

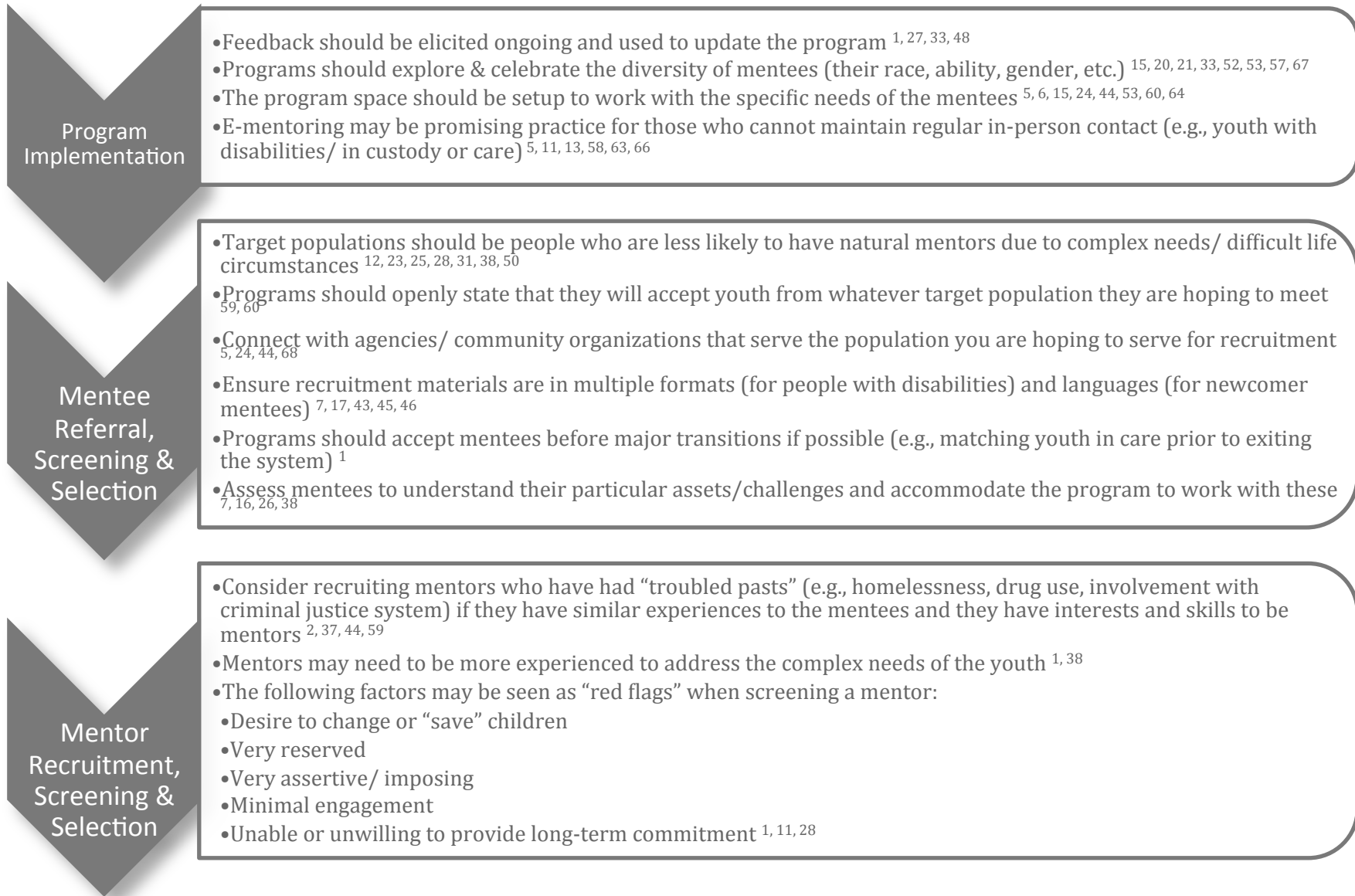
Best Practices for Mentoring Youth Facing Barriers to Success

Purpose of this Resource

The purpose of this handout is to provide practitioners a set of overall best practices that can guide the planning and delivery of mentoring for youth who experience multiple barriers to success. These practices were taken from the literature review commissioned by the Ontario Mentoring Coalition and the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. For more in-depth best practices, broken down by population (e.g., Racialized Youth, Youth with Mental Health Needs) see the Literature Review.

