many features of community life. Of these, the researchers believe that the most significant is the presence or absence of adult mentors.

Mentoring- Contemporary Definition:

Mentoring is a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee.

While a one-on-one relationship between a mentor and youth is the most popular kind of mentoring taking place in formal programs today, mentoring can also take on a buddy, team or group approach. As the younger person goes through difficult and challenging periods in their lives, the goal of the relationship is to be there for the youth, to care about the youth and to help the youth.

Many programs refer to the youth or student as the “mentee.” While the term cannot be found in the dictionary, it has served well over the last decade in mentoring programs. In Canada, the youth is a “protege.” Big Brother/Big Sister community-based programs use the term “littles.”

What terms should be used to describe the kind of youth who needs a mentor? Words such as young people with “potential,” or on the “brink of success,” have greater positive appeal than “youth at risk.” The latter has negative connotations and labels youngsters unnecessarily. Some Mentor Programs prefer to describe these youth as “at promise.”

Kinds of Mentoring Programs

Mentoring programs come in all shapes and sizes. Typically, the location of the meetings between mentors and youth determines the name. These include:

School-based	Takes place in schools at all grade levels
Workplace-based	Focuses on business and private sector programming
Community-based	Located at community centers, Boys & Girls Clubs and similar places
Residential-based	Takes place in prisons, youth shelters and other locations
Faith-based	Organized by religious groups
Campus-based	Occurs on college campuses
Court-based	Developed as a law enforcement/court strategy
Virtual	E-mentoring

Getting Started

Creating Awareness

The first step in establishing a mentoring program - whether housed in a school, church, community center or additional locations in the community - is to conduct a needs assessment. This will guide the goals and objectives of the program.

A Program Director should begin by becoming aware of what is going on already in the community and its schools. Find out if someone or some organization is recruiting mentors. How will your organizations relate to and work with each other? What can you learn from the experiences of others? The idea for a mentor program may come from within the schools or it may originate outside. Regardless, plan to reach out to community institutions as important target groups which will want to endorse your program.

Identify the audiences who need to be made aware of your idea. The list should include individuals whose support is necessary if the mentoring program is to succeed. Since school age students are the likely target audience, school personnel are critical. Talk to people within organizations, present your idea, provide a summary of your program plan to date, and always listen to comments and suggestions.

Examples of Key Players:

Community:

Boys & Girls Clubs Student Athletics

Tribal Council

Elders

Sober Community Members Housing Agencies or
Departments Spiritual Leaders

Funders

Counselors

Scouts

Colleges

4-H Groups

Law Enforcement

Indian Child Welfare Workers Business
Organizations

Civic, Social and Fraternal Organizations

Senior Citizen Agencies

Local Churches

Youth Groups

State and Municipal Employees

School District:

Board of Education Members

Office of the Superintendent

School Councils

Parent Advisory Committee

Indian Education Representatives

Native American Paraprofessionals

Parents and Parent Groups (PTO/PTA)

School Administrators

Psychologists and Nurses

Social Workers and Guidance Counselors

Teachers Advisory Boards

Juvenile Justice Authorities Principals

Creating an Advisory Council Who Should Assist You?

Create or expand your current Advisory Board or Council to assist you throughout the life of your mentor program. Members may include: Program staff, community leaders, mentors and youth representatives to assist you with all aspects of your program plans and implementation. Remember to include individuals with connections, experience and wealth!

List below those individuals who should be invited to join the council in your program:

Name

Title/Organization

Assessing the Need Techniques That Work

Develop specific information about the needs of students in your community and whether a mentor program can address those needs. Doing a needs assessment in a rural community can be a challenge. The information, however, is *needed* and there are creative ways to gather information. Questionnaires or interviews can occur at sporting events, pow-wows, or Indian health clinics. You can also utilize Community Health Representatives who go out into the communities, the tribal newspaper or even the local Native radio station.

Here are some tested techniques for conducting a needs assessment.

- Questionnaires
- Interviews by telephone and in person
- Reviews of available research data
- Personal observations
- Focus groups

The responses to your needs assessment will help you to determine your course of action. If, for example, you learn that educators, community and business leaders are concerned about the excessive dropout rate or preventing risky behavior, your program goals will be to include working with youth to keep them in school through high school graduation or out of trouble with the law.

Identifying Program Resources Who Makes a Good Mentor?

Caring, Committed Role Models for Youth

Identifying potential mentors is as important as identifying what kinds of funding, office space, telephones, clerical staff, and supplies are available for your program. You need to match what you want mentors to do with the skills, knowledge, and reliability of the prospective mentors.

