

## Windows on the Workplace: Mentoring, Youth, and WIA



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One of twelve training packets created for Texas Workforce Board regions as part of the Texas Workforce Commission Youth Program Initiative.

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# Windows on the Workplace: Mentoring and WIA Youth



## TRAINING GOALS

- Understand the different types of mentoring, their outcomes, and which strategies make sense for WIA-served youth.
- Learn about ten critical components for designing an effective mentoring strategy.
- Understand the tools and support youth and mentors need in order to make the most of their relationship.

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# Mentoring and WIA Youth Services

An older person working alongside a younger person – coaching, questioning, testing, affirming – it’s a classic part of our view of how the world works. Almost everyone has had someone they would call a “mentor” in their life. The practice is as old as the Greeks and ancient Africa and probably older. Business leaders and academics use it to cultivate new leaders and scholars. New entrepreneurs look to seasoned professionals to help them get a new venture off the ground. Apprentices meet with masters to inspect project work. For years, mentoring relationships have enabled us to invest in the next generation.

No wonder formal mentoring has gained such prominence in youth development circles. Programs have sprouted up around the country – especially since the mid 1970’s. In an era of big institutions and challenging youth issues, providing a young person with a bit of unambiguous one-on-one attention makes incredible sense.

The Workforce Investment Act mentions mentoring by name. It is a required element. Youth must have access to it. But what is “it”? A new mentoring program? Possibly. You may indeed want or need to create a new mentoring program. Mentoring is also a strategy, however, not always a stand-alone program. As a strategy, it has a role to play in other WIA youth element areas – work-based learning, tutoring support, and elsewhere. Youth and adults have many opportunities to connect. Will mentoring be a part of it? For example, if youth have a summer job, shouldn’t supervisors also be good mentors?

This training packet will help you understand how mentoring fits with WIA and how it can strengthen youth services. You’ll also learn the ten components of a successful mentoring effort.

# The Many Flavors of Mentoring

## What kind of mentoring would you like?

If you scan the landscape of mentoring programs, you will see variations – important differences that reflect the youth served and objectives of the

mentoring relationship. Think of “mentoring” as a vehicle. You have to know which kind you want and where you want to drive it.

DIFFERENT MENTORING APPROACHES		
<b>Mentoring Type</b>	Professional mentoring Adult-to-youth mentoring Peer-to-peer mentoring Supervisory mentoring Situational mentoring  Facilitated mentoring	Mentoring in a business or higher education setting An adult is matched with one or more young people Older youth mentor younger youth Workplace or work-based learning mentoring Project-specific, generally informal and shorter term, mentoring Formal mentoring program (vs. informal mentoring by a workplace supervisor, for example)
<b>Mentoring Format</b>	Group mentoring Team / partner mentoring One-to-one mentoring Face-to-face mentoring E-mentoring or telementoring	One mentor works with a small group of youth Two mentors work with a youth One mentor and one young person work together Mentor pair meets regularly in person Mentor pair connects by email, phone, or web-based platform
<b>Mentoring Timeframe</b>	Short-term Long-term	Relationship lasts less than 1 year Relationship lasts more than 1 year, possibly several
<b>Mentoring Purpose</b>	Psychosocial Instrumental	Mentor is role model, supporter, and friend Mentor encourages specific career, academic, or life skills objectives

# Psychosocial Versus Instrumental Mentoring - A Closer Look

Psychosocial Mentoring	Instrumental Mentoring
Direct impact on sense of self	Direct impact on education, career, social life
Provide social and self-exploration opportunities	Provide focused opportunities, i.e., workplace or career exploration, life skills development
Serve as role model	Serve as role model, teacher, coach, advocate, network contact
Evaluate attitudes, values, behavior, and beliefs	Evaluate skills
Provide emotional support	Provide planning and goal-setting support; professional development
Negotiate youth's environment, help solve problems or facilitate intervention	Negotiate youth's life/career path, connect to networks and resources, tackle barriers
Maintain an ongoing relationship	Set a limited time for relationship

## PSYCHOSOCIAL VERSUS INSTRUMENTAL MENTORING – A CLOSER LOOK

This last difference in types of mentoring – psychosocial versus instrumental – is important. WIA focuses on instrumental mentoring. Youth participate in order to develop career and life skills and workplace experience.

## OTHER WIA MENTORING CONSIDERATIONS

The minute you think of WIA and mentoring, other considerations, or design parameters, should start popping into your mind. You work with a certain demographic, and mentoring is part of a larger array of support mechanisms. Ultimately, your WIA mentoring strategy with youth needs to reflect:

- A skill development focus
- Minimum of 12 months of adult mentoring
- Mentoring as part of an integrated package of services
- Mentoring as a strategy within other services and service components
- Effective practices for older youth, ages 14-24
- Effective practices for youth with special needs: youth with learning and physical disabilities, juvenile offenders, pregnant and parenting youth, dropouts or out-of-school youth
- Coordination among mentoring efforts; creation of a mentoring network or system vs. isolated programs

# Five Biggest Lessons from Mentoring Efforts Past

## So...what should we do together?

Mentoring really has grown up over the years, with many lessons learned. You will face many decisions and questions as you design your approach. The good news is that someone else somewhere has probably already experienced them. Our national knowledge base on mentoring is large! Look for suggested websites and materials in the Resources section of this packet.

Of all of the lessons learned so far, five are worth pointing out now, before you get too deep into the details:

### # 1 SET A CLEAR PURPOSE AND MISSION.

You explored a range of mentoring approaches earlier in this packet. What do the youth you serve need to get out of mentoring? What formats will work best for them? Specifically, what role and function do you want a mentor to fulfill? Be clear with yourself and everyone else!

