GRANT MAKERS IN HEALTH

YOUTH MENTORING

A Social Development Approach to Youth Health Promotion

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Foreword

On November 3, 1999, GIH convened a forum, co-sponsored with Grantmakers for Children, Youth and Families (GCYF), featuring grantmakers who have made major commitments to youth mentoring as a health promotion strategy as well as researchers and those operating programs in the field. Participants engaged in a lively and open exchange of ideas, experiences, and information about what grantmakers can do to support and improve such programs. This Issue Brief brings together key points from the day's discussion with factual information on youth mentoring and grantmaker activities drawn from a background paper prepared for Dialogue participants.

Special thanks are due to those who participated in the Issue Dialogue but especially to presenters and discussants: Fatima Angeles, Michele Booth Cole, Jean Grossman, Rebecca Hornbeck, Lori Mastromauro, Kathryn Taaffe McLearn, and Andrea Taylor. Christine Robinson, co-chair of GYCF, and Lauren LeRoy, president and CEO of GIH, co-chaired the meeting. We were also fortunate to have with us two young people, Olga Baez and Jetaria Taylor, who described their experiences as mentees. Their insights and poise impressed us all.

Judy Ford of GIH's staff planned the program and wrote the initial background paper. Mary Darby skillfully synthesized the background paper with points made at the meeting. Anne Schwartz of GIH also contributed to the final report. GIH also gratefully acknowledges The Commonwealth Fund for its support of this program, the third in a series of forums designed to bring grantmakers together with experts in policy, practice, and research to exchange information and ideas about key health issues.

About GIH

Grantmakers In Health's mission is to help foundations and corporate giving programs improve the nation's health. It works to build knowledge, skills, and effectiveness of individual grantmakers and the field of health philanthropy. It also seeks to foster communication and collaboration among grantmakers and to provide links with experts who can help grantmakers shape their programs.

GIH structures its programs to anticipate changes in the nation's health and health policy and help grantmakers respond to those changes. Its Resource Center on Health Philanthropy monitors the activities of health grantmakers and synthesizes lessons learned from their work. GIH's Resource Center includes a searchable database on the priorities, grants, and initiatives of foundations and corporate giving programs working in the health field.

In addition to its Resource Center, GIH has several special initiatives including its:

- Support Center for Health Foundations — Helping new health foundations develop effective programs, organizational structures, and operational styles
- Policy Programs — Building bridges between grantmakers and policymakers
- Partnerships for Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health — Working to foster collaborative efforts between grantmakers and the public sector to improve the health status and well-being of mothers, children, adolescents, and families.

GIH's services are designed for executives, staff, and trustees of foundations and corporate giving programs working in the health field. The organization serves the general health grantmaking community, develops targeted programs and activities for segments of this community, and provides customized services for individual funders. Specific activities include holding meetings (issue-focused forums, workshops, and large annual gatherings of grantmakers), providing education and training, tracking the field and conducting studies of health philanthropy, providing technical assistance on both programmatic and operational issues, making referrals to expert consultants, and brokering professional relationships.

Grantmakers In Health does not give grants or provide assistance in finding grants.

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Introduction

For most people, youth is a period of relatively good health. In fact, when health is defined based on the presence or absence of physical illness, youth fare well (Elster et al. 1992; Millstein et al. 1996). But when that definition is broadened to encompass emotional, social, and environmental health issues, significant health problems and unmet health needs of young people emerge (Millstein et al. 1996). Seventy percent of adolescent mortality and morbidity is related to six categories of behavior: injuries, drug and alcohol abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancies, diseases associated with tobacco use, illnesses resulting from inadequate physical activity, and problems related to inadequate diet. These problems pose serious threats to healthy development. Deaths from violence and complications of HIV infections are increasing. Rates of teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and drug use have either risen or remain high relative to rates in other countries (Kipke 1999).

Understanding the factors that lead to youth health problems is critical to the design of successful prevention and intervention strategies. Two insights are particularly important. First, problem behaviors (as well as those behaviors that enhance health) tend to cluster together and reinforce one another. For example, adolescents who drink and smoke are more likely to initiate sex earlier than their peers. This clustering suggests that by addressing the common roots of both positive and negative behaviors, healthy lifestyles can be fostered during adolescence (Kipke 1999).

Second, families, communities, and other institutions have a profound influence on adolescent behavior and development (National Research Council 1993). Because risk-related behaviors occur in a social context, these settings can help adolescents successfully navigate the transition from childhood to adulthood.

Recently, attempts have been made to strengthen adolescent health programs so that they recognize the interrelationships among youth health problems and the social context in which they occur. Many of these programs seek to address the whole young person, promoting positive youth development and life skills overall, rather than targeting a single health behavior or problem. These programs employ strategies and practices — such as mentoring, leadership development, and community service activity — that are not typical health promotion activities. The intent of these strategies, however, is to improve health and social development outcomes by addressing problems, not just their symptoms.

On November 3, 1999, Grantmakers In Health convened an Issue Dialogue to examine youth mentoring as a strategy for promoting healthy youth development. Youth mentoring is a strategy that addresses some of the roots of adolescent health problems, such as isolation and lack of adult supervision. It is based on a social development approach that fosters the development of competencies — including personal and social skills and self-confidence — by meeting needs for structure, relationships, independence, and opportunities to contribute to society. The goal is to ensure that youth have the skills and capacities to navigate the transition to adulthood successfully (Halperin et al. 1995). While the links between mentoring and health, education, and leadership development are not immediately obvious, youth mentoring has been shown to significantly affect outcomes related to health and social development (Sipe 1996; Tierney et al. 1995; Walker and Freedman 1996).

During the day-long Issue Dialogue, participants heard presentations from grantmakers who have made major commitments to youth mentoring as a health promotion strategy, as

well as from researchers and those operating programs in the field. Participants engaged in a lively and open exchange of ideas, experiences, and information about what grantmakers can do to support and improve such programs.

This Issue Brief draws on a background paper that was prepared for the Issue Dialogue and synthesizes the discussion at the meeting to provide more information on youth mentoring and explore what grantmakers can do to support it. The paper is divided into the following sections:

- a brief review of the relationship between youth mentoring and youth development, including a description of the contemporary social context that creates the need for increased adult-youth connections;
- a discussion of the various structures, goals, and elements of success of youth mentoring programs, as well as findings from recent research on youth mentoring programs;
- selected results of a 1998 survey of adult mentors conducted by The Commonwealth Fund that provides rare insights into the experiences and perceptions of people who have served as mentors;
- a description of several mentoring programs that were highlighted during the Issue Dialogue to illustrate how youth mentoring is put into practice; and
- a discussion of the challenges and opportunities for grantmakers to support youth mentoring as a health promotion strategy in their communities.

The Relationship Between Youth Development and Youth Mentoring

Formal youth mentoring began at the turn of the century with the precursor to today's Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BBSA) programs (Walker and Freedman 1996). In 1904, responding to the needs of children in New York City's juvenile justice and social welfare

ENGAGING SUPPORT FOR MENTORING

Community foundations frequently are in a unique position to convene local civic and advocacy groups in collaborative efforts on behalf of young people. Following a 1995 study by Public/Private Ventures that showed that dedicated, reliable mentors could make remarkable, positive impacts on the lives of young people, the Milwaukee Foundation decided it was high time to tap into the power of mentoring in a more organized and cooperative manner. At that time, there were many mentoring programs operating in Milwaukee - some formal, some less structured. All of them were struggling with issues like recruiting, screening, and developing standards for good mentoring.

