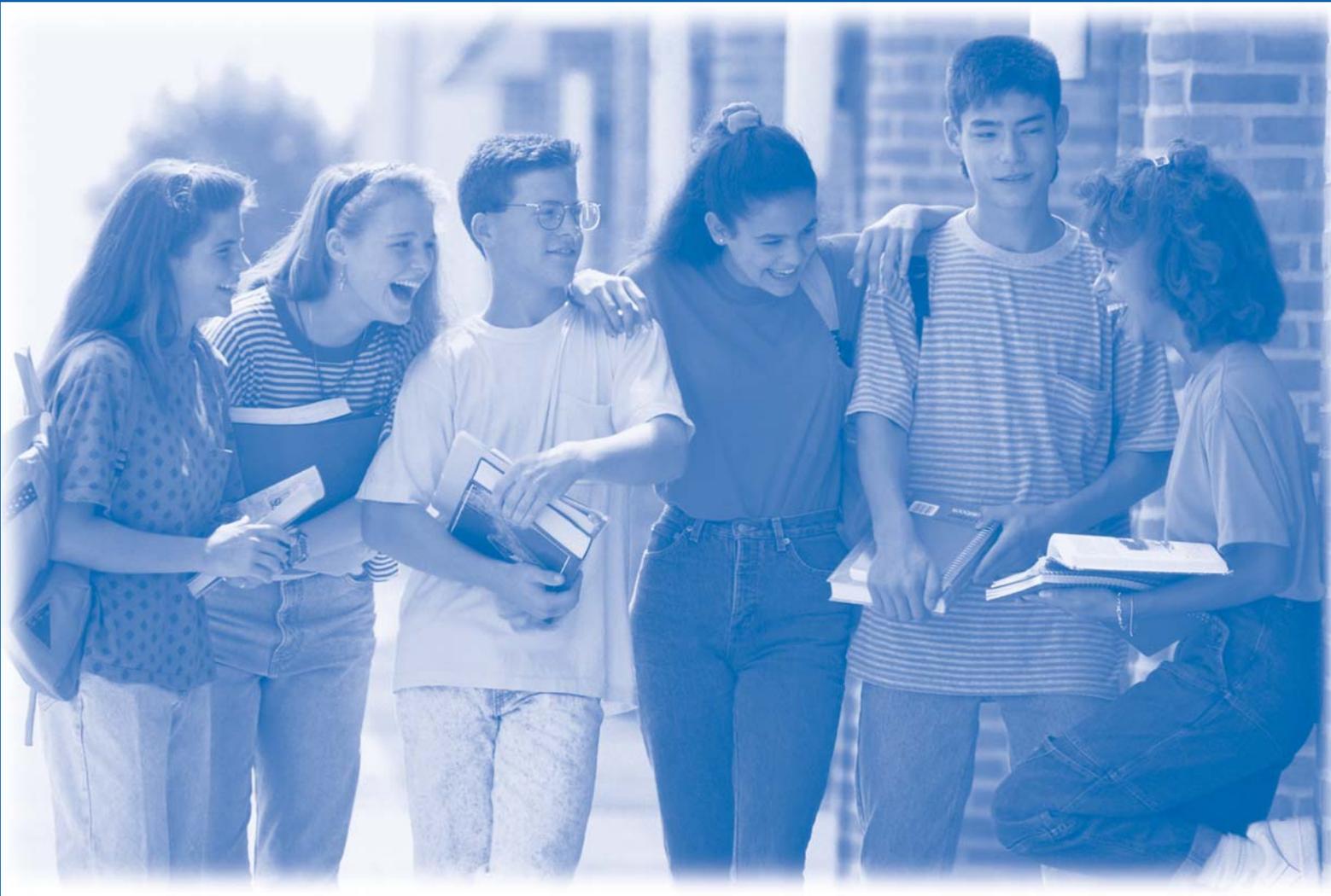


Strategies to Prevent Youth Violence

- Social-Cognitive Strategy



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Overview of the Social-Cognitive Strategy

Researchers have linked a lack of social problem-solving skills to youth violence (Pepler and Slaby 1994; Baranowski et al. 1997). When children and adolescents are faced with social situations for which they are unprepared emotionally and cognitively, they may respond with aggression or violence. Many assert that we can improve children's ability to avoid violent situations and solve problems nonviolently by enhancing their social relationships with peers, teaching them how to interpret behavioral cues, and improving their conflict-resolution skills (Nadel et al. 1996).