### # 2 HAVE A WELL-PLANNED MATCHING PROCESS.

Mentors and youth fixate on the match, understandably. Who will I be matched with? How? Do I get to choose my mentor? Will I meet them first? Female or male? What job will my mentor have? Give them confidence by articulating a clear path to the match. Haphazard, forced or arbitrary matches, or an unclear matching strategy, will undermine the mentoring relationship from the start.

### # 3 DON'T "MATCH 'EM AND LEAVE 'EM." MONITORING MATTERS.

There are situations where mentors and their charges connect informally; the relationship depends on their will alone. This is very common in business; not good for youth initiatives. Regular monitoring and facilitation after a match are a must.

### # 4 SERVE THE WHOLE YOUTH; BE A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MENTOR.

Mentors should pay attention to the whole youth, not just skills or interests related to a particular career or job. By the same token, youth should understand multiple aspects of their mentor and his or her career and life skills.

### # 5 MENTORS AND YOUTH NEED SPECIFIC IDEAS ABOUT WHAT TO DO TOGETHER.

Nothing panics a mentor more than not knowing what to do with their mentee. If your effort has particular objectives, you should supply mentors and youth with specific activity ideas, tools, and resources.



# The Skilled Mentor

## Ready - and able!

One of the goals of your effort is to identify and train skilled mentors: professional adults who can build relationships with 14-24-year olds and achieve very specific objectives. They will help youth explore educational and career opportunities, practice job-related and academic skills, oversee projects, learn about financial aid, job applications, or interviewing, and so on. In other words, mentoring takes skill. It's a skilled job!

Potential mentors will come to you with some, perhaps all, of these skills. Others will have none but might still make amazing mentors. Mentor screening is generally a part of any mentoring program: you ask for background information and do a formal background check. It's just as important to define the skill set you want your mentors to have and evaluate them. Missing skills doesn't mean that you'll turn a potential mentor away. It does mean that you'll know exactly what training and support to provide.

MENTOR'S SKILL SET	
MENTOR FUNCTIONS	SKILLS
<i>Career Exploration and Planning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting goals; planning; self-assessment</li> <li>• Using career information resources</li> <li>• Navigating important education and career advancement steps: job search, interviews, networking, college or training program applications; financial aid</li> </ul>
<i>Workplace Learning and Skill Development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching and modeling career or occupational skills</li> <li>• Planning youth projects</li> <li>• Evaluating youth skill development</li> </ul>
<i>Life Skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing time</li> <li>• Budgeting finances</li> <li>• Balancing work and family life</li> </ul>
<i>Networking</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying and using professional networks and contacts</li> </ul>
<i>Coaching</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating with youth</li> <li>• Listening and counseling</li> </ul>
<i>Referral</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solving problems; troubleshooting</li> <li>• Identifying other needs; helpful resources</li> </ul>
<i>Other</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with high-risk youth; youth with special needs</li> </ul>

# Top Ten “To Do’s” – Steps for Developing a Mentoring Strategy

USE THESE TEN STEPS TO HELP YOU ORGANIZE AND DEVELOP YOUR MENTORING EFFORT:

- Step One:** Scan and Plan
- Step Two:** Recruit Mentors
- Step Three:** Orient Potential Mentors
- Step Four:** Prepare Youth
- Step Five:** Organize Pre-Match and Match Activities
- Step Six:** Arrange and Celebrate Matches
- Step Seven:** Support Relationship and Rapport-Building
- Step Eight:** Update and Intervene
- Step Nine:** Arrange Ongoing Training and Group Activities
- Step Ten:** Evaluate, Move On and Re-engage Mentors

## STEP ONE: SCAN AND PLAN

These days almost every community has a mentoring program. Scan your community and learn about mentoring services already available. At the very least, you’ll find that they provide homegrown expertise about how to “do mentoring.” They might also make a perfect provider or expansion partner for WIA-related mentoring.

Next, ideally with a workgroup that involves potential mentor recruitment partners (like a local employer, Chamber of Commerce, etc.), clarify the purpose and goals of your mentoring strategy. Go one step further, though: identify the specific list of competencies or objectives mentors and youth should work on together.

With your landscape and objectives clear, you are ready to develop a plan. Many mentoring efforts do in fact start with a pilot. Mentoring is initially quite labor intensive. You want to get the basic practices down so that you can scale up

effectively and efficiently. Also, until you have a strong partnership and mentor referral network behind your effort, your capacity to serve will be limited.

Like all good plans, your mentoring plan should identify:

- Purpose and expected outcomes
- Targeted youth
- Scale and scope of your effort and any growth goals
- Staffing and support needed
- Your budget
- Other resources needed
- How you will market and recruit
- How you evaluate the initiative

As part of your planning process, review the Mentoring Quality Assurance Standards developed by the National Mentoring Partnership. They will help you approach the design of your strategy thoughtfully, with an eye on lessons past.

Finally, don’t forget to look at where else mentoring, as a strategy, can power up other WIA service components. Your plan should identify where else the mentoring systems, tools, and expertise you develop will affect work-based learning, tutoring, life skills, and other WIA opportunities.

## take action! scan and plan

Identify existing mentoring programs in your community. How could and will you coordinate with them?

Develop a Mentoring Plan that clarifies the purpose of your program and, bottom line, the competencies you want mentors and youth to work on together.

## STEP TWO: RECRUIT MENTORS

Communities are full of potential mentors. Many adults desperately want youth to succeed. They may not always know what to do, but they are ready and willing to commit. In contrast, many people may never have considered themselves ‘mentor material,’ yet would make wonderful mentors.

That said, mentoring is a big responsibility. People should only step into the role with full awareness of the challenges! Mentor recruitment is a bit of a recipe: one part outreach and marketing, one part role clarification, one part screening and skill assessment.

