

Enhancing Cultural Competence in Youth Mentoring Relationships

Bernadette Sanchez, PhD

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Agenda

- ▶ What is cultural competence?
- ▶ Research on the role of cultural competence in the quality of youth mentoring relationships.
- ▶ Examples of how to enhance the cultural competence of mentoring programs.



What is cultural competence?

- ▶ The extent to which individuals have the capacity to work with individuals of a cultural group (Sue, 2006).
 - ▶ Cultural awareness and beliefs
 - ▶ Cultural knowledge
 - ▶ Cultural skills



Consider cultural competence at 3 levels

- ▶ Mentor-youth relationship
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Coalitions of organizations



Role of Cultural Competence in Youth Mentoring

How we assessed youth's perceptions of mentor's cultural sensitivity

- ▶ My mentor seems to understand my racial/ethnic background and culture
- ▶ My mentor is respectful of my...
- ▶ My mentors makes me feel proud of my...
- ▶ My mentor seems interested in my...
- ▶ My mentor helped me understand and feel good about my racial/ethnic group

- ▶ Sanchez, DuBois, Silverthorn, & Pryce, 2010



Youth's perceptions of mentor's cultural sensitivity

- ▶ Study of 40 early adolescent girls and their mentors (Sánchez, DuBois et al., 2010).
- ▶ Youth's perception that their mentor is culturally competent at 3 mths is related to the following **youth** reports...
 - ▶ Greater instrumental satisfaction at 3 & 12 mths
 - ▶ Lower overall dissatisfaction in relationship at 3 & 12 mths
 - ▶ More youth-centered relationship at 3 & 12 mths
 - ▶ The more mentor helped to cope at 3 & 12 mths
 - ▶ The more available youth is for mentor's support at 3 mths



Mentor's cultural sensitivity

- ▶ Youth's perception that their mentor is culturally sensitive at 3 mths is related to the following **mentor** reports...
 - ▶ More outlook-focused relationship at 3 & 12 mths
 - ▶ Closer relationship at 3 mths



Youth's perception of mentor's cultural sensitivity

- ▶ Study of 34 older, ethnically diverse adolescents and their mentors (Sanchez, Feuer, & Davis, 2010)
- ▶ The more youth perceives mentor to be culturally sensitive...
 - ▶ the more available mentor is to provide support
 - ▶ the more dependable is mentor
 - ▶ the more youth and mentor relate to one another
 - ▶ the more growth-focused activities they engage in - e.g., teaching, learning



Cultural sensitivity from mentor's perspective

- ▶ **Ethnocultural empathy** (Wang et al., 2003)
 - ▶ Ability to put ourselves in the shoes of racially or ethnically different persons



Components of Ethnocultural Empathy

(Wang et al., 2003)

▶ Ethnocultural emotions & expressions

- ▶ Affective responses to the emotions and/or experiences of racially/ethnically different people.
- ▶ Communicating concern in light of prejudicial attitudes, beliefs, behaviors

▶ Acceptance of cultural differences

- ▶ Understanding, valuing and accepting the cultural customs and traditions of racially and ethnically different persons.



Role of EE in quality of mentoring relationship (Sanchez, DuBois et al., 2010)

- ▶ The more accepting mentor is of cultural differences in the beginning of the program...
- ▶ the more Mentor perceives her protégé to seek academic support from her at 12 mths.



Role of EE in quality of mentoring relationship

- ▶ Mentor reports of empathic feelings and expressions at the beginning of program are related to the following **youth** reports...
 - ▶ Less dissatisfaction in relationship at 3 & 12 mths
 - ▶ Less trust is broken in relationship at 3 & 12 mths
 - ▶ Less growth-focused relationship at 3 mths
 - ▶ Feeling happier in relationship at 12 mths



Other ways that cultural competence plays a role in mentoring

- ▶ **Some mentors are unable to bridge cultural differences which led to relationships failing (Spencer, 2007)**
 - ▶ Mentors' inability to effectively deal with cultural differences.
 - ▶ Some mentors were unaware of cultural misunderstandings that took place between them and their mentees.
- ▶ **Mentors' efforts in getting to know youth's cultures may increase relationship quality (Lederer et al., 2009).**
 - ▶ Getting to know mentees and their families.
 - ▶ Sensitivity and respectful of cultural differences.
 - ▶ Deliberately sharing their cultural differences and experiences.



