A Guide to Effective Practice for Mentoring Young People

Department for
Victorian Communities

A Victorian
Government
initiative

Victoria
The Place To Be
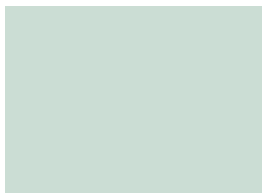
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A Message from the Minister

Leading the Way: The Victorian Government's Strategic Framework on Mentoring Young People 2005-2008 was released in 2005. Led by the Department for Victorian Communities through the Office for Youth, all Victorian Government departments now share a strategic approach to mentoring that will support the delivery of high-quality, cost effective programs that meet safety and community standards.

Existing research and experience provides convincing evidence that good quality mentoring really works, with young people benefiting through higher school retention rates, better relationships with peers and family, higher levels of participation in community activities and lower levels of drug and alcohol use. Volunteers and the wider community also contribute to and benefit from mentoring.

The most effective mentoring programs involve strong partnerships with communities, youth agencies, businesses and philanthropic organisations.

As part of the Victorian Government's commitment under *A Fairer Victoria*, the strategic framework guiding a whole of government approach to addressing disadvantage in our community, this Guide has been produced as a practical resource to support those involved in mentoring programs for young people.

The contents of the Guide have been developed through drawing on evidence of effective mentoring practice in Victoria, Australia and overseas. In addition, the development of this Guide has occurred with the significant input of mentoring practitioners around Victoria who have participated in workshops, freely given up their time to participate in interviews and generously provided their knowledge, experience and resources.

The Guide is aimed particularly at community organisations establishing, running, or wishing to improve the effectiveness of their mentoring programs. The adoption and reinforcement of mentoring good practice principles and program components including the sharing of knowledge and building the evidence base are critical steps to building the capacity of the sector.

I encourage all those involved in mentoring programs across Victoria to use the Guide to build on and improve their practices of mentoring of young people.

Jacinta Allan, MP
Minister for Employment and Youth Affairs

Part One
Overview

Part One of this Guide provides an overview of mentoring and the context in which programs are supported in Victoria.

Mentoring in Victoria

In 2005 the Victorian Government released *A Fairer Victoria* a framework for addressing disadvantage. This framework sets out the actions the Government is taking to improve access to vital services, reduce barriers to opportunity, strengthen assistance for disadvantaged groups and places, and ensure that people get the help they need at critical times in their lives. A key strategy of the framework is Getting Young People Back on Track, which provides significant support for turning around the lives of young people at risk, including new mentoring programs.

To deliver this strategy the Government has developed *Leading the Way: The Victorian Government's Strategic Framework on Mentoring Young People 2005-2008.* Victoria is the first Australian state to adopt a strategic, coordinated framework for mentoring young people. This framework sets out to support the delivery of mentoring programs for young people which are guided by contemporary evidence and quality practice and can achieve positive outcomes for young people.

The Government also recognises it is critical to ensure activities involving community participation are safe, meet community standards and are delivered where they are most needed.

The Office for Youth, Department for Victorian Communities is leading the implementation of the Mentoring and Capacity Building Initiative (MCBI) to put in place the agreed goals of the framework for mentoring in Victoria over the next two years. One of the priority actions is to produce a Guide to Good Practice Mentoring as a practical resource and shared knowledge base to improve the quality of Victoria's mentoring programs. Most importantly those involved in mentoring told us they wanted to have information shared about what practitioners and research tell us about the effective features of mentoring programs for young people.

The MCBI involves working with partners across government and the community to achieve:

- a whole-of-government and community approach to stimulating higher levels of access to quality mentoring programs and supporting volunteering in mentoring roles;

- a means to support existing and potential providers of mentoring programs to achieve high quality assurance and continuous improvement in the delivery of mentoring programs; and

- a means to assist business, community and philanthropic organisations to feel greater confidence when supporting mentoring by ensuring programs meet important community standards.

Across Victoria there is an extensive and expanding range of mentoring activities for supporting programs for young people aged 12-25 and providing positive outcomes for a diverse range of young people. Engaging young people in mentoring has positive benefits for both young people and volunteers.

The wide range of programs that exist throughout Victoria reflects the diversity of the different groups of young people and communities who participate in and benefit from formal mentoring. The following illustrates the types of mentoring programs currently operating throughout the state.

Program Focus	Target Group
Cultural and Linguistic Diversity	• Culturally and linguistically diverse youth including newly arrived young people. • Young refugees.
Juvenile Justice	• Young people in juvenile justice custodial centres, on remand or serving a Youth Attendance order. • 16 – 18 year olds preparing to leave state care including young pregnant women, young parents and homeless young people.
Child Protection	• Children under notification of child protection authorities. • Young people aged 12 – 17 years, at risk of education breakdown, of becoming, or already, a client of Child Protection. • Young people leaving or who have recently left the care of the state.
Mental Health	• Young people with mental health issues. • Children of parents with mental health issues.
High Risk	• Young people aged 11 – 20 years living within rural and metropolitan communities facing disadvantage and social exclusion. • Young people at risk of peer pressure to misuse drugs or other harmful substances. • Boys not living with their fathers. • Young people experiencing factors in their lives (including mental illness, chronic physical illness) which are making it difficult for them to reach their full potential.
Young Women	• High-risk young women aged 14 – 17 years who have been involved in the juvenile justice system. • Young pregnant women and young mothers.
Disability	• Tertiary students with a disability who are in, or nearing, final year of study.
Indigenous	• Koori students in years seven to nine. • Young people in Koori communities.
School-based	• Students in both primary and secondary school requiring academic and/or social development assistance. • Young people making the transition from school to education, training and employment.
Vocational development	• Young people looking for an apprenticeship-type relationship with a professional. • Young people seeking leadership or entrepreneurial skills.

Further information on the State Government's support for mentoring in Victoria is available on the Office for Youth website at www.youth.vic.gov.au

Why this Guide?

This Guide has been developed as part of the Mentoring and Capacity Building Initiative and aims to support mentoring programs through providing general advice on good practice mentoring as well as some practical checklists for applying those principles. The Guide will be useful to a wide range of mentoring programs. For mentoring programs which focus on Indigenous young people, young people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, young people with disabilities, or same sex attracted young people it is highly recommended that, in addition to using this Guide, readers consult expert agencies in these fields for specific content and process for inclusion in program design and delivery. Some key issues for consideration when working with these groups of young people is included in the section on Recognising the Diversity of Young People and Communities. The Guide is not intended to focus on business or employee development mentoring or mentoring that occurs naturally in communities.

The Office for Youth, and a whole-of-government reference group initiated the development of this Guide in 2006 in response to the expressed interests of those involved in existing programs as well as those thinking about how to develop effective practices and programs. The group provided ideas, feedback and guidance throughout the process of consultation and preparation of the Guide. A list of members is at Appendix 1.

This Guide has been developed with the input and views of a diverse range of Victorian mentoring practitioners who attended focus groups, agreed to participate in one-one-one interviews and willingly shared their wisdom and experience with the authors and each other. A list of focus group participants and contributors of ideas is provided at Appendix 2.

This Guide is presented in four parts. The first part provides an overview of mentoring in Victoria and an introduction to the Guide. Part Two presents information on the meaning, principles and keys to effective mentoring, together with advice on how to develop and run a mentoring program. In addition, this part includes some advice on how to engage and achieve the meaningful participation of young people when working with diverse groups, communities, and programs. Part Three provides a series of practical checklists to assist you in establishing and documenting your mentoring program. The fourth part provides some useful additional resources for you to access as needed.

Part Two
Effective Practice

This part of the Guide is aimed at providing an overview of the evidence that exists around effective practice in mentoring programs for young people. Effective programs demonstrate a number of characteristics, the presence of which enhance the chances of successful outcomes.

What is Mentoring?

Leading the Way: The Victorian Government's Strategic Framework on Mentoring Young People 2005-2008 defines mentoring as "the formation of a helping relationship between a younger person and an unrelated, relatively older, more experienced person who can increase the capacity of the young person to connect with positive social and economic networks to improve their life chances"[4].

Mentoring may occur either as **natural mentoring**, when a sustained relationship develops naturally between a coach, teacher, neighbour, or other adult and a young person, or as **planned mentoring**, when a relationship is purposefully created to help a young person who may otherwise not have the access he or she needs to the wisdom and support of a caring adult. Planned or formal mentoring can take several forms including:

* traditional mentoring (one adult to one young person)
* group mentoring (one adult working with a small number of young people)
* team mentoring (several adults working with small groups of young people)
* peer mentoring (caring youth mentoring other youth)
* e-mentoring (mentoring via email and the internet)

Mentoring can take place in a wide range of settings such as a school, faith based organisation, community setting, workplace, juvenile corrections setting or in the virtual community.

Mentoring is not the same as coaching although sometimes coaching programs are labeled as "mentoring" and sometimes a mentoring relationship can include aspects of coaching. The key differences relate to the focus and objectives of mentoring as opposed to coaching. Coaching has a clear set of objectives and goals which once achieved brings about a "natural ending" to the relationship/agreement between the coach and the person being coached. Mentoring is much broader and is related to the whole person and their life, with goals and objectives evolving over time. First Train claims the major differences between mentoring and coaching relate to focus, role, relationship, source of influence, personal returns and the arena in which mentoring takes place.[5]

Mentoring is used to describe various programs and relationships, whether formal or informal, which aim to build the skills or well-being of a young person through the input and/or assistance of another person who has more skills, experience and knowledge.

Carruthers (1993) gives a detailed account of the origin of the term 'mentor'. Mentor, in Greek mythology, was the faithful companion of Odysseus, King of Ithaca. When Odysseus set off for the Trojan wars, Mentor was put in charge of the household with particular responsibility for ensuring that the king's son, Telemachus, was raised to be a fit person to succeed his father. Therefore Mentor had to be parent figure, teacher, role model, approachable counsellor, trusted adviser, challenger, and encourager.[1]

More recent views on mentoring have a lot in common with historical perspectives. For example, Rhodes describes mentoring as "a relationship between an older, more experienced adult and an unrelated, younger protégé - a relationship in which the adult provides ongoing guidance, instruction, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the protégé". (Rhodes, 2002[2]). Similarly, MacCallum and Beltman purport that mentoring involves an older, more experienced person guiding and helping a younger person in his or her development. The crucial component of mentoring is the trusting relationship that develops between the mentor and the mentee. (MacCallum and Beltman, 1999[3])

1 Carruthers, J. (1993). The principles and practice of mentoring. In B. J. Caldwell & E. M. A. Carter (Eds.), *The return of the mentor: Strategies for workplace learning*. London: The Falmer Press.