Program Planning

- Use strengths-based approach ^{5, 14, 20, 21, 68}
- Program should have anti-discrimination policies to support and protect their participants ⁶
- Use mentoring as part of treatment/ support plans for youth (team approach) ^{21, 26, 36, 45, 46, 61, 62}
- Partner with relevant agencies/ communities, (e.g., schools for academically struggling youth, elders and community members for indigenous youth, LGBT organizations for LGBT youth) ^{7, 16, 20, 22, 26, 37, 47, 61, 65}
- Establish advisory committees to ensure the program is collaborating instead of imposing on certain communities ^{2, 3, 4, 7, 20, 37, 42, 65}
- Hire staff from the community you are serving or people who have worked with those communities before ^{2, 3, 6, 7, 15, 36, 42}
- Provide staff training on special topics/ considerations for the youth being targeted in the program ^{5, 7, 20, 37, 42, 45, 57, 60}
- Review program materials regularly to ensure cultural appropriateness and diminish any bias ^{2, 3, 27, 37, 42}
- Use accommodations to support full inclusion of marginalized mentors and mentees, e.g., website that can be used for those with disabilities ^{1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 15, 27, 36, 53, 60}



Mentor Training

- Have community members help create mentor training ³
- Ensure training is accessible to mentors from various backgrounds and life experiences ⁵
- Mentors training should include:
 - Cultural competency (understand the needs of the young people & their community)
 - Understanding the community/ context which the mentees live
 - Learning and practicing inclusive language
 - Their roles as mentors to ensure they know parameters (**not** counselors, tutors, etc.)
 - Counseling techniques
 - Learning about local services to where they can refer their mentee
 - Program expectations
 - Awareness of impact of early match termination, especially for more marginalized youth
 - Disclosure and confidentiality issues (e.g., how and whom to discuss issues that emerge) because marginalized youth may have more sensitive issues that emerge ^{1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 20, 26, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 48, 52, 55, 57, 60, 64, 65}

Matching Process

- Mentors who share life experiences/ challenges/ race/ socioeconomic status with their mentees may be seen as more credible and thus developing relationships with their mentees may be easier ^{5, 7, 8, 11, 13, 26, 33, 40, 43, 48, 56, 57}
- Mentoring relationships are more successful when the mentors and mentees have similar values, interests, and backgrounds ^{31, 32, 43}
- Allowing mentees choice/ ability to share their preferences for their match ^{16, 19, 38}
- Cross- race/ gender/ experience matching can be supported through:
 - Helping the mentors understand their own biases
 - Providing mentors with ongoing training about cultural competency, relationship development skills (authenticity, conflict management, empowerment, etc.), maintaining commitments to their mentee, and allowing the mentee to direct activities and goal-setting
 - Teaching the mentors to support the mentee in learning about their heritage and celebrate the ethnic identity of their mentee
 - Supporting the mentor in learning to provide feedback in a positive way ^{41, 49, 51}

Mentoring
Relationship
Development

- It is important to foster reciprocal relationships through offering mentees choices, encouraging mutual cultural understandings, and supporting mentors and mentees to learn from one another ^{4, 10, 26, 39, 57, 60, 67}
- Mentoring more vulnerable youth requires enhanced consistency and commitment from mentors ^{18, 26, 45}

Match
Supervision &
Support

- Staff should check in with mentors, mentees, and family members regularly to assess relationship status, address any challenges/ problem solve issues, avoid burnout- there may be more issues/ challenges in the match because the youth experience marginalization ^{1, 7, 11, 16, 18, 38, 45}
- Providing mentors and supporters with compensation can help with mentor retention and increase capacity and outcomes ^{31, 68}
- Ongoing training and support should be provided for mentors ^{1, 7, 24, 26, 39, 44, 54, 59, 64, 68}

