Digging Deep into What *Really* Works (and What Doesn’t) with Mentoring

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Session Objectives

• Why mentoring?
• Background and Theory
• Mentoring in the context of GEAR UP
• Voices from the Ground
What is mentoring?

Share what defines mentorship to you
Why Mentoring?

Many youth development programs are drawn to mentoring because we’re looking to deliver an experience that is transformational and authentic developmental relationships work!
Avoiding “magical thinking”
Mechanisms of Mentoring

**Common Elements**
- Rapport
- Working Alliance
- Mutual Consent
- Regular Contact
- Positive Interactions
- Youth Centered

**Focus of Relationship**
- Enduring Relationship
- Emotional Attachment
- Youth guided activities
- Concrete skill development (i.e. academic)
- Concrete goal setting
- Performance feedback
- Curriculum based

**Goals of Relationship**
- Social Development
- Emotional Development
- Cognitive Development
- Skill Achievement
- Mastery Experience
- Skill self-efficacy

Adapted from Figure 1. McQuillin (2014) Innovation in school-based mentoring. Advances in School Mental Health Promotion
A Mentoring Theory of Change

How well you run your program → Quality of support a mentor provides to youth → Quality of youth & adult relationships → What the mentee thinks and believes → The youth’s behavior → Youth outcomes you wish to achieve
Why Emphasize Effectiveness?

- Only high quality mentoring programs have positive effects on youth.
- “Middle of the road” programs have few clear outcomes.
- Low quality programs show documented damage to youth.
Youth and mentors live in communities where they experience stress, oppression, systemic racism, bias, adultism, and also assets, relational support, opportunities, & privilege.

Youth think and believe certain things.

Mentors think and believe certain things.

Mentoring program offers tools, resources, guidance.

Youth and mentors work together to tackle real world issues.

Mentor’s understand how to better support young people, learn and grow themselves.

Youth develop their understanding of self, learn agency and advocacy.

Outcome result from new ideas, attitudes, actions, skills and improved systems.

An Updated Theory of Change
Envisioning a New Way: Dual Capacity Building Model of Mentoring
Mentors, Teachers, and Students Together: Transforming Teaching and Learning

- Gentrification through the Lens of History
- Community Mapping Project
- You Can be an Engineer!
What is Mentoring?

Who serves who, and to what end?

What happens when you flip the script?
## Components of a Program

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EEP Program Design

1. Program mission statement of overall vision
2. Program theory of change and a logic model
3. Resource development plan and budget
4. Marketing and communications plan
5. Evaluation plan
6. Policy and Procedure manual
EEP Program Leadership and Oversight

1. Advisory committee (or Board)
2. Adequate and appropriate staffing
3. Staff development, compensation, and recognition
4. Data and information management
5. Advocacy for mentoring
6. Partnerships with other local programs and services
7. Monitoring and oversight for continuous improvement
Program Design & Leadership Tips

1. Learn, grow, hire to have “mentors that get it”: culturally competent, culturally responsive, culturally sustaining

2. Be asset-based and community-connected

3. How would you design your program if you said the problem wasn’t the youth, the problem was the system?

4. Watch for saviorism & privilege

5. Be clear about goals and HOW you think those things will work
Tips for School-Based Programs

• What do you offer that school does not? How do you measure that?
• Consider role of older youth mentors (cross-age mentoring)
• Consider benefits of both one-on-one and group mentoring
• Literature: Continue program throughout summer to lengthen matches, work with entire school, consider transportation, know the trade offs of working with youth/adults as mentors
Examine Your Balance of Power

- Partnership
- Empowerment
- Engagement
- Leadership
- Participation
- Voice
Mentors, Teachers, and Students Together: Reframing the College Journey

Connecting Content with Students’ Lives: College Advocate Mentors (CAMs), alongside their teacher Ms. Delgado, led a food and culture workshop where students got the opportunity to draw, watercolor and collage a cultural dish from their background. This activity is in conjunction with their class book, Like Water for Chocolate.

When CAMs and teachers bring their creativity and skills together, the sky is the limit. From engaging workshops that connect students to their personal stories, to interactive classroom activities that inspire curiosity about career opportunities, to family events that build connections between school and home, the partnership transforms the classroom into a space of mutual learning and growth.
EXCEL. ★ PROVE. ★ MOBILIZE.

Social Context
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender
- Immigration Status
- Neighborhood Conditions
- Education Policies
- Economic Policies
- Political Climate
- Power and Privilege

Upstream
Communities most burdened by inequalities face unique structure challenges related to their social, political, economic, and environmental context. How might this context affect college-going identity development, and how can their voices inform and guide decision-making about program design and supports?