2 Rhodes J E. (2004) Stand by Me – the risks and rewards of mentoring today's youth; Harvard University Press

3 MacCallum J, and Beltman S (1999), International Year of Older Persons, Mentoring Research Project, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. Canberra

4 Victorian State Government (2005); Leading the Way: The Victorian Government's Strategic Framework on Mentoring Young People 2005-2008

5 First Train, www.corporatetraining.ie

	Mentor	Coach
Focus	**Individual** The focus is on the person and support for individual growth.	**Performance** Goal-focused and performance oriented.
Role	**Facilitator with no agenda** Mentors are facilitators and teachers allowing the mentee to discover their own direction.	**Specific agenda** A coach's role is to change skills and behaviours in a guided fashion – there are specific goals and objectives to be achieved.
Relationship	**Self-selecting** The mentee participates voluntarily and has an active role in initiating and maintaining the relationship.	**Comes with the job** In many cases the coach is assigned.
Source of influence	**Perceived value** A mentor's influence is proportionate to the perceived value they can bring to the relationship. It is a power-free relationship based on mutual respect and value for both mentor and mentee.	**Position** A coach has influence because of their position or title.
Personal returns	**Affirmation / learning** The mentoring relationship is reciprocal. There is a learning process for both the mentor and mentee. The relationship is a vehicle to affirm the value of and satisfaction from fulfilling a role as helper and developer of others. Mentees can develop new skills and learn to build trusting relationships.	**Teamwork / performance** The return comes in the form of the achievement of specific goals or performance improvement.
Arena	**Life** Mentors are sought for broad life issues. The mentee is proactive in seeking out mentors and keeping the relationship productive.	**Task related** Coaching even in the sporting arena is task related-improvement of knowledge, skills or abilities to better perform a given task.

Similarly, mentoring is not role modeling. A mentor may be a role model, but a role model is not necessarily a mentor. A role model is a person who serves as a model in a particular behavioural or social role for another person to emulate. Role models can exist outside of a formal relationship. In fact, a person may be a role model to another, without even knowing the person who looks to them for examples of how to behave in a particular social or more formal context.

Who Benefits from Mentoring?

Young people

Many young people from all walks of life can potentially benefit from mentoring and mentoring programs can be designed to take into account the interests, needs and aspirations of various target groups.   Programs may be developed with a focus on the goals of young people who are:

- disengaged or at risk of disengaging from the education system
- seeking to make the transition from school to work or further education
- involved in or seeking to transition from the justice system
- socially isolated, for whatever reason
- young parents
- seeking to connect or reconnect with cultural identity
- wanting to further their sporting or athletic potential
- keen to increase their career options

Young people involved in mentoring are likely to experience:

- improvements in their relationships with family and peers
- an increase in their overall communication skills with others
- reduced feelings of isolation
- a reduction in risky behaviour
- enhanced social and emotional development
- increased options and opportunities for participation
- increased resilience

Mentors

Mentors as volunteers experience enormous feelings of satisfaction from 'making a difference' and opportunities to reflect on their own lives, goals, aspirations and ways of working with others. Many mentors value the opportunity to give back to the community, particularly when they have benefited from involvement in mentoring themselves.

Through their involvement in mentoring, mentors can also build new skills through training, meet new people and add variety to their work and life experiences.

Community

Mentoring is an effective form of volunteering and it impacts positively on the community through the influence of positive relationships and increased community connectedness. Mentoring can also contribute to community strengthening through building collaborative partnerships as well as community capacity and abilities. Engaging young people and building their confidence and abilities will also increase the possibilities that they will get more involved in their communities.[6]

6   Mentor/National Mentoring Partnership (2005), How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program using the Elements of Effective Practice, USA, www.mentoring.org/program_staff/research_corner/benefits_from_mentoring.php

marnie

case study 1*

The Benefits of Mentoring

Marnie is a young woman from Ballarat involved in Community Door – a mentoring program for young people run by Lead On.

Community Door aims to support young people aged 18 – 25 years to gain confidence and more meaningful representation in local community, business boards and committees. Young participants are matched to an adult mentor who is an active member of a corporate or community organisation board such as Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENS), community planning boards and health and welfare agency boards. Both mentor and mentee are provided with support and training to make the experience a valuable opportunity for all.

Having moved to Ballarat from a small rural community, Marnie felt the need to expand her networks and feel at home in her new environment. She also wanted to feel she was really contributing to her new community. She was matched by the project coordinator to a mentor and to Women's Health Grampians which offers services across the region including Marnie's home town and Ballarat.

The health group was enriched by gaining the perspective of a young woman from their catchment area and Marnie gained real confidence and new friendships as well as social and career networks and important support to help her feel at home in her community. Marnie's story is a good example of the mutual benefit that can be achieved by both the community and the young person from mentoring.

Dawn Veale

Lead On Ballarat

Mentoring Good Practice Principles

There is a wealth of information available on mentoring in Australia and overseas. At the end of this Guide you will find a list of references and resources that can be drawn upon in the establishment, building and improvement of your mentoring program.   Current thinking and practice indicates that mentoring good practice principles should include at a minimum:

1. The needs, interests and empowerment of young people being at the centre of thinking in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the program

2. The input of key stakeholders, especially young people, in the design of the program

3. Establishing, developing and nurturing a relationship between the mentor and mentee where the mentor is an equal rather than a teacher

4. Approaches which are holistic in nature, recognising that there are many layers, relationships and influences in a young person's life, mentoring being just one

5. Sound program design based on evidence of what works and supported by appropriate policies and procedures

6. Cultural, ability and gender appropriate content and processes

7. Effective collaboration and partnering with other agencies

8. Adequate funds to run the program over an appropriate length of time

9. Well defined, effective structures of management and governance

10. Monitoring, evaluation and review integrated throughout the program

These principles are further highlighted in the table 'Keys to Effective Mentoring' on page 15.

Sharnee

case study 2

A young person's experience of mentoring

My name is **Sharnee***. I am 20 years of age. Over the past six years I have been involved in a number of youth services and mentoring programs. I am currently a leader on a youth leadership program with young people – using all I have learnt to help them achieve their goals and become young leaders.*

So what have I learned? That a good mentor is supportive of, and cares about, the young person, contacting the young person to see if they need any help with things.

When I went for two weeks' work experience, Glenda, my mentor, helped me out by taking me shopping for clothes to wear to work. She called me the night before I started to make sure everything was OK, offering to pick me up from the station in the morning and take me into the office.

When I summarise how mentors have helped me I can see that it has been about providing me with support and encouragement to open my eyes and see the opportunities available. It's about self-esteem. I have been encouraged to:

* *improve my self confidence by supporting me to begin public speaking*

* *join committees such as the Urban Quest talent competition*

* *have a go at difficult things such as training to be a Leader on the Young Leaders program*

My advice to mentors: Keep communication clear. Follow up with the young person. Say you will do something? Then do it! Listen. Try to understand what we are saying or asking of you. Don't put your spin on what you think we want. Let us work out our goals and follow our passion.

Thanks to mentoring, I have a range of people I can contact for advice and support on a range of issues. I have experienced different role models, ways of living and opportunities that are open to me and seen how I can get there. I have been bushwalking, camping and climbing high ropes! I have done things I wouldn't have done without support and developed friendships with people that I never thought I would have.

Sharnee (Mentee)

Mission Australia, Melbourne

The Keys to Effective Mentoring

Much of the evidence from Australia and overseas indicates that certain characteristics/ components of mentoring programs, when present, increase the likelihood of mentoring being successful. These may be summarised in the table below.

Characteristic	Description	Impact	Examples of Evidence
Clear Vision, Purpose and Values	A statement about what the program is trying to achieve and its underlying philosophies	• Robust program framework as the basis for developing policies and procedures, promotional activities, evaluation etc	Mentoring Australia Benchmarks 2000[7]
Collaboration with relevant agencies/ community groups	Partnerships, agreements, memorandums of understanding and referral protocols with relevant agencies and groups which may have contact with the participants in the program	• Facilitates "holistic" approach to meeting the young person's needs • Assists in promoting and marketing program to potential sponsors/ funders and mentors. • Members of advisory groups/Boards of programs have mutual interest in program outcomes. • Enhances sustainability of program over time	National Mentoring Partnership[8]
Policies and Procedures	Well documented policies, procedures and protocols which guide program implementation and management	• Consistency and integrity of program application • Assists in "managing risk" in all aspects of the program	Mentoring Australia Benchmarks 2000[9]
Screening of Mentors	Procedures for advertising, interviewing, reference checks, police checks	• Mentors with appropriate characteristics, skills, experience • Safety of young people • Program reputation	BBBS[10] Sipe 1998[11] Grossman and Furano 1999[12] Roaf et al 1994[13]
Orientation and Training	Training of mentors and mentees includes program requirements and rules, presentations on the developmental stages of youth, communication and limit-setting skills, relationship building, ways to interact, cultural awareness, understanding of people with disabilities, risk management and protective behaviours	• Mentor volunteers are aware of the commitments of being a mentor, understand their role, and have realistic expectations • Mentees understand the role of the mentor and their own role in the relationship	Sipe 1998[14] BBBS 2004[15] Tierney and Branch 1992[16] Styles and Morrow 1992[17]

The Keys to Effective Mentoring

Characteristic	Description	Impact	Examples of Evidence
Matching Process	Matching procedures take into account the preferences of the young person, their family and the mentor, and use a professional case manager/coordinator to determine which mentor would work best with the young person	• Good matches which minimise the risk of early termination of relationships • Young person's goals more likely to be achieved • Mentor more likely to stay involved and gain more personally	Tierney et al 2000[18]
Ongoing Support and Supervision	Programs include professional staff providing ongoing and regular supervision and support to mentors and mentees before and after they are matched	• The likelihood of effective matches increased • Builds capacity of the mentor to get through the early stages of the match while the relationship is established • Follow-up areas of additional training or organisational support identified • Programs in which mentors are not contacted regularly by staff are most likely to fail • Poorly supervised matches are more likely to be disbanded because of loss of interest	Sipe 1996[19] Furano et al 1993[20] LoSciuto et al 1996[21] Mecartney et al 1994[22] Jekielek et al 2002[23]
Selection of Mentors	Mentor selection criteria should aim to identify mentors who: • have a sincere desire to be involved in the life of a young person • respect young people • actively listen, suspend judgement, ask thoughtful questions • empathise with the young person • see solutions and opportunities	• Young person is assisted to pursue their interests, achieve their goals and handle tough decisions • Young person is provided an opportunity to explore their own thoughts and find solutions	National Mentoring Partnership[24]

Characteristic	Description	Impact	Examples of Evidence
Length of Match	Length of match needs to be considered in light of program goals. Programs which have a focus on developing long term relationships between mentors and mentees need to be at least 12 months and preferably longer (some programs suggest up to three years).	• Mentoring relationships sustained over a significant period of time are more likely to produce beneficial outcomes and are likely to become progressively more effective with time. • Earlier than expected terminations dissolve the bond of trust between mentor and mentee and can have longer term negative effects. • Relationships that terminate within three months have been shown to have negative impacts on young people, particularly in terms of their self esteem and capacity to trust others.	Grossman and Rhodes 2002[25] Dubois and Neville 1997[26] Rhodes 2002[27] Grossman and Johnson 1998[28]
Managed Closure	A Closure Policy with procedures for exiting the program and assistance for mentees to define the next steps in achieving their goals	• Formal relationships are ended responsibly • Reward and recognition of relationship and celebration of achievements • Expectations for further contact are clear for both mentor and mentee • Mentee is supported to continue to pursue his/her own goals	Mentoring Australia Benchmarks 2000[29]
Evaluation Process	Clear framework, indicators, data collection and reporting established to evaluate effectiveness at an individual and program level	• Continuous improvement linked to the program's strategic plan • Evidence base for pursuit of further funding, community involvement and partnerships	Mentoring Australia Benchmarks 2000[30] McCallum and Beltman 1999[31]