Social-cognitive interventions strive to equip children with the skills they need to deal effectively with difficult social situations.

Social-cognitive interventions strive to equip children with the skills they need to deal effectively with difficult social situations, such as being teased or being the last one picked to join a team. They build on Bandura's social-cognitive theory, which posits that children learn social skills by observing and interacting with parents, adult relatives and friends, teachers, peers, and others in the environment, including media role models (Bandura 1986). Social-cognitive interventions incorporate didactic teaching, modeling, and role-playing to enhance positive social interactions, teach nonviolent methods for resolving conflict, and establish or strengthen nonviolent beliefs in young people.

Best Practices for a Social-Cognitive Intervention

While evaluations have shown social-cognitive interventions to be effective in the short-term, long-term effectiveness is still unclear. However, even with limited data, we can offer best practices for developing and implementing this type of intervention. The recommendations that follow are based on an extensive literature review and on interviews and surveys conducted with experts in the field of youth violence prevention.

Identify the Populations You Want to Reach

Social-cognitive interventions are typically aimed at children. The younger participants are when your effort begins, the better your chances of successfully preventing aggressive attitudes and behaviors (Slaby 1998). Ideally, these interventions should reach all young people in a community, not just those with a history of violent behavior. However, if your community is like most, limited resources may prohibit such a large-scale effort. To determine who your intended participants should be, assess the community's needs and the money, time, and human resources available.

If you choose to target both violent and nonviolent children, use caution in planning your intervention activities. While violent children may be positively influenced by nonviolent participants, children with high levels of aggression need special attention. They may not thrive in an intervention intended for a general population. And if the ratio of violent to nonviolent children is too high, the nonviolent children could be negatively influenced.

Consider the Cultural and Demographic Context of Intended Participants

Social-cognitive interventions must take into account the environment in which participants live and the circumstances they face. Children who exhibit violent behaviors often come from neighborhoods in which risk factors such as poverty, drug or alcohol abuse, and divorce are commonplace. Interventions must address these issues, in addition to teaching social and conflict-resolution skills. They must also be sensitive to the views of individual schools, the school system's administrators, and the community as a whole.

Select an Appropriate Setting

Most social-cognitive interventions reported in the literature are centered in the schools for practical reasons. Trainers are often already on site, and children gather there for seven to eight hours

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a day, five days a week. Also, schools can set policies and alter the physical surroundings to minimize risk factors for violence, thus creating a model environment.

However, social-cognitive interventions need not be limited to school settings; they can be conducted wherever children are found in organized groups. Because patterns of violence appear to develop at an early age, researchers suggest that violence prevention efforts begin when children are very young and continue throughout their school years (Kellam et al. 1994; Slaby 1998). Therefore, social-cognitive interventions may ideally be introduced in Head Start programs, preschools, and childcare centers.

Additionally, efforts should be made to reach children who have dropped out of school. This may mean developing interventions to be carried out in community centers, churches, and juvenile detention facilities.

Involve the Community

Social-cognitive interventions cannot succeed in a vacuum. The surrounding community must be engaged in violence prevention activities that support the school-based effort. In addition, parents and caregivers must reinforce the learning that goes on inside the classroom.

The school community

The effectiveness of social-cognitive interventions depends largely on a whole-school approach (Aber et al. 1996; Wiist, Jackson, and Jackson 1996; Orpinas et al. 1996). In other words, all members of the school community—from administrators to teachers to students and other school personnel—should have a role.

