



# Montgomery County, Maryland Department of Health and Human Services Guidance Document for Youth Mentoring Program Contracts

Under the auspices of work conducted with the PEW-MacArthur Results First Initiative, expert working groups of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) have provided the following guidance document for youth mentoring programs. The guidance document, references and annexes are intended to better align services with evidence-informed practices, provide a standardized approach to measuring engagement and offer increased constancy to the measurement of outcomes of mentoring programs.

The document provides a specific definition of youth mentoring programs, evidence-informed elements of effective mentoring programs and DHHS pre-approved process and outcomes measures are for inclusion in program proposals.

#### Mentoring Definition

Programs which are described as youth mentoring should meet the following definition: Mentoring takes place between young mentee and older/ more experienced person providing relationship-based support that benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development. It shares these characteristics: Non-professional (Non-parent/ non-guardian) mentor relationship in a helping capacity; the relationship has positive impacts to socio-emotional, identity, cognitive or other area of development; and the program uses 1:1, group and/ or peer-based models.

#### **Practice Elements**

Annex I provides a subset of the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring to be included in mentoring programs. These cover evidence-informed recruitment, screening, training, matching, monitoring and support and closure elements. The details for each element can be found online at: <a href="https://www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/">www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/</a>

#### Approved Performance Measures

According to the National Mentoring Resource Center youth programs address one or more of the seven developmental outcome domains addressing: healthy and prosocial behavior; mental and emotional health; academics; interpersonal relationships; social emotional skills; problem behavior; or risk and protective factors. Annex II lists performance measures approved for use with DHHS youth mentoring programs. Links to reliable individual age-appropriate measures and scales are provided at no-cost.

Mentoring programs need to include a measure of the number of unique individuals (youth) that engage (minimum number of times, frequency and/ or duration) in mentoring and/ or a measure of the mentoring relationship quality.

# Annex I: DHHS Youth Mentoring Contracts Adopted Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring (National Mentoring Partnership)

The following evidence-informed standards of effective practice to be included in the request for youth mentoring¹ proposals. Details related to each standard (coded B.#.# or E.#.#) of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*² can be found at the National Mentoring Partnership (<a href="www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/">www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/</a>). If the standard is not applicable to the program proposal, a brief explanation should be included.

# STANDARD 1: RECRUITMENT MENTOR RECRUITMENT

- B.1.1 Program engages in recruitment strategies that realistically portray the benefits, practices, supports, and challenges of mentoring in the program.
- B.1.2 Program utilizes recruitment strategies that build positive attitudes and emotions about mentoring.
- E.1.1 Program communicates to mentors about how mentoring and volunteering can benefit them.
- E.1.2 Program has a publicly available written statement outlining eligibility requirements for mentors in its program.
- E.1.3 Program uses multiple strategies to recruit mentors (e.g., direct ask, social media, traditional methods of mass communication, presentations, referrals) on an ongoing basis.

### MENTEE RECRUITMENT (PARENT OR GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION/ CONSCENT)

- B.1.6 Program engages in recruitment strategies that realistically portray the benefits, practices, supports, and challenges of being mentored in the program.
- E.1.4 Program has a publicly available written statement outlining eligibility requirements for mentees in its program.

### STANDARD 2: SCREENING MENTOR SCREENING

- B.2.1 Program has established criteria for accepting mentors into the program as well as criteria for disqualifying mentor applicants.
- B.2.2 Prospective mentors complete a written application that includes questions designed to help assess their safety and suitability for mentoring a youth.
- B.2.3 Program conducts at least one face-to-face interview with each prospective mentor that includes questions designed to help the program assess his or her suitability for mentoring a youth.
- B.2.4 Program conducts a comprehensive criminal background check on prospective adult mentors, including searching a national criminal records database, along with sex offender and child abuse registries and, when relevant, driving records.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Definition: Mentoring takes place between young mentee and older/ more experienced person providing relationship-based support that benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development. It has these characteristics: Non-professional (Non-parent/ non-guardian) mentor relationship in a helping capacity; relationship has positive impacts to socio-emotional, identity, cognitive or other area of development;

uses 1:1, group and/ or peer-based models

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Garringer, M., Kupersmidt, J., Rhodes, J., Stelter, R., & Tai, T. (2015). Elements of effective practice for mentoring (4th Edition). Boston, MA: MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership.