Further information and suggested points for action are outlined in Part 4 of this Guide.
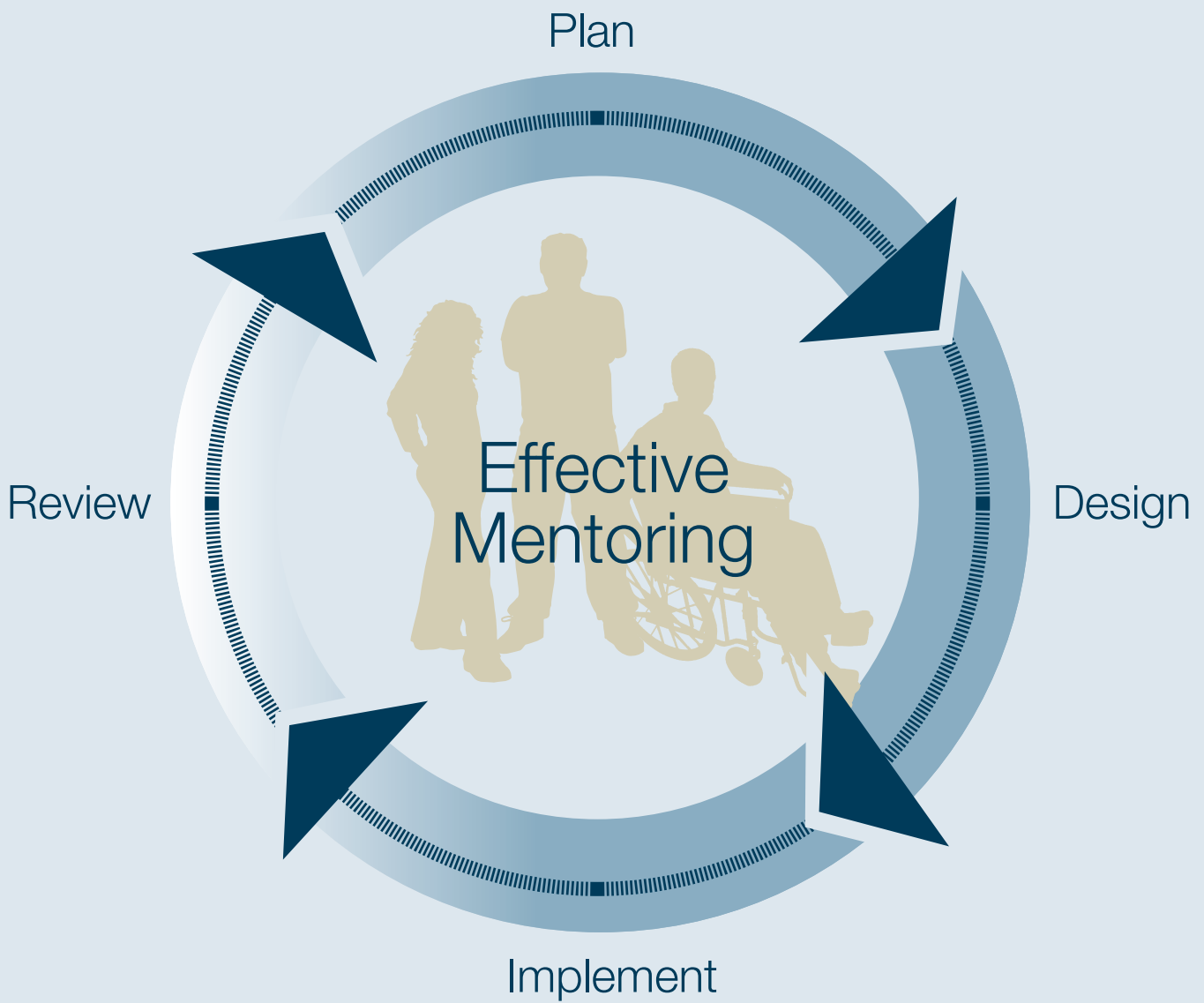
The Keys to Effective Mentoring

7   Mentoring Australia (2000) Mentoring: Benchmarks for effective and responsible mentoring programs

8   MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership (2005) How to Build A Successful Mentoring Program Using the Elements of Effective Practice, www.mentoring.org

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21 LoSciuto L, Rajala A K, Townsend T N, Taylor A S (1996) An outcome evaluation of Across Ages: an intergenerational mentoring approach to drug prevention. Journal of Adolescent Research 11: 116-129

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23 Jekielek S M, Moore K A, Hair E C, Scarupa H J (2002) Mentoring: A promising strategy for youth development. Child Trends Research Brief. www.childtrends.org

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25 Grossman J B, Rhodes J E (2002) The test of time: Predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships. American Journal of Community Psychology 30 (2): 119-219

26 DuBois D L, Neville H A (1997) Youth mentoring: Investigation of relationship characteristics and perceived benefits. Journal of Community Psychology 25: 227-234

27 Rhodes J (2004) Op Cit

28 Grossman J B, Johnson A (1998) Assessing the effectiveness of mentoring programs.
    In Grossman J B (ed) Contemporary issues in mentoring, Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, USA

29 Mentoring Australia Benchmarks (2000) Op Cit

30 Ibid

31 MacCallum J, and Beltman S (1999), Op Cit

Part Three

Running a Mentoring Program

This part provides a framework for running a mentoring program. It may be used as a basis for reviewing and improving existing programs as well as helping those wanting to establish new mentoring programs.

Plan

Design

Implement

Review

Effective Mentoring

The continuous cycle of effective mentoring

Developing and Running a Mentoring Program

Whether you are working in an existing program or about to establish a mentoring program it is useful to conceptualise the components of effective mentoring as falling into a continual cycle of planning, design, implementation/operations and review. The concept of continuous improvement is integral to the goal of effective practice.

The four steps in the cycle are outlined in the next section and it is suggested you work through each of these in sequence to develop or review your program. Each step includes essential questions to think about and respond to as a guide to practice. The steps and outcomes from each are:

STEP 1 Planning	STEP 2 Design	STEP 3 Implementation /Operations	STEP 4 Review
- demonstrated need for program - strategic plan/road map - evidence of viability/ sustainability	- governance model - program documentation - management systems	- recruitment of mentors and mentees - screening - training - matching - building relationships and networks - supporting and supervising participants - acknowledging contributions - managing closure of the relationships	- capture program data - examine impact - program, individual, community - identify program improvements

Planning

Step 1

Planning will assist you to assess whether your program is viable and sustainable as well as result in a strategic plan and road map to help guide you in the activities of designing and improving, operating and reviewing your program.

It is recommended that you do this as a group, making sure you have some key stakeholders, particularly young people present. The planning is as simple as working through five basic questions about your program: Why, Who, What, Where and How?

Once these issues are addressed, you will need to undertake a realistic assessment of whether the program is viable and sustainable.

Having gone through the planning process you should then ask whether you should proceed with setting up your program or, equally importantly, whether your existing program should continue.

Why is this program important?

- Why does this program need to exist?

- What is driving our desire to establish the program?

- Are there any other providers of this type of program in our community? If so, could they be our competitors or our collaborators?

- Are there alternative or complementary strategies which might address the needs of the young people we are trying to assist?

- What is our vision for young people in this community?

- What are the values/principles that will underpin and guide us in designing and running the program?

Who will be involved?

- Who is the target population of young people – age, gender, circumstances, needs, risk levels, location?

- What are likely to be issues and goals for young people in this target group?

- What are the best ways to encourage young people to get involved in the program, particularly those that may not have experienced mentoring before and are unsure about what mentoring can offer them?

- What do potential mentees want from this program?

- Would it be of value to them?

- What are we looking for in mentors?

- Where are the potential sources of mentors?

- What do the mentors want from the program? What would they value from involvement in our mentoring program?

- Would it be of value to them?

- Which agencies/organisations in our community would add value to our program? – e.g. business/government for funding, sponsorship, source of mentors; organisations for referral and support to the young people involved; organisations for collaboration on issues such as program development, activities, evaluation; organisations with expertise in working with our target group e.g. race, cultural, language, gender, same sex, disability.

What are we trying to achieve?

- What will the focus of mentoring be – skills and education, employment, personal development, resilience, reduction in risky behaviour?

- What outcomes are we hoping for?

- If the program was successful, what would that mean for the young people, the mentors and the community?

Where should the program be delivered?

- What is the most appropriate type of mentoring for us to achieve the goals – one on one, group, team, peer, e-mentoring?

- Where will the mentoring take place – on-site (e.g. school, church), in the community, on-line, community based facilities?

- Where should we locate our program?

How do we make this happen?

- What is the best structure for our program – within an existing organisation or as a stand alone entity? What are the legal implications of structural options?

- What involvement do we want from other organisations – funding, mentors, agreements, participation in our Advisory Group, Steering Committee or Board?

- How do we market and promote the program to young people, potential mentors, funding bodies and the community in general?

- What program staff do we need and what are the skills, experience, knowledge we need?

- What training and induction is required?

- What infrastructure is needed?

- What policies and procedures are needed?

- How big is the budget?

- What are the potential sources of funding we can tap into?

Is the program viable/sustainable?

- Is there a demonstrated need for the program?

- Does the program have the appropriate support from young people, potential volunteer mentors, and other relevant agencies and organisations in our community?

- Do we/can we access adequate levels of funding?

- What is our unique capability in contrast to other programs?

If you are unable to answer any of these questions, or if the answer is "No", then it is suggested you stop and rethink your program before proceeding any further.

Program Design

Step 2

In designing your program you will need to consider a range of governance, management and operational issues.

Governance

An appropriate governance structure is needed to ensure the program is guided, resourced, managed and accountable to all of its stakeholders.

Structure

If the program is to be established as a new stand-alone organisation you will need to ensure you have an appropriate legal structure, with a Board of Directors. Legal advice should be sort to ensure you have the structure which meets your needs bearing in mind that many funding bodies require organisations to be incorporated entities with limited liability.

If your mentoring program is part of an existing organisation it is recommended that a Reference/Advisory Group be established to guide and monitor the program.

Whether you are looking to set up a Board of Directors or a Reference/Advisory Group, recruitment of members should be targeted to ensure you have a good balance of representatives of stakeholders, including young people, as well as specialist skills/ expertise such as mentoring, financial management, marketing and promotion.