From 1996 to 1998, with support from the Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth, the Foundation used the Sponsor-A-Scholar (SAS) mentoring model to restructure its scholarship funds, linking them with mentoring programs. SAS was begun in Philadelphia with support from The Commonwealth Fund. The Philadelphia Program, Philadelphia Futures, provides technical assistance to communities interested in adapting the model.

In 1997, the Foundation started Milwaukee Mentors in response to needs identified by their partners. Milwaukee Mentors is a collaboration of 14 area mentoring programs that focus on different age groups, different parts of the city, and different goals. They all agreed, however, on the importance of good mentoring - and on the benefits of collaboration. Together, they have developed a set of best practices and joint recruitment, marketing, screening, and ongoing training activities. The results: a boost not only in the number of volunteer mentors but also in the

systems, journalist Ernest Coulter called together a group of professionals and businessmen to "volunteer to be a youngster's big brother, to look after him, help him to do right, make the little chap feel that there is at least one human being in this great city ... who cares whether he lives or dies" (Walker and Freedman 1996). The purpose was not only to combat the effects that harsh institutional environments had on young people, but also to connect youth with adults in sustained, caring relationships — ones that could help young people reach beyond their current life circumstances to better options and opportunities.

A Focus on Promoting Healthy Growth

The thinking of Coulter and other early youth advocates reflects an understanding of what is now a central tenet of contemporary youth development theory: the importance of a caring, consistent, and sustained relationship between a young person and an adult who is committed to the youth's growth and development (Pittman and Irby 1996). Youth development theory focuses on that which is healthy and the methods and strategies that will promote and sustain healthy factors in a young person's life. Youth mentoring programs address problems not by targeting what is negative but by establishing, promoting, and sustaining healthy forces in young people's lives.

The Importance of Mentoring

The importance of mentoring relationships for youth has been well-documented in the literature and in the practice of youth health promotion and social development. In its concluding report on adolescent development, the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development found that many problem behaviors in adolescence have common antecedents in the childhood experience, including the absence of strong and sustained guidance from caring adults. The Council also found that what youth want from programs that serve them is the opportunity to participate in mentoring relationships with adults (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development 1997). Accordingly, the Council called on community organizations to connect youth with reliable adults who can offer them opportunities to learn, build a sense of worth, and make durable friendships.

Mentoring has also been hailed as a mediator of the difficult circumstances faced by youth growing up poor who may be especially vulnerable to threats against their development. For example, Williams and Kornblum (1985) note that among the many factors that affect whether teenagers will end up on the street corner or in a stable job, the most significant is the presence or absence of adult mentors. Similarly, sociologist William Julius Wilson (1990) argues that an adult role model can help keep alive the perception that education is meaningful, that steady employment is a viable alternative to welfare, and that family stability is the norm, not the exception. In further support of the idea that mentors can help disadvantaged youth realize their full potential, Levine and Nidiffer (1996) found that those who overcome poverty to reach college often have had one or more mentors who shepherded them across unfamiliar terrain. For these youth, mentoring can provide the added benefit of establishing a level of resiliency that means the difference between developmental success or failure.

Contemporary Society and the Need for Youth Mentoring

Understanding the problems and challenges that young people face today requires looking to recent social changes that directly affect the lives of youth. Mentors at the turn of the century focused on institutionalized youth who had little access to adults for guidance and support. Mentors today respond to that same need but in a different societal context.

The philosophy behind youth mentoring is developmental in its approach to youth problems.

Mentors can expand horizons for youth, enabling them to envision new possibilities by exposing them to opportunities and experiences they otherwise would not have had.

Changes in the Social Milieu

Changes in family structure, societal norms and pressures, economic access, and increased income disparity all affect the resources available to youth in the form of responsible adults to nurture and guide them. For example, changes in family structure and societal norms and pressures have contributed to the reduced presence of adults in American families. More than one in four children are born into a single-parent household; among African Americans, the estimate is two out of three. During the 1980s, the number of so-called no-parent households, where children are raised by grandparents, other relatives, or foster parents, doubled. (Walker and Freedman 1996). Economic issues have created a time famine among working adults. Regardless of the number of adults in the home or family income, working parents find it increasingly difficult to spend sufficient quality time with their children.

As a result of these circumstances, today's youth often find themselves in search of adult guidance outside the home. Other community institutions, such as schools, after-school programs, volunteer groups, and nonprofit organizations, have been called upon to fill the gap. In some cases, youth find their connections with adults on neighborhood streets. The problem with this scenario is clear. Youth-serving institutions such as schools are not typically structured to effectively compensate for all that may be missing in the lives of youth. In fact, many schools are so strapped for resources that they are struggling to meet their educational missions. In urban school districts where student-counselor ratios are as high as 500 to 1, classes include up to 40 students, and the average teacher faces almost 200 students in a single day, it is unlikely that many youth will find a beneficial and lasting adult connection with school staff (Elliott et al. 1998; Walker and Freedman 1996).

Threats to Youth Health and Social Development

Youth today face a bewildering array of threats to their health and their social development. More than half (56 percent) of teenage girls and nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of teenage boys have had sexual intercourse by their 18th birthday. Fewer than half (44 percent) use a condom, placing them and their partners at risk for pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV infection (Kaiser Family Foundation 1996). Half of all new HIV infections in the United States are among people under age 25 (CDC 1999). Violence also poses significant threats to the physical and psychosocial health and development of young people. In addition, because schools and neighborhoods, places that formerly were considered safe havens for youth, now suffer from violence, young people may feel less secure and safe. By age 15, 70 percent of adolescents have witnessed a physical assault and 33 percent have witnessed a shooting. In a survey of 2,000 students, one in eight reported carrying a weapon to school for protection, while one-third reported cutting classes or staying away from school regularly out of fear for their safety (Walker and Freedman 1996).

The impact of these events on the emotional stability of young people is reflected in data from a 1996 poll of youth conducted by Children's Institute International. Nearly half of students surveyed believed that their schools were becoming too violent, and one in ten reported that they were afraid of being shot or hurt by classmates who carried weapons to school. In addition, more than 20 percent said that they were afraid to go to the restrooms because students were frequently victimized there (Elliott et al. 1998).

Given this social context, many youth are without adult support at precisely the juncture in their lives when they need it the most (Walker and Freedman 1996). Mentors can enable youth to envision new possibilities by exposing

them to new opportunities and experiences. They can foster young people's competencies, encourage them to explore their interests, and help them understand how their actions today may affect their lives tomorrow. Perhaps most importantly, all youth need a responsible, trusted adult who is not a parent and who will listen to them and help them confront and solve their problems (Grossman 1999).

Mentoring should not be viewed as an intervention designed solely for disadvantaged youth. All youth, regardless of their background and socioeconomic status, are at risk for not reaching their full potential. Mentoring relationships can help them successfully navigate social and environmental threats.

Youth Mentoring: Structures, Goals, and Elements Of Success

The structure, goals, and strategies of youth mentoring programs vary across the diverse array of organizations that support such programming, including schools, corporations, universities, religious groups, volunteer/civic groups, national and local nonprofit youth-serving organizations, and federal agencies. While some of these programs have been designed to address a particular health or social development concern, most mentoring programs focus simply on providing young people with a mentor who is committed to their overall health and development. Indeed, mentors typically are not trained in drug prevention, remedial tutoring, anti-violence counseling, or family therapy. They are simply trained to be effective guides and friends to young people. With this in mind, the positive effects of mentoring relationships on academic and behavioral outcomes are even more impressive.