### YOUR MENTOR POOL OR DIRECTORY

From your first mentor forward, you’ll be in recruitment mode. Once you start, there’s no stopping! Your mission is to maintain a mentor pool, a fluid group of people you can call on to serve, who match the needs, interests, and issues of youth you serve.

At any given moment, you may have both active and inactive mentors, depending on how many and which particular youth need them. Let mentors know this so that they don’t take the lack of match personally! In general, you want to set your recruitment target 10-15% higher than the number of youth you plan to serve.

### MENTOR RECRUITMENT PACK

Before you even fix potential mentors in your sight, be ready with the information they will need to make a good participation decision. Keep it simple and concrete. A one-page handout that explains the following should do the trick:

- Purpose and youth targeted
- Mentor’s role
- Examples of activities
- Time commitment and any important schedule information
- Support and training
- Application process and materials

### MENTOR RECRUITMENT METHODS AND MULTIPLIERS

There are a variety of creative strategies you can use to target and recruit mentors. The first thing you should do, however, is target “multipliers” – networks, groups, clubs, etc., that have access to streams of potential members. You want your mentor recruitment notices emblazoned across newsletters, posted on websites, and announced in meetings. Other methods you can use include:

- Ask employer partners to integrate recruitment strategies inside their companies and area industry associations.
- Hold “brown bag” lunch recruitment sessions at companies, government offices, and other organizations.
- Have a mentor sign-up booth at a major community or corporate event or mall.
- Ask people with whom you work for referrals or have partners ask their employees.
- Hold a special event where youth speak to potential mentors.
- Keep track of former program participants (alumni) and ask them to serve as mentors or referral resources.

### MENTOR SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

Mentor screening is like screening a job applicant – and then some. Use a mentor application, survey or questionnaire to collect information on background and experience. Ask them why they want to serve as a mentor and what help they

## take action! recruit mentors

Create a simple mentor recruitment pack that includes information on the purpose of your program, mentor’s role and responsibilities, time commitment, and application materials.

Do a “mentor multipliers” brainstorm. Who in your community has access to large groups of potential mentors and can help you multiply your recruitment effort?

might need in order to serve well. Conduct an interview. Get references and check them. Hold an introductory meeting with all potential mentors to review their purpose and role. Have other mentors and youth present so potential recruits hear about the experience firsthand.

You will also need to cover routine volunteer requirements: mentor release agreements, fingerprinting, a background check, medical assurances (TB test), and driver's record/use of vehicle forms.

The forms and formalities are necessary and help you manage risk. Equally as important, these steps help you watch for a few important mentor types:

- **The Inappropriate Mentor:** The mentor whose background is unacceptable to a youth, his or her family, or your organization. Note that programs use mentors with a wide variety of backgrounds – a former offender can be a powerful mentor for a juvenile offender. Usually, in these cases, the potential mentor has already disclosed any pertinent information before the background check turns it up. Other programs discuss the mentor's background check findings with the family, who can then approve the match and sign a waiver or acknowledgement.
- **The Nice Person, Bad Mentor:** The mentor who wants to “save” or “parent” youth, someone with no or few skills to offer, an enthusiastic recruit more committed to the cause than the time commitment, or a person with low expectations of disadvantaged youth.
- **The Uncommitted or Disorganized Mentor:** The mentor who can't handle the relatively simple hurdle of screening and initial orientation requirements probably won't be able to

handle reporting and other demands of your mentoring initiative.

- **The Mentor in Need of Targeted Support:** The good recruit who may just need a bit of extra orientation support.

### STEP THREE: ORIENT POTENTIAL MENTORS

For most programs, a mentor orientation session is mandatory. It is the one rule you don't want to break: make it clear that mentors will not be matched with youth unless they participate in the orientation. An orientation meeting can be short, no more than 90 minutes, and can be done anywhere and tailored to particular groups of mentors. For example, if you have a number of mentors from one company, take the orientation session to them. Have mentors from like career clusters or industry areas (arts, technology, health) go through orientation together.

In the end, you may run several orientation sessions. At every single one of them, be clear about program expectations and requirements.

A good orientation agenda and materials cover:

- Time commitment: how often mentors should meet with youth, for how long each meeting, over how many months, and whether there should be contact (phone, email) between meetings
- The year's schedule
- Expected skill development or career exploration goals
- How matches are made
- Mentoring “do's and don'ts”: mentor meeting locations, transportation, money, relationship with youth's family, liability, troubleshooting other issues

## take action! orient mentors

Create a 90-minute mentor orientation session and orientation packet with substance! Be sure to include practical tips, suggested activities and resources, and a commitment or agreement form.

- Actions that help the relationship; actions that can hurt the relationship
- A review of your mentor “toolkit” or guide with suggested activities and resources
- Formal signing of a mentor contract or agreement that defines roles and responsibilities
- Success stories!

As the years progress, former mentors should virtually run the orientation show!

### STEP FOUR: PREPARE YOUTH

Most youth have heard of mentoring. Public service announcements on television and radio have put the word out there. Many young people don’t know exactly what you do with a mentor or what you talk about. They may hold unrealistic expectations about what their mentor will do for them – for example, get them a job, loan them money, give them gifts, or take them places socially.

As cool as they can seem on the outside, most youth heading into a mentoring match are nervous. Parents and family members feel equally nervous, curious, or even threatened by the impending relationship.

Your aim as you prepare youth is three-fold:

- Explain the purpose and process of mentoring, and keep the door wide open for questions.
- Find out what youth would like to accomplish with their mentor.
- Reassure parents and family members (and the young person) that the mentor is a guide and a resource.