Terms of Reference or Constitution

The Reference/Advisory Group or Board will need specific terms of reference or a constitution/model rules so that the roles and responsibilities of members as well as the boundaries between their accountabilities and the accountabilities of the Program Coordinator are clear. Depending on the program structure the governing/advisory body will be responsible for:

- strategic planning
- financial management
- selection and performance management of the Program Coordinator
- fund raising
- risk management
- compliance
- marketing and promotion
- program monitoring and review

Membership

If you are running a stand alone program with a Board of Directors you may also want to consider terms of membership and office bearer positions. If you are setting up or reviewing your Reference Group/Advisory Committee you should make sure it has appropriate representation and skills and preferably be drawn from relevant organisations and members, including young people from the community in which the program is located.

This group needs to be large enough to get the work done and take account of important stakeholders, but not so large that communication becomes a constraint.

Management

The Reference/Advisory Group or Board needs to decide on how often it will meet, where it will meet, for how long, and its meeting management processes. The Department of Consumer Affairs is a useful source of information to assist with this process.

Gunditjmara Mentoring Project

case study 3

Developing a Partnership Model for Mentoring

The establishment of Gunditjmara Mentoring Project in the Barwon Southwest region has been a valuable and humbling learning experience for our organisation. The processes that led to the commencement of the project have provided lessons and a few guiding principles which may be useful for other agencies planning mentoring programs for Indigenous young people.

It is important to acknowledge that agencies don't necessarily have all the skills and experience to do it alone. And so the program should be built on a partnership of Indigenous and non-Indigenous agencies working together, using their individual strengths for development and delivery. Another principle is that the partnership should be headed up by the Indigenous organisation as lead agency. This will go some way towards ensuring there is ownership of the project by the Indigenous community and will give them greater confidence that the program will be developed and implemented to meet their specific needs, rather than seeing them as an addition to mainstream services.

For our project, three agencies came together through a process managed by the DVC local team:

- *Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative is the primary service provider to Indigenous people in the Warrnambool area and has experience in managing the delivery of services to the Koori population of the region;*

- *The Barwon Association of Youth Support and Accommodation (BAYSA) has vast experience in delivering a number of quality mentoring programs for at risk young people in the region; and*

- *Brophy Family and Youth Services (Brophy) works with young people at risk across Southwest Victoria.*

Together, the three organisations began considering the value and feasibility of developing a mentoring program for disengaged Indigenous young people in Warrnambool and began discussion around what that project might look like.

There was willingness among the agencies in the partnership to compromise and discuss options. An early challenge was developing a common understanding of the meaning and role of mentoring from Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives. Indigenous communities have been providing cultural mentoring to their young for thousands of years so for them, mentoring has been in the context of passing on traditions through kith and kin. Non-Indigenous mentoring, however, has its roots in a very different context, being generally based on the development of supportive bonds outside familial relationships. Here mentoring involves 'other' community members passing on their wisdom and knowledge to young people, some of whom have serious social or other concerns.

These different backgrounds to practice were overcome when all agreed to move away from highlighting the differences in approaches to create one of mutual inclusion. We began to consider whether the two roles for mentoring could in fact sit side by side to provide stronger benefits to Indigenous young people.

From this agreement, the project model emerged: Gunditjmara would build the cultural mentoring aspect within its community and Brophy would assist with connecting the young people to the 'other' networks involving education, training, and career pathways. BAYSA, with their extensive experience in implementing mentoring programs for young people, would provide ongoing supervision and technical support in rolling out the project.

The next step was to research if other organisations had travelled a similar path. There was one program in Alice Springs called 'Deadly Mob' which had produced a hybrid version of what we were seeking to achieve. Armed with these learnings, the partnership developed the initial model.

Having developed a common understanding of the model in principle was one thing but to come up with the 'language' for it to satisfy funding requirements was another. One of the strengths offered by the non-Indigenous organisations was that this language was very familiar to them and part of their day-to-day operations. Together with BAYSA, Brophy penciled out the model. This took some time to develop as each objective, strategy and measure needed to be reality tested with the experiences and insights of Gunditjmara to ascertain what would have the best chance of working within an Indigenous organisation and community.

We have successfully launched the program, jointly selected staff who will be employed by each of the organisations, and it's now time to reality test the model with the young people who will now take a primary role in developing the model further.

Francis Broekman

Brophy Youth and Family Services, Warrnambool

Program Documentation

Operational policies and procedures are essential and critical to support effective practice and need to be developed to guide the operations and review of the program. Further information on these is in Part 4 for your reference. These should include at a minimum:

- A statement of the program's vision, purpose and values

- A description of the target group and any specific needs

- The goals of the program

- The governance arrangements

- Program/organisational structure and roles and responsibilities of key positions and volunteers

- Orientation and mentor training manuals documenting content; selection, payment and evaluation of trainers/facilitators; annual training schedule; training evaluation forms

- Child Safety and Duty of Care policies and procedures

- Confidentiality and Disclosure policies and procedures

- Guidelines on the mentor/mentee relationship including length of match, frequency and duration of meetings, types of activities, goal setting and review, boundaries

- Recruitment and selection policies and procedures for both mentors and mentees

- Policies and procedures for supporting mentors, mentees and the match

- Termination policies and procedures – voluntary and non-voluntary including exit interviews

- Guidelines on data collection, management and reporting

Managing the Program

Management structures and systems need to be established to support the day to day management of the program including staffing, finances, other resources, operations, volunteers, and program monitoring. Some of the issues to be addressed include:

- The selection of the Program Coordinator and other paid staff and support volunteers as appropriate

- A financial and funding strategy

- A promotional and marketing strategy

- Establishing Memorandums of Understanding/Agreements with relevant partnering organisations

- Reviewing staff development/training issues and establishing professional and personal development plans

- Implementing appropriate feedback, supervision and debriefing processes for staff and volunteers

- Procuring appropriate resources to ensure staff can do their jobs e.g. phone, desk, computer, car (where appropriate)

- Developing training programs for volunteers

- Establishing financial management systems, policies and procedures

- Reporting systems to ensure the data/ information requirements of funding bodies are met in a timely and accurate manner

- Providing formal reports to and establishing communication protocols with other parts of the organisation and/or the Reference/ Advisory Group or Board of Directors

- Implementing a stakeholder management strategy ensuring communication, and program delivery meet agreed expectations

- Establishing a Code of Ethics to guide staff

- Developing, implementing and monitoring a risk management plan

- An evaluation framework

Program Implementation and Operations

Step 3

Do not be surprised if the planning and design phase of your program takes three months or more to pull together! But spending the time developing a sound mentoring program framework will greatly enhance the effectiveness of program implementation and operations.

There are eight main components of an effective mentoring program. These are:

1. **Recruiting mentors and mentees**

2. **Screening**

3. **Orientation and training**

4. **Matching mentors and mentees**

5. **Building relationships and networks between participants**

6. **Providing ongoing support and supervision**

7. **Acknowledging and recognising the contributions of participants**

8. **Managing the closure of the match**

Checklists to assist you successfully implement and manage these components are provided in Part Four of this Guide. In addition, the section on "Other Useful Information" includes resources such as websites where practical examples of tools, policies and procedures can be found. Other useful sources of information are mentoring practitioners in Victoria and Australia. Most practitioners are more than happy to share what they've learned with others so it is worth making contact directly or through the Youth Mentoring Alliance, Victoria[32]

It's important to remember that implementation and program operations rarely occur in a straightforward, sequential or logical way, no matter how much you have planned. There will always be cases where things go off-track both with the matches and with program administration. If this happens it is important to ensure you focus on keeping the young people engaged and ensuring the program continues to meet organisational and community standards established in the planning and design stages.

Things to be aware of:

- If a young person has complex/high risk needs he or she may need additional support and require you or program staff to spend extra time liaising with other agencies they are involved with, school or family.

- Your program needs to be continually promoted to engage young people and potential mentors, regardless of how many current matches you have on the books.

- At any point in time, you are likely to have a number of potential mentors and mentees who are waiting to be matched. You will need to keep in regular contact with them to keep them interested and engaged in your program.

- Matches or mentors may need extra support from the Coordinator or program staff to help develop the relationship, maintain the necessary commitment and resolve conflicts. The mentor may also need specific training and support in the early stages of the match.

- Mentors who are working with high risk young people or young people with complex needs may need additional support and/or training, particularly if they are part of a match for the first time.

- The Coordinator or mentors may leave the program prematurely with insufficient provision for continuity. Establishing a contingency/succession plan will help in managing this type of situation.

- Try not to take on too many matches which the program is unable to support to the level required. Quality of matches rather than quantity is what is important in running a successful mentoring program.

- Staff workloads, turnover and training needs will require your attention, time and support. However, managing the administrative and human resource demands are as important as managing program operations to ensuring your program's success.

- Unanticipated costs are likely to occur. Try and make sure you have made allowance in your budget, as far as possible, to account for the surprises!

- Program operations can consume staff and non-mentor volunteers. Most people come to work in this field because they are passionate about mentoring young people, not about data collection. It is important to make sure you take the time to train and support staff in data collection and regularly allocate time to analyse and discuss with staff and volunteers how your program is going against its objectives and aims.

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32 The Victorian Youth Mentoring Alliance has set its goal to be an effective alliance of youth mentoring programs in Victoria, supporting the successful implementation of sustainable mentoring practices in regional and urban communities. The alliance aims to provide an increased communication network for mentoring programs and practitioners. Information can be found at www.youthmentoring.org.au.

Review and Program Improvement

Step 4

This section provides an overview of program review and improvement. It is important to note that evaluation needs to be integrated into every aspect of your program from the initial planning phase through to formal review, and should be viewed as an ongoing cycle that continuously contributes to program improvement. Good evaluation needs appropriate levels of resourcing. It is important that in the planning stage of your program you include evaluation as part of your program budget.

Evaluation involves:

- Establishing program goals/expected outcomes (planning)

- Determining success measures and key performance indicators (planning)

- Addressing data collection issues – how, who, when data will be collected (design)

- Providing regular reports to key stakeholders against key performance indicators (implementation)

- Engaging participants (young people and mentors) in giving feedback and reflecting on the process and benefits (review)

- Analysing data, reflecting on findings and reaching conclusions on the effectiveness of the program (review)

- Identifying program improvements (review)

- Planning what needs to happen to improve your program (planning).

There are three levels of program evaluation:

Efficiency: measures program outputs (e.g. matches, training programs, completions) over inputs (e.g. staff and costs[33])

Effectiveness: measures the extent to which the outputs and outcomes achieve the program's objectives

Impact: identifies how the program is making a difference to an actual community or the young person's needs and the extent to which it contributes to addressing broader social concerns.