To achieve such an integrated system, intervention planners should establish a steering committee or core group within the school or school district to coordinate activities. This group should work closely with school principals and other administrators to ensure that the intervention's activities are in line with the school's or district's goals and to increase the commitment level of decision makers (Aber et al. 1996; Wiist, Jackson, and Jackson 1996; Orpinas et al. 1996). Supervisors should also be encouraged to support the professional development and training that teachers and other educators need to effectively implement the intervention and to allow intervention staff extra time to meet project deadlines.

Parents and others

No matter how intensive and well-conceived school-based interventions are, they will probably not be successful without the approval, cooperation, and support of parents and the community (Powell, Muir-McClain, and Halasyamani 1995). Practitioners planning a social-cognitive intervention should recruit one or more credible, respected individuals in the school to promote the intervention and find ways for parents, community leaders, and others to participate in developing the intervention's activities and curriculum.

Set Clear Goals and Objectives for Intervention Outcomes and Implementation

Social-cognitive interventions promote social competence by building communication skills and facilitating peer relationships. Their general goal is to improve young people's ability to avoid conflict and handle in nonviolent ways any conflict that does arise. Common objectives of social-cognitive interventions include reducing the number of children suspended for violent acts, reducing the number of students referred to school counselors for aggressive behavior, and increasing positive attitudes toward nonviolence. Of course, goals and objectives for individual schools or communities will vary depending on needs and resources.

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Select the Best Intervention for Your Participants and Develop Appropriate Materials

The intervention selected for a given school or school system—and the activities and curriculum that comprise it—will depend largely on participants' ages and whether the goal is to change the behaviors and attitudes of all students or those of aggressive or violent students only. However, all social-cognitive interventions typically address the beliefs and attitudes that support aggressive behavior and teach the following skills (Greene 1998):

- negotiation, critical thinking, and decision making
- identifying, managing, and coping with feelings, including anger
- anticipating the consequences of one's aggressive verbal and nonverbal behavior
- finding nonviolent alternatives to conflict
- moral reasoning

When developing the curriculum and activities for your intervention, review interventions that have been tried in other schools. Assess whether the practices that made the intervention effective are applicable to your school or community. You may need to customize some components of the intervention, but do so cautiously. Changing significant elements can alter the intervention's effectiveness.

Experts in the field of youth violence prevention have identified the following additional suggestions for developing social-cognitive intervention materials (Aber et al. 1996; Wiist, Jackson, and Jackson 1996; Orpinas et al. 1996; Huesmann, Pierce, and Briggs 1996; Greene 1998):

- Involve teachers and principals from the beginning.
- Use the words children use with their peers when they are angry.
- Include role-playing and small-group exercises to help children practice prosocial, nonviolent behaviors and develop automatic positive responses.
- Include training in intercultural understanding so young people can tolerate differences and see others' points of view.
- Teach students about the risk factors or triggers that can lead to violent confrontation.

For the general student population

If a school or community wants to prevent aggressive behavior before it starts or wants to improve the overall attitude toward violence, a social-cognitive intervention that's aimed at all students is one possible strategy. This section describes interventions designed for the general student population.

Elementary school

Research has shown that between ages 6 and 12, children's beliefs about aggression and their tendencies to attribute hostile intent to others' actions are developing rapidly (Aber et al. 1996). Therefore, several interventions have been developed to target this age group.

The Resolving Conflict Creatively Program (RCCP) is designed to help elementary-school teachers and students learn nonviolent ways of resolving conflicts, prevent involvement with violent situations, and promote intercultural understanding. It has several components, including the following:

- Teachers are trained to incorporate into a traditional curriculum exercises to improve communication, conflict resolution, and intergroup relations.

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- Staff developers guide teachers in applying new skills.
- Administrators are briefed about the intervention's concepts and how they can support the effort.
- Peer models for nonviolent conflict resolution intervene in arguments and disputes on the playground and in the lunchroom.

The RCCP curriculum contains 51 weekly lessons, each lasting 30 to 60 minutes. These lessons or “workshops” focus on active listening, assertiveness, emotional expression, perspective-taking, cooperation, negotiation, problem solving, conflict analysis, and countering expressions of bias. Teachers facilitate role-playing exercises, interviewing, small-group discussion, and brainstorming to achieve a high level of student interaction (Aber et al. 1996).