Just as you did for mentors, hold an orientation or introductory meeting with youth:

- Have former youth participants there, without their mentors, for at least part of the time.
- Ask youth to make a list of the questions they have – anything goes!
- Give specific examples of what mentors and youth have done together in the past.
- Let them know what they can do if the relationship isn’t working for them. Build their confidence by working with them on mentoring “do’s and don’ts” from the youth perspective. Use role-play to make the topic less daunting and authoritative.
- Be clear about their responsibilities in the relationship.
- Ask them to create an autobiographical essay, photo-journal, or portfolio of their work, anything that enables them to better introduce themselves to their mentor.
- Give them background on their mentors – where they work, their interests, etc. – before they meet them.

Ideally, parents or family members should meet mentors at a match celebration or other opportunity. At a minimum, they should receive information about the program, including mentor name and contact information. You can also ask for their input and feedback along the way: on potential matches for their child, names of other good mentors, program design, and stories about impact. Some mentoring programs even create a parent advisory committee.

### take action! prepare youth

Create an orientation for youth. Make sure it includes two important ingredients: time for plenty of questions and activities that help youth imagine what it’s like to work with a mentor and how they might use the opportunity.

Create a family connection: send information home; invite family members to participate in important meetings (orientation, match ceremonies, etc.).

**STEP FIVE: ORGANIZE PREMATCH AND MATCH ACTIVITIES**

Pre-match activities allow mentors and youth to interact as a large group before there's any talk of actual matches. The activities are fun and informal and designed for discovery. It's "meet and greet" mixed with icebreakers and team-building.

Pre-match activities often allow pairs to emerge naturally: mentors and youth discover common interests, career and professional goals, etc. Even in cases where you need to match youth with a specific mentor (i.e., for reasons related to career interests, special needs, geography), pre-match activities give people a chance to wade into the shallow end of the pool first. Two or three pre-match activities will generally do.

Pre-match activity examples

- A "ropes" course, softball game, basketball shooting or makeshift mini-golf contest, or any other recreational activity
- A pot luck with family stories or activities that help mentors and youth share their cultural backgrounds
- "Getting to Know You" interviews based on questions youth and mentors identify
- A "who's who" scavenger hunt or bingo game. Find out interesting facts about mentors and youth in advance and encourage them to hunt for the right people at the session.
- Team challenges, i.e., teams use a set of materials (newspaper, paper towel rolls, tape, etc.) to create tallest "sculpture."

At the end of pre-match activities, ask mentors and youth to write down their first, second and third choices for their mentor match. This might be a struggle for some, but worth it. You're building on self-selection where you can and giving

mentors and youth an element of choice and control in the process.

Pre-match activities also provide staff with a final screening opportunity. Watch for mentors who can't relate well to your youth or youth who seem reluctant or struggling to interact. Talk with them about your observations. They may just need a bit of help and encouragement. With a few tips, they'll find their groove. On the other hand, you may need to make a tough call: sometimes people aren't ready for mentoring or really don't want to do it. Better to find out now!

**STEP SIX: ARRANGE AND CELEBRATE MATCHES**

Usually pre-match activities lay the foundation for the actual matching process. Frequently, you can match straight from the choices mentors and youth made. Connect first choices that match first, second choice matches, and so on.

If your instincts tell you a particular match choice won't work, talk with the mentor and youth about good criteria for a match – youth need and mentor ability, career interests, shared background or culture, geographical proximity, etc. – then move confidently and comfortably on to a second choice.

Over the years, people have asked themselves many questions about matching:

- **Shouldn't we match females with females, males with males?**
- **How about taking racial or ethnic background into account?**
- **What if there isn't anyone with the same career interests?**

**take action! pre-match and match**

Plan two or three pre-match meetings that allow potential mentors and youth to meet, interact, and work on fun challenges or tasks in small teams or groups. Finish by asking mentors and youth to identify three people they would like as their match community.

**take action! celebrate**

Clarify any matching guidelines up front – gender, career interests, racial or language background, etc. If your guidelines are open, always check with youth and their parents whenever you feel unsure about a potential match.

Make a big deal out of the match! Make it public and put it in pictures.

Youth and their parents seem to feel most comfortable with same-gender matches. However, cross-gender matches are just as effective. Workplace mentoring (supervisors) is often cross-gender. If cross-gender matches emerge naturally during pre-match activities, trust the process and make the match. If you want to make a cross-gender match and aren't sure, ask the young person.

Some programs feel very strongly that mentoring should enable a young person to see how someone "like them" succeeds. If this is true for your effort, target mentor recruitment efforts at groups with access to the type of mentor you need, for example, cultural groups, women's organizations, councils for the disabled, etc.

WIA is focused on workforce preparation, of course, so it would make sense to match youth and mentors according to career interest. Youth, however, can have undefined or multiple career interests or you simply may not have mentors for every career interest. Mentoring can still work, magically even, when career interests differ. The mentor becomes a window on the world of work, a professional and a generalist who understands career exploration. The pair can fold exploration of the young person's specific interests into activities – they can network, meet with people, visit places, etc.

As a rule of thumb, announce matches only after everyone is matched and you have reviewed everything to ensure you made the most effective matches possible. And, when you do announce, celebrate!

- Find a fun or formal way to announce the match to each pair – balloons, a special card or e-card, along with an invitation to the match celebration.
- Hold a match ceremony: have someone official (a judge, CEO) preside, invite

families and significant others.

- Ask matches to sign a commitment form or "swear them in."
- Take pictures of the group and each pair and put them in a yearbook, along with fun facts about each pair.

When all is said and done, you may have unmatched mentors. This does happen, especially when youth are looking for mentors in particular career areas. Keep them engaged and let them know you'll need mentors again soon!

### STEP SEVEN: SUPPORT RELATIONSHIP AND RAPPORT-BUILDING

Your work now shifts. Remember what it's like to date? On the first date, you chat and chat. By the third date, casual chatter runs its course; you run out of things to say. Or, they haven't called... maybe they're not interested anymore? The beginning of a mentoring relationship can be just like this.