Types of data that can be collected as part of **evaluation** could include:

Efficiency Measures	Effectiveness Measures	Impact Measures
• Number of mentors recruited • Number of mentees recruited • Number of new matches • Number of completions • Number and types of activities • Length of matches • Frequency and duration of meetings • Number of partnerships/ alliances established with other agencies • Cost of program • Number of staff • Mentor satisfaction with the "match", training, support • Mentee satisfaction with the "match", orientation, support	• School attendance rates • Academic performance • Obtainment of a job • Social behaviour or engagement in risky behaviour • Classroom engagement • Young person's well-being • Parent-child/family relationships • Achievements against goals established as part of the mentor/mentee plan • Participation in community activities	• School completion rates • Levels of education achieved • Employment participation rates • Involvement in the justice system • Social and emotional well-being • Participation in community groups and projects

33 See Big Brothers Big Sisters Melbourne (2004) Building an evidence base to practice, for an example of how to measure program efficiency.

Recognising the Diversity of Young People and Communities

Importantly, programs need to consider how best to record and track information. Keeping multiple pieces of information whether paper-based or on several computer based files can cause difficulties when it comes time for analysis and reporting. It is recommended that, particularly for process evaluation purposes, and tracking of participants Client Relationship Management (CRM) databases should be utilised.

Where program staff are unfamiliar with working with data, it is recommended that training is provided to enable them to produce and interpret program reports for relevant stakeholders, promotion and submission purposes. Coordinators may, in particular, benefit from engaging a knowledgeable mentor / evaluator to help them with a range of issues associated with evaluation.

Every program will have particular nuances and areas that are specific to that program including the type of program (involving young people at risk, Indigenous, vocational, generic skill and values development etc.), and particular characteristics (such as personalities, communities, financial support and the partnerships it has). You have probably started to think about how you should incorporate those issues into your program design, implementation and review. The following points are 'suggestions only' and are provided to assist you in the 'thinking of what needs doing' and the 'have we covered everything?' process.

Communities

Does your program have the 'tyranny of distance' or do you celebrate the joy of the countryside? For programs that operate in small communities, or even operate across many, the issue of barriers to participation for mentors and mentees requires consideration.

- Can mentors and mentees meet in convenient locations?

- How far are your mentors willing to drive?

- Do you need to reimburse or subsidise travel costs?

- What logistics do you need to consider when having group gatherings?

- How will your mentees be able to afford participating in local activities and what ramifications will this have on your matching process?

- Is there a culture of volunteering and a volunteer resource centre in the community?

- What particular issues do you need to consider when recruiting and operating across several communities?

In addition, you should consider what it is that members of your community will be attracted to in relation to participating as mentors. What are their interests, values and drivers in relation to them as individuals and as members of their communities?

Attracting mentors from a range of backgrounds

One of the key success factors in mentoring is the fact that in the vast majority of cases mentors are volunteers. The relationship with young people is considerably strengthened in many instances when the young person realises that for some, this is the first adult in their life who is choosing to interact with them and who, given they are volunteers, are not being paid. This can be a seminal moment in the relationship developing, however, being a volunteer can cost. All mentors would have considered and know that they are contributing the cost of their time, but what happens when the costs of catch ups, the invariable food and drinks, the excursions, movies and other wonderful activities they both do together become financially prohibitive. Expecting mentors to meet all costs may mean that potential mentors who may not be particularly well-off will be less willing to participate. The same issues may also be a consideration for mentees.

- What will you reimburse in the way of expenses and what are the parameters?

- What do you expect mentors to pay for?

- Do you organise free tickets to events to minimise costs?

- Do you expect your mentees to pay for themselves, and if you do, will this mean some young people cannot be involved in the program for financial reasons?

- Do you clearly inform mentors and mentees of your expenses policy and procedures prior to starting?

- What guidelines do you provide about mentors, staff and non-mentor volunteers lending young people money?

Young people at risk

Many young people are classified 'at risk' due to their behaviour and ability to 'stretch' the boundaries most of society accepts. Some young people will have committed and been convicted of crimes, others may be experimenting with 'anti-social' behaviour, and some may have lacked the appropriate adults in their life (hence the need for mentoring) to allow them to develop suitable values and beliefs. Despite these challenges these young people are valuable members of our community. A quality mentoring program will not focus on negative labels but treat them as our next generation of potential community leaders. However, to make the experience valuable for all, perhaps the following are worthy of a second look.

- Does your training provide information on the stages of adolescence? (A good idea for all mentoring programs)

- The young people may be or have been involved with a statutory agency, so how much about their backgrounds do you inform the mentors, given that a mentoring program is about a 'fresh' start?

- Where there is current involvement with a statutory agency, who else is working with the young person that you may need to liaise with?

- Do you train your mentors in dealing with various behaviours?

- Have you established, via your policies and procedures, clear boundaries for interaction between the mentor and mentees?

- Have you considered how the mentor can, or should contribute to the case management planning that the young person will have?

- Have you got a rigorous selection process so that you attract genuine mentors and not people who want to 'save' young people?

Indigenous and other programs specifically for young people from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background

Some programs are specifically aimed at young people where their cultural background is also a key recruitment item. These programs can make a wonderful contribution to ensuring that the young people involved as mentees can reconnect and strengthen their cultural identity. To ensure this happens and to ensure that mentoring programs contribute to a community that celebrates difference, diversity and tolerance, some additional questions may need to be considered in the planning process.

- What existing organisations with relevance to the target group do you need to consult/partner with?

- Are there sufficient mentors from the specific community available for the purpose of strengthening cultural identity and connectedness?

- If there are few mentors from within the community and demand on their time is high, do you need to think of some kind of payment to attract them to your program?

- If the purpose of mentoring includes facilitating connection with the wider community or business world, what cultural training will need to be delivered if mentors are recruited from outside of the community?

- Will interpreters be required?

- Will parents of the mentees and other community members accept mentors from outside their community and if so, under what conditions?

- What on-going supports will be needed for mentors?

- Is mentoring part of the community's culture and what pre-program work will need to be undertaken with parents and community Elders and leaders to inform them of mentoring and what can be achieved?

- Are there specific cultural events and celebrations that can be included in the mentor programs list of activities?

- Do you need different evaluation criteria that will enable you to consider the community in appropriate context?

Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues

case study 4

Issues in establishing mentoring programs with CALD Young People

The Multicultural Youth Mentoring Program of the Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues was set up to empower 16-21 year old young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds with the skills and confidence to access opportunities to achieve their goals.

In establishing the new program, extensive consultation was undertaken with interested young people, a range of migrant and refugee community leaders and groups and other mentoring organisations.

For some individuals and groups 'mentoring' was a new concept, whereas for other communities and community members, mentoring already occurs either informally or formally within their own communities.

A number of community leaders expressed support and interest in a mentoring program involving young people and mentors from a diverse range of backgrounds. It was seen as a positive way to expose young people to new information and networks outside their own communities and increase dialogue between people (young and old) from different backgrounds.

The program also runs a peer support group. This group offers young people a chance to make new friends both from within and outside of their own communities, gain support in the development of their one to one mentor relationship, have fun, develop new skills, discuss issues of concern and take action.

Factors such as gender, geography, personal and professional interests have been taken into account in establishing matches. It is interesting to note that in setting up one-to-one matches, all mentors and young people have stated they have no preference to be matched with a person from a particular cultural or religious background. There is a real willingness to learn about other cultures and share experiences.

Leanne McGaw

Centre for Multicultural Youth Issues, Melbourne

Same sex attracted

A young person has many things they need to develop as they go through adolescence. Not only are there huge biological changes occurring it is also the time when they form many of the beliefs and values they will hold for life. There are additional pressures when they are also questioning their sexuality, or wishing to acknowledge they are same sex attracted. Quite often this is regarded as outside the 'norms of society' and young people who are same sex attracted will encounter varying levels of acceptance and tolerance in their community. A mentoring program specifically for these young people may wish to consider additional options.

- Will you only have mentors who are same sex attracted as well?

- Are there additional policies and procedures you will need to develop?

- Do you live in a tolerant community?

- Are there additional resources you need to inform your mentors about, i.e. various specific help lines etc?

Disability

Young people (in fact all people) have different abilities. It is those different abilities that make up our rich society and they should all be recognised and celebrated, while not minimising some of the challenges and struggles that some have to deal with on a daily basis. Mentoring programs with a focus on young people with disabilities can bring enormous benefits to all those involved including, increasing access to activities within the community that might not otherwise be available to mentees, providing opportunities for mentors and mentees to learn and develop shared skills, and increasing the participation of the mentees in clubs, organisations and community groups. Like other specific groups of young people, a mentor program for young people with varying physical, intellectual or mental health abilities may also wish to consider some relevant areas.

- Will the program have specific needs in regards to transport and access to program activities?

- What additional training will need to be done to inform the mentors of particular issues?

- Are there on-going program requirements to address (parents, carers, health professionals etc)?

- What other information, advice, support may be needed to ensure young people and others who are significant in their lives can participate?

Vocational

Some mentoring programs have a vocational outcome as one of the key end results of the mentoring match. For many people, both young and old, on-going formal and informal workplace mentoring can continue for a large part of their working life. Many people change from mentee to mentor over that time. Vocational mentoring can assist a young person explore a range of employment options and also the expectations of an employer.

- Must the match of mentor be specific to the mentees preferred vocation?

- Is the aim of the mentoring program to obtain work for the mentee or to inform them of possibilities only?

- Should the mentor/mentee only meet at the workplace?

- How do you recruit industry specific mentors?

- Should you include generic training such as OH&S, first aid and other workplace training to mentees?

- Does a vocational mentoring program need to operate for as long as a relationship development program?

- A mentor should be a friend and an equal, yet a vocational program may establish a boss/employee situation, so how do you deal with this?

The questions asked throughout this section are not meant to be exhaustive. They are intended to assist you develop a questioning process for your program; after all, you are in control!

case study 5

Linking young people to vocational opportunities

It's not always easy to turn a young person's life around. An early school leaver without a clearly defined career direction, Franco was referred to the LYPET mentoring project. He was aged 16 and had completed year 8. Franco was matched with a mentor and together they attended group and one on one mentoring activities.

The LYPET mentoring project coordinator referred him to Centrelink for a Job-seeker identification application and Intensive Assistance eligibility and to a Job Network member for registration. A series of discussions took place between Franco, Centrelink, the mentor and the project coordinator. Together they developed a career plan for him and arrangements for employment in commercial cookery were made as Franco had indicated an interest in this area.

However, nothing eventuated – Franco failed to keep appointments, attend a work trial or contact the employer. When asked to comment on the experience of working with a young person, Franco's mentor commented, "Young people have yet to learn about things that adults take for granted – punctuality, courtesy or returning telephone calls, meeting commitments that have been made or agreed to. Young people also need to learn that they need to make an effort if they want something. Simply registering with an agency is not enough to get results."

The Job Network agency and the mentor then revisited Franco's career plan with him to clarify his interests and commitment to finding employment and the mentoring relationship. Franco was offered a three-month trial at a small refrigeration service, with the intention of converting this into an apprenticeship. However, he resigned two weeks short of the trial period having overheard a conversation suggesting that he was "a poor choice". The employer approached the Job Network agency regarding a replacement but didn't offer convincing reasons for his dissatisfaction with Franco.

