



SUSTAINING YOUR MENTORING PROGRAM

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PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

- TWO KEY COMPONENTS
- Effective Staff
- Adequate funding streams



Keys to Program Effectiveness

Foundations of Successful Mentoring Programs

1. **Strong Agency Capacity**
2. Proven Program Design
3. Effective Community Partnerships
4. Sustainable Resource Development
5. Useful Program Evaluation



Keys to Program Effectiveness

Role of Program Staff to Ensure Sustainability

Qualified and Trained Staff

- *In order to ensure a successful mentoring program that lasts over time, your own staff is one of the most – if not THE most important ingredients*



Importance of Staff

- Interact daily with volunteers, youth, parents, teachers and community members
- Recruit volunteers and mentees
- Train and support mentors
- Act as “face” of organization


Foundations of Successful Youth Mentoring
National Mentoring Center



Supporting Mentors


- *Across all types of mentoring programs, volunteers who are offered continuing support and supervision are more likely to persist than those who are not contacted regularly by staff*
 - **SAD FACTOID**
- 20% of surveyed mentors almost never talked to staff
- 9% had no staff contact at all

Source: Sipe 2000




Research

- Study of BBBS found that pairs were significantly more likely to FAIL TO MEET in programs where mentors mail in records of the meetings than in programs where staff *call* the mentors to check about the meetings




Research

- Unsupportive mentor/mentee matches fail and can do more harm than good. Supervising is a prime risk management tool. A systematic procedure for supervising matches assists in early identification and resolution of problems in relationships



Building Staff

- Does your agency/school district have:
 1. Written job descriptions for all staff
 2. Minimum requirements: knowledge, skills, experience
 3. Strong background of staff in youth work and volunteer management, preferably with a mentoring program




Building Staff

1. Diversified advertisements for job openings to get best qualified
2. Screening procedures of new staff for safety and liability
3. Orientation and training for new staff
4. On going staff development plan, listening and problem solving




Staff Recruitment

- Diversify your recruitment strategies
- *Print Ads*
- *Listserve and Web pages*
- *Radio/TV*
- *University bulletin boards*
- *Community centers*
- *Networking with local agencies and partners*
- *Networking with state mentoring programs*




Staff Screening/Training

- Do not settle for a less qualified candidate
- Look for the good "fit"
- Use risk management strategies to screen qualified candidates **criminal background checks, child abuse registry**
- Prepare staff for their new roles; learn all they can about effective mentoring
- Offer on-going professional development




Building Staff

1. Consistent staffing patterns – high turnover is a problem
2. Plan B for staff losses that can disrupt support of matches and delay efforts
3. Selection plan for appropriate staff to monitor matches
4. Staff who are allowed to be mentors – **not all agencies permit volunteering**
5. New staff gets assigned seasoned “mentor” to show them the way




Building Staff

- How is staff hired/selected for your program?
- How frequently does staff meet with mentors and mentees to find out how they are doing?
- How is progress documented?
- What questions does staff ask when they meet with mentors about their progress?
- How is information about mentors/mentees collected?
- How are problems between mentors and mentees resolved?




Staff Support

- Written records about progress and problems means new staff can always learn the history of each match
- Initial contact with mentor and mentee within first 2 weeks of the match. Many programs contact mentors after 2 weeks but not mentees
- Checks with mentors and mentees after 2 more weeks
- Monthly checks with each match for the first year
- If match is doing well, quarterly thereafter




GOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE

- It is not unusual to hear potential mentors complain about not being called back
- Answering calls within 24 hours is the key! There is also e-mail.



Information and Collection System

1. How often does mentor/mentee meet?
2. Is youth resistant to the match?
3. Are the mentors and mentees satisfied with activities in which they have been engaged?
4. How are pairs communicating?



Information and Collection System

5. Any special problems?
6. Is mentor able to meet commitment or overwhelmed?
7. Is mentee able to meet commitment or overwhelmed?
8. Any “red flags” that say there may be trouble?



Information and Collection System

9. How can the program help to improve the relationship?
10. What are the positives about the relationship?
11. Mediation and conflict resolution between the pairs?
12. Referrals to outside support system professionals when appropriate



Information and Collection System

13. Is pre-information for evaluation purposes complete?

14. Are volunteers thanked regularly for their commitment?

The difference between a mentoring program that lasts over time or fizzles and dies is on-going staff support



How Information is Collected

1. Activity form mailed or e-mailed
2. Phone calls
3. Face-to-face meetings
4. Group meetings to share and network
5. Mentor Support groups/brown bags
6. Mentee Support groups
7. E-mail discussion groups and listservs



Question for staff

- o Program Directors
- o When was the LAST time that you talked to teachers or program staff at the school, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, church group, etc. about our mentees?



Program Resolution

1. Identify the problem and a clear understanding of it
2. Liaison clarifies any potential problem and works with pair to resolve issues EARLY ON
3. Offer and develop alternative solutions



Program Resolution

4. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each solution
5. Act on the best one
6. If problem continues (e.g. lack of meeting time together), additional solutions must be considered
7. Consider termination when all else fails



Mentor Recognition

- Awards dinners, receptions and other events
- Mentor/mentee match of the month
- Profiling matches in newsletters, brochures, media and website
- Gifts and awards
- Instant recognition in the form of the simple "thank you!"



Mentor Recognition

- Letters of Appreciation
- Handwritten personal notes and birthday cards
- Notes to and from teachers in school-based model
- Brown bag lunches – 3/4 times/yr
- Telephone calls



Mentor Recognition

- Parent/teacher/mentor conferences in s-b model
- E Mails
- Back to school nights
- Scholarships to mentees – a great incentive for mentors
- Table tents
- Public recognitions



DIVERSIFY YOUR FUNDRAISING

- Get comfortable with the "f" word – fundraising
- First, get buy in from your board and staff. Your board must view fundraising as a major responsibility that is committed to diversification of funding sources
- What is the makeup of your Board?




STEPS TO SUCCESS

- Develop a clear picture of your current sources of funding?
- _____
- Determine your future needs
- What funding sources can your target?
- Develop a 3-5 year plan
- Monitor the plan regularly




WHY DIVERSIFY?

- Only one source could dry up easily
- Don't wait for the crisis
- Building a stable, diversified base will give you "breathing room"
- Prospective donors and funders will be impressed. They won't invest until they know you are financially stable!



SOURCES OF FUNDING

- 1. Government
- 2. Private Foundations
- 3. Special or 3rd party events
- 4. Individuals/Annual appeal
- 5. United Way, Tax Credits, In-kind
- 6. Corporate Giving



1996 RESEARCH

- **Interesting Factoid**
 - How important is each of the following reasons to you for contributing to a charitable organization?
 - 72.1% Someone I know well asked
 - 60.7% Have volunteered at the organization
 - 59.1% Asked by the clergy
 - 43.3% Read or heard a news story
 - 38.2% Asked at work