- B.2.5 Program conducts reference check interviews with multiple adults who know an applicant (ideally, both personal and professional references) that include questions to help assess his or her suitability for mentoring a youth.
- B.2.6 Prospective mentors agree in writing to a one-year (calendar or school) minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship, or a minimum time commitment that is required by the mentoring program.
- B.2.7 Prospective mentors agree in writing to participate in face-to-face meetings with their mentees that average a minimum of once a week and a total of four or more hours per month over the course of the relationship, or at a minimum frequency and amount of hours that are required by their mentoring program.
- E.2.1 Program utilizes national, fingerprint-based FBI criminal background checks.
- E.2.4 School-based programs assess mentors' interest in maintaining contact with their mentees during the summer months (following the close of the academic school year) and offer assistance to matches in maintaining contact.
- E.2.5 Programs that utilize adult mentors prioritize accepting mentor applicants who are older than college-age (i.e., 22 years and older).

#### **MENTEE SCREENING**

- B.2.8 Program has established criteria for accepting youth into the program as well as criteria that would disqualify a potential youth participant.
- B.2.11 Parent(s)/guardian(s) and mentees agree in writing to a one-year (calendar or school) minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship, or the minimum time commitment that is required by the mentoring program.
- B.2.12 Parents(s)/guardian(s) and mentees agree in writing that mentees participate in face-to-face meetings with their mentors that average a minimum of once a week and a total of four or more hours per month over the course of the relationship, or at a minimum frequency and amount of hours that are required by the mentoring program.
- E.2.7 Mentees complete an application (either written or verbally).
- E.2.8 Mentees provide written assent agreeing to participate in their mentoring program.

# STANDARD 3: TRAINING MENTOR TRAINING

- B.3.1 Program provides a minimum of two hours of pre-match, in-person, mentor training.
- B.3.2 Program provides pre-match training for mentors on the following topics:
  - a. Program requirements (e.g., match length, match frequency, duration of visits, protocols for missing, being late to meetings, and match termination).; b. Mentors' goals and expectations for the mentee, parent or guardian, and the mentoring relationship.; c. Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles.; d. Relationship development and maintenance.; e. Ethical and safety issues that may arise related to the mentoring relationship.; f. Effective closure of the mentoring relationship.; g. Sources of assistance available to support mentors.; h. Opportunities and challenges associated with mentoring specific populations of youth (e.g., children with an incarcerated parent, youth involved in the juvenile justice system, youth in foster care, high school dropouts), if relevant.; i. Initiating the mentoring relationship.; and j. Developing an effective, positive relationship with mentee's family, if relevant.
- B.3.3 Program provides pre-match training for the mentor on the following risk management policies that are matched to the program model, setting, and population served.
  - a. Appropriate physical contact; b. Contact with mentoring program (e.g., who to contact, when to contact); c. Relationship monitoring requirements (e.g., response time, frequency, schedule);
  - d. Approved activities; e. Mandatory reporting requirements associated with suspected child

abuse or neglect, and suicidality and homicidality; f. Confidentiality and anonymity; g. Digital and social media use; h. Overnight visits and out of town travel; i. Money spent on mentee and mentoring activities; j. Transportation; k. Emergency and crisis situation procedures; l. Health and medical care; m. Discipline; n. Substance use; o. Firearms and weapons; p. Inclusion of others in match meetings (e.g., siblings, mentee's friends); q. Photo and image use; r. Evaluation and use of data; s. Grievance procedures; and t. Other program relevant topics

- B.3.4 Program uses training practices and materials that are informed by empirical research or are themselves empirically evaluated.
- E.3.2 Program addresses the following post-match training topics:
  - a. How developmental functioning may affect the mentoring relationship; b. How culture, gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, and other demographic characteristics (e.g., linguistic) of the mentor and mentee may affect the mentoring relationship; c. Topics tailored to the needs and characteristics of the mentee; d. and Closure procedures.
- E.3.3 Program uses training to continue to screen mentors for suitability to be a mentor and develops techniques for early troubleshooting should problems be identified.