Structure of Mentoring Programs

There are two general structures for mentoring programs: one-on-one or team/group. One-on-one mentoring involves the establishment of an ongoing, committed relationship between one adult and one youth. These relationships typically are voluntary on both parts and involve time spent together on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis. That time may be spent on structured activities or more informally. The belief is

DIVERSITY IN MENTORING

Changing demographics in many communities raise issues of language and culture affecting mentoring programs. How important is it for adult mentors and youth to have similar racial or ethnic backgrounds, or to have the same primary language?

Reactions to this question during the Issue Dialogue were mixed. Some program operators felt that differences in ethnicity and race posed difficult challenges and that their communities were struggling with very real problems of racism and classism. Other program operators said that diversity training for mentors can minimize this problem (Mastromauro 1999). Mentors, Inc., which serves an increasingly Latino population in Washington, DC, tries to partner with community organizations that work with Latino professionals and social service workers, so that its mentor pool is more diverse (Cole 1999).

The experience of Across Ages, a school-based intergenerational mentoring program in Philadelphia, indicates that mentors' attitudes toward youth are more important than differences in race, ethnic background, or even age. Youth interviewed by program operators said that what they want most in mentors is someone they can talk to, someone who will listen to them, and someone who is not afraid to come to their neighborhoods (Taylor 1999).

that by establishing trust and consistency with the young person, the adult can serve not only as a friend, but also as a source of support, information, and guidance. One-on-one mentoring is the most common mentoring structure.

Team mentoring fuses the strengths of traditional one-on-one mentoring with the power of group dynamics. This mentoring structure responds to the limited pool of adults who volunteer as mentors and the substantial number of youth in need. In this structure, teams of adult mentors work with a small group of youth, providing them with a community of caring relationships. Team mentoring allows young people to build relationships with more than one adult, and encourages young people who are being mentored to teach and learn from one another. Through the group dynamics of team mentoring, youth benefit from more structured opportunities to learn skills such as leadership development, group interaction, team building, and peer mentoring.

Goals of Mentoring Programs

Four basic types of goals — career, educational, general social development, and intergenerational - form the foundations for most mentoring programs.

Career Development. Programs focused on career development seek to address the social, educational, and early professional development of older youth. As youth grow older, they often become more disconnected from traditional youth-serving institutions, which may not be able to effectively serve their increasing needs for support in becoming productive and independent citizens. At this time, older youth are in need of educational and vocational guidance. Career mentoring programs match a young person with an adult in a professional field of interest. This relationship may be informal; the adult serves as a friend and provides information on career options and educational choices. In a more structured relationship, the young person shadows the adult mentor at work, gaining hands-on experience to better understand that career option. Career mentoring programs can help young people establish and achieve academic and career goals, complete high school and gain admission to college, explore career opportunities, and develop work experience. These programs typically are associated with middle and secondary schools, colleges and universities, and businesses or corporations (Johnson et al. 1998; Sipe 1996).

Educational Development. These programs focus on academic achievement, cultural and civic development, or career learning. Educational development programs provide more than tutoring assistance; they seek to increase the engagement of youth in the academic experience by helping establish and meet educational goals, apply and get into postsecondary institutions, and make the most of higher learning experiences. In addition, these programs incorporate learning in other areas, such as culture and the arts, civic responsibility and community service, and career exploration and preparation. Mentoring relationships tend to be informal. Most of these programs are associated with youth-serving, nonprofit organizations, middle and secondary schools, colleges and universities, and private businesses.

General Social Development. Programs whose focus is general social development have a broad goal of establishing and maintaining caring, supportive relationships between youth and adults. In these typically informal relationships, adults play a variety of roles including friend, tutor, educational and career advisor, counselor, recreational companion, and surrogate parent. These mentoring programs may take on the structure of either the one-on-one or team mentoring relationship. Most of these programs are associated with youth-serving, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, or faith-based groups.

Intergenerational. These mentoring programs bridge the generation gap by bringing together older adults (55 years and older) and youth. They seek to accomplish two goals: to engage older adults in productive activity through community service and connection with young people, and to provide young people with the opportunity to connect with and learn from the life experience of older adults. In addition, intergenerational programs help to advance the concept of generativity — the need for older adults to transmit their knowledge and experience from one generation to another (LoSciuto et al. 1996). The steadily increasing population of older adults, many of whom seek to be actively engaged in their retirement years, represents an untapped resource that may be effective in supporting the healthy growth and development of young people. Although intergenerational mentoring programs are unique in their strategy of connecting older adults with youth, they are similar to other types of mentoring programs. Intergenerational mentoring programs may focus on career, educational, or general social development. These programs are typically one-on-one in structure and are associated with a variety of youth-serving, nonprofit organizations and educational institutions. Organizations that serve the needs of older adults are another venue for intergenerational mentoring programs.

PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR INFORMAL MENTORS

Most mentoring takes place informally, outside the parameters of structured programs. A 1998 survey by The Commonwealth Fund found that 83 percent of adults who have mentored within the past five years did so through informal contact. A mentor can be virtually anyone — a teacher, neighbor, coach, family friend, or a relative — who takes the time to develop a meaningful and consistent relationship with a young person in the hope of having a positive impact on that person's life.

The Commonwealth Fund survey found few differences between formal and informal mentors in terms of socioeconomic status, gender, and education. Informal mentors, however, seemed to maintain their relationships with their mentees for a longer period of time. Few informal mentors were relatives of their mentees; most met their mentees through community organizations, like churches or Little League teams (McLearn 1999).

About one-third of informal mentors who responded to The Commonwealth Fund's survey said they would have benefited from some type of ongoing support or technical assistance (McLearn 1999). This raises an interesting question: How can foundations -— especially foundations working at the community level — reach out to informal mentors and provide support if they want it?

Several foundations are trying to answer this question. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, for example, is testing strategies for helping informal volunteers in three cities. The idea is to find out whether a foundation can either create an entity or link with existing organizations and remove barriers for informal mentors. Potential barriers include lack of training for mentors and competition for facilities in schools and other indoor and outdoor sites to conduct youth activities (Morris 1999).

Kansas Health Foundation is trying to change social awareness and behavior to promote informal mentoring. Having conducted a statewide media campaign to increase awareness of the importance of adults in young people's lives, the Foundation is now trying to promote changes in adult-youth interaction through a program called Simple Acts. The goal is to

Elements of Effective Programs

Mentoring programs are only as good as the relationships that they help develop. If a mentoring program does not promote healthy relationships between mentors and mentees, it is not a good program (Grossman 1999). Effectiveness, however, depends on a number of factors, including characteristics of the mentors, presence of certain program structures and support, ongoing supervision, and commitment to a relationship over time (Sipe 1996).

Foundations should seek to support grant requests for mentoring programs that screen for or train mentors to employ characteristics of effective mentoring. Effective programs have mentors who:

- recognize the importance of building trust, commit to the gradual process of trust-building, and focus their attention on becoming a friend to their mentee;
- involve youth in deciding how the pair will spend time together;
- commit to being consistent and dependable while maintaining a steady presence in the youth's life;
- take responsibility for keeping the relationship alive even if the young person seems unresponsive;
- pay attention and respond to the young person's need to have fun, recognizing that fun is key to relationship building for youth;
- respect the young person's viewpoint; and
- seek and use the help and advice of the mentoring program's staff (Sipe 1996).

Certain program structures and support - including screening, training, and ongoing supervision and support — are essential to effective mentoring programs (Sipe 1996). Building an effective mentoring relationship takes time and can be difficult; for that reason, programs should employ screening practices that assess each adult's ability to commit to the time necessary for the relationship, and his or her ability to be an effective mentor.