Mentors and youth are getting to know each other, establishing communication patterns, and starting to dig into the real work – the goals you've challenged them to achieve. Communication can be awkward, scheduling difficult and mentoring tasks more challenging than expected.

Give mentor pairs a jump-start:

- Give them specific assignments and "real work" for their first meetings, for example, a list of questions to ask each other; review the young person's Individual Service Strategy or do goal-setting; visit the mentor's workplace; create a list of things to do together.
- Call or email after the first meeting to see how things went.

### take action! relationship building

Give mentors and youth specific assignments for their first 2-3 meetings together. Mix it up – combine one-on-one goal-setting with something more hands-on, like a visit or meeting with a co-worker. Check in to see how the pair did.

- Have a staff person or case manager attend one of the early meetings to review the pair’s plans.
- Design a special “Getting Started” workshop.
- Send activity ideas or discussion topics each month.

Triangle meetings, between a staff member, mentor, and youth, are especially helpful for pairs that seem tentative or struggling. Start out with them and gradually wean the pair off.

Finally, regroup! Call pairs back together for a fun group activity or mixer during the first six weeks of the match.

### STEP EIGHT: UPDATE AND INTERVENE

You need to know how everything is going. Is the relationship strong? Is the pair making headway on tasks? What are the hurdles? Does the pair need support, information, tools? You need an update!

Most programs ask mentors, and sometimes youth, to turn in a short monthly update or report that covers activities, accomplishments, problems, and support needs. Alternatively, a staff member or case manager calls the mentor every 4-5 weeks to check on progress. Still other programs hold periodic “mentor only” or “youth only” meetings. Use a newsletter or e-bulletin to share what you learn. Other pairs love to know what other matches are up to and what works.

Many matches go off without a hitch. Others experience difficulties:

- Youth don’t return mentor phone calls or miss meetings
- Youth report that their mentor is too busy to meet

- Youth don’t respond to the mentor or don’t engage in activities
- Mentors and youth don’t know what to do with one another
- Pairs don’t like each other or “can’t connect”
- Mentor reports are vague or “off task”
- Youth drop out or withdraw
- Mentors move or want to end the match because of a change in commitments

Be ready to intervene quickly, at the first sign of relationship erosion. Coach each partner separately first, and if that fails, meet with the pair to discuss and resolve the problem. Possible solutions include having a staff member, case manager, or other mentor pair meet with the pair having difficulty for a short while.

If you need to end a match, do it decisively – you should know from the start of your initiative when to end one and for what reasons. Have a final meeting with the mentor and youth to formally ‘close’ the relationship, and then meet with each afterward. You want to know why it didn’t work. Dip into your mentor pool to arrange a new match as quickly as possible.

### STEP NINE: ARRANGE ONGOING TRAINING AND GROUP ACTIVITIES

The deeper mentors get into their relationship with a young person, the more they tend to want follow-up training. It’s natural! They’ve experienced the challenges firsthand. Mentoring demands a wide variety of skills and knowledge. Youth, although they don’t always ask for it outright, also appreciate more training. Mentoring activities often identify skills they need more time to work on.

### take action! update and intervene

Outline your intervention process. If you see signs of trouble, what specific steps will you take?

### take action! ongoing training & group activities

Plan a schedule of 3-4 follow-up training or group activities each year. Where do mentors and youth need guidance or additional information? What would give them energy and affirmation as a group?

Your training and support paths may diverge into 'mentor only' series and group activities designed for both mentors and youth. Glean training themes from monthly update information or draw them straight off the list of competencies and knowledge mentors need. Find interesting people and experts to facilitate or serve as panelists for sessions: a financial manager to discuss household budgeting, a family therapist to work on adolescent behavior and communication, a college admission counselor, etc.

You can also turn the agenda over to mentors and youth, especially as their relationships mature. Let them take the lead on group social, learning, and team-building activities. Pairs or small activity committees can brainstorm ideas, run them by you, and plan the event.

**STEP TEN: EVALUATE, MOVE ON, AND RE-ENGAGE**

All good mentoring relationships must come to an end, at least as far as your program goes. As mentoring activities wind down, do a final evaluation and formally 'close' matches.

Common evaluation methods include:

- Final mentor report
- Mentor and youth self-assessments
- Individual portfolio of youth work, especially for workplace mentoring relationships
- A public exhibit or showcase of participants' work
- Youth and parent evaluations
- Focus groups, forums, or interviews with youth, mentors, program staff
- Annual program review
- Overall initiative evaluation and year-end report

Many programs close with fanfare. They host a closing ceremony or graduation for mentors, youth, and their families, and program partners. The event creates a natural breaking-away moment, important in longer-term mentoring relationships. Many mentors and youth do stay in touch. And in WIA, where follow-up support and performance tracking is required, mentors can be a big help. You can give mentors ideas about how to support youth informally (by email, phone, etc.) during the follow-up period.

The "moving on" moment ends one set of relationships and begins others. Former mentors and alumni make great mentors, referral resources, orientation and training partners, advisors, planning partners, and initiative leaders. Engage them at this stage! Give them a list of participation opportunities or personally invite them to serve in a particular capacity.

**take action!  
evaluate and  
re-engage**

Let mentors and youth tell you what worked, what didn't, and why. Let them demonstrate accomplishments in a portfolio, exhibit, or presentation. Help them both identify a new role in your effort.



# Mentoring Programs vs. Mentoring Networks and Systems

In some communities you can turn left and see a mentoring program, turn right and see another, behind you another, and so on. About ten years ago you could see the same phenomenon nationally. Mentoring programs were (and are) everywhere!