However, Franco didn't give up this time. On his own initiative, and supported by his mentor, Franco then contacted the Job Network agency again and was referred to a furnishing company with two other candidates. Franco was the successful applicant and has progressed successfully in his new role.

His Job Network case worker was very impressed with Franco's new determination: "The turn-around in attitude and application of this young person is amazing and can be directly attributed to the influence of and relationship with his mentor."

Trish van Lint

Linking Young People to Employment and Training Program, Whittlesea

Part Four
Practical Checklists

The checklists provide in this part are prompts to assist you to think through what and how to go about putting into action the Keys to Effective Mentoring summarised in Part 2. These are a guide and include reference to the relevant procedures and policy requirements for running a mentoring program.

Vision, Purpose and Values

hannah

case study 6

Mentors need to be well prepared to work with young mentorees

Key points

Articulating the vision, purpose and values of your program:

- will clarify your group's/organisation's common interest and purpose

- address the goals and desired outcomes

- explain why you are doing this and how it fits into the world

- should be referred to regularly to keep everyone involved "on track" and working to the same goal rather than to rules

- help to identify allied people and groups – reducing potential conflicts, the influence of personal agendas, and differing interpretations of program intent

Checklist

☐ **vision** statement – how you want the world to be for young people relevant to your program

☐ **purpose** statement – why your program should exist, how will it contribute to the achievement of the vision?

☐ **values** statement – the beliefs and principles which will guide your practice

Hannah (12) was referred to Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) by the school student welfare officer in mid 2004. She lives with her grandparents and has done so since she was three years old. Both Hannah's parents were in jail at the time of the referral, each having long histories of theft and drug use. Hannah is well cared for by her grandparents, however she has significant problems with her self-esteem and struggles to maintain friendships with her peers. Increasingly her grandparents found it more challenging to take Hannah out to do all the things she wanted to do and felt that Hannah would benefit from having a younger adult in her life.

Trained volunteer mentor, Joanne (28) works as a personal assistant and team coordinator for a large human resources firm in Melbourne. Matched in mid-2004, Joanne and Hannah formed a good relationship within a short time. From the very first outing Hannah was very eager to see Joanne and prolong their time past the original time agreed upon. Hannah sends text messages regularly to Joanne, e.g. a very early message stating "you rock!". Hannah's eagerness is also a sign of how much she needed an extra adult friend and Joanne finds she is often a sounding board for issues that Hannah would not feel comfortable to discuss with her grandparents.

They have enjoyed many activities together including catching a tram to cafés in Brunswick Street (the first time Hannah had been on a tram), going to the Werribee Zoo, cooking together or going for a bike ride. They have created a photo scrapbook detailing most of their outings together. At the end of 2004, Hannah invited Joanne to her Grade 6 graduation ceremony. Now 14 years old, Hannah is still enthusiastic about her friendship with Joanne as she completes her Year 8 studies and comes to terms with her relationship with her parents.

Paul Mathewson

Big Brothers Big Sisters, Melbourne

Policies and Procedures

Key points

Program policies and procedures are critical to the effective management of your program. They should:

- provide staff with clear guidelines on how to administer a program

- ensure consistency in program approach and operation in face of staff and volunteer turnover

- serve as a blueprint for program replication and expansion

- be reviewed regularly to ensure they continue to be relevant and support the program objectives

Checklist of Key Policies and Procedures

☐ handling inquiries

☐ recruitment

☐ screening

☐ training

☐ boundaries between mentor and mentees

☐ matching

☐ match support and supervision

☐ confidentiality and disclosure

☐ duty of care

☐ mandatory reporting

☐ record keeping

☐ use of alcohol and drugs

☐ unacceptable behaviour

☐ termination of mentor, mentee

☐ recognition

Establishing a
Program Budget

Key points

- mentoring is often viewed as a "cheap program" because of the reliance on volunteer mentors, but there are significant costs that should be taken into account when preparing program budgets

- staffing requirements will be dependent on the size of your program. A rule of thumb for moderately at risk young people would be 1 full-time Coordinator and 1 part-time Assistant/Administrative Officer for a program which supports 20 matches at any one time. School based mentoring would, in most cases be able to support more matches with the same number of staff, while severely at risk young people may require more intensive support and time to make linkages with other agencies who may be involved with the young person so the number of matches may be less for this level of staffing

- if you are undertaking a Cost Benefit Analysis of your program you will need to take into account the nominal value of "in-kind" support

Checklist

The following items need to be taken into account in mentoring budgets:

- [ ] **program coordinator salary and on-costs**
- [ ] **contingency funds to handle the cost of staff turnover**
- [ ] **other paid staff salaries and on-costs**
- [ ] **marketing and promotional materials**
- [ ] **postage, phone, fax, internet**
- [ ] **stationery – letterhead, envelopes, business cards, etc**
- [ ] **office supplies**
- [ ] **insurance**
- [ ] **police checks**
- [ ] **screening fees e.g. psychological tests**
- [ ] **utilities**
- [ ] **rent**
- [ ] **mentor expenses – movie tickets, activities, petrol**
- [ ] **program activities and events**
- [ ] **meeting expenses – venue and catering costs**
- [ ] **thank you gifts**
- [ ] **transport e.g. car, petrol, servicing, taxis**
- [ ] **referral costs**
- [ ] **evaluation**

What to look for in a Coordinator

Key points

The Program Coordinator is responsible for:

- overseeing the development and implementation of the mentoring program

- program quality and performance

- communications with mentors, mentees, parents/carers, relevant organisations

- program reporting to reference / advisory committee or Board of Directors and funding bodies

- promotion of the program

- managing relationships with partners, sponsors and funding bodies

- supervision of staff and non-mentor volunteers

Checklist

- [ ] **expert knowledge of mentoring**

- [ ] **experience in program management and evaluation**

- [ ] **excellent communication skills**

- [ ] **well developed organisational skills**

- [ ] **well developed networks and knowledge of the youth sector**

- [ ] **experience in coaching and supervision of staff**

- [ ] **submission and report writing**

- [ ] **skills and knowledge of evaluation and continuous improvement techniques**

- [ ] **commitment to stay for a period of time**

Recruitment of Mentors

Key points

When recruiting mentors:

- develop a list of characteristics, skills and experience etc that will be valued by your potential mentees and target your recruitment efforts accordingly

- remember that the 'best qualified/skilled' people are not necessarily the best mentors, people with rich life experiences (positive and negative) who have developed coping and problem solving skills can bring a lot to a mentoring relationship

- save time and money and enhance the effectiveness of advertising and marketing by promoting the program through partnerships with local and allied organisations

- use your Reference Group/Board's networks to get the message out there

- make use of experienced mentors to help recruit new mentors

- use personal invitations to potential mentors wherever possible

Checklist

☐ **a mentor position description**, including:

- an explanation of the need and focus of the program

- desired applicant attributes and qualifications

- outline of training required

- description of the mentor's roles and responsibilities

- clearly defined time-line and duration of commitment.

- a description of the requirements of a mentor. Check that you have covered: Where / When / Why / What / How?

- a form for the applicant to fill in when a commitment is made

☐ **contact lists of allied local organisations with established volunteer networks**, including:

- schools, TAFE and University

- churches

- local community and business groups

- civic organisations: Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis etc

- the corporate sector

☐ **further information and insight for prospective new mentors**, including:

- names of experienced mentors and mentees who are prepared to chat

- testimonials

- example of the benefits of mentoring and program statistics

- accomplishments, awards, photos etc

☐ year-round marketing and public relations

☐ volunteer opportunities beyond mentoring (for applicants unable to commit to time required or without desired skills)

kirsty

case study 7

The importance of appropriate matching for successful mentoring relationships

Kirsty *was one of the first Gippsland East Mentoring Project (GEMS) mentees – and is now a successful student with great ambition for her future. Tina was a young mum with two young children under 10. They were matched with each other as they both had similar interests and backgrounds and lived in fairly close proximity to each other in regional East Gippsland.*

Both admitted to being quite shy before becoming interested in mentoring through GEMS.

"However," Kirsty said "once I'd been through the project induction and learnt about mentoring and then met my mentor Tina I was never embarrassed to have a mentor or to be seen with her. In fact, I would recommend a mentor to any young person who needs extra support. They are somebody you can really talk to. They won't judge you.

"My mentor was a helpful, caring, genuine person. We had so much fun… I felt I could talk to her about anything – everything – and she listened! She helped me to grow as a person. I consider my mentor a friend. I know I could ring her up any time and she would still be there for me if I had any troubles."

For Tina's part, she hadn't realised that just meeting, having coffee and 'chatting' on a weekly basis was having such a marked effect on increasing Kirsty's confidence and willingness to re-engage with educational opportunities. Tina herself became inspired to become more engaged with mentoring and now assists the GEMS coordinator run the mentoring program in East Gippsland. This is something that previously she wouldn't have thought of as a career path.

A successful mentoring match can be both life changing and yet at times really challenging for both the mentor and mentee.

Tina (mentor)

Gippsland East Mentoring Project, Bairnsdale.

Recruitment of Mentees

Key points

The Planning phase of the mentor program should have identified that there is a real need for mentoring in your area – this may be through consultations with school, community organisations, faith based organisations and community members. When recruiting mentees:

- the selection process should be seen by the young person as a positive opportunity, not a punishment or a 'branding'

- self selection by young people is likely to produce better outcomes than young people being invited to participate or young people referred to programs by other organisations

- young people who may not have experienced mentoring before, and therefore are unaware of the potential benefits they may gain, are likely to need a lot of encouragement to become involved

- engaging previous mentees to advocate for and promote your program to potential mentees will be a useful strategy

- no background check is necessary

Checklist

☐ **pre-established guidelines and criteria for selection process** that may include:

- – an interview.

- – a written application.

- – written parental permission where possible.

- – references – from teachers, family friends, community leaders.

- – an outline of interests, hobbies, sports etc.

☐ **a defined interview procedure** that focuses on the interests and attitude of the mentee. Questions could include:

- – Why do think you would like a mentor?

- – What type of activities would you like to do with your mentor?

- – What are your three most worthy and three least worthy attributes?

- – Tell me about your friends.

- – How are you going at school? What are your best subject areas?

- – Are you able to commit to meeting your mentor regularly for the agreed length of you mentor/mentee match?

- – Are you willing to commit to the program guidelines including initial and ongoing training, reporting and feedback sessions?

- – Do you have any questions to ask me?

☐ **clear documentation** to record decisions once appropriateness is determined

☐ **disclaimers/waiver** – as per your organisation's insurance policies and your own policies and procedures on Duty of Care and Risk Management

Ash

case study 8

Mentoring through schools expands students' options

Ash *was a lonely student. In my Year 10 English class he always sat by himself, gazing toward the ground. A heavy air of defeat seemed to envelope him. I tried to encourage him to participate in class activities or discussions but Ash found it difficult to find courage to speak to his peers let alone in front of the class.*

With time, I tried to get to know Ash but he kept up his defences. I learnt from the Welfare teacher that life was pretty tough for Ash on many fronts. He could not take for granted those things which many young people have in their lives. The odds were stacked against him.