Not everyone makes a good mentor. Experience indicates that successful mentors have certain characteristics in common. The list that follows will serve as a guide. Every program operator needs to determine which of the characteristics suit the needs of your program. Typically, mentors have time for youth, care about youth and believe in them. Often they provide the only stability a youngster knows. Engaging in a positive relationship based on trust and confidence is key.

Mentors:

- give attention
- tolerate frustrating situations
- listen well
- communicate
- are stable
- provide leadership
- have outstanding employment record
- show up on time
- are committed
- are not judgmental
- nurture the relationship
- accept responsibility
- are mature (personality, not age!)
- keep confidences
- are tolerant
- are positive
- are reliable
- do not replace role of parent/caregiver
- do not interfere with program policies and procedures
- demonstrate the ability to work with youth

Setting Standards and Competencies

What are the critical elements of effective, outstanding mentoring programs? After years of research, the MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership has developed a set of proven, effective guidelines to encourage success. A team of national experts in the field of mentoring created the program standards known as "Elements of Effective Practice". They are recommended to produce the best possible outcomes for youth and mentors.

Take some time to determine which elements your program already has in place. The "Elements" can be found and downloaded from . The pages that follow offer ways to expand those areas that may need improvement.

Checklist

A Mentor Program contains the following program elements:

- ✓ A timely responsiveness to mentor inquiries.
- ✓ A well-defined mission with short- and long-term objectives.
- ✓ A strong organizational infrastructure that offers program oversight and consistent support and contact with both mentors and youth.
- ✓ Clear, written administrative and program procedures.
- ✓ Eligibility requirements for mentors.
- ✓ Input from an advisory board and community members.
- ✓ Policies that address liability, confidentiality, reporting and financial practices.
- ✓ A process to monitor and evaluate program effectiveness.
- ✓ EEO staff hiring procedures.

Establishing Goals and Objectives

A Framework for Program Design

Goals and objectives grow out of the needs assessment. These will determine many of the features of your program design and implementation. Clear goals and objectives are important to the entire process.

What is a goal?

A goal is a broad statement of purpose. It arises from the philosophy of your particular organization and its needs. It is not measurable and does not play a part in program evaluation. For example, a broad statement may be that you want your youth to remain in school through high school graduation. You may decide that you have more than one goal for your program. For each goal, you will need a series of objectives.

What are objectives?

Objectives state the specific intent. There should be a series of objectives for each goal. Objectives must include three elements:

who: the specific people who will take whatever action is called for.

what: the intent of the objective.

when: specific time lines for the who to accomplish the what.

The elements listed above can be tracked and easily measured. Your objectives may include, for example, that by October, the Program Director for mentoring will have recruited, trained and matched 12 mentors to work in your organizational environment with 12 youth.

Once you have established and written clear goals and objectives, the program design and implementation phases will be easy to plan. Program design sets up a framework for achieving the goals and meeting the objectives. In a sense, this is your program architecture. Here a Program Director deals with the practical day-by-day issues: Who will administer the program? How will operations be organized? Where will the program be housed? What staff will be required to run the program adequately? How will finances be handled?

If yours is a school-based program, school board approval up-front and an official, written policy statement will be very important. The program should be endorsed by top officials in order to avoid difficulties later on. Where will the program appear on the district's organizational chart? Will the activities be managed at a school, at the district level, or in the community?

Worksheet

It is now time for you to write one goal and two or three objectives for your mentor program below:

Goal:

Objectives :

1.

2.

3.

Program Implementation

Recruiting Mentors

Recruit mentors to serve in your program from the most appropriate volunteers. You are looking for individuals who are willing to spend time with a younger person and care about that person. Consider that selecting quality mentors is far more important than rushing to secure a quantity of mentors. The best advice is to take small steps to ensure success. The first year, move cautiously; don't plan a major media campaign to build capacity until you have the program well managed.

During the recruitment phase, think about individuals and groups who have been good to your organization in the past and might wish to consider mentoring. This is usually a great place to begin looking for people to join the program. Make an appointment to visit and explain the program goals and your expectations.

Below is a partial list of available resources whom you may wish to contact to begin:

Employees of Small and Large Business	Mental Health and Human Resources Agencies
Retirees - Professionals Including Teachers/Professors	Artists
High School and College Students	Presidents of Indian Clubs
Social, Civic, Fraternal and Professional Organizations	VISTA Volunteers
Alumni Associations	Judicial System
Church Groups	Health Organizations
Local Government Officials and	Traditional People in the Tribe Professional Native Americans in the Community
Members of Commissions and Boards	Elders
Fire, Police and Municipal Employees	Cultural Workers
Senior Citizens (AARP, RSVP and others)	Indian Child Welfare Workers Commission on National Service IRS/FBI/BIA
Hospitals and Health Facilities Banks and Utility Companies United States Armed Forces/National Guard	Veterans Organizations
Media	Youth Organizations
	Probation Officer

Identifying Youth

Teachers, church and community leaders, and other professionals interested in youth may be in the best position to recommend students for the mentor program. The target youth may be having difficulties in their families, and with school authorities; they may be from one-or two-parent families where there is substance abuse, or lack of support. The youth may be suffering from poor self-esteem, they may lack the desire to stay in school and have poor attitudes about school. They may be in trouble with the law, with drugs, alcohol abuse and crime-related activities. They may be latch key youth.