There is nothing innately wrong with multiple mentoring programs – each might focus on a particular type of youth or mission. However, it can cause unnecessary competition confusion among partners, youth, youth providers, and potential mentors.

Nationally, organizations began to coalesce into mentoring partnerships like the National Mentoring Partnership and National Mentoring Center. Programs in scattered communities did likewise. Sometimes, they actually merged. More often, they simply began to coordinate mentor and student recruitment, training, referral and matching, and other activities.

As you develop your mentoring effort for WIA youth -- or help others do so -- think about what you hope to create. It will definitely shape initial decisions you take and relationships you make!

Mentoring Program	Mentoring Network or System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff recruit individual mentors and work within partner organizations to recruit</li> <li>• Matching process focuses on participants only; youth are “in” or “out”</li> <li>• Staff know about, but rarely meet with, other mentoring programs</li> <li>• Program has “our mentor pool”</li> <li>• Youth-serving organizations and youth themselves have multiple program options but have to figure out themselves which one is most appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff manage campaign marketing and partner recruitment; partners play large role in recruitment and work across networks</li> <li>• Matching process incorporates referral process – i.e., program recommends youth to a more appropriate program given needs</li> <li>• Staff meet regularly with other programs to design tools, training</li> <li>• Network has mentor pool and pool management system – any program can add to or use mentor</li> <li>• Organizations articulate a clear point(s) of entry and referral, and staff help youth make best program selection given needs</li> </ul>



## Activity One: Finding Our Focus

**Goal**

- Review why your group wants to start a mentoring effort, what your goals are, and how to format your effort.

**Materials**

- Mentoring Initiative Vision Worksheet

**Time**

- 45-60 minutes

**Instructions**

As a group, or in smaller breakout groups, discuss your vision for a mentoring initiative. Use the Mentoring Initiative Vision Worksheet to guide you. Have one member of your group keep notes. If you work in smaller groups, report your ideas back to everyone, compare notes, and record the 'best of the best' of your group's thinking on a clean copy of the worksheet.

# Mentoring Initiative Vision Worksheet

Use this worksheet to help your group discuss what you want your mentoring effort to look like.

<p>Whom we want to serve</p>	
<p>What we want them to experience</p>	
<p>How we want to structure or format mentoring relationships</p>	
<p>What we expect mentors and youth to do together</p>	
<p>Other important considerations we need to pay attention to</p>	
<p>Who could help us and how</p>	

## Activity Two: Consensus on Competencies

### Goal

- Identify a core set of ‘competencies’ or outcomes mentors and youth are to accomplish together.

### Materials

- Mentoring Competencies Checklist
- Flip chart, markers, and masking tape

### Time

- 45-60 minutes

### Instructions

When mentors and youth get together, they need real work – real skill development tasks. Use the exercise to help your group define the skills and knowledge you think are critical for youth in your care. Next, brainstorm examples of activities that will allow youth and their mentors to practice these skills together.

Use the Competencies Checklist to guide you. You may want a member of your group to record your initial brainstorm on flip chart paper. When you think you have the skill set you want, transfer the information to a clean copy of the Checklist.

You may also want to break into small groups and give each group a particular skill area, for example:

- Life Skills
- Employability and Workplace Readiness
- Career Exploration

If you need to focus on specific career or occupational skill sets, don’t reinvent the wheel! Go to the States’ Career Cluster Initiative (<http://www.careerclusters.org>) and download copies of the Knowledge & Skills Competencies for the career areas you need. Instead of identifying skills, your group should focus on activities that mentors and youth can use to work on specific skills.

You may want to make additional copies of the Competencies Checklist.



## Activity Three: Mentoring Cycle

### Goal

- Understand critical steps for developing a mentoring effort.
- See a whole 'year at a glance' – what the flow of activities could look like for mentors and youth.