### **MENTEE TRAINING**

- E.3.4 Program provides training for the mentee on the following topics:
  - a. Purpose of mentoring; b. Program requirements (e.g., match length, match frequency, duration of visits, protocols for missing or being late to meetings, match termination); d. Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles; f. Ethics and safety in mentoring relationships; g. Initiating the mentoring relationship; and h. Effective closure of the mentoring relationship.
- E.3.5 Program provides training for the mentee on the following risk management policies that are matched to the program model, setting, and population served.
  - a. Appropriate physical contact; b. Contact with mentoring program (e.g., who to contact, when to contact); c. Relationship monitoring requirements (e.g., response time, frequency, schedule); d. Approved activities; e. Mandatory reporting requirements associated with suspected child abuse or neglect, and suicidality and homicidality; f. Confidentiality and anonymity; g. Digital and social media use; h. Overnight visits and out of town travel; i. Money spent on mentee and mentoring activities; j. Transportation; k. Emergency and crisis situation procedures; l. Health and medical care; m. Discipline; n. Substance use; o. Firearms and weapons; p. Inclusion of others in match meetings (e.g., siblings, mentee's friends); q. Photo and image use; r. Evaluation and use of data; s. Grievance procedures; and t. Other program relevant topics

#### PARENT OR GUARDIAN TRAINING

- E.3.6 Program provides training for the parent(s) or guardian(s) (when appropriate) on the following topics:
  - a. Purpose of mentoring; b. Program requirements (e.g., match length, match frequency, duration of visits, protocols for missing or being late to meetings, match termination); c. Parents' and mentees' goals for mentoring; d. Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles; e. Mentees' obligations and appropriate roles; f. Ethics and safety in mentoring relationships; g. Initiating the mentoring relationship; h. Developing an effective, working relationship with your child's mentor; i. and Effective closure of the mentoring relationship.
- E.3.7 Program provides training for the parent(s) or guardian(s) on the following risk management policies that are matched to the program model, setting, and population served.
  - a. Appropriate physical contact; b. Contact with mentoring program (e.g., who to contact, when to contact); c. Relationship monitoring requirements (e.g., response time, frequency, schedule); d. Approved activities; e. Mandatory reporting requirements associated with suspected child abuse or neglect, and suicidality and homicidality; f. Confidentiality and anonymity; g. Digital and social media use; h. Overnight visits and out of town travel; i. Money spent on mentee and

mentoring activities; j. Transportation; k. Emergency and crisis situation procedures; l. Health and medical care; m. Discipline; n. Substance use; o. Firearms and weapons; p. Inclusion of others in match meetings (e.g., siblings, mentee's friends); q. Photo and image use; r. Evaluation and use of data; s. Grievance procedures; and t. Other program relevant topics