Evaluation of RCCP has revealed mixed results. The beliefs and thought processes that put students at risk for aggression increased among all students as the school-year progressed. However, when teachers administered many RCCP lessons, students' aggressive attitudes increased much more slowly. When teachers taught only a few RCCP lessons, students experienced a faster increase than average. In addition to the number of lessons taught, the context of the child's life was found to impact the effect of this program. The positive effects resulting from frequent exposure to the RCCP curriculum were weakened among children from high-risk classrooms and neighborhoods (Aber et al. 1998; Roderick 1998).

PeaceBuilders is a school-wide intervention that teaches five principles: praise people, avoid put-downs, seek wise people as advisors and friends, notice and correct hurts we cause, and right wrongs. The program uses nine broad techniques for behavior change (Embry et al. 1996):

- common language for “community norms”
- real-life models and story characters who depict positive behaviors
- environmental cues to indicate desired behaviors
- role plays to increase the range of responses to conflict
- rehearsals of positive responses to negative situations
- rewards—both individual and group—for prosocial behaviors
- reduction in threats to reduce reactivity
- self- and peer monitoring
- activities to promote maintenance of change across time and context

Initial outcomes over a two-year period showed that exposure to PeaceBuilders significantly increased teacher-rated social competence and student-reported prosocial behavior. Fewer effects were seen for students' aggressive behavior (Flannery et al., unpublished). Additionally, in a separate study assessing whether the program had any impact on visits to the school nurse, the researchers found that nurse visits—including those related to injuries—decreased 12 percent in intervention schools, while they remained static in comparison schools. The rates of injuries related to fighting showed little change in intervention schools, but they increased 56 percent in the comparison schools (Krug et al. 1997).

The PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) Curriculum was developed to help students in kindergarten through fifth grade develop essential skills in emotional literacy, positive peer relations, and problem solving. Teachers blended intervention materials with the regular curriculum, and activities were conducted both in and out of the classroom. Parents were also given materials for use at home to help students generalize the lessons learned in class.

Four clinical trials of PATHS over the past 15 years have demonstrated improvements in social and emotional competencies and reductions in aggression and other risk factors (e.g., depression) across a wide range of elementary school children, including students with special needs. Some improvements were also seen in cognitive skills. These findings were reflected in teacher ratings, student self-reports, child testing and interviewing, and independent ratings by classroom observers (Greenberg et al. 1995; Greenberg and Kusche 1998).

Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum was developed to reduce aggression and increase prosocial behavior. Grossman and colleagues (1997) conducted a randomized trial among 790 second- and third-grade students in six matched pairs of urban and suburban elementary schools in Washington state. At both two weeks and six months after the intervention, the researchers found a moderate decrease in physical aggression and an increase in neutral and prosocial behavior in school. There was no measurement of behavior change outside the school setting. While this intervention appears promising for elementary schools, it has had disappointing effects when implemented in middle schools. In one study, the curriculum led to a decrease in boys' aggressive behaviors, but the results were short-lived (Orpinas et al. 1995). In a second study, the curriculum failed to reduce aggressive behaviors (Orpinas et al. 2000).

Middle school

Conflict Resolution: A Curriculum for Youth Providers is an intervention for middle-school students. Teachers present five chapters designed to build skills in communication and nonviolent conflict resolution. Students in classes that followed the curriculum reported significantly fewer violent solutions to hypothetical conflict situations than did students in other classes. The intervention group also reported significant decreases in the actual use of violence. Although the short-term results appear promising, the study used a quasi-experimental design to evaluate the curricula, and the students were not randomly selected. Therefore, interpretations of the results are limited (DuRant et al. 1996).

High school

The Violence Prevention Project (VPP), which was implemented in three high schools in Boston, involved students in lectures, discussions, and interactive role plays once a week for 10 weeks. Evaluation of the project found that very low suspension rates were maintained among juniors, but these rates were not always significantly different from groups who did not participate in the project. However, in a specialized class with a smaller student-teacher ratio and several services that were not available in the main school system, the project reduced suspension rates by 71 percent. Findings from this project suggest that the VPP can reduce negative school behaviors when other supportive activities and services are provided concurrently (Hausman, Pierce, and Briggs 1996).

