



DEFINITIONS FOR MENTORING

Mentoring describes a relationship between an older, more experienced adult and an unrelated, younger protégé or mentee, characterized by on-going guidance, instruction, and encouragement provided by the adult and aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee.
Rhodes, 2002

An **"at-risk"** youth is a minor whose environment increases their chance of becoming involved in risky behavior that prevents him or her from achieving their full potential. Some of these risky behaviors include truancy and school dropout; involvement in violence and gang membership or affiliation; alcohol, tobacco, and other drug early experimentation, use, or abuse; early sexual activity and teen parenting; or self-harm or other dangerous coping mechanisms.

ELEMENTS OF SAFE & EFFECTIVE MENTORING ORGANIZATIONS

An effective mentoring organization requires:

- ✓ A clear, concise vision
- ✓ Risk management and confidentiality policies
- ✓ Written administrative and program procedures
- ✓ An established organization for oversight
- ✓ Adherence to EEO requirements
- ✓ Inclusiveness of racial, economic, and gender representation as appropriate to the program
- ✓ Adequate financial and in-kind resources to attain maximum program quality and effectiveness
- ✓ Use of generally accepted accounting practices
- ✓ Prudent and reasonable rationale for staffing requirements
- ✓ Paid and/or volunteer staff with appropriate skills and qualifications
- ✓ Written job descriptions for all staff and volunteer positions
- ✓ Adherence to general principles of volunteerism
- ✓ Consent by and consistent contact with parents/guardians of mentee
- ✓ Additional community support services based on needs of mentors and mentees
- ✓ Compliance with the Ten Quality Assurance Standards (following pages)



10 QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR SUCCESSFUL MENTORING:

1. A Mission Statement and a Long Range Plan that includes:

- A Mission Statement that concisely states who you serve, why you are serving them, expected outcomes for them, and what services will be provided to achieve outcomes
- The long-range vision of the organization
- Shorter-term program goals and action plans that include who, what, when, where, why and how activities will be performed
- Input from originators, staff, funders, potential volunteers, and participants
- Assessment of community need
- Realistic, attainable, and easy-to-understand operational plan
- Funding and resources development plan
- Goals, objectives, and timelines for all aspects of the plan

2. A Recruitment Plan for Mentors that includes:

- Strategies that portray accurate expectations and benefits
- Year-round marketing and P.R. activities that target outreach based on participants' needs
- Volunteer opportunities beyond mentoring
- A basis in your program's statement of purpose and long-range plan

A Recruitment Plan for Mentees that includes:

- Targeted outreach based on participants' needs
- Coordination with other agencies and institutions working with the mentees
- A basis in your program's statement of purpose and long-range plan

3. Customized Orientations for Mentors and Mentees that include:

- Program overview
- Description of eligibility, screening process, and suitability requirements
- Level of commitment expected (time, energy, and flexibility)
- Expectations and restrictions (accountability)
- Realistic benefits and rewards
- A summary of program policies, including written reports, interviews, evaluation, reimbursement

4. Eligibility Screening/Application Process for Mentors that includes:

- A commitment to put the safety of the youth in your program first
- Incorporating current research on child molester profiles into every facet of screening
- Extensive face-to-face interview
- Home visit
- Reference checks from friends, family members and colleagues
- Child abuse registry and fingerprinting/criminal record check
- Driving record and proof of automobile insurance
- Suitability criteria that relates to the program's mission statement and needs of the clients
- Assessment of traits proven by research to be conducive to successful mentoring relationships (e.g., flexible, non-judgmental, low expectations, low personal needs)
- Successful completion of pre-match training and orientation



10 QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR SUCCESSFUL MENTORING: (con't)

Eligibility Screening for Mentees that includes:

- An application process for potential client and parent(s)
- A face-to-face interview
- A home visit and parent orientation
- Suitability criteria that relate to the program's mission
- Emphasizing the voluntary aspect of the child's consent and participation
- Parental consent and support

5. A Training Curriculum for all Mentors and Mentees that includes:

- Trained staff trainers
- Orientation to program and resource network
- Skills development as appropriate
- Cultural/heritage sensitivity and appreciation training
- Guidelines on how to get the most out of the mentoring relationship
- Relationship building and management
- Job and role descriptions
- Confidentiality and liability information
- Crisis management/problem solving resources
- Communication skills development
- Frequent, ongoing contact by staff to support the relationship building process
- Challenges to help mentors and staff assess their appropriateness for the program

6. A Matching Strategy that includes:

- A commitment to making high quality "compatible" matches
- Strict adherence to the program's eligibility criteria and screening process
- Appropriate criteria for matches
- Signed statements of understanding that both parties agree to the conditions of the match and the mentoring relationship
- A structured first meeting that includes staff, parent(s), mentors, and mentee

7. A Monitoring Process that includes:

- An ongoing commitment to monitor the relationships established by your organization to ensure the safety of each of your clients; staff should be trained on current research on child molester profiles and methodologies
- Frequent ongoing contact between staff and mentors, and staff and mentees
- Consistent scheduled meetings with staff, mentors, and mentees
- Extensive written records on each match, including dates and times they met, activities they participated in and comments of the mentor and mentee about the relationship
- Input from family, community partners, and other significant youth professionals in the child's life (e.g. teacher, juvenile probation officer)
- A process for managing grievances, praise, re-matching, interpersonal problem solving, and premature relationship closure



10 QUALITY ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR SUCCESSFUL MENTORING: (con't)

8. *A Support, Recognition, and Retention Component that includes:*

- Ongoing training and development, including support groups for volunteers and participants
- Social gatherings of different groups as needed
- Annual recognition and appreciation event
- Newsletters or other mailings/emails to mentors and mentees that recognizes their achievements, disseminates information on relevant issues, and communicates details on program and community activities, events, and resources

9. *Relationship Closure Steps that include:*

- Private and confidential exit interviews to de-brief the mentoring relationship between mentor and mentee
- Structure and future program support for the mentor and mentee that have successfully fulfilled program requirements and time commitment
- Policies and procedures for determining the future roles of mentor and mentee in the program if their relationship is terminating before they have fulfilled the program requirements and time commitment

10. *An Evaluation process that includes:*

- A **Process Evaluation**, an extensive, ongoing tracking of program statistics relative to goals that includes data on numbers of participants, participation rates in support services and activities, amount of time mentors and mentees spend together, number of contacts by program staff, and how program requirements are fulfilled; reflects the informational needs of the organization to assess program quality as well as the needs of program donors and supporters to track program progress
- **Outcome Evaluation** procedures to measure both short-term and long-term outcomes for youth in mentoring relationships, e.g. academic achievement, improvement of school behavior and attendance, pre/post tests with validated measures of changes in self-esteem, self-efficacy, or whatever other outcomes your program is trying to achieve for youth
- A vehicle for the organization to use both process and outcome evaluation data for ongoing, self-renewing change that enriches the organization and its service capacities

Sources: Friends for Youth, Inc.; National Mentoring Working Group; California Governor's Mentoring Partnership

For more information on customized training concerning
Elements of Safe and Effective Mentoring Programs
and the
10 Quality Assurance Standards for Successful Mentoring,
contact us:

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