I taught him again in Year 11, the year he gained his mentor. Ben saw in Ash qualities he never believed he had – certainly no one else had ever seen. With support, Ben patiently helped him to gain a belief in himself. As a teacher I saw him standing a little taller each day. He wrote the following at the end of Year 12 – a new Ash – looking towards the future with optimism.

"I have recently finished Year 12 and I have received the David Burgess Foundation Scholarship. I will be studying Biotechnology at Monash University Gippsland. There are quite a few students who do not believe in themselves enough to continue let alone consider themselves eligible for tertiary education – this is likely to be due to family problems, their living situations or a sense of feeling intimidated by their peers who they believe are better than them. Ben, who gave up his own time, has helped me conquer my adversities just by providing valuable encouragement and allowing me to explore possibilities for the future. I have benefited greatly from mentoring."

Jeanette Pritchard

Standing Tall in School Mentoring Program, Hamilton

Orientation

Key points

Orientation to the program is important for both mentors and mentees. Orientation:

- may occur separately or jointly for mentees and mentors, depending on the nature and focus your program.

- should occur prior to the matching process.

- should involve all staff in the program whether paid or volunteer.

- should include, where relevant, parents/carers to address any of their fears, concerns as well as to encourage their support with communication, feedback and celebration.

- should include ex-mentors and ex-mentees to present their "stories".

Checklist

☐ **program overview**, including:
- vision, purpose, values and program goals
- job descriptions, roles and responsibilities
- key dates and time frames
- program policies, including reporting, evaluation, and reimbursement

☐ **description of the mentor role and responsibilities**, including:
- eligibility and suitability requirements
- screening process

☐ **level of commitment expected** (time, energy, flexibility).

☐ **expectations and restrictions**, including:
- an agreed standard of positive communication
- accountability
- Confidentiality and Privacy
- Duty of Care
- liability
- procedures for changing plans, problem solving, and conflict resolution
- when to refer? seek help? who do you go to first?

☐ **benefits and rewards of mentoring**

☐ **discussion time**
- time for potential mentors and mentees to share their aims and concerns separately, with their peers. This can be catalyst to forming a support group or network of participants

☐ **question & answer time** at the end for attendees to:
- clarify expectations
- leave feeling empowered to make an informed decision

☐ **mentor application pack**, including:
- why do you want to mentor? what are your expectations?
- who would you prefer to mentor? (age, gender etc).
- what are your special interests? skills?
- release forms for police checks
- Statement of Agreement: to comply with the program guidelines
- for the diary: schedule of next mentor training

Mentor Screening

Checklist

☐ **a well-structured, application process with clear documentation, including criteria for the selection of mentors**

☐ **reference checks for mentors by trained staff, which may include:**
– character references
– WWC Check (see section 4 Other Useful Information)
– driving record checks
– criminal record checks where legally permissible

☐ **a face-to-face interview**
Questions could include:
– why do you want to become a mentor?
– previous volunteering background? With young people?
– what are your three most worthy and three least worthy attributes?
– what do you believe you can offer a young person?
– are you able to commit to meeting your mentee regularly for the agreed length of your mentor/mentee match?
– are you willing to commit to the program requirements including initial and ongoing training, reporting systems and feedback sessions?
– do you have any questions to ask me?

☐ **suitability criteria** based on the program's statement of purpose and needs of the target population. Could include some or all of the following:
– character references
– personality profile
– skills identification
– gender/age
– language and cultural requirements
– level of education/academic standing
– career interests
– motivation for volunteering

☐ **submitting the mentor application pack**, including
– personal references
– employment history

☐ **criteria for screening out unsuitable applicant mentors** that could include:
– the obvious reasons: a relevant criminal record, history of child abuse etc
– questionable motives: to increase status, gain reward, sort own problems
– inappropriate skills
– lack of availability

☐ **a process for informing inappropriate volunteers** that they will not be selected for the program. This could include:
– offering other volunteer opportunities within the organisation
– explaining "We have no suitable mentee match for you at this time."

Key points

Mentor screening:

- reinforces that the young person's safety is paramount at all times

- needs to include several methods for assessing suitability

- minimises the risk of non-compliance with Victoria's legislation on Working with Children Check (WWC) (see section 4)

- aims to highlight potential mentors who are committed and skilled as opposed to those whose influence may be harmful to the mentee or program

The Mentor Training Program

Key points

- before embarking on mentor training volunteers must have attended orientation and submitted their mentor application documents

- mentors should ideally complete their training before being matched with a mentee

- assessment of participation and contribution during the mentoring training program can also be used as part of mentor screening

Checklist

Ensure the following topics are covered:

☐ **the responsibility of the mentor/Duty of Care**

  – policies and procedures already in place within your organisation

  – DO's and DON'Ts of relationship management

  – "Working with Children" and other relevant legislative obligations

  – confidentiality and liability, e.g.: report concerns to the co-ordinator if the Mentee shares information that refers to illegal activity or puts the Mentee or others at risk

  – specific issues related to the mentee group e.g. cultural/heritage and disability – sensitivity and appreciation training.

☐ **establishing the mentoring relationship**

  – positive Communication: sharing, active listening

  – embracing the mentoring cycle, from "Getting to know you" to saying "Goodbye"

  – building trust, dealing with emotions and families,

  – understanding the stages of adolescence including the biological and social pressures placed on young people today

  – who is "Generation Y and Z"? Why are they different to other generations?

  – cultural awareness

☐ **helping the mentee along their way**

  – strategies for life-planning; clarifying values, establishing needs and wants that encourage personal empowerment

  – motivation, goal setting, prioritising, time management, problem solving

  – the social services accessible in the area and how to make the most of them

☐ **mentor support system: structured and ongoing**

  – mentor get-togethers, building into a support network

  – a 'mentor the mentor' program

  – ongoing, regular training opportunities, able to be adapted as needs arise

  – opportunity for debriefing and counselling through the support of the coordinator

The Matching Process

Key points

- the needs and interests of the young person are paramount in the matching process

- having appropriate matches is crucial for the individuals and the success of the program

- confidentiality around disclosure of the contact details of mentors and mentees needs to be carefully considered, many programs restrict contact access to mobile phone numbers

- depending on your program focus and target group, initial meetings may be one on one or in a group setting

- matches can fail, despite best efforts – where possible provide opportunities for re-matching

Checklist

☐ a matching procedure linked with the program's statement of purpose

☐ appropriate criteria for matches, including some or all of the following: gender; age; language requirements; availability; needs; interests; preferences of program participants; life experience; temperament

☐ a signed statement of understanding that both parties (and where appropriate the parent/carer) agree to the conditions of the match and the mentoring relationship

☐ pre-match social activities between potential mentors and mentees

☐ team building activities to reduce the anxiety of the first meeting

☐ a process for facilitating the first meeting

☐ a process for mediation when matches are experiencing difficulties

☐ a process for re-matching when a miss-match takes place

☐ a process for the termination of the match

aaron

case study 9

Mutual interests between mentor and mentee strengthen the mentoring relationship

Meet **Glenn** and **Aaron**. Glenn is not Aaron's dad, his uncle, or even related to him. But for the past 15 weeks Glenn has been spending at least two hours a week with Aaron; working with him not only on spray painting and panel beating, but also helping him with school work and day-to-day issues. Glenn is not a social worker or a youth worker and he doesn't get paid for his time with Aaron. Glenn is a trained Plan-It Youth mentor who spends time each week with Aaron.

Together they have built a good relationship and learnt more about themselves. Each week Glenn and Aaron catch up at 'The House' at the Traralgon Secondary College campus. They discuss issues that may have occurred during the week, Aaron's school work and any other problems or outcomes.

Aaron confessed that he was a bit 'naughty' at school and was subsequently asked if he wanted to join the Plan-It Youth program. After an information session he decided to give it a go. Since then, he has met Glenn and forged a positive relationship with an older male role model. Aaron has been working on a signage project with Glenn and learning different skills from the spray painting and panel beating trades. Not only did Aaron complete a sign of his own design, he also helps out at Glenn's work during his school holidays and spare time.

Both of them agree that the Plan-It Youth program has made a difference. For Glenn it was building a friendship with not only Aaron, but other mentors in the program and learning more about himself. For Aaron, it has helped him develop friendships with others including adults, introduced him to new people within his school and given him the opportunity to experience success.

Lyn Simmons

Berry Street, Victoria, Morwell

Building the Relationships and Networks of Participants

Key points

Mentoring meetings where mentees, mentors, staff and other volunteers attend are an important way to develop trusting relationships and networks. These forums:

- provide an opportunity for everyone to help develop and improve the program and foster a sense of ownership and belonging

- need to be held in a safe, comfortable location

- should involve a range of activities and opportunities

- should encourage the attendance of mentors and mentees; however, the personal circumstances, particularly of the young person need to be considered, so attendance should not be compulsory

Checklist

☐ planning sessions involving participants to determine the types of activities/events and regularity

☐ a range of events to meet needs/interests of participants e.g. skill building, field trips, social functions, sporting events, community activities

☐ a calendar of events developed and made available to participants

☐ feedback process e.g. discussion session and/or evaluation sheet to assess participant satisfaction

Mentors, One on One Volunteers

case study 10

Mentoring can include a variety of engagement options depending on the needs of the mentee.

Good Shepherd MOOOV (Mentors, One On One Volunteers) program conducts and supervises regular social activities (such as camps, days at the football, Christmas parties, etc) where mentees and mentors come together in a group. These activities allow friendships and peer support to develop between mentors.

They also enable mentees to meet and gain peer support across the mentee group in a safe and comfortable environment. These activities, amongst other functions, assist in retaining mentors and young people by building a feeling of belonging to something bigger than just one match.

Kim is an 18-year old woman who came to Good Shepherd through a local tertiary education student support service. Kim was referred by her counsellor as she was chronically depressed, with an extremely low self-esteem, had no self-confidence and suffered significant grief and loss issues. Kim was very isolated and without a significant adult in her life, her mother had died the year prior. With all her family overseas, Kim became the primary carer for her 14-year-old younger brother.

Kim was matched and with her mentor made great progress and improvement, though she still battled life's difficulties. She was "flunking out" at uni and struggling to support herself and her brother on government benefits. She needed a job but had no work history and didn't even have a resume.

During a Good Shepherd function, Kim found herself in discussion with another mentor and she shared her plight, around her lack of work history. The mentor immediately offered the opportunity to undertake "work experience" with her in an administrative role. Kim discussed this with her mentor. Arrangements were completed via program staff and the workplace and Kim commenced soon afterwards. Kim remained doing work experience for some time and then volunteered her work to the organisation. Kim's reference was glowing when she left many months later.

Recently Kim attended an interview for a full-time position in the entrainment industry and was successful. No doubt her experience enabled her to obtain the position but provided more, equipping her for the rigors of her new employment.

This example is not a rare occurrence, as MOOOV has a commitment to support and encourage the networks built between mentors, mentees and each other via our meetings and activities.