Parent/
Caregiver/ Family
Involvement

- Keep parents/ caregivers/ family members informed about the program- ensure materials are translated and you provide lots of pictures for those who may have literacy issues ^{4, 30, 42, 46}
- Staff should encourage parental inclusion in mentoring programs by:
 - Requiring them to sign consent forms
 - Providing opportunities for parents to give insight about how to make the program successful and safe for their child
 - Participating in orientation sessions
 - Referring to other supports/agencies ^{3, 5, 6, 15, 16, 48, 60}

Match Closure & Re-Matching

- There should be policies and procedures established to deal with match interruption or unexpected closures so that mentors and mentees know how to end the relationships and reflect on their successes^{1, 45}
- Ending mentor relationships for marginalized youth must be handled delicately due to many of these youth having past experiences of abandonment^{22, 28, 29}
- Staff should ensure mentors have the skills to end the relationship in a healthy way, which they can model to the mentees^{28, 29}

References

1. Alberta Centre for Child, Family, and Community Research. (2014). Mentoring youth in care. Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Subcommittee of the Alberta Mentoring Partnership. Retrieved from <http://albertamentors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Mentoring-Youth-in-Care.pdf>
2. Alberta Mentoring Partnership. (2011a). Guidelines for mentoring with First Nation, Métis, and/or Inuit communities. Retrieved from <http://albertamentors.ca/create-a-mentoring-program/tools-for-mentoring-in-aboriginal-communities/>
3. Alberta Mentoring Partnership. (2011b). Guidelines for mentoring with immigrant and refugee children and youth. Retrieved from <http://albertamentors.ca/create-a-mentoring-program/tools-for-mentoring-immigrant-communities/>
4. Alberta Mentoring Partnership. (2011c). Handbook for Aboriginal mentoring: What. why. how. who? Alberta Children's Services & Alberta International, Intergovernmental, and Aboriginal Relations. Retrieved from <http://www.fcscsa.org/sites/default/files/documents/Handbook%20for%20Aboriginal%20Mentoring,%202007.pdf>
5. Axelrod, E., Campbell, G., & Holt, T. (2005). The best practices guide in mentoring youth with disabilities. Partners for Youth with Disabilities. Retrieved from <http://www.pyd.org/editor/images/resources-best-practices-for-mentoring-youth-with-disabilities.pdf.pdf>
6. Barajas, J. (2005). Mentoring lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth. Mentoring Tactics. Retrieved from http://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/13719-Mentoring_Lesbian_Gay_Bisexual_and_Transgender.pdf
7. Bazron, B. J., Brock, L., Read, N., Segal, A. (2006). The mentoring toolkit: Resources for developing programs for incarcerated youth. National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center for the Education of Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent, and At-Risk. Retrieved from http://www.neglected-delinquent.org/sites/default/files/docs/NDTAC_MentoringToolkit_Unabridged.pdf
8. Bell, E. C. (2012). Mentoring transition-age youth with blindness. *The Journal of Special Education*, 46(3), 170-179.
9. Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland. (n.d.). Tips for volunteers: Mentoring lesbian and gay youth. Retrieved from http://www.bigsisters.bc.ca/site-bbbs/media/BCLowerMainland/Mentoring_Gay_Lesbian_Youth.pdf
10. Birman, D., & Morland, L. (2013). Immigrant and refugee youth. In DuBois, D. L., & Karcher, M. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (pp. 355-369). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
11. Britner, P. A., Randall, K. G., & Ahrens, K. R. (2014). Youth in foster care. In DuBois, D. L., & Karcher, M. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (pp. 341-355). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
12. Bruster, B. E., & Coccama, P. (2013). Mentoring for educational success: Advancing foster care youth incorporating the core competencies. *Journal of Human Behavior in the*