Identity Development
- Beliefs about Education
- Skills, Resources, Community
- Beliefs about Self and Future
- Navigating the Unknown
- Realistic Self-Appraisal
- Identity Transition

Midstream
THE COLLEGE JOURNEY
Developed by students of the College Advocacy Project, Roosevelt High School

College Preparation To Do List
- Planning
- Maintaining School Performance
- Applying to College
- Applying for Financial Aid
- Selecting a College
- Transitioning to College

Downstream
- Set goals
- Identify options
- Determine requirements
- Record due dates
- Attendance
- Grades
- ACT/SAT scores
- AP/college credit
- Extracurricular Activities
- Fill out college applications
- Request recommendations
- Be aware of deadlines
- Write essays
- Send transcripts
- College costs
- Financial Aid eligibility
- Submit scholarships
- Award packages
- Fit
- Cost
- Acceptance
- Enrollment
- High School graduation
- Summer Plans
- Registration
- Moving
- Accept Financial aid

- Confront financial fears with plans
- Negotiate with family regarding financial needs
- Experiencing a loss of control
- Confront barriers, tackle obstacles, and learn to own decision making and results
- Overcome the fear of "I am not good enough to succeed in college"

- Explore the history and meaning of education with family
- Consider how family roles and dynamics affect relationships
- Integrating family and social, and community commitments
- Manage social aspects of life (friends, family, love)
- Overcome fear of "I'm not good enough to try to go to college"
- Confront financial fears with plans
- Manage yourself (deal with unknown, disappointment, distractions)
- Manage social aspects of life (friends, family, love)
- Overcome fear of "I'm not good enough to get into college"
What models of mentoring are you interested in?

What model of mentoring works for GEAR UP?
Components of a Program

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- Recruitment Screening Matching Support Closure
- Program Design
- Program Leadership & Oversight
- Program Improvement & Evaluation
EEP Recruitment

1.1 & 1.2 & 1.6 Engages in recruitment strategies that realistically portray the benefits, practices, supports, and challenges of mentoring in the program, build positive attitudes and emotions about mentoring.

1.3 Recruits mentors whose skills, motivations, and backgrounds best match the goals and structure of the program.

1.7 Recruits mentees whose needs best match the services offered by the program.
EEP Recruitment

1.4 Encourages mentors to assist with recruitment efforts by providing them with resources to ask individuals they know, who meet the eligibility criteria of the program, to be a mentor.

1.5 Trains and encourages mentees to identify and recruit appropriate mentors for themselves, when relevant.
Recruitment Tips

• What kind of mentors can truly effectively connect with the youth in your school?
• It is going to take longer than you expect
• Use a long-term, relationship building approach to finding mentors
• Work with other folks to recruit (consider race, ethnicity, gender)
• Don’t always say “yes”
• Grow your own
• Well-meaning doesn’t automatically mean a good mentor
Voices from the Ground: Graciela Quinto Alfaro

College Advocate Mentor
Roosevelt High School
2017-Present
Who are your mentors?

What partnerships can you build to find and work with mentors that students relate to?
EEP Screening Mentors

B.2.1* Program has established criteria for accepting mentors into the program as well as criteria for disqualifying mentor applicants.

B.2.2 Prospective mentors complete a written application that includes questions designed to help assess their safety and suitability for mentoring a youth.

B.2.3 Program conducts at least one face-to-face interview with each prospective mentor that includes questions designed to help the program assess his or her suitability for mentoring a youth.

B.2.4 Program conducts a comprehensive criminal background check on prospective adult mentors, including searching a national criminal records database, along with sex offender and child abuse registries and, when relevant, driving records.
EEP Screening Mentors

B.2.5 Program conducts reference check interviews with multiple adults who know an applicant (ideally, both personal and professional references) that include questions to help assess his or her suitability for mentoring a youth.

B.2.6* Prospective mentors agree in writing to a one-year (calendar or school) minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship, or a minimum time commitment that is required by the mentoring program.

B.2.7* Prospective mentors agree in writing to participate in face-to-face meetings with their mentees that average a minimum of once a week and a total of four or more hours per month over the course of the relationship, or at a minimum frequency and amount of hours that are required by their mentoring program.
EEP Screening Mentees

**B.2.8*** Program has established criteria for accepting youth into the program as well as criteria that would disqualify a potential youth participant.

**B.2.9 & 10** Parent(s)/guardian(s) complete an application or referral form, and permission for child to participate.

**B.2.11*** Parent(s)/guardian(s) and mentees agree in writing to a one-year (calendar or school) minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship, or the minimum time commitment that is required by the mentoring program.

**B.2.12** Parent(s)/guardian(s) and mentees agree in writing that mentees participate in face-to-face meetings with their mentors that average a minimum of once a week and a total of four or more hours per month over the course of the relationship, or at a minimum frequency and amount of hours that are required by the mentoring program.
Screening Tips

• Set and follow a screening policy that is appropriate for your model (the age of the youth served, their time alone in the community, what supervision looks like)

• Realize that the criminal justice system has documented, unequal bias and impact. Placing limit on “who is a good mentor” using a background check has unequal consequences. Determine what is right for your program.

• Screening goes WAY BEYOND a background check – Screening Applicants for Effectiveness lists 22 different tools.
EEP Matching & Initiating

B4.1 Program considers the characteristics of the mentor and mentee.