The youth selection process is a sensitive one and should be examined carefully based on the objectives which you have established for your program. Keep in mind that, if the program is school-based, selection of youth is usually done by principals, teachers, social workers, nurses, guidance counselors, and psychologists. Below is a list of the criteria which may warrant a need for a match between a young person and a caring adult. Add your own to the list:

Youth School Criteria:

Weak academic performance

Poor attendance

Lack of motivation

Poor classroom preparation

Easily discouraged

Unable to take risks

Unwilling to make commitments

Youth Personal Criteria:

Neediness

Insecurity

Low self-esteem

Feelings of helplessness

Little control over their own lives

Inappropriate or negative attention-seeking

Youth Social Criteria:

Mistrustfulness

Difficulty relating to peers and adults

Unhappiness

Low energy

Poor communication

NOTE: There will also be students who do not fit these criteria who wish to have a mentor. From an indigenous perspective, they cannot be turned down. Remember, mentoring is part of the natural systems to help bring out the “genius” or “gifts” within the youth so that those gifts will develop and be given to the community.

Worksheet

What criteria would you consider to recruit youth for your mentor program?

List criteria below:

Securing Permission from Youth and Parents

Once teachers, school support staff or community professionals have identified youth who would benefit the most from a mentoring relationship, it is critical to obtain written parent permission for each individual who will be matched with a mentor. It may be a wise idea to check with your organization's legal department or the school district's corporate counsel to seek advice.

A Program Director should:

- meet with each parent or guardian
- explain the goals of the program
- explain how it will help their youngster
- indicate where sessions will take place

Parents will need to sign a memorandum of understanding which requires the youth abide by the rules and regulations of the program, outlines parental responsibility, and fully discharges the organization from liability and claims.

Many youth ask to become involved with a mentor. Others need to be identified by professionals. Regardless, participation in a mentor program needs to be discussed individually with each youth.

The rules of the program, expectations, timeline, location of activities, and types of activities must be clearly defined.

Some youth think that mentoring means tutorial assistance to improve academic performance in school. While this may be the emphasis in some programs, the majority of mentoring programs provide an opportunity to establish trust and confidence between a mentor and youth and to become involved in activities which are agreed upon mutually by both.

It is important up front to address the:

- issue of gift-giving with youth
- limits on the exchange of telephone numbers and addresses.

What is discussed will vary depending on the goals of the program. But youth need to understand some of the program's guidelines and restrictions before they agree to participate.

Role of the Family

Although the majority of mentoring sessions will take place between mentor and youth, the family can play an important role in the partnership.

Typically the family is asked to participate in events at school or the agency/organization, usually 2-3 times each year. Program staff invites mentors, youth and families to join together, have dinner or dessert and a planned event.

Topics for an evening may include:

- learning how to instill self-esteem in your child
- reading with your child
- setting up a reading corner at home
- getting involved at school
- problem solving
- goal setting
- resolving conflict
- observing signs of difficulty

Some sessions may also include:

- how to reenter the job market
- how to complete a high school diploma

Sometimes assistance is offered for:

- completing the application and financial aid process for youth who are getting ready for the college years
- implementing assertive discipline techniques

Community and church-based mentoring will often include the family at religious services, picnics, outings, plays and other planned events. While each program may have completely different kinds of family involvement, it is important, however, to include the family whenever possible. This will eliminate possible concerns and clearly indicate that it takes many different “mentors” from the home, the school, and the community to improve the life of our youth today.

Mentor Application Process

Once a prospective mentor is recruited, the formal application process begins. Prior to acceptance in the program, individuals must be properly screened. While volunteers have the best of intentions, it is the responsibility of the Program Director to ensure maximum protection for the mentoring experience.

Steps in the application process:

Mentors complete an application which includes their choices of days and times for their meetings with youth, the preferred grade level or age and sex of youngster with whom they wish to work. Some programs only match mentors with individuals of the same sex and ethnic group. Others do not. This is something that you will establish early in your program design. The application will include a statement of the mentor's intentions, special interests that are helpful in matching mentors with youth, personal references, and a complete employment history. Mentors are asked to sign a release statement, agreeing to abide by the rules and regulations of the program and fully discharging the program from liability and claims.