How to Enhance the Cultural Competence of Mentoring Programs



▶ **POWER Acronym:**

- ▶ P = Pride
- ▶ O = Opportunity
- ▶ W = Women-in-the-Making
- ▶ E = Energy & Effort
- ▶ R = Relationships

▶ **Program Target Areas:**

- ▶ Health promotion (e.g., exercise, nutrition)
 - ▶ Risk behavior prevention (e.g., substance use, violence)
 - ▶ Education (academic success, career exploration)
 - ▶ Positive youth development (e.g., social relationships, goal-setting, problem-solving, coping skills, cultural identity)
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Sample Steps in GirlPOWER! Program (DuBois et al., 2008)

- ▶ Reviewed research literature on important issues to African American and Latina adolescent girls.
- ▶ Interviewed various stakeholders (e.g., parents, youth, mentors, staff) about program development.
- ▶ Included an advisory board of youth, parents and staff.



Framework for enhancing the cultural responsiveness of programs (Resnicow et al., 2000)

▶ Surface Structure

- ▶ Matching program materials and messages to the target population's characteristics
- ▶ Determining channels and settings that are most appropriate for delivery of messages/programs.

▶ Deep Structure

- ▶ Adaptations that incorporate the cultural, psychological, social, environmental and historical factors that influence the behaviors of a target group.



Examples of surface structure adaptations in GirlPOWER!

- ▶ Included characters/pictures of women and girls from similar backgrounds.
- ▶ Staff came from similar racial/ethnic backgrounds.
- ▶ Diverse mentor pool.
- ▶ Delivering workshops in community space convenient to youth.



Program Components

- ▶ **POWERSessions**
 - ▶ 12 Monthly, 3-hour Group Sessions with 10-15 Mentor-Youth Pairs
- ▶ **POWERBuilders**
 - ▶ Between-session activities for Matches to do on their own
 - ▶ Thematically linked to topics of POWERSessions
- ▶ **Goal-Setting**
- ▶ **Parental Involvement**
 - ▶ Orientation and attendance at mid-program check-in & graduation sessions
 - ▶ Personalized notes sent home to parents after each session
- ▶ **Relationship Support**
 - ▶ Training for Mentors and Youth
 - ▶ Supervision through monthly check-ins with mentor and youth/parent
 - ▶ Training & supervision are keyed to program goals/activities and are designed to supplement training/supervision provided as part of the standard BBBS program
- ▶ **Program Monitoring & Evaluation**
- ▶ **Group Reunions at 6 month intervals following end of formal program**



Example of Deep Structure Adaptation in GirlPOWER! (DuBois et al., 2008)

- ▶ *Celebrating our Sameness and our Differences: Cultural Diversity* (GirlPOWER!; DuBois et al., in press)

- ▶ **Workshop Goals:**
 - ▶ To help girls develop a positive ethnic & racial identity.
 - ▶ To help mentors and girls share their cultural backgrounds with each other.
 - ▶ To help girls learn strategies for coping with prejudice and discrimination.



POWERSession Overview

- ▶ Mystery Activity (“ice breaker” keyed to topic of session)
- ▶ Welcome & MatchBuilders (role play/discussion of issues/challenges that can arise in mentoring relationships)
- ▶ Introduction to Topic (e.g., what is culture?)
- ▶ Community Guest (presentation on session topic with emphasis on interactive learning/exploration)
- ▶ Lunch/Snack Break



POWERSession Overview Cont'd

- ▶ Review of POWERBuilders (i.e., between-session Match activities)
- ▶ POWERPlay (group experiential activity/project keyed to topic of session)
- ▶ Wrap-Up & Evaluation



POWERBuilders - Suggested activities for mentor & youth to do after Culture Workshop

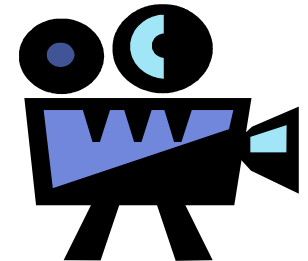
▶ She is POWERful!