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Training and support services are also critical to effective mentoring programs. Training programs vary in focus from informing volunteers about program policies and procedures to mentor skills development and youth development theory. The amount and type of formal training provided depend upon the objectives of the mentoring program, the needs of the population being served, and the experience and skills of the mentors. It is critical for mentors and mentees to have realistic expectations about the relationships that they are entering and to understand the rules and parameters of those relationships. In particular, mentors need to recognize that it takes time to develop a trusting relationship with their mentees and that this process, which may feel awkward at first, should not discourage them.

Ongoing supervision and regular meetings of mentor support groups allow mentors to benefit from the experience and expertise of program staff and of their more experienced peers. This in turn helps to reinforce the skills and motivation of the mentor, promoting a more successful mentoring relationship. This is especially important during the first three months of the relationship, when the mentor and mentee are just getting to know each other.

The positive effects of mentoring increase over time, and take at least six months to become apparent. This difference becomes more pronounced at about nine months and even more so at a year. Some researchers believe that the minimum length of a mentoring relationship should be a school year (Grossman 1999), while The Commonwealth Fund survey found that two years is the ideal length for a mentoring relationship (McLearn 1999). One mentoring program profiled in this report, Mentors, Inc., requires mentors to make a commitment to

maintain the mentoring relationship for the duration of their mentees' high school careers (Cole 1999). Other programs may extend the relationship even further, so that mentees have the support of their mentors during college.

Researchers have identified two basic indicators that can be used to assess mentoring programs. The first is the number of matches that last less then three months. If that number is high, the mentoring program is probably not meeting its mission. Matches that end in less than three months can have lasting negative effects on young people, who may view the experience as a personal rejection. The second indicator is the average length of the program's matches. Longer matches are more likely to reflect beneficial and effective mentoring relationships (Grossman 1999).

Program success also requires adequate resources and support. When assessing mentoring programs and grant requests, foundations should determine whether the appropriate organizational structures and services are in place to promote effective mentoring. If not, foundation support could focus on strengthening the structure of the program so that investment in it will be more likely to produce positive outcomes for youth health and social development.

Through Mentors' Eyes: Findings From A 1998 Survey

There is relatively little systematic information about the impact of mentoring activities, the mentoring experience, the types of youth in mentoring relationships, the extent and variety of mentoring activities, the characteristics of adults who are most likely to volunteer as mentors, and the features of successful mentoring relationships. To shed light on these and other issues related to mentoring, The Commonwealth Fund commissioned Princeton Survey Research Associates to conduct The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People. This nationwide survey included 1,504 adults age 18 or older who reported mentoring a youth other than their own child during the past five years. Findings from this survey offer the first national overview of the experiences of mentors, as well as their perceptions of youth involved in mentoring relationships (McLearn et al. 1998).

Mentors report that they believe mentoring works, and that they have helped solve or prevented problems for a young person. Whether in formal, structured mentoring programs or in relationships through informal family, church, or neighborhood connections, most mentors believed that they have had a positive impact on young people's lives. Nearly all (84 percent) would be likely to mentor again. Almost all (91 percent) say they would recommend mentoring to a friend.

Mentors' perceptions of their mentees reflect many concerns about the problems that young people face. Nearly half of youths being mentored live in families that are struggling financially. Fewer than half of mentored youth are growing up in two-parent families. Thirty percent live in single-parent families, while 11 percent were not living with any parent during the mentoring relationship. Mentors report that four of five youths being mentored have one or more of 12 problems investigated by the survey, including:

- negative feelings about themselves (55 percent),
- poor relationships with family members (49 percent),
- poor school grades (42 percent),

Matches that end in less than three months can have lasting negative effects on young people, who may view the experience as a personal rejection.

- hanging out with the wrong crowd (41 percent), and
- getting into trouble at school (36 percent).

Mentors say that they feel they have been most effective in alleviating young people's negative feelings about themselves (62 percent). They also believe that they have had a significant positive influence in helping youth address problems with skipping school (52 percent), poor grades (48 percent), getting into trouble in school (49 percent) or out of school (47 percent), or substance abuse (45 percent).

Several factors were found to improve mentoring relationships:

- Mentoring relationships that last at least two years are more likely to have a positive influence on young people's lives. Compared with shorter-term relationships, mentors in relationships that last at least two years are more likely to help solve or avert problems for young people.
- Mentoring relationships are more successful when the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and offers guidance to the young person. Leading activities reported by the majority of mentors include teaching social skills (83 percent), standing up for youth when in trouble (75 percent), providing cultural or social experiences (71 percent), exposing youth to the mentor's own work (68 percent), career introductions (62 percent), and teaching job-related skills (54 percent). Nearly half of mentors say they spend significant time talking with young people about personal problems or issues.
- Young people in difficult life circumstances benefit more when mentors are 50 or older, introduce them to other people who can help them, and spend four or more hours per month with them in telephone conversations.

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Most adults (83 percent) carry out their mentoring activities through informal connections within their neighborhoods, families, or church. About one in six mentors (17 percent) has been part of a formal, structured program, conducted mainly through a university, school, or church. More than one-quarter of mentors say they were in a program sponsored by their employer. Mentors are more likely than adults who have never mentored to be college-educated, have a higher family income, and to have had a mentor when they were growing up.

The survey's findings suggest several strategies for recruiting future generations of mentors:

- Given the high rate of adults who mentor and volunteer in other community activities, mentoring recruitment efforts could reach out to adults who volunteer in activities such as Sunday schools, organized sports, scouting groups, and academic tutoring programs.
- Increasing the number of employer-sponsored mentoring programs offers another recruitment strategy, especially for community-based foundations.
- Information about mentors themselves provides clues for how to locate additional adult mentors. Mentors tend to be college educated, have higher incomes, and to have had a mentor themselves. In addition, current mentors can be valuable recruitment resources and ambassadors for recruiting people in their communities (McLearn 1999).

In summary, the survey results indicate that mentoring makes a difference for youth and that mentors value their relationships and experiences with young people. The challenge is to reach a larger proportion of youth by recruiting more adults to share their time, experience, and compassion with young people.

Youth Mentoring: Sample Programs and Their Impact

Following is a description of several mentoring programs that were highlighted during the Issue Dialogue. These programs provide examples of the four program types - career, educational, intergenerational, and general social development. In addition, most of these programs have been evaluated for their impact on youth.

The Hospital Youth Mentoring Project

The Hospital Youth Mentoring Project (HYMP) addresses the fundamental question of how community organizations - hospitals, in this instance - can use mentoring as a strategy for steering young people in poor communities toward productive futures (McLearn 1999). Launched in 1994 as a national demonstration program initially funded by The Commonwealth Fund, the HYMP matches urban, at-risk students of low academic achievement with mentors from community hospitals throughout the country (McClanahan et al. 1998). Its goal is to help at-risk students complete high school and make the transition to postsecondary education or work. Based at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, the program was designed to get hospitals more involved in their communities by helping to educate their future work force through mentoring programs for low-income youth. Mentors provide youth with career guidance and work experience through job shadowing or internships. In addition, the project provides student participants with hospital tours, supplemental educational and career workshops, and, in some programs, paid employment opportunities.

Initially, the HYMP involved the pairing of 15 community hospitals with their local school or school district to provide one-on-one mentoring between a hospital employee and a student in need of extra support and guidance. Hospitals were encouraged to design their programs according to the needs of their communities. Each hospital developed a plan for how it would serve young people, establish linkages with schools, provide one-on-one mentoring,

The Hospital Youth Mentoring Project was designed to get hospitals more involved in their communities by helping to educate their future work force through mentoring programs for low-income youth.