Mentors sign an agreement to: attend training sessions; be on time for scheduled meetings; accept assistance from program staff; keep discussions with youth confidential; ask for help when needed; engage in the relationship with an open mind and notify staff if they are unable to keep their appointed meeting time.

Mentors are invited for a personal interview with staff. You may wish to form a committee with diverse representation to conduct the interviews. This is an ideal opportunity to get to know the candidate better. Ask questions about the applicants' family relationships and history; interests, leisure time activities, attitudes and belief system; experiences working with children and adults; reactions to stressful situations; use of alcohol and drugs; level of flexibility and time commitments: educational experience: transportation requirements; and strengths and weaknesses. Evidence of character and reliability are key.

The focus of the relationship may include career interests, social and life skills, employability skills and academic improvement.

Program staff conduct a check on all job and personal references. Some programs require that each mentor secures a tuberculin test from their health provider or, in the case of a school-based program, from the school nurse. Mentors are required to sign a driver affidavit and provide a copy of current driver's license and registration. Some programs require mentors to complete and sign field trip forms.

Mentor Training

Training mentors is one of the most critical components of a program. This is the time that mentors are prepared for the task ahead. Many experts have debated how long mentors should be engaged in training. Initially, mentors will spend a few hours receiving the most important information they will need in order to begin meetings with their youth. However, mentors cannot work in a vacuum and one training session is never enough. Mentors need constant help and support. On-going training is the best ingredient for success.

Program staff conduct on-going training, often during what are called “brown bag” lunches. This is the time for sharing best practices, learning new techniques, and asking questions. In addition, mentors will be able to communicate with program and staff regularly through notes, telephone calls and personal meetings. Below is a typical agenda for the initial training session before beginning in a mentor program.

Agenda for Mentor Training Session Preparing Mentors for Mentoring

- Role of a Good Mentor How to Be a Good Listener and Communicator
- Resources Available to Help Mentors
- Substance Abuse Education
- Cultural and Racial Sensitivity
- How to Read to and with Youth
- Strategies for Sessions that Work
- Profiles of Youth Today; Dealing with Peer Pressure
- Student Records and Confidentiality
- How to Instill Self Esteem and Improve Attitudes of Youth
- Signs of Progress; Improving Academic Performance
- Setting Goals
- Signs of Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Child Abuse and Mandated Reporting
- When and Where Sessions Will Take Place; Keeping the Commitment Long Term
- Terminating a Relationship
- Mentoring - an Indigenous Perspective
- The “Breaking” and “Mending” of the Sacred Circle of Life
- Tribal Values, Customs, Beliefs and Teachings on Children and their role in the Tribe

Matching of Mentors and Youth

Mentors have been recruited and trained; youth and families have agreed to participate. Now is the time to match mentors and youth. Often this means pairing two total strangers.

Youth requests are examined along with the information which mentors provided in their original profile application and personal interview. Good matches are important. Yet, there is no research to date that supports the theory that individuals must be matched based on common interest, sex or cultural experiences in common. Gender matching is almost universal, particularly at the middle and high school levels in school-based programs and at all ages in many community-based efforts. Nevertheless, sometimes a good sense of humor and the “some blind dates really work out” theory apply.

There is a destiny
which makes us brothers.

None goes on his
way alone;

All that we send into the lives of others,

Comes back into our
own.*

*Edward Markham

Mentor Orientation

As part of their training, mentoring requires that mentors attend orientation to the program's location, culture and environment. This is a process to prepare individuals for involvement on a weekly basis in a new setting. If the program takes place at a school, usually the school principal, librarian, secretary, and support staff, e.g. social worker, psychologist, nurse, guidance counselor will assist the Program Director with the orientation. Most likely, coffee and pastry one morning or cake and coffee late in the day would be a perfect time for such an event. This is a time to thank new mentors for agreeing to help and to make them feel welcomed. If the program takes place at any other site, site staff conduct the orientation.

What is covered during the orientation? Mentors will be acquainted with the surroundings that will soon become almost like home to them. At the event, mentors learn about:

A typical day in the life of a youth

Proper identification

Check-in

Scheduling procedures

School/agency hours of operation

Calendar of school/agency closings

Mentors:

Receive a school/agency handbook and map

Learn where to eat lunch (if appropriate)

Learn where to park

See where their mentoring sessions will take place in the building

Are introduced to all staff

Tour the building

Program Directors will need to decide, in advance, if the time of the meeting, the space available and other factors will determine if parents of the students are invited to this session. Before the orientation ends, the youth themselves may be invited to meet their mentors for the first time. This is always a scary and exciting moment in the life of any successful program.

