

Superstars Wanted!

Choosing the right mentors for your mentoring program



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youthmentoring.org.au

Overview

- Characteristics of successful mentors
- Effective mentor practices
- The risks of 'dud' mentors
- Developing clear selection criteria for mentors

Screening Mentors

For suitability

- Not all people make good role models
- Not all people have the personality to be a good mentor
- The Mr. and Mrs. Fix It's of the world don't always make good mentors

Screening Mentors

For child protection

- Mentoring is an attractive role for a perpetrator
- It allows them to develop a close bond with the child, their families and the program creating the perfect environment in which to offend.

Describe the young people you are working with?

What are the types of characteristics the mentors must poses to work with these young people?

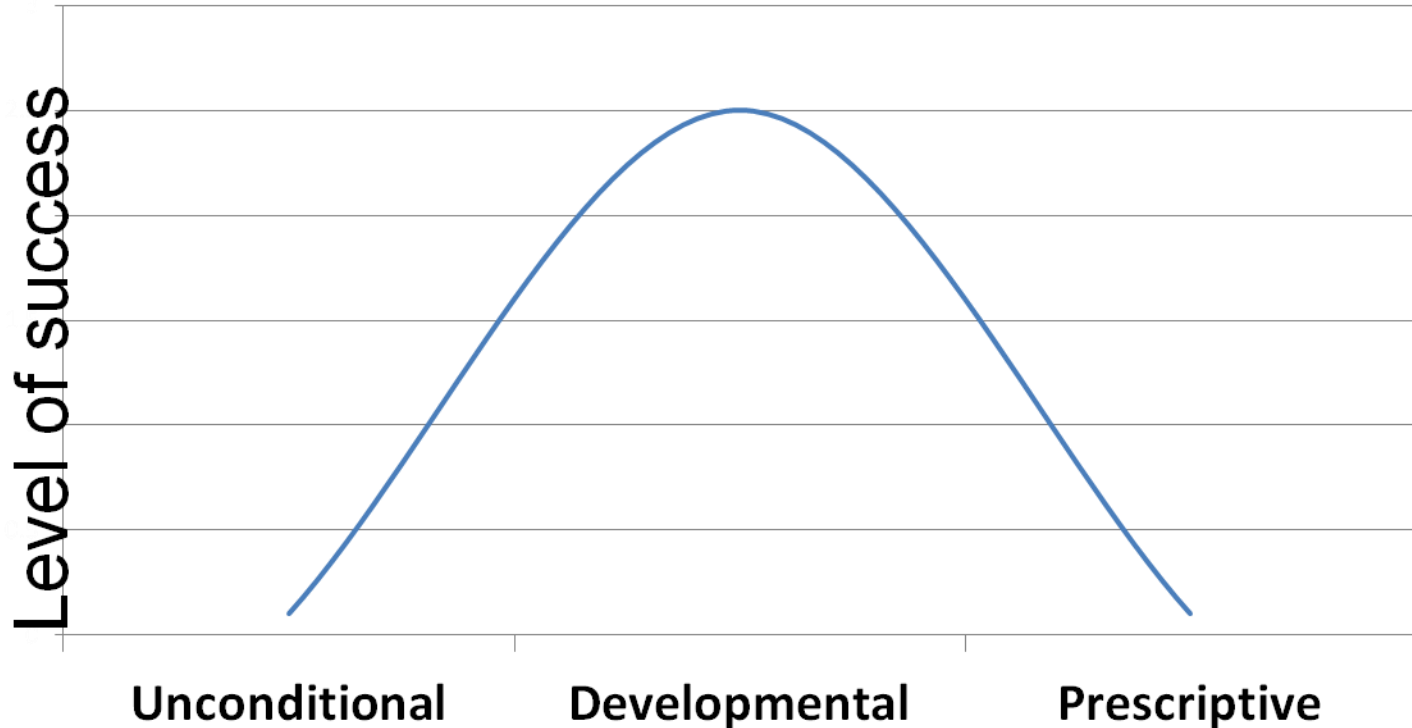
Characteristics of Successful Mentors

- Caring
- Good listener
- Stable
- Can provide leadership
- Reliable (e.g. shows up on time)
- Committed
- Non-judgmental
- Discreet (will keep information confidential)
- Patient
- Likes children
- Has a good sense of humor
- Tolerant
- Outstanding employment record
- Does not attempt to replace a parent or guardian