MENTORING PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR A STUDENT WITH ASPIRATIONS

To Olga Baez, participating in the New York City Mentoring Program (NYCMP) was an opportunity she could not pass up. An 11th grade student at Theodore Roosevelt High School in the Bronx, Olga says her mentor, Violet, from Chase Manhattan Bank, has made a tremendous difference in her life — helping her with schoolwork and, more importantly, giving of her time and wisdom. "Violet is like my second mom," says Olga. "She has provided me with the opportunity to be more responsible, and has made our friendship fun and interesting. She has also helped me to feel more independent, which makes me feel better about myself."

Olga was born in the Dominican Republic and moved to the United States in 1992. At school, Olga is a member of the debate team, a captain in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Course, secretary of the student government, and a member of the honor league society. Olga notes that her mother and grandmother have worked hard to prepare her for life; she feels that it is up to her to take advantage of every opportunity that comes her way. "Being a mentee," she says, "was an opportunity that I could not miss." She is currently in her second year of participating in the NYCMP with Violet.

As for her future, Olga says that she plans to become a child psychologist. In that way, she explains, she can "help other kids as someone to share their feelings with, just like a mentor

and eventually link mentoring with career development activities (McLearn 1999). Each program, however, was required to match at least 50 students with hospital employees as mentors. Most hospitals recruited mentors from their professional and managerial staff, although one recruited medical students. Volunteers were required to make a commitment to mentor their students through high school graduation. Mentors received training prior to engaging in the mentoring relationship and were supported throughout the process with periodic mentor meetings, support groups, and roundtable discussions (McClanahan 1998). Since its inception, the HYMP has served more than 2,000 youth, 96 percent of whom have continued on to college, either full time or part time (McLearn 1999).

A Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) study of the HYMP examined the nature and content of the relationships that developed between the mentors and the mentees. Earlier research found that the most enduring and effective mentoring relationships are those that are loosely structured allowing, above all else, the gradual and informal development of trust between the mentor and mentee. The study found, however, that, despite the structured program and focus on outcomes, HYMP mentors were able to develop successful relationships with their youth (McClanahan 1998). In addition, the study found that the provision of mentor support and training through group mentor meetings was particularly effective in the development of successful mentoring relationships. Mentors who received more hours of formal training or attended more support group meetings had longer relationships with their mentees, provided them with more career guidance, and engaged them in more social and preparatory activities (McClanahan 1998).

Hospitals found that they also have benefited from the program. Mentoring improved employee morale, expanded the hospital's part-time employee pool because mentees frequently decided they wanted to work at the hospital, and brought mentees' parents and families into the hospital's health care system. Of the 15 hospitals that were part of The Commonwealth Fund's initial grant program, 11 continue to operate mentoring programs on their own. Hopkins is currently investigating how it can reach out to other hospitals and encourage them to start or expand their own mentoring programs (McLearn 1999).

The New York City Mentoring Program

Established in 1983, the New York City Mentoring Program (NYCMP) is funded by New York City's Board of Education and managed by the Board's Office of Community Relations. It is the largest mentoring program of its kind operated by a board of education in a city system, with 50 participating New York City high schools and 56 partnering organizations (Mastromauro 1999). The NYCMP also receives substantial support, in the form of donations, from partnering organizations throughout the city that supply mentors for the program (Johnson et al. 1998). Partnering organizations include local businesses, corporations, university alumni groups, professional associations, and government agencies. Each organization is paired with a high school, and volunteer mentors are recruited, trained, and matched on a one-to-one basis with a student of the same sex.

The purpose of the program is to expand the cultural awareness, educational and economic opportunities, and increase the self-esteem of disadvantaged youth in New York City's public high schools (Johnson et al. 1998). The specific objectives of the NYCMP are to:

- provide opportunities for academic achievement through assistance with homework, SAT preparation, and the college application process;
- increase cultural enrichment through expo-

sure to cultural and arts institutions and events in New York City;

- promote civic responsibility through participation in community service projects; and
- create opportunities for career exploration and preparation through identification of career goals and options and mentor apprenticeships (Johnson et al. 1998).

The Office of Community Relations is responsible for coordinating with participating high schools and partnering organizations to match the mentors with their student mentees. Each participating school appoints one or more school coordinators, and each partnering organization identifies a mentor coordinator. School coordinators recruit students, obtain parental permission for students to participate in the program, meet with students for two hours a month in mentee group meetings, and monitor students' relationships with their mentors to ensure that they are making progress in meeting their goals. Coordinators for the partnering organizations work with the Office of Community Relations to recruit volunteers, set up training sessions, and administer a five-page mentor questionnaire that collects background information and is used to match mentors with students. Together, coordinators from the schools and the partnering organizations establish mentoring pairs and plan mentoring activities (Mastromauro 1999).

Each group of mentors receives a three-hour training session facilitated by New York City

LESSONS FOR SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

Following are lessons for running successful mentoring programs gleaned during the Issue Dialogue:

- *Nurturing, caring, and consistent relationships are the key to successful mentoring programs.*
- *The process used to match adults and youth is critical; it should take into consideration young people's career, academic, and outside interests.*
- *A developmental rather than a prescriptive approach to mentoring works best (Taylor 1999).*
- *Try to engage parents and make them comfortable with mentoring. A parent who feels threatened by a mentor may undermine the mentoring relationship (Taylor 1999).*
- *Young people need help achieving their aspirations - not salvation. Mentors need to recognize the potential of youth and not focus merely on their problems or difficulties (Cole 1999).*
- *Program activities are an important lure to get young people into mentoring programs. Program operators need to be resourceful and creative in planning and marketing their activities for young people, and they need to vary them from year to year (Cole 1999).*
- *Take advantage of electronic media technology to recruit volunteers, advertise your program, and communicate with program participants. It's cheap and easy to do (Cole 1999).*
- *Plug into other community service organizations, so that you are not replicating services. This will also enhance your ability to provide referrals for youth when they need them (Taylor 1999; Cole 1999).*
- *Young people and adults don't necessarily work well together at first. While these relationships are developing, they may require significant technical and skills-building assistance (Angeles 1999).*
- *Engaging young people in community activities often brings in their parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and other family members (Angeles 1999).*
- *Be creative and be brave. A program funded by the Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation to combat gangs formed an automobile racing club for teens. A boy in the club complained that members of his gang were threatening him because of his involvement in the program. His*

Mentoring Program staff before beginning the mentoring relationship. This training defines their responsibilities and reviews appropriate conduct and activities for the mentoring relationship. Once the training is complete, each school sponsors a 'kick-off meeting' to introduce the mentors and mentees. Each mentor is required to commit at least one year to the mentoring relationship (Johnson et al. 1998).

Mentors meet with their mentees for at least one hour per week or two hours bi-weekly. In addition, mentees receive support throughout the school year from the school coordinators at regular mentee group meetings. At these meetings, the objectives of the mentor/mentee relationship are clarified and reinforced. Likewise, the mentor coordinators organize periodic group debriefing meetings for the mentors in their organization. These meetings help to provide ongoing peer training and support for the mentors (Johnson et al. 1998).

Like other mentoring programs, the NYCMP is designed to help mentors and mentees get to know each other, build trust, share their experiences, and have fun. The student's interests drive the relationship; the mentor pursues those interests with the student and, in doing so, tries to help the student set goals and solve problems.

In mentor debriefing meetings, some mentors have said that they believe that much of what they do revolves around helping young people process their lives (Mastromauro 1999).