#### **STANDARD 4: MATCHING**

- B.4.1 Program considers the characteristics of the mentor and mentee (e.g., interests; proximity; availability; age; gender; race; ethnicity; personality; expressed preferences of mentor, mentee, and parent or guardian; goals; strengths; previous experiences) when making matches.
- B.4.2 Program arranges and documents an initial meeting between the mentor and mentee as well as, when relevant, with the parent or guardian.
- B.4.3 Program staff member should be on site and/or present during the initial match meeting of the mentor and mentee, and, when relevant, parent or guardian.
- B.4.4 Mentor, mentee, a program staff member, and, when relevant, the mentee's parent or guardian, meet in person to sign a commitment agreement consenting to the program's rules and requirements (e.g., frequency, intensity and duration of match meetings; roles of each person involved in the mentoring relationship; frequency of contact with program), and risk management policies.
- E.4.1 Programs match mentee with a mentor who is at least three years older than the mentee.
- E.4.3 Program provides an opportunity for the parent(s) or guardian(s) to provide feedback about the mentor selected by the program, prior to the initiation meeting.
- E.4.5 Program staff member prepares mentor for the initial meeting after the match determination has been made (e.g., provide mentor with background information about prospective mentee; remind mentor of confidentiality; discuss potential opportunities and challenges associated with mentoring proposed mentee).
- E.4.6 Program staff member prepares mentee and his or her parents or guardians for the initial meeting after the match determination has been made (e.g., provide mentee and parent(s) with background information about selected mentor; discuss any family rules that should be shared with the mentor; discuss what information family members would like to share with the mentor and when).

#### **STANDARD 5: MONITORING AND SUPPORT**

- B.5.1 Program contacts mentors and mentees at a minimum frequency of twice per month for the first month of the match and once a month thereafter.
- B.5.2 At each mentor monitoring contact, program staff should ask mentors about mentoring activities, mentee outcomes, child safety issues, the quality of the mentoring relationship, and the impact of mentoring on the mentor and mentee using a standardized procedure.
- B.5.3 At each mentee monitoring contact, program should ask mentees about mentoring activities, mentee outcomes, child safety issues, the quality of the mentoring relationship, and the impact of mentoring on the mentee using a standardized procedure.
- B.5.5 Program contacts a responsible adult in each mentee's life (e.g., parent, guardian, or teacher) at a minimum frequency of twice per month for the first month of the match and once a month thereafter.
- B.5.6 At each monitoring contact with a responsible adult in the mentee's life, program asks about mentoring activities, mentee outcomes, child safety issues, the quality of the mentoring relationship, and the impact of mentoring on the mentee using a standardized procedure.
- B.5.7 Program regularly assesses all matches to determine if they should be closed or encouraged to continue.
- B.5.8 Program documents information about each mentor-mentee meeting including, at a minimum, the date, length, and description of activity completed.

- B.5.9 Program provides mentors with access to relevant resources (e.g., expert advice from program staff or others, publications, Web-based resources, experienced mentors) to help mentors address challenges in their mentoring relationships as they arise.
- B.5.10 Program provides mentees and parents or guardians with access or referrals to relevant resources (e.g., expert advice from program staff or others, publications, Web-based resources, available social service referrals) to help families address needs and challenges as they arise.
- B.5.11 Program provides one or more opportunities per year for post-match mentor training.
- B.5.12 Program provides mentors with feedback on a regular basis regarding their mentees' outcomes and the impact of mentoring on their mentees to continuously improve mentee outcomes and encourage mentor retention.
- E.5.1 Program conducts a minimum of one in-person monitoring and support meeting per year with mentor, mentee, and when relevant, parent or guardian.
- E.5.2 Program hosts one or more group activities for matches and/or offers information about activities that matches might wish to participate in together.
- E.5.3 Program hosts one or more group activities for matches and mentees' families.
- E.5.4 Program thanks mentors and recognizes their contributions at some point during each year of the mentoring relationship, prior to match closure.
- E.5.5 At least once each school or calendar year of the mentoring relationship, program thanks the family or a responsible adult in each mentee's life (e.g., guardian or teacher) and recognizes their contributions in supporting the mentee's engagement in mentoring.