- Social Environment, 23(3), 388-399.
13. Burgstahler, S. (2012). Opening doors: Mentoring on the internet. E-mentoring and individuals with disabilities. University of Washington. Retrieved from <http://www.washington.edu/doit/opening-doors-mentoring-internet>
 14. Callahan, S., Endelman, S. A., Manning, C., & Thomas, G. C. (2013). Mentoring 101: An introductory workshop for new mentors. Partners for Youth with Disabilities & Mass Mentoring Partnership. Retrieved from <http://www.pyd.org/editor/images/resources-mentoring-youth-with-disabilities-101.pdf>
 15. Canadian Women's Foundation. (2015). Girls group mentoring toolkit. Retrieved from <http://mentoringgirls.ca>.
 16. Cannata, A., Garringer, M., MacRae, P., & Wakeland, D. (2005). Making the grade. A guide to incorporating academic achievement into mentoring programs and relationships. Folsom, CA: U.S. Department of Education, Mentoring Resource Centre.
 17. Chan, W. Y., & Henry, D. B. (2013). Juvenile offenders. In DuBois, D. L., & Karcher, M. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (pp. 315-325). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
 18. Covenant House. (n.d. a). Covenant House mentor orientation handbook. Retrieved from https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0ahUKEwjGz5i8-ZfKAhUQz2MKHqavBgAQFggcMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fhomelesshub.ca%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2FMentor%2520Orientation%2520Handbook.doc&usg=AFQjCNHpyjuh9G28QmUh2uc_bfKJ68VHcQ&sig2=TLiNd9-UCoY-tqIh9sQ_vQ
 19. Covenant House. (n.d. b). Mentor guidelines. Retrieved from https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjy1MaP-pfKAhUH8GMKHbDsB3EQFggBMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fhomelesshub.ca%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2FMentor%2520Program%2520Guidelines.doc&usg=AFQjCNFvqZGxkn_o-VKzFzQYnyEeckXaNq&sig2=mfpW4E9HHdUFYcVkJHkEdA&bvm=bv.110151844,d.cGc
 20. Crooks, C., Chiodo, D., & Thomas, D. (2009). Engaging and empowering Aboriginal youth: A toolkit for service providers. Public Health Agency of Canada. Retrieved from http://master.fnbc.info/sites/default/files/resourcefiles/Engaging%20and%20Empowering%20Aboriginal%20Youth%20-%20Toolkit%20for%20Service%20Providers_0.pdf
 21. Crooks, C., Chiodo, D., Thomas, D., & Hughes, R. (2010). Strengths-based programming for first nations youth in schools: Building engagement through healthy relationships and leadership skills. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 8(2), 160-173.
 22. Cullen, S. (2006). Mentoring and befriending for young homeless people: A good practice guide. Shelter. Retrieved from http://england.shelter.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/40404/Mentoring_and_Befriending_for_Young_Homeless_People.pdf
 23. Dang, M. T., Conger, K. J., Breslau, J., & Miller, E. (2014). Exploring protective factors among homeless youth: The role of natural mentors. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 45(3), 1121-1138.
 24. Dove, S., & Mbonisi, M. (2007). Ten strategies for recruiting African American male mentors. The Technical Assistance and Training Program for Mentoring System-Involved Youth. Retrieved from http://msiy.edc.org/resources/MSIY%20Publications/MSIY_10%20Tips%20for%20Recruiting%20AfricanAmerican%20Male%20Mentors.pdf
 25. Gastic, B., & Johnson, D. (2009). Teacher-mentors and the educational resilience of sexual minority youth. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 21(2-3), 219-231.
 26. Garringer, M. (2011). "It may be the missing piece" – Exploring the mentoring of youth in systems of care. 2011 Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring. National Mentoring Centre. Retrieved from <http://albertamentors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Mentoring-Youth-in-Care.pdf>
 27. Greenlee, J., Henson, A., Jones, L., Vance, M. F., & Wilson, P. (2013). Developing a mentor program for unaccompanied homeless youth. School of Social Work Community Projects. Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.
 28. Greeson, J. K. P., Thompson, A. E., Evans-Chase, M., & Ali, S. (2014). Child welfare professionals' attitudes and beliefs about child welfare-based natural mentoring for older youth in foster care. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 41(1), 1-20.
 29. Greeson, J. K. P., Usher, L., & Grinstein-Weiss, M. (2010). One adult who is crazy about you: Can natural mentoring relationships increase assets among young adults with and without foster care experience? *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32(4), 565-577.
 30. Grossman, J. B., & Garry, E. M. (1997). Mentoring – A proven delinquency prevention strategy. *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/164834.pdf>
 31. Jarjoura, G. R. (2013). Effective strategies for mentoring African American boys. American Institutes of Research: Human and Social Development. Retrieved from <http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Effective%20Strategies%20for%20Mentoring%20African%20American%20Boys.pdf>
 32. Johnson, D., & Gastic, B. (2015). Natural mentoring in the lives of sexual minority youth. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 43(4), 395-407.