Mentor/Youth Sessions- Strategies for Success

Mentors help youth in many ways. The goals of the program will determine what the sessions should include. Every program will be different and unique. Many different strategies can be used to establish trust and confidence between mentor and youth.

Strategies may include:

Reading to and with younger children

Taking them to the library

Playing games

Working out in the gymnasium

Practicing on a musical instrument, the computer, or

Just walking outside on a nice day and talking under a tree

Social skills

Older youth may get involved in discussions around:

Career and college options

Current events

Community service

Getting a job; employability skills

Reading the newspaper

Manner and etiquette

Community-based programs that allow youth to meet outside of the confines of the school day will involve the pairs in:

Week-end activities

Trips to museums

Trips to the beach

Other opportunities

Tips for Mentors Working with Youth

Put the youth first; concentrate on their problems and needs: leave yours at the door.

- Be flexible with your own plans.
- Be a friend and not the buddy.
- Approach youth with mutual respect.
- Take time to get to know your match.
- Drop the authoritative role.
- Talk one-third of the time.
- Ask questions that cannot be answered with yes or no.
- Do not interrupt your student.
- Give youth quiet time in which to think.
- Observe nonverbal clues.
- Use brief remarks.
- Don't lecture on how to behave.
- Do not be alarmed at remarks made.
- Do not make false promises.
- Be sincere in your praise.
- Be accepting.
- Do not ignore a problem.
- Do not become quickly discouraged or expect dramatic changes overnight.

Recognizing and Retaining Mentors

Soon after mentors are involved with youth, they will often tell you that it is the best part of their day or week and that recognition of their efforts is unnecessary. Regardless, volunteers need to be thanked often. This will lead to renewal of their commitment over the long term. It is also part of the indigenous value system of showing gratitude, honoring of others, and modeling of care and love by the community to its community members.

For a mentor program to grow and endure, Program Directors must understand that forming relationships is not always easy. Gaining trust takes a great deal of time. Sometimes mentors feel worthless and that they are not making any progress in the relationship. Proper support will help mentors through the most difficult times. Efforts to notice and appreciate them will go a long way.

There are many different kinds and forms of recognition. Understanding your volunteers and their needs will be key to knowing what is meaningful to them. Below are some ways to recognize mentors and ensure that they will be willing to continue in your program. How many more can you think of instituting?

Thank you, mentors

1. Appreciation breakfasts, lunches and dinners.
2. Regular articles in the local press about accomplishments of mentors.
3. Mentor testimonies appearing often in program brochures and newsletters.
4. Telephone calls and notes of appreciation from youth, families and staff.
5. Gifts for mentors.
6. Meetings between mentors and staff.
7. Ongoing training for mentors.
8. Workbooks of new strategies for mentors to use with their youth.
9. Sponsor get-togethers a few times a year to exchange stories and commend mentors.
10. Year-end public recognition ceremonies.
11. Newsletters published frequently for mentors.
12. Willingness to change a match if it isn't working.
13. Immediate support if there is a crisis.
14. Assistance in terminating a relationship if needed.
15. List of all mentors in a program yearly in local press.

Terminating Relationships

Although mentor matches are made with the best of intentions, sometimes the relationship does not work. Always discuss problems, concerns and progress with your program director or coordinator before making a decision to terminate a relationship.

When the decision has been made to end the formal mentoring relationship, the mentor should:

1. Set a specific date for your last meeting and inform youth of this ahead of time.
2. Be honest, candid and supportive regardless of the reason for the termination.
3. Talk about the reasons for ending the relationship.
4. Talk about your thoughts and feelings for the youth and your feelings about the termination.
5. Encourage the youth to do the same.
6. Be positive and supportive, especially about what the future may hold for your youth.
7. If it seems appropriate, talk to the program coordinator about a replacement mentor for your youth.
8. Don't make promises you may not keep. (e.g., that you will always keep in touch).

Evaluating a Mentor Program

The objectives that were established at the beginning of the guidebook can be measured to determine if your mentor program is working. Evaluate the program throughout the year and at the end of specific intervals. Then you will know if your program is successful.

Depending upon those objectives, success may be determined by how the mentors are doing and if the number of recruits was achieved. Ask mentors and youth how they are progressing in the relationship.

Every program will use different forms to evaluate the initiative. Some focus on whether mentoring is going to turn a young life around. They look for differences in grade point averages. But mentoring is just as much about fundamentally human things that may never show up on a programmatic evaluation. Sometimes the value of mentoring is subtle.