### Materials

- Mentoring Cycle Worksheet

### Time

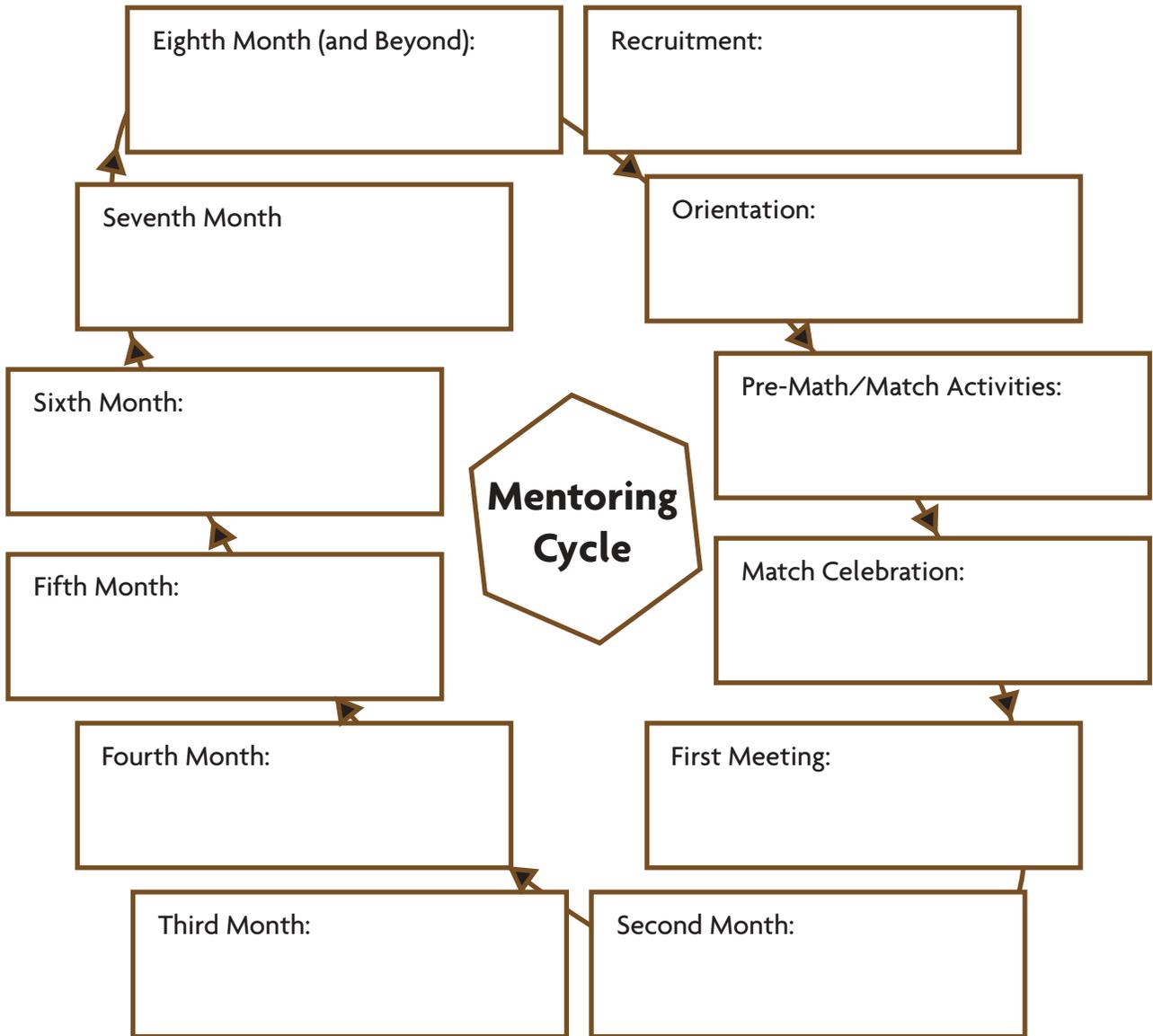
- 30-45 minutes

### Instructions

Use the Mentoring Cycle Worksheet and the activity ideas you generated in Activity Two to plot the first 8-12 months of your mentoring effort. What are the most important things you – or mentors and youth – need to accomplish along the way? When will you have mentors and youth meet as a group? As you work, remember the Ten Steps!

- step one:* Scan and Plan
- step two:* Recruit Mentors
- step three:* Orient Potential Mentors
- step four:* Prepare Youth
- step five:* Organize Pre-Match and Match Activities
- step six:* Arrange and Celebrate Matches
- step seven:* Support Relationship and Rapport-Building
- step eight:* Update and Intervene
- step nine:* Arrange Ongoing Training and Group Activities
- step ten:* Evaluate, Move On and Re-engage Mentors

# Mentoring Cycle Worksheet



## Activity Four: Mentor Sources and Resources

### Goal

- Explore mentoring resources in your community – where mentors congregate, who has access to them, and how partners can help.

### Materials

- Flip chart, markers, masking tape
- Mentoring Partner Profiles Worksheet

### Time

- 45 minutes

### Instructions

1. Grab as many people as you can! At least enough to have a good brainstorming session about people, groups, and places in your community. If you have more than 8 people, break into groups of 3-4.
2. Start by making a list of the types of mentors you need. Think about the youth you serve. What are their interests? Needs? Who would serve as a good professional role model for them? (5-10 minutes).
3. Next, think about where mentors like this work, play, and live. Who has a connection to them? Brainstorm a list of as many examples as you can, as fast as you can, and record them on flip chart paper (5-10 minutes).
4. If you worked as breakout groups, report back to the full group. Post your lists on a wall so that everyone can see them. Compare notes and take stock of the mentor resources in your community.
5. As a group, identify your top ten best sources. Put a ★ star next to your choices. This doesn't mean you don't like the others! You just need to focus on a few for now.
6. Have each breakout group profile two different sources. Use the Mentoring Partner Profiles Worksheet to help you. If you don't know the information, don't make it up! You'll need to dispatch someone to find out later.

# Mentoring Partner Profiles - Worksheet

Potential Partner	Partner's Mission and Main Activities	Other Partners & Relationships They Have	What You Want Them to Do

## EXAMPLES FROM THE FIELD

By the end of the 1990's, Portland, Maine found itself with three separate mentoring programs – serving different types of students but all recruiting from the same employer base. Led by the school system, the community agreed to coordinate all programs under one umbrella, [THE PORTLAND MENTORING ALLIANCE](#). With pooled resources and partners, the Alliance was able to hire a full-time coordinator to coordinate mentor recruitment, training, student recruitment, and tool development.

In [SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASHINGTON](#), a unique partnership between the school district, city, and two Rotary clubs matches Rotary members with at-risk youth. Mentors provide job shadowing opportunities, take their young people to Rotary meetings, help with schoolwork and career exploration, work with youth on community service projects, and sponsor special activities like a four-day technology camp. Mentors also provide – and challenge other businesses to provide – financial incentives to help youth mark important milestones and scholarships to help young people finance college.

One out of eight K-12 students in [GEORGETOWN, TEXAS](#) has a mentor. And every student has the opportunity to have one. The program – sponsored by a partnership between the school district, the Chamber of Commerce, Southwestern University, and the community – is a school-based model. Mentors meet with their students for 30 minutes each week for a year.

[TOLEDO MOUNTAIN MENTORS, OHIO](#), gets the mentoring relationship off on the right foot – by sending youth and their mentors on a five-day hiking trip up and over the highest peaks in New England. The program serves youth on probation. After the trip, mentors and youth continue to connect at least once a week by phone or email and meet once a month for a year for group activities and one-on-one sessions.