33. Journey, B. J., & Loukas, K. M. (2009). Adolescents with disability in school-based practice: Psychosocial intervention recommendations for a successful journey to adulthood. *Journal of Occupational Therapy, Schools, & Early Intervention*, 2(2), 119-132.
34. Jucovy, L. (2000). Mentoring sexual minority youth. Technical assistance packet #2. National Mentoring Center.
35. Kemeny, J., Arnhold, R., & Herold, S. (2012). I can do it, you can do it: A health promotion mentoring model for youth with disabilities. *Palaestra*, 26(1), 15-19.
36. Kerr, D. C. R., & King, C. A. (2013). Youth with mental health needs. In DuBois, D. L., & Karcher, M. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (pp. 325-341). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
37. Klinck, J., Cardinal, C., Edwards, K., Gibson, N., Bisanz, J., & da Costa, J. (2005). Mentoring programs for Aboriginal youth. *Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Indigenous Community Health*, 3, 109-130.
38. Larose, S., & Tarabulsky, G. M. (2013). Academically at-risk students. In DuBois, D. L., & Karcher, M. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (pp. 301-315). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
39. Leahy, M., & Robb, C. (2013). Building a better school environment for youth with mental health and addiction issues. The New Mentality, & Children's Mental Health Ontario. Retrieved from <http://www.kidsmentalhealth.ca/documents/res-building-a-better-school-environment-for-youth-with-mental-health-and-addiction-issuesv2.pdf>
40. Liang, B., Bogat, G. A., & Duffy, N. (2013). Gender in mentoring relationships. In DuBois, D. L., & Karcher, M. J. (Eds.), *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (pp. 159-175). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
41. Liang, B., & West, J. (2007). Do race and ethnicity really matter? *Research in Action: Youth Mentoring*, (9). Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_390.pdf
42. MENTOR. (2007). Mentoring immigrant & refugee youth. A toolkit for program coordinators. Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1197.pdf
43. MENTOR. (2015). Elements of effective practice for mentoring, 4th ed. Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/new-site/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Final_Elements_Publication_Fourth.pdf
44. Miller, D. (2008). Man up: Recruiting & retaining African American male mentors. Urban Leadership Institute. Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1127.pdf
45. Miller, J. M., Miller, H. V., Barnes, J. C., Clark, P. A., Jones, M. A., Quiros, R. J., & Peterson, S. (2012a). Referring youth in juvenile justice settings to mentoring programs: Effective strategies and practices to improving the mentoring experience for at-risk and high-risk youth. A resource compendium. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved from <http://www.mentoring.org/images/uploads/Journal%20Article.pdf>
46. Miller, J. M., Miller, H. V., Barnes, J. C., Clark, P. A., Jones, M. A., Quiros, R. J., & Peterson, S. (2012b). Researching the referral stage of youth mentoring in six juvenile justice settings. An exploratory analysis. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/images/uploads/OJJDP%20Final%20Report_p10.pdf
47. Mitchell, J. L. (2011). Mentoring: Combating vulnerabilities of homeless children. *Florida Public Health Review*, 8, 66-67.
48. Powers, L. E., Sowers, J., & Stevens, T. (1995). An exploratory, randomized study of the impact of mentoring on the self-efficacy and community-based knowledge of adolescents with severe physical challenges. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 61(1), 33-41.
49. Rhodes, J. (2002). Mentoring and race. Mentor: National Mentoring Partnership. Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1320.pdf
50. Rhodes, J. (2005). Fostering positive outcomes: How mentoring can help children and adolescents in foster care. Research Corner: MENTOR, National Mentoring Partnership. Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1325.pdf
51. Rhodes, J. E., Reddy, R., Grossman, J. B., & Lee, J. M. (2002). Volunteer mentoring relationships with minority youth: An analysis of same- versus cross-race matches. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 32(10), 2114-2133.
52. Rotich, J. (2009). Mentoring as a springboard to acculturation of immigrant students into American schools. *Journal of Case Studies in Education*, 1, 1-8.
53. Sánchez, B., Colón-Torres, Y., Feuer, R., Roundfield, K. E., & Berardi, L. (2005). Race, ethnicity, and culture in mentoring relationships. In D. DuBois, & M. Karcher (Eds.), *The SAGE Program on Applied Developmental Science: Handbook of youth mentoring* (pp. 191-205). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
54. Scannapieco, M., & Painter, K. R. (2013). Barriers to implementing a mentoring program for youth in foster care: Implications for practice and policy innovation. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 31(2), 163-180.
55. Schueths, A. M., & Carranza, M. A. (2012). Navigating around educational road blocks: Mentoring for pre-K to 20+ Latino/a students. *Latino Studies*, 10(4), 566-586.

