

Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™

3rd Edition

Newly revised and updated to reflect the latest in quality mentoring research, policies and practices

✓ A CHECKLIST FOR MENTORING PROGRAMS

A Glossary of Terms:

Responsible mentoring:

- Is a structured, one-to-one relationship or partnership that focuses on the needs of mentored participants.
- Fosters caring and supportive relationships.
- Encourages individuals to develop to their fullest potential.
- Helps an individual to develop his or her own vision for the future.
- Is a strategy to develop active community partnerships.

Evidence-based practice:

Two types of evidence were used to justify the standards included in this document: evidenced based upon the latest mentoring research and evidence from experienced mentoring practitioners.

Benchmarks: The minimum requirements necessary to produce a positive mentee outcome.

Enhancements: Best practices that are believed to produce positive mentee outcomes.

Standard 1: Recruitment

Benchmarks:

Mentor Recruitment

- B.1.1** Program engages in recruitment strategies that realistically portray the benefits, practices and challenges of mentoring in the program.

Mentee Recruitment

- B.1.2** Program recruits youth whose needs best match the services offered by the program and helps them understand what mentoring is and what they can expect from a mentoring relationship.

Enhancements:

Mentor Recruitment

- E.1.1** Program has a written statement outlining eligibility requirements for mentors in its program.

Mentee Recruitment

- E.1.2** Program has a written statement outlining eligibility requirements for mentees in its program.

Standard 2: Screening

Benchmarks:

Mentor Screening

- B.2.1** Mentor completes an application.
- B.2.2** Mentor agrees to a one (calendar or school) year minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship.
- B.2.3** Mentor agrees to participate in face-to-face meetings with his or her mentee that average one time per week and one hour per meeting over the course of a calendar or school year.
- B.2.4** Program conducts at least one face-to-face interview with mentor.
- B.2.5** Program conducts a reference check (personal and/or professional) on mentor.
- B.2.6** Program conducts a comprehensive criminal background check on adult mentor, including searching a national criminal records database along with sex offender and child abuse registries.

Mentee Screening

- B.2.7** Parent(s)/guardian(s) complete an application and provide informed consent for their child to participate.
- B.2.8** Parent(s)/guardian(s) and mentee agree to a one (calendar or school) year minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship.
- B.2.9** Parents(s)/guardian(s) and mentee agree that the mentee will participate in face-to-face meetings with his or her mentor a minimum of one time per week, on average, for a minimum of one hour per meeting, on average.

Enhancements:

- E.2.1** Program utilizes national, fingerprint-based FBI criminal background checks (e.g., the SafetyNET system operating under the auspices of the Child Protection Improvements Act, in cooperation with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children).
- E.2.2** School-based programs assess mentor's interest in maintaining contact with mentee during the summer months following the close of the school year and offer assistance with maintaining contact.

Standard 3: Training

Benchmarks:

Mentor Training

- B.3.1** Program provides a minimum of two hours of pre-match, in-person training.
- B.3.2** Mentor training includes the following topics, at a minimum: a) Program rules; b) Mentors' goals and expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship; c) Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles; d) Relationship development and maintenance; e) Ethical issues that may arise related to the mentoring relationship; f) Effective closure of the mentoring relationship; and g) Sources of assistance available to support mentors.

Enhancements:

Mentor Training

- E.3.1** Program uses evidence-based training materials.
- E.3.2** Program provides additional pre-match training opportunities beyond the two-hour, in-person minimum.
- E.3.3** Program addresses the following developmental topics in the training: a) Youth development process; b) Cultural, gender and economic issues; and c) Opportunities and challenges associated with mentoring specific populations of children (e.g., children of prisoners, youth involved in the juvenile justice system, youth in foster care, high school dropouts), if relevant.
- E.3.4** Program uses training to continue to screen mentors for suitability and develops techniques for early trouble-shooting should problems be identified.

Mentee Training

- E.3.5** Program provides training for the mentee and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) (when appropriate) on the following topics: a) Program guidelines; b) Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles; c) Mentees' obligations and appropriate roles; and d) Parental/guardian involvement guidelines.

Standard 4: Matching

Benchmarks:

- B.4.1** Program considers its aims, as well as the characteristics of the mentor and mentee (e.g., interests, proximity, availability, age, gender, race, ethnicity, personality and expressed preferences of mentor and mentee) when making matches.
- B.4.2** Program arranges and documents an initial meeting between the mentor and mentee.

Enhancements:

- E.4.1** Program staff member should be on site and/or present during the initial meeting of the mentor and mentee.

Standard 5: Monitoring and Support

Benchmarks:

- B.5.1** Program contacts the mentor and mentee at a minimum frequency of twice per month for the first month of the match and monthly thereafter.
- B.5.2** Program documents information about each mentor-mentee contact, including, at minimum, date, length and nature of contact.
- B.5.3** Program provides mentors with access to at least two types of resources (e.g., expert advice from program staff or others; publications; Web-based resources; experienced mentors; available social service referrals) to help mentors negotiate challenges in the mentoring relationships as they arise.
- B.5.4** Program follows evidenced-based protocol to elicit more in-depth assessment from the mentor and mentee about the relationship and uses scientifically-tested relationship assessment tools.
- B.5.5** Program provides one or more opportunities per year for post-match mentor training.

Enhancements:

- E.5.1** Program has quarterly contact with a key person in the mentee's life (e.g., parent, guardian or teacher) for the duration of the match.
- E.5.2** Program hosts one or more group activities for mentors and their mentees, and/or offers information about activities that mentors and mentees might wish to participate in together.
- E.5.3** Program thanks mentors and recognizes their contributions at some point during each year of the relationship, prior to match closure.

Standard 6: Closure

Benchmarks:

- B.6.1** Program has procedure to manage anticipated closures, including a system for a mentor or mentee rematch.
- B.6.2** Program has procedure to manage unanticipated match closures, including a system for a mentor or mentee rematch.
- B.6.3** Program conducts and documents an exit interview with mentor and mentee.

Enhancements:

- E.6.1** Program explores opportunity to continue the mentor/mentee match for a second (or subsequent) year.
- E.6.2** Program has a written statement outlining terms of match closure and policies for mentor/mentee contact after a match ends.
- E.6.3** Program hosts a final celebration meeting or event with the mentor and mentee to mark progress and transition.