Here are some resources to help you evaluate a program:

Attendance Records

Teacher Reports on Observable Behavior Changes Mentor Pre-post Yearly Evaluation

Mentor Self-Evaluation

Parent Evaluation

Youth Pre-post Evaluation

Self-Perception Inventories

Fundraising

Keeping “Fun” in Fundraising

How does a mentoring program ensure financial support and the ability to be self-sustaining? Fundraising is a constant concern for Program Directors, but it does not have to be tedious and tiresome. Being creative is key. Most mentors will buy products that support and remind them of the program.

Here are just a few ideas to raise money for your program:

- Establish a 501(C)3 Tax Exempt Scholarship Fund so youth can have money for post-secondary education.
- Publish a mentor/youth generated cookbook of favorite recipes.
- Sell youth-designed holiday and note cards.
- Set up a Wishing Well in local stores.
- Secure grants and awards from private foundations interested in education.
- Become a United Way Donor Designation Agency.
- Secure corporate sponsorship for year-end events, gifts, and refreshments.

Marketing Your Program Letting Everyone Know

Once you have established a successful mentor program, market the effort. Mentors love to see their names in print and stories help to get the word out to recruit more mentors.

Market to everyone your program may reach. Write about program success from the viewpoint of mentors, youth participants and their families, community businesses, local institutions including schools, and funding sources.

Send stories to:

- Newspapers
- Program newsletters and brochures
- Local television programs
- Radio Public Service Announcements (PSA's)
- Company newsletters
- Flyers in Chamber of Commerce mailings
- Complete list of mentors
- Church bulletins
- Indian radio stations
- Tribal newspapers
- Native newspapers
- Local Native journalists

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Screening Process

Screening of Mentors includes:

Completion of Mentor Agreement (page 41)

Completion of Mentor Application (page 42)

Two (2) personal reference letters

Mentor Reference Checks (page 45)

In-House Interviews (page 46)

Completed Drivers Affidavit which includes proof of current insurance policy and driver's license

Reference Check

Inform the prospective mentor who will be conducting the reference and interview procedures. The screening process is carried out by either a Director of Human Resources or Personnel at a participating company or a Selection Committee which consists of resources from the school district or community agency.

Explain the steps involved in a reference check. It begins with a background check of applicants including references, verification of employment history, child abuse and criminal history. The local Police Department is asked to obtain a criminal check.

Personal Interview

Invite the applicant in for an interview. The personal interview provides a first-hand examination of character, skills, knowledge and experience to support the written evidence. Use the model suggested on page 50 of this guide.

Mentor Agreement

As a volunteer mentor in the Mentor Program,

(name)

AGREE

- To attend a training session before beginning.
- To be on time for scheduled meetings.
- To notify the school/organization if I am unable to keep my weekly mentoring session. To engage in the relationship with an open mind.
- To accept assistance from my mentee's program staff. To keep discussions with my mentee confidential.
- To ask program staff when I need assistance or do not understand something.
- To notify the Program Director of any changes in my employment, address, and telephone number.
- To notify the principal of a desire to change mentee.

Date

Signature

Mentor Application

Name of Mentor _____

Name of Company/Organization _____

Title _____

Date of Birth _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ E-mail _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Preference of Day (Mon-Fri): Choice #1 _____ Choice #2 _____

Best Hour of Day (9am-3pm): Choice #1 _____ Choice #2 _____

Do you prefer: A boy _____ A girl _____ No

Preference _____

Write a brief statement on why you wish to be a mentor:

Describe any special interests which may be helpful in matching you and your mentee (i.e. career interests, chess, stamp collecting, roller skating, golf, stock market, needlepoint, computers, baseball, foreign language, music, football, painting, etc.)

I would like to work with a child in Grade (circle):

ELEMENTARY K 1 2 3 4 5 MIDDLE 6 7 8 HIGH 9 10 11 12

TWO (2) REFERENCES (OTHER THAN FAMILY MEMBERS)

Name _____ Telephone _____ Relationship _____

Address _____ City, _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name _____ Telephone _____ Relationship _____

Address _____ City, _____ State _____ Zip _____

LAST THREE (3) PLACES OF RESIDENCE

1) Street Address _____

State _____ Zip _____

Resided there from _____ to _____ (provide start and end dates)

2) Street Address _____

State _____ Zip _____

Resided there from _____ to _____ (provide start and end dates)

3) Street Address _____

State _____ Zip _____

Resided there from _____ to _____ (provide start and end dates)

Employment History

THE LAST THREE PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT WITH MOST RECENT FIRST

Company, Address, Dates

Company, Address, Dates

Company, Address, Dates

I the undersigned, hereby state that if accepted as a Mentor, I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the _____ Mentor Program. I understand that the program involves spending a minimum of one hour each week with my mentee. Further, I understand that I will attend an orientation session, be involved in training during the year, and communicate with the program staff regularly during this period. I will be committing one year in the program and will then be asked to renew for another year. I have not been convicted, within the past ten years, of any felony or misdemeanor classified as an offense against a person or family, of public indecency, or a violation involving a state or federally controlled substance. I am not under current indictment. Further, I hereby fully discharge program personnel, participating companies or organizations from any and all liability, claims, causes of action, costs and expenses which may be attributable to my participation in the _____ Mentor Program.