Because of the tremendous commitment and support of the NYCMP from its partnering organizations, many graduating seniors receive scholarships and an end-of-the year celebration and banquet for program coordinators where certificates of appreciation are awarded usually takes place. In recognition of 15 years of mentoring achievement, the NYCMP was awarded the National Excellence in Mentoring Award for Program Leadership by the National Mentoring Partnership, a national organization that advocates for the expansion of mentoring and serves as a resource for mentors and mentoring initiatives (Johnson et al. 1998).

Survey results indicate that the NYCMP is having positive effects on student academic performance, motivation, self-confidence, job skills, and college preparation. A 1996-97 survey of 126 mentors found improvements in mentees':

- academic performance (34 percent),
- school attendance (9 percent),
- self-confidence (87 percent),

MAKING FRIENDS ACROSS AGES

"Having a mentor," says Jetaria Taylor, "is like having an old friend." Jetaria, 12, is a seventh-grade student at Beaver Middle School in Philadelphia who enjoys bowling with her older mentor (even though, Jetaria confides, she is the better bowler), as well as shopping, skating, going to basketball and baseball games, getting ice cream, and just talking. Jetaria's mentor also helps her with her homework and takes her to the library and local bookstore. Jetaria and her mentor were paired through the Across Ages Intergenerational Mentoring Program.

"At the end of the year, we talk about things that happened throughout the school year," Jetaria explains. "We talk about solving conflicts without fighting, and ... we come together to do a survey on drugs and different things. And after that, we get paid" — a reference to the $5 compensation that Across Ages pays children to fill out an evaluation survey for the program.

Jetaria says that, despite the difference in their ages, she and her mentor have a lot in common. They joke around, talk on the phone, and go out every Monday. But mostly, she says, they just have fun.

- motivation (74 percent),
- college preparation (62 percent), and
- job skills (36 percent) (Johnson et al. 1998).

Students viewed the program favorably as well. Of 393 mentees surveyed in 1996-97, 97 percent reported that they found the program successful, and 74 percent said that they wanted to participate again. Of the remaining 103 students, 75 percent could not participate again because they were graduating seniors, but said they would participate if they were still in high school. Finally, 13 percent reported that they could not continue to participate because of circumstances such as moving or conflicts such as after-school jobs (Johnson et al. 1998).

Program officials say that interest and commitment from all sides of the partnership - participating high schools, partnering organizations, mentors, and students - are responsible for making it successful. Particularly important are the roles played by the coordinators at the schools and at the partnering organizations. Likewise, students must want to participate in the program if they are to benefit from it - a prescriptive or mandatory approach will not work. Finally, adequate resources are needed to support the program, provide training for mentors, plan group events, and evaluate the program (Mastromauro 1999).

Across Ages Intergenerational Mentoring Program

Launched in 1991 as a five-year demonstration project of the Center for Intergenerational Learning at Temple University in Philadelphia, the Across Ages Intergenerational Mentoring Program was designed to test the effectiveness of intergenerational mentoring as a drug use prevention strategy. This research-based mentoring initiative pairs older adults (55 years or older) on a one-on-one basis with at-risk middle-school youth. Mentors provide positive, nurturing role models for children, and the social bonding between mentor and mentee serves as a protective factor against drug use.

The Across Ages Program was designed to achieve the following goals:

- improve school attendance and increase academic competence;
- increase knowledge about and negative attitudes toward alcohol and tobacco use;
- boost adolescents' self-esteem, problem-solving skills, and positive social support networks;
- generate supportive parent involvement in classroom and project activities; and
- foster collaboration among the youth, aging, and educational services.

Mentors are required to commit at least one year to the mentoring relationship and to spend at least four hours per week in one-on-one activities with their mentee. As a school-based initiative, Across Ages places the mentoring relationship within the context of other program services to reinforce a broad range of protective factors that may keep youth away from drugs. The program has three additional components:

- youth engaged in community service activities, such as visiting elderly residents in nursing homes;
- teachers who are trained to implement a classroom-based life skills curriculum designed to reinforce young people's social competence; and
- regular weekend and evening events that bring together youth, their family members, and mentors in positive recreational activities.

An evaluation of the Across Ages program found that, relative to comparison groups, mentored youth, especially those with highly involved mentors, experienced:

Mentoring program operators say that they are looking for volunteers who are good listeners and nonjudgmental and who can participate effectively in collaborative problem solving and goal setting.

- improved school attendance and bonding with school, adults, and their community;
- larger gains in their knowledge about the risks and consequences of substance use;
- greater increases in negative attitudes toward alcohol and tobacco use; and
- enhanced ability to respond appropriately to situations involving drug use (LoSciuto et al. 1996).

Key to the program's success is a rigorous screening process for mentors who are interviewed and subjected to an intensive background check. In addition, all mentors must participate in two days of preservice training. Program operators say that they are looking for people who are good listeners and nonjudgmental and who can participate effectively in collaborative problem solving and goal setting. Pairing is done through a series of workshops, during which older adults and children get to know each other before the matches are made. After entering the program, mentors participate in monthly in-service meetings (Taylor 1999).

Initially funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), this unique program targets middle school youth in Philadelphia public schools. The program reaches approximately 180 students each year and has supported more than 700 youth since its inception. Across Ages has achieved national recognition for its work in effectively mentoring youth. In 1997, the program was recognized as one of 50 Presidential Teaching Examples at the President's Summit on Volunteerism. In 1999, it was recognized by CSAP as a National Dissemination Model Program and given the Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Program Award. A program development manual has been prepared to facilitate replication of this program in other cities.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America

Started more than 90 years ago, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BB/BSA) is the oldest and best known mentoring program in the country. BB/BSA is a national network of more than 500 local agencies created to support one-on-one mentoring relationships between adult volunteers and disadvantaged youth, particularly those youth living in single parent households (Tierney et al. 1995). Its approach to mentoring is both intensive and comprehensive. Mentors and mentees are required to commit at least one year to the mentoring relationship. Mentoring pairs agree to meet two to four times per month, with each meeting lasting about four hours. And, unlike other mentoring programs that focus on a particular health or behavioral outcome, the BB/BSA mentoring programs seek to promote the general growth and overall development of the young person (Sipe 1996; Tierney et al. 1995).

BB/BSA programs maintain approximately 75,000 matches nationwide each year. These matches are organized by local BB/BSA agencies which operate by a set of national standards and procedures to create effective and sustainable matches (Sipe 1996; Tierney et al. 1995; Walker and Freedman 1996). Local agencies customize their programs to fit the needs, resources, and circumstances of their communities. National standards and procedures help to provide a level of uniformity and consistency in mentor screening, recruitment, training, and supervision; and mentor/mentee pair matching (Tierney et al. 1995). Implementing these standards and procedures is time consuming and costly, amounting to about $1,000 per match. The standards also provide the framework for significant, ongoing support services designed to maintain and nurture the mentoring relationship. BB/BSA mentor pairs also benefit from the resources and expertise of a national organization that has been creating and supporting

youth mentoring programs for nearly a century (Sipe 1996; Tierney et al. 1995).

In an effort to produce evidence of the effectiveness of mentoring programs, Public/Private Ventures examined the impact of the BB/BSA mentoring program. A comparative study was conducted of 959 youth, ages 10 to 16, who applied to BB/BSA programs in 1992 and 1993. Half of the group were randomly assigned to receive mentors; the other half were randomly assigned to waiting lists. The two groups were compared after 18 months. The study found that mentored youth, compared with nonmentored youth:

- were 46 percent less likely to start using drugs (and mentored minority youth were 70 percent less likely than nonmentored minority youth to start using drugs);
- were 27 percent less likely to start using alcohol, with minority females about half as likely to start alcohol use;
- were 33 percent less likely to hit someone;
- skipped half as many days of school, felt more competent about doing school work, skipped fewer classes, and showed modest gains in their grade-point averages (gains were strongest among females, especially minority females);
- had better relationships with their parents (this effect was strongest for white males); and
- showed improved relationships with their peers (this effect was strongest among minority males) (Tierney et al. 1995).