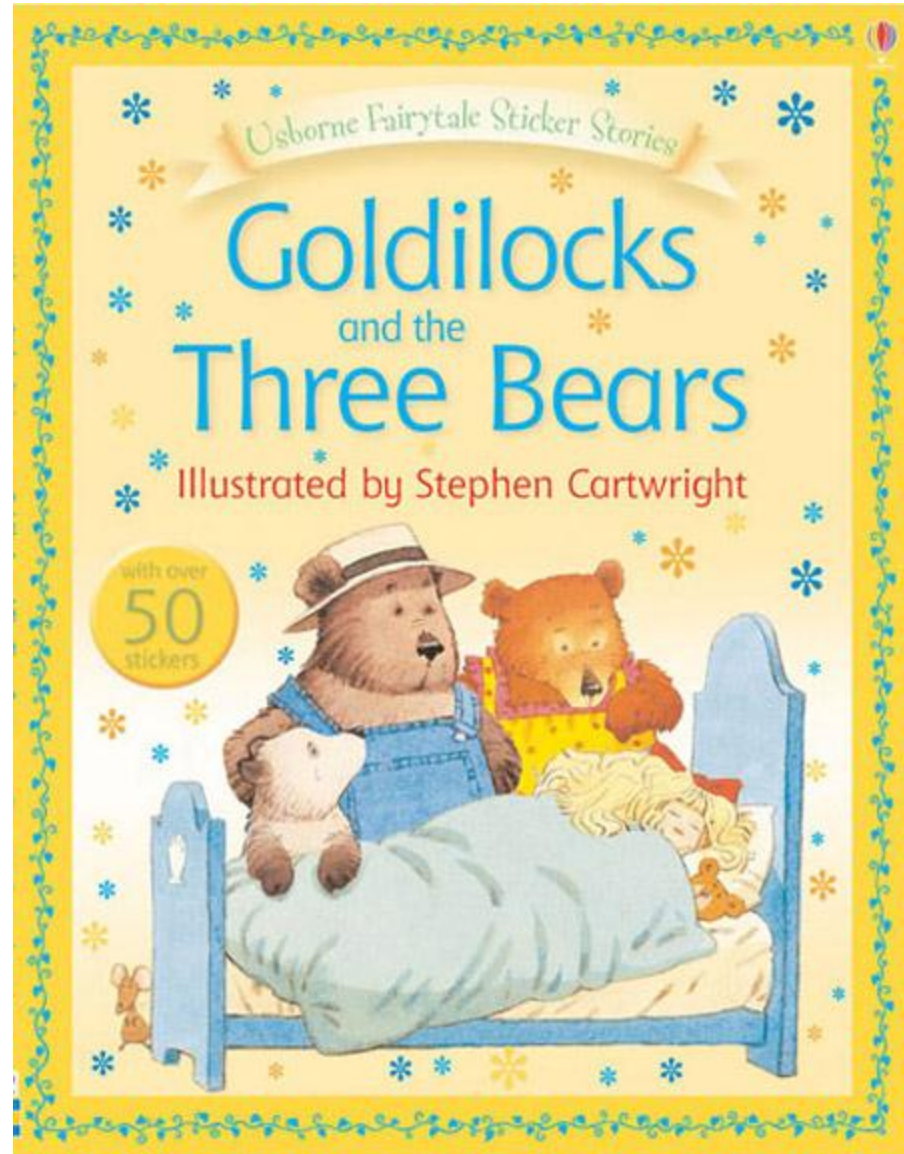
(Source: DR Susan G. Weinberger, President, Mentor Consulting Group Inc. cited in 'How to build to a successful mentoring program using the effective elements', MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership.)

Effectiveness of the Mentor

Mentors' Approach to the Relationship



The Goldilocks Effect



Effectiveness of the Mentor

When choosing a mentor, programs should look for volunteers that have:

- Prior experience in helping roles
- Understand the socioeconomic and cultural influences in the youth's life
- A sense of efficacy for being able to mentor young people
- Ability to model relevant behaviours
- Refrain from unhealthy behaviours.

(Grossman & Bulle 2006, tested by Rhodes and Schwartz 2010)

Mentor attitudes and youth outcomes

Disconnected

More emotionally engaged than disconnected mentees with negative mentors

Connected

Worse off than the control group

Screening Tools

- Written application
- Reference check: personal and professional (not relatives)
- Criminal history check
- Driving record review
- In-person interview
- Home assessment
- Psychometric testing
- Interview of significant others residing in home
- Check of prior volunteer experience
- Documented mentor–mentee matching criteria
- Mentor training

Positive Mentoring relationships will do amazing things!

But poor mentoring relationships will do more harm than good.

Thank you!

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