56. Shem, K., Medel, R., Wright, J., Kolakowsky-Hayner, S. A., & Duong, T. (2011). Return to work and school: A model mentoring program for youth and young adults with spinal cord injury. *Spinal Cord*, 49(4), 544-548.
57. Sinclair, R., & Pooyak, S. (2007). Aboriginal mentoring in Saskatoon: A cultural perspective. Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saskatoon. Retrieved from http://iphrc.ca/pub/documents/mentorship_final_july30.pdf
58. Snowden, R. (2003). Partners for youth with disabilities. *American Rehabilitation*, 36-41.
59. Supporting Our Youth. (2007). CLICK mentoring program for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual and transgender youth. Policy and procedure manual. Sherbourne Health Centre. Retrieved from <http://www.soytoronto.org/documents/CLICK-%20MentoringManual.DOC>
60. Sword, C., & Hill, K. (2002). Creating mentoring opportunities for youth with disabilities: Issues and suggested strategies. Issue Brief. Examining Current Challenges in Secondary Education and Transition, 1(4). National Center on Secondary Education and Transition.
61. Taussig, H. N., & Culhane, S. E. (2010). Impact of mentoring and skills group program on mental health outcomes for maltreated children in foster care. *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 164(8), 739-746.
62. Torres, R. S., Harper, G. W., Sánchez, B., Fernández, M. I., & the Adolescent Medicine Trial Network for HIV/AIDS Interventions. (2012). Examining natural mentoring relationships (NMRs) among self-identified gay, bisexual, and questioning (GBQ) male youth. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34(1), 8-14.
63. Urban Youth. (2013). Unlimited: A "lessons learned" guide from what it takes e-mentoring with African American males. Philadelphia, PA: Urban Youth.
64. UR Pride Centre for Sexuality and Gender Diversity. (2013). Queer mentorship program manual. Retrieved from <http://www.urpride.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/QMPManual.pdf>
65. Waller, K. S., Houchins, D. E., & Nomvete, P. T. (2010). Establishing a school-based mentoring program for youth who are transitioning from a secure facility. *Beyond Behavior*, 19(3), 30-35.
66. Wallis, J. A. M., Riddell, J. K., Smith, C., Silvertown, J., & Pepler, D. J. (2015). Investigating patterns of participation and conversation content in an online mentoring program for northern Canadian youth. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 23(3), 228-247.
67. Ware, V. (2013). Closing the gap clearinghouse: Mentoring programs for Indigenous youth at risk. Australian Government, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and Australian Institute of Family Studies, Resource Sheet No. 22. Retrieved from <http://www.aihw.gov.au/uploadedFiles/ClosingTheGap/Content/Publications/2013/ctgc-rs22.pdf>
68. Watson, J., Washington, G., & Stepteau-Watson, D. (2015). Umoja: A culturally specific approach to mentoring young African American males. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 32, 81-90

This document was prepared February 2016 by Vanessa Chase, MCA, and Melanie Bania, PhD, as research consultants for the Ontario Mentoring Coalition. This document and other affiliated documents were developed for the Mentoring Resource Development Project funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

www.ontariomentoringcoalition.ca