Although these results cannot be applied to all mentoring programs, it is important to note that the health-related and other social development-related outcomes of the BB/BSA evaluation were obtained with mentors who were not trained in drug prevention, academic tutoring, violence prevention strategies, or family and youth counseling (Walker and Freedman 1996).

The Sponsor-a-Scholar Program

The Sponsor-a-Scholar Program (SAS) is a nine-year-old mentoring program that matches low-income, academically promising young people with sponsors and adult volunteers interested in providing youth with long-term mentoring relationships, academic assistance, and scholarship support for college. The program (with funding from several grantmakers, including the Annie E. Casey, Annenberg, William Penn, Nelson, and Horace Goldsmith Foundations; The Pew Charitable Trusts; and The Commonwealth Fund) has assisted more than 500 low-income Philadelphia high school students. The program incorporates mentoring with support services to encourage academic success, cultural enrichment, college enrollment, tuition assistance, and management of scholarship dollars. The program also provides training and guidance to the volunteer mentors, most of whom commit to personally donating scholarship dollars for the mentored students. Through the work of Philadelphia Futures, the affiliate of the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition that developed the SAS program and provides managerial and administrative support, SAS has become firmly established throughout Philadelphia as an effective mentoring program supported by public/private partnerships.

The SAS approach to educational mentoring involves the development and support of one-on-one mentoring relationships; collecting and managing funds for college-related expenses; and program support services. Mentors are matched with students in the ninth grade and are required to commit to the mentoring relationship through at least the first year of college. Mentors receive training and ongoing support services throughout the mentoring relationship. Many mentors serve as financial sponsors or are employed by institutions that serve as financial sponsors. Sponsors contribute up to $7,500 to

The Wellness Village Projects initiative views youth as important resources for developing and building their communities in ways that benefit people of all ages.

support student expenses over the course of their college career (of which $1,500 is used for SAS program activities while the student is in high school). In addition to mentoring and assistance with college-related expenses, SAS students receive a year-round curriculum of academic skill building and enrichment, homework help, college preparation activities, and cultural opportunities. Special programming is also provided for parents and mentors of SAS students to develop a web of support for their social and educational development.

An evaluation by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., found that students in the SAS program had higher grade-point averages and their chances of attending college were significantly higher than a comparison group of students not in the program. SAS students were more likely to enroll in SAT preparation courses, collect information on financial aid for college, and attend four-year colleges. Students whose mentors communicated with them at least once a week and knew their families well did better academically and were more likely to attend college than other SAS program students. The evaluation also showed that the SAS program had the largest impact on students who began the program with the fewest resources - that is, those students from the least supportive families, who attended the poorest performing schools, and who began the program with the lowest grade-point averages and motivation (Johnson et al. 1998).

Building on the success of the SAS program, and with funding support from The Commonwealth Fund and technical assistance from Philadelphia Futures, The Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth has worked with community foundations in five cities throughout the country to replicate the SAS program. In addition, the Coalition serves as a national source of assistance for other community foundations seeking to adopt the SAS model.

The Wellness Village Projects

The Wellness Village Projects, a component of The California Wellness Foundation's Children and Youth Community Health Initiative, are broad-based community health improvement efforts located in 10 communities throughout California. They began in 1997 with a planning grant from The California Wellness Foundation and, in 1999, each of the 10 communities received more than $1 million to implement their Wellness Villages over three and a half years. The purpose of these projects is to improve community health by engaging children and youth in activities that transform their social, physical, and chemical environment. This initiative views youth as important resources for developing and building their communities in ways that benefit people of all ages (Angeles 1999).

Each Wellness Village has an advisory committee on which youth serve side by side with adult residents, members of community-based associations, and service providers. This committee provides leadership for the Wellness Village community by making decisions about community health improvements and designing and implementing community health projects. These projects vary; for example, one site is doing a community gardening project. Others are involved in health education programs around issues like smoking, lead toxicity, and gambling (Angeles 1999).

The initiative also includes an academic support component. Each community is required to partner with a college or university. The objective is to establish long-term links between academic institutions and their local communities, so that resources and ideas are shared. Informal mentoring frequently occurs here. For example, one Wellness Village partnership supports an internship program where community youth are paired with graduate students (Angeles 1999).

Mentoring is viewed as an important way to build relationships among youth and adults in communities, tap into existing resources, and strengthen social networks to improve health outcomes. For young people, mentoring also promotes skill development, generosity of spirit, independence, and a sense of community involvement. The mentoring programs are proving more difficult to implement than other aspects of the projects, especially when it comes to recruiting volunteers in smaller communities. The Foundation has asked the ten communities to approach existing mentoring programs, such as their local Big Brothers/Big Sisters chapters or neighborhood YMCAs and YWCAs, to take advantage of their expertise and knowledge. The goal is to foster one-on-one adult-youth relationships that are informal yet help develop each young person's leadership potential. The mentor/mentee pairs can also work on a variety of community projects and activities together (Angeles 1999).

Mentors, Inc.

Founded in 1987, Mentors, Inc., is a private, nonprofit organization that promotes the academic, career, and personal development of public high school students in the District of Columbia through mentoring and other enrichment activities. The program's primary goal is to ensure that students graduate from high school and have a concrete plan for their futures after high school. By fostering one-on-one mentoring relationships, Mentors, Inc., provides young people who are trying to take advantage of the resources available to them with additional support in the form of caring, committed adult mentors. Mentors are viewed not as the solution to a young person's problems, but as one component of a support network that pro-

MENTORING FOR HIGH-RISK AND ADJUDICATED YOUTH

Working with the highest-risk youth - those who have been incarcerated for criminal offenses - is one of the toughest challenges for any mentoring program. These young people have the greatest need for a responsible and caring adult in their lives, yet they are often the most difficult to work with.

The California Wellness Foundation has funded a program called the Black Male Rebirth Program, aimed at providing positive male role models for African-American boys in juvenile detention facilities. The program connects boys with four generations of African-American men, who provide support and counseling for the boys while they are in the facility. That support continues when the boys leave the facility and re-enter their communities (Balaoing 1999).

Other programs encourage law enforcement agencies to work more productively with at-risk or adjudicated youth. In New Haven, a program operated by the Yale Child Study Center called Community Policing provides education and training for police officers on child and adolescent development and family relationships. In this way, the officers are better equipped to act as mediators when issues such as family violence arise. A demonstration program funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) links Boston police with community-based organizations like boys and girls clubs. When a youth gets into trouble with the law and has to go to court, the judge assigns him to one of these centers for ongoing support (Morris 1999). RWJF is also investigating other models and strategies for working with adjudicated youth, such as offering seminars and education for judges on alternative sentencing. Another grantmaker is working with a state's attorney general to develop a mentoring program for high-risk or adjudicated youth, with the goal of helping these youth stay out of trouble in the future.

A recent survey by The California Wellness Foundation found that 70 percent of likely voters in California felt that it was never too late to help a young person - even if that person had been in trouble with the law (Balaoing 1999). Yet there appear to be few programs with the specific aim of helping these young people and providing them with positive role models and support. Clearly, well-designed mentoring programs could fill a critical gap.

By fostering one-on-one mentoring relationships, Mentors, Inc., provides young people who are trying to take advantage of the resources available to them with additional support in the form of a caring, committed adult mentor.

motes academic, career, and personal development (Cole 1999).