B4.2 Program arranges and documents an initial meeting between the mentor and mentee as well as, when relevant, with the parent or guardian.

B4.3 Program staff member should be on site and/or present during the initial match meeting of the mentor and mentee, and, when relevant, parent or guardian.

B4.4 Mentor, mentee, a program staff member, and, when relevant, the mentee’s parent or guardian, meet in person to sign a commitment agreement consenting to the program’s rules and requirements.
Matching & Initiation Tips

1. Be youth-centered (a mentor is not a mentor until the youth develops an attachment)

2. It often helps to find things that helps the youth identify with the mentor (shared passions, similar experiences).

3. Consider logistical concerns (travel, time of day, etc)
EEP Training

**B3.1** Program provides mentors a minimum of two hours of in-person pre-match training

**B3.2** Mentor training includes listed topics at a minimum

**B3.3** Program provides pre-match training for the mentor on risk management policies that are matched to the program model, setting, and population served

**B3.4** Program uses training practices and materials that are informed by empirical research or are themselves empirically evaluated
Training Tips

• Be realistic about what training will change (how do you effectively change human behavior)?
• Orientation doesn’t mean training
• Train on asset-based thinking and shifting perspectives
• Use role play and interactive exercises and specific examples
• Ongoing training and regular check-ins are incredibly important
Voices from the Ground: Deanne Delgado

Placement Partner
2017-Present
EEP Monitoring & Supporting

B5.1 Program contacts mentors and mentees at least twice per month for the first month of the match and once a month thereafter.

B5.2 At each mentoring contact, program staff should ask mentors questions using a standardized procedure.

B5.3 At each mentoring contact, program staff should ask mentees questions using a standardized procedure.

B5.4 Program follows evidence-based protocol to elicit assessments from mentors and mentees about the quality of their relationship.
EEP Monitoring & Supporting

**B5.5** Program contacts a responsible adult in a mentee’s life twice a month for the first month and once a month thereafter.

**B5.6** At each mentoring contact, program staff should ask parents/guardians questions using a standardized procedure.

**B5.7** Program regularly assess all matches to determine if they should be closed or encouraged to continue.

**B5.8** Program documents information about each mentor-mentee meeting.

**B5.9** Program provides mentors with access to relevant resources to address challenges in mentoring relationships.
EEP Monitoring & Supporting

**B5.10** Program provides mentees and parents or guardians with access or referrals to relevant resources to help families address needs and challenges.

**B5.11** Program provides one or more opportunities per year for post-match mentor training.

**B5.12** Program provides mentors regular feedback regarding their mentees’ outcomes to encourage mentor retention.
Monitoring & Support Tips

1. Not all of the work is done when the match is made. Ongoing support may be the MOST important work of a mentoring program.

2. If youth and mentors feel safe and connected to you, they will tell you MUCH more than if they don’t know you.
Voices from the Ground: Jennie Cha

Mentor Coordinator, 2016-Present
College Advocate Mentor, 2011-2016
GEAR UP Alum, 2011
EEP Closure

B6.1 & 2 & 3 Program has procedures to manage anticipated closures, unanticipated closures, closure when one member of the match is unable or unwilling to engage in the closure process.

6.4 conducts exit interview with mentors and mentees, and when relevant, with parents or guardians.

6.5 has a written policy and procedure, when relevant, for managing re-matching.

6.6 documents that closure procedures were followed.

6.9 has a written public statement outlining the terms for mentor/mentee contact after a match ends.
EEP Closure

**B6.7 & 8** Regardless of the reason for closure, the mentoring program should have a discussion with mentors, mentees (and parents when relevant), that includes the following topics of conversation: Discussion of mentors and mentees feelings about closure; discussion of reasons for closure, if relevant, discussion of positive experiences in mentoring relationship, procedures for notification about timing of closure in order to allow sufficient time to adequately prepare; review of program rules for post-contact closure; creation of a plan for post-closure contact, if relevant; creation of a plan for the last match meeting, if possible; discussion of possible rematching, if relevant.
Closure Tips

1. The worst thing you can do is make promises that you (or a mentor) cannot keep.

2. Healthy closure is a life long skill. A healthy, celebratory closure offers a good way to develop these skills.
Voices from the Ground: Jonathan Perez Carrasco

College Advocate Mentor
Engineering, Roosevelt High School
2017-Present
EEP Program Evaluation

1. Indicators and benchmarks of successful program implementation
2. Feedback from participants and stakeholders on service delivery
3. Expected participant outcomes and benchmarks
4. Valid and reliable instruments to capture participant outcome data
5. Valid and reliable instruments to gauge match closeness and satisfaction
6. Use of archival data sources
7. Periodic evaluation of program outcomes using experimental research designs
8. Sharing data and evaluation results with stakeholder groups
Resources

Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring
https://www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/

Request FREE, short-term Technical Assistance from the National Mentoring Resource Center (a project of OJJDP)
https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/
What is mentoring to you?

What resources do you need to get there?
Questions? Comments?
Complete the Seminar Survey!
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