#### **STANDARD 6: CLOSURE**

- B.6.1 Program has a procedure to manage anticipated closures, when members of the match are willing and able to engage in the closure process.
- B.6.2 Program has a procedure to manage unanticipated closures, when members of the match are willing and able to engage in the closure process.
- B.6.3 Program has a procedure to manage closure when one member of the match is unable or unwilling to engage in the closure process.
- B.6.4 Program conducts exit interview with mentors and mentees, and when relevant, with parents or guardians.
- B.6.5 Program has a written policy and procedure, when relevant, for managing rematching.
- B.6.6 Program documents that closure procedures were followed.
- B.6.7 Regardless of the reason for closure, the mentoring program should have a discussion with mentors that includes the following topics of conversation:
  - a. Discussion of mentors' feelings about closure; b. Discussion of reasons for closure, if relevant;
  - c. Discussion of positive experiences in the mentoring relationship; d. Procedure for mentor notifying the mentee and his or her parents, if relevant, far enough in advance of the anticipated closure meeting to provide sufficient time to adequately prepare the mentee for closure; e. Review of program rules for post-closure contact; f. Creation of a plan for post-closure contact, if relevant; g. Creation of a plan for the last match meeting, if possible; h. Discussion of possible rematching, if relevant;
- B.6.8 Regardless of the reason for closure, the mentoring program should have a discussion with mentees, and when relevant, with parents or guardians that includes the following topics of conversation:
  - a. Discussion of mentees' feelings about closure; b. Discussion of reasons for closure, if relevant;
  - c. Discussion of positive experiences in the mentoring relationship; d. Procedure for notification of mentor, if relevant, about the timing of closure; e. Review of program rules for post-closure

- contact; f. Creation of a plan for post-closure contact, if relevant; g. Creation of a plan for the last match meeting, if possible; and h. Discussion of possible rematching, if relevant.
- B.6.9 Program has a written public statement to parents or guardians, if relevant, as well as to mentors and mentees that outline the terms of match closure and the policies for mentor/mentee contact after a match ends (e.g., including contacts using digital or social media).
- E.6.1 At the conclusion of the agreed upon time period of the mentoring relationship, program explores the opportunity with mentors, mentees, and (when relevant) parents or guardians to continue the match for an additional period of time.
- E.6.2 Program hosts a final celebration meeting or event for mentors and mentees, when relevant, to mark progress and transition or acknowledge change in the mentoring relationship.

### **Annex II: DHHS Youth Mentoring Contracts Approved Performance Measures**

According to the National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC)<sup>3</sup> youth mentoring programs address one or more of the seven developmental domains. These include outcome measures addressing: healthy and prosocial behavior; mental and emotional health; academics; interpersonal relationships; social emotional skills; problem behavior; or risk and protective factors.

The following performance measurement outcomes from the National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC) *Measurement Guidance Toolkit*<sup>4</sup> have been reviewed and approved for use with DHHS youth mentoring<sup>5</sup> contracts. A program proposal should include a minimum of one approved outcome measure and which best aligns with the program's purpose.

Links to reliable individual age-appropriate measures and scales are provided at no-cost by the NMRC. Details related to each measure and copies of measurement scales can be found at the NMRC website.<sup>6</sup> Use of other reliable and appropriate measures and scales that address the specific youth developmental outcome listed below are also acceptable.

Outcome	Outcome		Suggested measure or scale
Domain	Measure	This Measures	provided by NMRC
Mental and Emotional Health	Adaptive coping with stress	The frequency with which different coping strategies are used by a youth in response to stressors and the youth's perceptions of their effectiveness. Intended for 7- to 12-year-olds or 13- to 17-year-olds.	KIDCOPE – Child version www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/inde x.php/toolkit/item/245-life-adaptive-coping-with- stress.html
	Hopeful future expectations	A youth's hopefulness or positive expectations about his or her future. Intended for 10- to 18-year-olds.	Abbreviated version of the Hopeful Future Expectations (HFE) Scale www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/Hopeful%20Future%20Expectations.docx
	Self-Esteem	A youth's level of global self-esteem. Intended for 8- to 18-year-olds.	Self-Esteem Questionnaire – Global Self-Worth Scale www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/SEQfullversion.doc
Social Emotion al Skills	Social competence	A youth's perceived ability to be assertive and to create and maintain positive peer relationships. Intended for 8- to 18-year-olds.	Social Competencies Scale of the Youth Outcome Measures Online Toolbox www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/Social%20Competence.docx
Healthy and Prosocial Behavior	Civic engagement (includes leadership)	The frequency with which the youth engages in civic-related behaviors. Intended for 13- to 16-year-olds.	Active and Engaged Citizenship (AEC) – Civic Participation scale www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/Civic%20Engagement.docx