Program staff recruit students in their schools through referrals from guidance counselors and other staff, and through presentations during lunch and open class periods. Interested students complete a two-page application explaining why they want to participate in the program and describing their career and outside interests. The next step is an orientation meeting with the student and his or her parent or guardian. This helps ensure followup and commitment on the part of the student and helps the parent feel more comfortable with the program and supportive of it.

Recruiting adult volunteers is a significant challenge. Mentors, Inc., relies on networking by board members, volunteers, and staff with Washington's business and professional community to recruit new mentors. It also uses the Internet to link with young professional groups in the area who are interested in civic involvement activities, as well as print media. Mentors must commit at least five hours per month with a student for the duration of the student's high school career. As part of the screening process, volunteers must fill out a four-page application, supply three character references, and undergo a criminal background check. Because of the program's financial constraints, volunteers are asked to pay the cost of the background check, which is about $30. Mentors, Inc., provides volunteers with four hours of training and holds monthly monitoring meetings to ensure that the mentoring relationships are progressing well.

Following a thorough screening, orientation, and training process, same-sex matches are made based on students' and mentors' career interests, personalities, and outside interests. Mentors, Inc., sponsors monthly activities, such as different types of workshops and information fairs, and distributes a weekly e-mail bulletin to program participants that lists free activities in the city. By and large, though, the program leaves it up to the students and their mentors to decide what they want to do with their time together (Cole 1999). The progress of matches is monitored monthly.

In addition to mentoring, Mentors, Inc. provides training and support services, academic tutoring and SAT preparation, career and job training workshops, college scholarships, referrals to a variety of health services (some of which are free), and summer job placement assistance. Mentors, Inc., receives funding from public and private grants, donations, and in-kind professional services.

Opportunities and Challenges for Health Grantmakers

Through its developmental approach in supporting the successful growth and well-being of young people, mentoring holds significant promise for youth health promotion. Indeed, the impressive outcomes of youth mentoring programs highlighted in this report, especially those of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs, indicate that mentoring can be an effective tool in promoting specific health outcomes for youth, such as the prevention of violence or drug and alcohol use. In that regard, funding support for promising mentoring programs provides a strategy through which grantmakers can promote youth health and social development in their communities.

Increasing the Availability of Mentors

The need for support of youth mentoring programs is great and presents significant opportunities for grantmaker involvement. Although a program like Big Brothers/Big Sisters can serve

upward of 75,000 youth each year, its waiting list is nearly half that number. In fact, it is estimated that between 5 million and 15 million youth nationwide could benefit from being matched with a mentor. Only an estimated 330,000 mentors are currently in place throughout the country, however (Sipe 1996; Walker and Freedman 1996).

Funding support could help bridge the gap between the availability of mentors and the population's need for their services. Foundations could support training programs for adult mentors. They also could support the outreach activities and information campaigns that promote the concept of mentoring in local communities and, thereby increasing the number of adults who volunteer to mentor young people. For example, The Columbus Foundation in Ohio provided a grant of $55,000 to the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America of Columbus and Franklin County, Inc. Those funds will be used in conjunction with a matching grant of $20,000 from the Herbert P. and Grace B. Cook Memorial and Helen Sells Clarkson Funds. Together, these grants will be used to step up recruiting efforts in order to increase the number of successful matches between youth and adult mentors.

Strengthening the Infrastructure for Mentoring

Mentoring programs are also in need of support for infrastructure and human, material, and financial resources. Compared with other mentoring programs, the Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs provides intensive mentor screening, recruitment, training, and matching services, as well as critical comprehensive supervision and support services for their mentoring relationships. Although this approach is critical to the program's success, it is also costly. Other smaller programs cannot afford to maintain such an intensive model for mentoring. Grantmakers can help by investing in the infrastructure that supports mentoring, either by replicating or expanding current BB/BSA programs or by strengthening and increasing the effectiveness of smaller, less intensive mentoring programs.

Fostering Collaboration

Foundations can also serve as mediators between local public and private mentoring initiatives, and, in this way, increase support from youth-serving public agencies for mentoring programs. Public-sector programs could play an integral role in scaling up effective private initiatives (Walker and Freedman 1996). Foundations could help by supporting efforts of local coalitions and collaboratives to improve and support youth mentoring programs. For example, the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund provided a $280,000 grant to support the Joint Mentoring Project, which created a partnership between two youth-serving agencies, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Sedgwick County and the Boys and Girls Club of South Central Kansas. This grant enabled the two partners to reach more youth with mentoring services and to support and promote youth mentoring throughout south central Kansas. In addition, the John Muir/Mt. Diablo Community Health Benefit Corporation provided a $10,000 grant to the Mentoring Youth at Risk program. The grant was used to support expansion of the mentoring program's services, which included partnerships between the program and faith-based institutions.

Schools and other youth-serving organizations can also be valuable partners in collaborative mentoring initiatives. First, they are potential recruiting sources for mentor volunteers. Second, because these organizations already have youth advocates on their staffs, they can help strengthen and expand their community's mentoring infrastructure. They can also support the training of those teachers, coaches, counselors, and administrators with the time and

desire to mentor the young people they come into contact with on a regular basis. Finally, schools and other youth-serving organizations are natural environments for adult-youth interaction. Making mentoring an integral part of these environments could enhance the quality of those interactions (Sipe 1996; Walker and Freedman 1996).

Foundations could help develop innovative program strategies that introduce and support mentoring in places like public schools and other youth-serving organizations. Increasingly, schools are being called upon to serve the health and social development needs of their students - and to produce tangible results with minimal financial resources. Foundation support of school-based mentoring activities could be a tremendous boon. For example, the Arlington Health Foundation has supported the Mentoring Character Leadership Program at McLean High School in McLean, Virginia. This school-based mentoring program uses a values-based curriculum to combat poor health behaviors among teens, such as smoking and violence. In addition, St. Luke's Charitable Health Trust in Arizona has provided $52,000 to Big Brothers/Big Sisters to expand a school-based mentoring program.

Schools and other youth-serving organizations are natural environments for adult-youth interaction.

Other Opportunities for Grantmakers

Because mentoring programs are so diverse in terms of their structures, goals, and the populations that they serve, their funding and support needs vary greatly. Among the many other funding opportunities for grantmakers:

- formal program evaluations that help demonstrate explicit links between youth mentoring and health and social development outcomes;
- complementary programming like large group events, youth workshops, and other activities;
- programs that meet the specific needs and characteristics of different demographic and socioeconomic groups;
- broad-based and creative recruiting efforts;
- research on the effects of mentoring;
- capacity building in the area of information technology and communication;
- research on the cost-effectiveness of different mentoring strategies;
- replicating promising or proven programs;
- identifying resources for informal mentoring;
- working as or supporting educators or advocates for mentoring;
- working with faith-based organizations to provide mentoring;
- developing program materials;
- communicating the value of mentoring to the public;
- linking academic resources with community programs;
- developing public education initiatives that focus on communities' responsibilities to their children;
- reducing barriers for informal mentors; and
- creating programs for the highest-risk youth, including those who have been incarcerated.

Conclusions

There is no single, simple solution for solving the many challenges that today's youth face in growing up to be healthy and productive members of society. Youth mentoring can be an important component of a whole web of strategies and interventions for supporting young people. As grantmakers search for program strategies that promote positive physical and psychosocial outcomes among youth, they should consider youth mentoring. Through their roles as funders, conveners, and catalysts for innovation, health foundations can improve the health and well-being of youth in their communities by supporting efforts that bring young people into meaningful relationships with caring and responsible adult mentors.

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