The [MENTORING CENTER IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA](#), which supports more than 100 mentoring programs in the San Francisco Bay area, designed a special program for incarcerated African-American youth, ages 14-22. The African American Males Transition Program (AAMTP) follows a 42-week curriculum that helps youth make the transition out of California Youth Authority facilities and into jobs, college and community life. A follow-up program called Positive Minds provides on-going mentoring and support, including GED, financial aid, and job search help.

The [UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN REACH OUT CENTER](#) partners with community organizations, including the Kiwanis, to provide a wide range of mentoring opportunities. “Wandering Wizards” volunteer short blocks of time to do science experiments or demonstrations. Other mentors provide longer-term academic tutoring or career development support, help with after-school career or science clubs, or participate in summer camps. Still others take on special projects, like a youth “task force on the environment” where youth investigated underground storage tanks (and possible leaks) and the city’s water purifications system, interviewed business and city officials, and then presented their findings to the city council.

## RESOURCES

### General – Program Design

Mentor Texas! <http://www.mentortexas.org/>

- Resources and Tip Sheets
- Texas Mentoring Best Practices Showcase
- Overview Card (pdf) - Quality Assurance Standards for Mentoring Program

National Mentoring Center <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/index.html>

- Foundations of Successful Youth Mentoring: A Guidebook for Program Development
- NMC's Training Curriculum (10 Modules)
- NMC's Technical Assistance Packets
- Mentor Recruitment Postcards

National Mentoring Partnership <http://www.mentoring.org/>

- Elements of Effective Mentoring
- Program Resources

Be a Mentor –Resource Center – Students in Business [http://www.beamentor.org/home\\_set.htm](http://www.beamentor.org/home_set.htm)

- Sample Forms
- Training Manuals

Who Mentored You?/National Mentoring Month - Harvard Mentoring Project, Harvard School of Public Health

<http://www.whomentoredyou.com>

### Special Populations, Special Settings

- Yes, You Can: A Guide for Establishing Mentoring Programs to Prepare Youth for College <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/YesYouCan/>
- Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/jump/index.html>
- MentorGirls <http://www.mentorgirls.org>
- Partners for Youth With Disabilities <http://www.pyd.org/>
- Kanfer, F.H., Englund, S., Lennhoff, Claudia, and Rhodes, J. A Mentor Manual: For Adults Who Work With Pregnant and Parenting Teens. Child Welfare League of America. February 1995 <http://www.cwla.org/>

### Practical Tools for Mentors

- Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/packfour.pdf>
- Career Quest Project Outline – Mentor's Guide (pdf) – iMentor <http://www.imentor.org/files/imentor/resources/imentor/resources/mentor/CareerQuestMentorsGuide.pdf>
- Independence 101: A Practical Guide for Young Adults (Ages 15-25). The Survival Series. Darien, CT: Westwood Press. <http://www.thesurvivalseries.com/mentors/>
- The Teenager's Guide to the Real World Online! <http://www.bygps.com/books/tg2rw/>
- Different Stages to Expect in Adolescent Development – Kids C.A.N. Mentoring Program, Hartford County, Maryland <http://www.co.ha.md.us/services/mentor/growth.html>

### E-Mentoring

- Wings Telementoring/Electronic Emissary - University of Texas, Austin <http://wings.utexas.org/telementoring.html>
- IBM MentorPlace <http://www.mentorplace.org/login.do>
- International Telementor.org- Colorado Nonprofit Development Center <http://www.telementor.org/>
- iMentor -Resources <https://www.imentor.org/resources/imentor2.jsp>
- e-Mentoring: A Model and Guide for a New Concept in Mentoring. Minneapolis, MN: Youth Trust <http://www.youthtrust.org/ythp.html>
- MentorNet – e-Mentoring Network for Women in Engineering and Science <http://www.mentornet.net>

**Risk Management**

- Minimizing Risk in Mentoring Programs (pdf) – Points of Light Foundation  
[http://www.pointsoflight.org/pdfs/minimizing\\_risk.pdf](http://www.pointsoflight.org/pdfs/minimizing_risk.pdf)
- More Than a Matter of Trust: Managing the Risks of Mentoring. Washington, DC: Nonprofit Risk Management, 1998  
<http://www94311.temp.wl.com/pubs/mentor.htm>

**Funding Resources for Mentoring Efforts**

- On-Line Funding Resources – National Mentoring Center <http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/funding.html>
- Federal Resources – National Mentoring Partnership  
[http://www.mentoring.org/take\\_action/federal\\_resources/federal\\_funds.adp](http://www.mentoring.org/take_action/federal_resources/federal_funds.adp)
- How to Get Money Funding Search – Afterschool.gov <http://www.afterschool.gov/cgi-bin/htgmsrch.pl>
- Resources – Afterschool Alliance <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/resources.cfm>

**Learning from Others**

- Mentor Question Archives – Peer Resources Network, Canada <http://www.mentors.ca/mentquestarch.html>
- Training and Supporting Volunteer Mentors for Juvenile Offenders in Urban Gardening. Konen, Joseph. Journal of Extension, February 2002. <http://www.joe.org/joe/2002february/iw6.html>
- Kids C.A.N. – Hartford County Government and Hartford County Board of Education, Maryland  
<http://www.co.ha.md.us/services/mentor/>
- US National Guard Challenge Program, Arlington, Virginia <http://www.ngycp.org/>
- Portland Mentoring Alliance, Portland, Maine <http://www.portlandpartnership.org/mentoring.html>
- ACE (Architecture, Construction, and Engineering) Mentor Program <http://www.acementor.org/>
- Check and Connect, Minneapolis, Minnesota <http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect/default.html>
- Tutor/Mentor Connection, Chicago, Illinois <http://www.tutormentorconnection.org/>

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