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> National Mentoring Resource Center, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Department of Justice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> National Mentoring Resource Center, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), <u>www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php/toolkit/item/239-toolkit.html</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Definition: Mentoring takes place between young mentee and older/ more experienced person providing relationship-based support that benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development. It has these characteristics: Non-professional (Non-parent/ non-guardian) mentor relationship in a helping capacity; relationship has positive impacts to socio-emotional, identity, cognitive or other area of development; uses 1:1, group and/ or peer-based models

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> These include the intended age, description, how to score and interpret findings, and metric/ scale alternatives. <u>www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php/toolkit/item/241-measurement-domains.html</u>

	Prosocial behavior	Youth engagement in prosocial behavior with peers. Intended for 6- to 11-year-olds.	Social-Emotional Character Development Scale (SECDS) – Prosocial Behavior subscale www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/Self-Control.docx
Problem Behavio r	Aggression	A youth's level of bullying behavior. Intended for 11- to 14-year-olds, but is applicable to older adolescents.	Modified Aggression Scale (MAS) — Bullying subscale www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/Aggression.docx
Interpersonal Relationships	Peer relationship quality	A youth's perception of support from a primary caregiver. Intended for 11- to 18-year-olds (grades 6—12); versions for pre-adolescents (grades 3-6) and college students are also available.	Hemingway Measure of Adolescent Connectedness (MAC) — Connectedness to Peers subscale <a href="http://adolescentconnectedness.com/media/HemingwayManual2012.pdf">http://adolescentconnectedness.com/media/HemingwayManual2012.pdf</a>
	Community Connectedness	A youth's positive feelings of connection with his/her peers. This scale has been used with adolescents from Grade 8 upwards and is most appropriate for adolescent populations.	Community Engagement and Connections Survey  – Connection to Community Subscale  www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/Community%20Connectedness%20sca le.docx
Academics	Academic performance	The youth's academic performance in four subject areas. Intended for 8- to 18-year-olds.	Academic Performance www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/Academic%20Performance.docx
	School engagement	A youth's active participation with learning activities in the classroom. Intended for 8- to 15-year-olds.	Engagement versus Disaffection with Learning (EvsD) – Behavioral Engagement subscale www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/images/Toolkit/School%20Engagement%20Scale.docx
Risk and Protective Factors	OST structured activity time	Youth's level of participation in structured out-of-school-time (OST) activities. Intended for 10- to 17-year-olds.	Out-of-School-Time Structured Activity Involvement www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/imag es/Toolkit/OST%20Structured%20Activity%20Inv olvementv2.docx

In addition to the collection and reporting of at least one of the youth developmental outcome listed above, measures of parental/guardian and/or youth customer satisfaction and youth self-confidence/empowerment are also approved for collection and reporting. Youth mentoring programs also include a measure of the number of unique individuals that engage in mentoring and/or a measure of the mentoring relationship quality.

	Measure	This Measures	Suggested measure or scale provided by NMRC
Other	Customer satisfaction (parent/ youth)	A measure of satisfaction with mentoring services delivered.	* A specific measure or scale is not provided; to be provided by contractor
	Self- confidence/ empowerment	A belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task.	* A specific measure or scale is not provided; to be provided by contractor
	Mentorship relationship	A youth's positive feelings of connection with his/her mentor.	* A specific measure or scale is not provided; to be provided by contractor
	Program retention	A measure of youth participation with mentoring services.	* A specific measure or scale is not provided; to be provided by contractor

The use of the approved lists above does not prevent the collection and reporting of additional measures and scales by mentoring providers.