I give permission for Mentor staff to run a background check as part of the screening for entrance in to this program. This may include verification of personal and employment references as well as a criminal check with the local authorities.

I have read the above Release Statements and agree to the contents. To the best of my knowledge and belief, all statements in this profile application are true and accurate.

Date _____ Signature _____

(Complete this profile and return to:
(name. address. telephone, fax and e-mail of program director)

Mentor Reference Checks

Date of Call _____

Name of Prospective Mentor _____

Name of Reference _____

In what capacity does reference know prospective mentor? _____

How long have you known prospective mentor? _____

Do you think he/she would make a good mentor and why? _____

Involvement with children? _____

Rate: (Circle one)

Reliability Excellent Good Fair

Consistency Excellent Good Fair

Judgment Excellent Good Fair

Work Ethic Excellent Good Fair

Caring Excellent Good Fair

Patience Excellent Good Fair

Commitment Excellent Good Fair

Name of Interviewer

Interviewer's Comments & Recommendation

In-House Interview Questions

The following questions are part of the in-house personal interview with potential mentor in no particular order.

1. Why do you want to be a mentor?
2. Prior experiences working with kids? What ages?
3. Have you ever been impacted by a mentor? Who and how?
4. Prior work experience including the most current.
5. Any experiences in the past with camping, boy scouts, baby sitting, etc.?
6. Personal interests and hobbies.
7. Any special transportation requirements.
8. Availability of time for mentoring.
9. What you hope to get out of the mentoring experience.
10. Your church affiliation/experiences.
11. What one word best describes you?
12. What do you consider a strength about you?
13. What do you consider a weakness?
14. Have you ever been a mentor before? When and where?
15. Educational experiences.
16. Leisure time activities.
17. What values and attitudes should students be equipped with to prepare for the 21st century?
18. How would you characterize your use of alcohol or drugs?
19. How do you react to stressful situations?
20. Describe your understanding of mentoring from a Native American perspective.
21. Who were the elders or teachers in your life who helped you to get to where you are today?
22. How do you “celebrate”?
23. If you are able, can you tell a little about how you participate in your tribal ceremonies and rituals?

Problem - You are supposed to meet with your mentee this afternoon at 1 p.m. Suddenly your boss indicates that you must work on a very important project which must be finished by 8 p.m. It will require overtime to get it done and leaves you without dinner or anything else you had planned for the next few hours. What would you do about your appointment with your mentee?

Mentor Liability

- Activities should take place on-site at the program location only. Notify parents as part of signed permission letter.

- Activities should take place during school/agency hours to allow maximum control and supervision by program personnel.

- Screen Mentors to ensure that each is capable and responsible:
 1. Follow up on references from employers, co-workers, physicians or other similar persons

 2. Conduct personal interview.

 3. Orient and instruct Mentor on rules and regulations affecting activities.

- Qualified program staff should be present as often as appropriate to observe and ensure the Mentor acts responsibly and within the specific limits of authority.

- Document and keep information on file.

Teacher/Parent/Program Staff Request For A Mentor

Requested By _____

School/Organization _____

Name of Youth Needing Help _____ Grade in School _____

Youth's personal interests/hobbies: _____

Reason(s) why this youngster would benefit from the services of a mentor: _____

Family relationships of interest to the mentor: _____

List below some specific strategies the mentor might use to assist this student (e.g. talking, reading, listening, playing games, etc.): _____

Additional comments: _____

Return this form to your program coordinator prior to _____ (Date)

Sample Permission Letter

Date _____

School/Organization _____

Address _____

City, State Telephone _____

Dear Parents:

The (name) Public Schools/Organization have a special relationship with a number of local organizations. This year, we have been fortunate to be assisted by volunteers from (Name of Organization). These volunteers will act as mentors (friends, buddies) to specially selected youth.

Based on program staff recommendations, your child (name) has been chosen to work with (name of mentor), a (name of company/organization) mentor for one hour per week. The hour selected is the time the staff feel that the child will most benefit from the interaction with another adult on a one to one basis. The activities may be those recommended by the staff, matching the needs of the child with the skills of the mentor.