- ▶ Identifying positive female role model in youth's culture



▶ My Culture in the Movies!

- ▶ Exploring prejudice and discrimination and identifying healthy ways to cope with this.



POWERBuilders cont'd

- ▶ **My Culture is All Around Me!**
 - ▶ Mentor and youth attend a cultural event relevant to mentee's culture or a restaurant that serves food of mentee's culture.

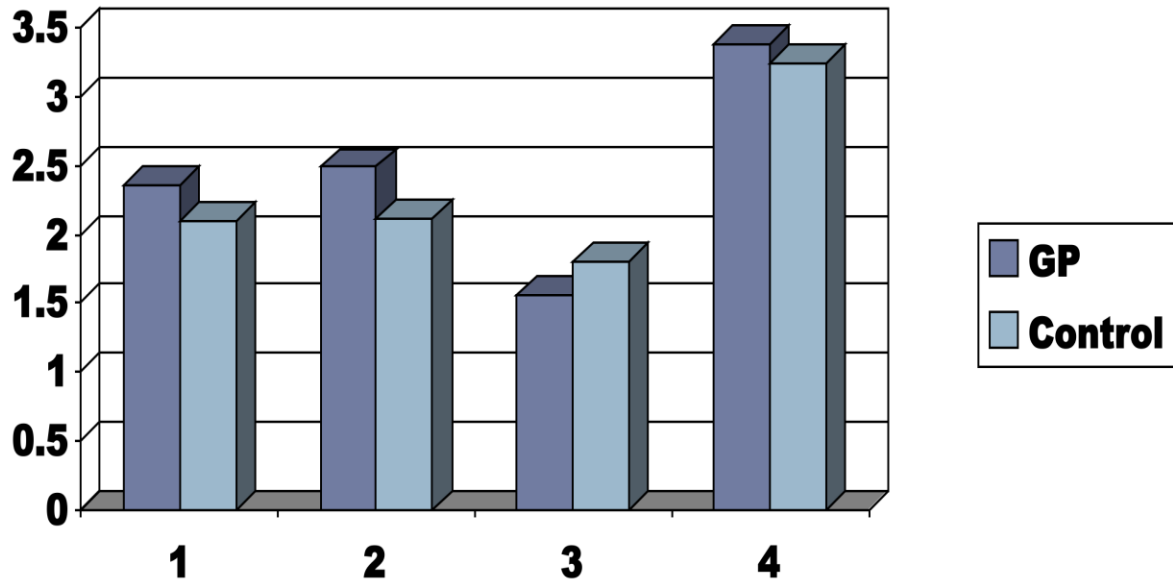
- ▶ **Me and My Culture:An Unbeatable Combination!**
 - ▶ Mentor and youth read a book together that is about the mentee's culture and/or that includes characters who are of the same culture as the mentee.

- ▶ **Know Your Roots!**
 - ▶ Big and Little create family trees to better understand their roots/cultures.



Differences between GP & non-GP Group in cultural processes

- 1=Cultural Sens. – 3 mths
- 2=Cultural Sens. – 12 mths
- 3=Cultural Mistrust – 12 mths
- 4= Ethnic Identity – 12 mths



Other ways to make programs
culturally responsive

Suggestions

- ▶ Conduct a needs assessment of target population (Liang & West, 2007)
- ▶ Include parents and family in the mentoring relationship (Farruggia et al., 2010; Sawrikar et al., 2008) for groups in which family is highly valued.
- ▶ Enhance cultural competence (ongoing) of mentors and staff.
- ▶ Adapt mentoring model to fit with youth's culture and community



Suggestions

- ▶ Consider arranging for consultants (e.g., tribal elders) or advisory board members to provide feedback on program development and implementation.
- ▶ Assess mentors cultural competence from mentor's and/or youth's perspective to target training efforts, matching, and supervision of mentors.