Mike Williams

Good Shepherd, Melbourne

Supervision and Support

Key points

Supervision and support:

- is critical (particularly early in the match) to support the building and sustainability of the relationship

- enables program staff to monitor and deal with any safety issues

- enables timely feedback from mentors and mentees about the development, activities and progress of the relationship

- provides an opportunity for program staff to reinforce positive mentor behaviours

- increases the capacity of mentors and mentees to deal and manage conflicts with advice and assistance from program staff where necessary

Checklist

☐ regularly scheduled meetings with staff, mentors, and mentees

☐ documented boundaries & guidelines to govern the mentor/ mentee relationship e.g.
  – where meetings will take place
  – communication e.g. frequency, method
  – disclosure of information
  – lending money to the mentee
  – gifts

☐ a tracking system for ongoing assessment

☐ written records

☐ mentor group meetings to facilitate mentors sharing experiences and strategies. (a similar process for mentees could also be considered)

☐ structured opportunities for group meetings of mentors and mentees to build social cohesion and networks for all participants

☐ procedures for input from community partners, family, and significant others

☐ a process for managing grievances, praise, re-matching, interpersonal problem solving, and premature relationship closure

Acknowledging and Supporting Contributions

Key points

Acknowledging and supporting the contributions of participants:

- keeps mentors and mentees engaged in the program, not just the relationship

- provides opportunities for sharing experiences and learnings between participants and contributes to continuous improvement of the program

- provides opportunities for capturing and documenting successes as part of program evaluation

- helps you to promote and advocate your mentoring program to your community, potential mentors and mentees, partners, sponsors and funding bodies

- assists mentors and mentees to share experiences and build networks

Checklist

☐ a formal kick-off event

☐ ongoing peer support groups for volunteers, participants, and others

☐ forums with key stakeholders for discussion of issues and information dissemination

☐ networking activities with appropriate organisations

☐ social gatherings of different groups as needed

☐ annual recognition and appreciation event

☐ awards for outstanding contributions and achievements

☐ newsletters or other mailings to program participants, supporters, and funding bodies

☐ media campaigns to promote positive stories

Closing the Match

Key points

- many mentoring programs are time limited and the ending of the match is anticipated

- matches may also close for other reasons e.g. mentee reaches a level of self sufficiency with the particular mentor so that mentoring is no longer needed; either the mentor or mentee drops out of the program; or life circumstances make it impossible to continue the relationship, i.e. a mentor is transferred to another city

- the feelings of both mentors and mentees, whatever they may be, need to be acknowledged and supported

- should the relationship end without a chance to formally close it, program staff need to support participants through a formal debriefing session

- after the closure of the relationship the mentor and mentee should be encouraged to consider the next step in terms of both future contact and the ongoing pursuit of personal goals

- the closure process should provide information that contributes to the evaluation process

Checklist

☐ **private and confidential exit interviews to debrief the mentoring relationship between:**
  – mentee and staff
  – mentor and staff
  – mentor and mentee with staff

☐ **closure information collected on:**
  – What was their most fun activity?
  – What did they most value in the relationship?
  – What goals did they set and achieve? What enabled this?
  – What goals were set but were not achieved? Why?
  – What was learnt that was unexpected?
  – What would/should they not do again?
  – What should the program not do again?
  – How would they improve the program?

☐ policy on future contacts

☐ discussion on how young person may continue to pursue their goals outside of the mentoring relationship

☐ discussion with the mentor on whether they would like to participate again

stacey

case study 11

Mentoring experiences can endure and provide long term benefits for all

Stacey was 16 when she visited JANA Youth Support and Employment Services. In the process of completing Year 10 in an adult-learning environment, she was undecided about her educational future and – unable to fathom its value – was considering leaving school.

Stacey wasn't living with her parents and had no significant adult in her life. Based on both shared professional interests and a perceived personality match, Stacey was then introduced to Catherine, an employment consultant (who had previously worked as a hairdresser).

Stacey and Catherine met first over coffee together with the program coordinator. During their subsequent early meetings in the same café, Catherine found herself asking Stacey lots of questions and talking quite a bit about herself.

Stacey was shy and lacked confidence in speaking generally about her own ambitions. Slowly, however, Stacey began to share with Catherine her desire to become a hairdresser. Her mentor was excited, seeing the "announcement" as a real break-through in their relationship.

To help Stacey visualise her future path, they drew flow-charts depicting possible paths to take to achieve her dream. Catherine encouraged her mentee to continue school, but to also undertake a Vocational Education and Training (VET) learning stream as part of Year 11.

Through the VET stream, Stacey was able to practically apply industry knowledge in a real work environment, as well as to study the theoretical background of the hairdressing industry. After Year 12, Stacey intends to secure a full-time hairdressing apprenticeship. To help her prepare, Catherine assisted Stacey in constructing a resume and letters of application and practicing interviews.

"Stacey could really see where she was heading, which gave her the impetus to keep going and enjoy the journey along the way," she said.

Although the two don't meet on a regular basis now, keeping in contact is still important for them both. "Even though I am no longer her mentor and hope to mentor another young person, I am still interested in following Stacey's progress and keeping in touch."

Taryn Williams

Jobs and New Approach, Ballarat

Evaluation

Key points

Evaluation:

- involves both efficiency and effectiveness measures

- is linked to program goals and information requirements of funding bodies, community partners, sponsors etc

- is inclusive, involving feedback from mentors, mentees, staff volunteers and other key stakeholders

- is integrated into program operations, management and governance

- contributes to continuous program improvement

- is critical to supporting future funding submissions

- should involve training and tools needed by program staff for data collection, analysis and reporting

Checklist

- ☐ program forms related to applications, screening, matching, training and closure

- ☐ procedures for collecting, handling (confidentiality), analysis and reporting

- ☐ training and tools for staff collecting and reporting on data

- ☐ an appropriate computer based system for storing, analysing and reporting on program outcomes

- ☐ process for involving stakeholders

- ☐ sufficient budget and time allocation

Other Useful
Information

Working with Children

Working with Children Check

The Victorian Government has introduced a new checking system which applies to people who work or volunteer with children. The Working with Children (WWC) Check helps to protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, violence or drug offences and findings from disciplinary bodies. The WWC Check represents a mandatory minimum checking standard across Victoria.

Existing employees, new employees, and volunteers in your program may need a WWC Check. All employees and volunteers who have regular, direct contact with a child where that contact is not directly supervised will need to apply for a WWC Check. Without passing a WWC Check employees and volunteers will be ineligible to work or volunteer with young people.

The WWC Check is being phased in from 2006 onwards. Further information can be found on the Department of Justice website www.justice.gov.au

Police Checks

Police checks will remain a critical component of the WWC Check. Running a mentoring program must include compulsory Police checks for people wishing to be involved in your program and should be undertaken prior to selection as an employee or mentor. Police checks cannot be provided without the written consent of the individual involved.

Further information can be obtained from:
Public Enquiry Service
PO Box 418
Melbourne, Victoria, 8005
Phone: (03) 9247 5907
Email: publicenquiryservice@police.vic.gov.au

Code of Ethics

A Code of Ethics to guide professional behaviour of program staff as well as the Reference group or Board can be a useful tool. The following suggestion has been adapted from the Code of Ethics, Big Brothers, Big Sisters Canada.

Professional Obligations

1. To regard the safety of the young people in our program as our primary professional duty.

2. To hold ourselves personally responsible for our professional conduct.

3. To maintain an objective, non-possessive, non-judgmental professional relationship with our volunteer mentors and mentees.

4. To adhere to the confidentiality of all records, material, and knowledge concerning the persons we serve and to use in a responsible manner the information obtained in the course of professional relationships.

5. To work cooperatively with other persons and agencies having respect for their areas of competence.

6. To not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, religion or sexual orientation.

7. To make a commitment to assess our personal and vocational strengths and limitations, biases and effectiveness.

8. We maintain the willingness and ability to recognise when it is in the best interest of those we serve to refer him/her to another program.

9. To take personal responsibility for continuing our professional growth through further education, supervision or training regardless of level of authority.

10. To be totally committed to providing the highest quality of care through our professional efforts and by utilising any other health professionals and/or services which may assist our mentees and their families generally.

Unprofessional Conduct

The following behaviour is deemed to be unworthy. A staff member is considered to have breached the Code of Ethics if they have:

1. without reasonable cause, witheld a service or failed to give information about availability of a service, or neglected to render or complete a professional service after undertaking to do so

2. failed to respect the privacy and dignity of a client through divulging confidential information without consent, except when required by professional or legal obligations

3. violated the legal rights of others

4. treated a client with disrespect

5. abused a position of authority or a professional relationship to the detriment of persons served or of colleagues

6. generally conducted themselves in a manner inconsistent with or in violation of, the statements contained under Professional Obligations

Resources

BBBS Canada www.bbbsc.ca

Dusseldorp Skills Forum www.dsf.org.au

Mentoring Australia National Benchmarks
www.dsf.org.au/mentor/benchmark

Victorian State Government (2005); **Strategic
Framework on Mentoring 2005-2008**

Youth Mentoring Network
www.youthmentoring.org.au

National Mentoring Partnership **How to
Build an Effective Mentoring Program
Using the Elements of Effective Practice,
www.mentoring.org**
(includes a comprehensive toolkit)

Department of Justice (2006) **Working with
Children Check**, www.justice.vic.gov.au

Australian Mentor Centre
www.australianmentorcentre.com.au

NRGize Mentoring Workshops
www.dsf.org.au/mentortraining

Washington State Mentoring Centre, Mentor
www.washingtonmentoring.org/toolkit/

National Mentoring Centre
www.nwrel.org/mentoring

Youth Justice Board for England and Wales,
**Mentoring – Key elements of effective
practice**, www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk

The Foundation for Young Australians, Sharp
C (2000) **Start Do It Yourself Evaluation
Manual**, www.youngaustralians.org

Community Toolbox **A Framework for
Program Evaluation: A Gateway to Tools**
http://ctb.ku.edu

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Appendix 1

Whole of Government Reference Group Membership 2006

Barbara Curzon-Siggers	Wellbeing Unit, Department of Education and Training
Leela Darvall	Group Manager, Post Compulsory Education, Department of Education and Training
Nigel D'Souza	Manager, Community Initiatives, Community Building & Information, Community Support Fund, Department for Victorian Communities
Gina Fiske	Principal Program Manager, Office for Youth, Department for Victorian Communities, Chair
Geoff Gook	Manager, Community Capacity Building, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, Department for Victorian Communities
Guy Hatfield	Senior Project Officer, Office for Youth, Department for Victorian Communities
Andrew Jackomos	Director, Indigenous & Diversity Issues, Department of Justice
Lisa Moore	Senior Project Officer, Indigenous & Diversity Issues, Department of Justice
David Riley	Manager, Youth Support Services, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, Office for Children, Department of Human Services
Tammy Sheedy	Senior Project Officer, Community Strengthening and Volunteering, Department for Victorian Communities
Jasmine Thompson	Manager Program Development, Office for Children, Department of Human Services
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