In order to begin this program, we must have your permission. Please fill out the form below and return it to me immediately. Only then can we start your child in this very worthwhile experience.

Sincerely,

(Signature of program staff)

(please detach here and return by (date))

I hereby give permission for my child, (name), to work with a (name of company/organization) mentor in the (name of Mentor Program).

The (name of program) takes place only on-site. No youth is allowed off-site with a mentor except with written parent permission

Date _____ Signature _____

Suggested Description to Explain Program to Parents

All of us will recall the many important individuals who have supported, motivated and encouraged us during our youth and adult lives. These mentors have served as coaches and advocates. In an effort to bring such a relationship, our organization has launched the community mentoring program.

I am delighted to announce that our organization has been chosen to begin the first pilot with mentors from (name of company/organization). This is a one-on-one relationship between an employee of the local (name of company/organization) and a deserving youth. The mentor may be released during the workday to travel to the program where each will read to and with a student; play games, sports or musical instruments; or just talk (add secondary school strategies where appropriate). The goal is to improve a youngster's attitude and desire to stay in school and away from risky behavior. It is not a tutorial program.

Much research is now available which points to the tremendous benefits of mentoring. The first group of mentors has been screened and will begin in our program next month. Although we would like to have a volunteer for every youth, only a handful of youngsters will be selected for the first phase based on the number of mentors who have volunteered to help. It is our hope that additional people will sign up to assist us in the future.

Parents whose children are eligible for the pilot will be notified shortly and will be asked to sign a written permission. I would be delighted to answer any questions you may have about the program.

School Liaison Responsibilities

The individual assigned with the responsibility of school liaison performs the following duties:

- Matches mentors and mentees using requests of mentors and Program Staff.
- Orients new mentors to the program (policies, sign-in procedures, location for weekly meetings with mentees, introduces staff, etc.).
- Coordinates the Mentor Welcome Back Breakfast each fall.
- Maintains and monitors weekly attendance sign-in lists.
- Updates lists of mentors/mentees and prepares accurate lists of mentors and mentees.
- Communicates with mentors on a regular basis to answer their questions and concerns.
- Serves as liaison with school social workers, guidance counselors, psychologists, nurses and other support individuals to the program.
- Arranges Brown Bag lunches and/or meetings between mentors and staff to maintain levels of communications at regular intervals.
- Works with mentors who may need to terminate their relationship.
- Introduces parents to mentors through conferences, evening events or other means.
- Coordinates the year-end Mentor Thank You Event.
- Accompanies youth on field trip.

This is the proposed “job description” for an individual who wishes to consider this most rewarding and exciting opportunity. It can, of course, be modified to meet the needs of your school.

Summer Activities

- Address and stamp 3-4 envelopes to yourself. Give them to your mentee and ask each to write you a note or letter during the summer months to let you know how they are doing.
- Give your mentee your office telephone number to call you on occasion this summer to say hello.
- Buy your mentee a small journal or notebook. Tell each to write down thoughts and feelings that they might wish to share with you when the summer is over - so they won't forget.
- If your mentee has a tape recorder or Walkman, give them a tape of your voice reading a special story or your favorite music to keep during the summer.
- Swap photos of you and your mentee. They will serve as a reminder when you are not there.
- Give your mentee your business card and use it as an opportunity to tell them what you do at work.
- Provide your mentee with a calendar and point out the weeks until you will see each other again.

Measuring Success

- We tend to focus on whether mentoring is going to turn a young life around.
- What is the difference, we ask, in grade point average?
- We look for other profound results.
- But mentoring is just as much about fundamentally human things — that may NEVER show up on a programmatic evaluation.
- Sometimes, the value of mentoring is subtle.

Program Evaluation

1. Have clear objectives to evaluate.
2. Document important information.
3. Record all significant events and changes in staff, mentors or students.

Ways to Evaluate Programs

- Attendance in Program
- Teacher Report Card — Observable Classroom Behavior
- Conferences, Notes, Telephone Calls, Breakfasts and Luncheons
- Mentor Yearly Evaluation
- Mentor Self-Evaluation
- Parent Evaluation
- Youth Evaluation
- Self-Perception Inventory

Benefits of Mentoring

Return to work happier.

More appreciative of students from diverse backgrounds.

Feel better about themselves for having impacted a child's life.

Improve understanding of school system.

Better able to relate to children.

Learn more about themselves.

Improve own values and beliefs.

Increase own sense of responsibility.

Help prepare workforce of the 21st century.

Get along better with own spouses and children.

Join other Nations in rebuilding/mending the Circle among indigenous tribes.

Feel connected to community.

Honor self while honoring others.

Participate in strengthening community.

"Give back" in honor of those who gave to you.

Experience spirituality in action.