For at-risk and high-risk youth

Aggressive youths tend to have trouble with impulse control, problem solving, anger management, assertiveness, and empathy. Social-cognitive interventions are designed to improve interpersonal and problem-solving skills so these children will be less likely to resort to aggression or to become the target of violence and better able to negotiate mutually beneficial solutions (Slaby et al. 1995).

High-risk youth should participate in interventions that use multiple components—for instance, academic enhancement and relationship building with both peers and adults. A broad, intensive intervention is needed to prevent violence by children with chronic aggressive behavior (Orpinas et al. 1996; Lochman et al. 1993).

Elementary school

The BrainPower program is an attributional intervention designed to reduce peer-directed aggression among African

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American and Latino boys. During 60-minute sessions conducted twice weekly for six weeks, students engage in activities designed to reduce their tendencies to attribute hostile intentions in peers following ambiguous negative social interactions (Hudley 1994). A study of the BrainPower intervention was conducted among 384 third- through sixth-grade students in four southern-California elementary schools. The students' behaviors and attitudes were measured for 12 months after the intervention. Boys in the intervention group improved their self-control and made fewer judgments of hostile intent. Although these results diminished over time, the findings suggest that improvements in behavior are related to changes in students' attributions (Hudley et al. 1998).

The Anger Coping Program and the Coping Power Program are related interventions designed for aggressive children who have a hard time accurately interpreting the intentions of others. Both interventions focus on developing children's abilities to manage anger, reducing their tendency to attribute hostile intent, and improving social problem-solving skills. The Anger Coping Program consists of 18 group sessions that are typically delivered in elementary schools. At three-year follow-up, the program had produced significant reductions in children's aggression in several pretest/post-test studies (Lochman, Burch, et al. 1984; Lochman, Lampron, et al. 1989) and reductions in substance use, but not in delinquency (Lochman 1992). The Coping Power Program has a 33-session child-group component and a 16-session parent-group component (Lochman and Welles 1996). Post-intervention and one-year follow-up evaluations showed significant reductions in children's aggression (Lochman, in press).

Middle school

Positive Adolescent Choices Training (PACT), implemented in Dayton, Ohio, was designed to reach high-risk African American students in seventh and eighth grades. The intervention's principle components include the following (Yung and Hammond 1995, 1998):

- Social-skills training—expressing anger, frustration, and disappointment constructively; listening and reacting appropriately to criticism or anger of others; and resolving disagreements nonviolently.
- Anger-management training—recognizing anger triggers, understanding anger responses, thinking through the consequences of those responses, and using techniques to control anger.

- Education about violence—dispelling myths about violence risks and raising awareness of the dynamics of violence.

Researchers found that youths in the PACT group expressed less physical aggression at school than did students in the control group. This improvement in behavior was observed both during and after the training. They also found that, compared to controls, PACT participants had less involvement with the juvenile court system, fewer violence-related charges, and lower rates of offenses per person (Yung and Hammond 1993).

Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways (RIPP) is a sixth-grade curriculum that was taught in the Richmond Youth Against Violence Project. It was designed for students with high rates of suspension, low grade-point averages, absenteeism problems, and a history of violent behavior. About 90 percent of the students in the intervention were African American, and many came from low-income, single-parent households in neighborhoods with high rates of crime and drug use. The curriculum—developed from an earlier program based on Prothrow-Stith’s model (1987) and the Children’s Creative Response to Conflict Program (1988)—included 25 50-minute sessions implemented by specialists trained in conflict resolution (Farrell and Meyer 1997). All sessions combined behavioral repetition and mental rehearsal, experiential learning activities, and didactic learning opportunities. Early sessions focused on team building and expanding students’ knowledge about nonviolence; later sessions focused on skill building and critical analysis. The skills taught in the sixth grade were reinforced by a school-wide peer-mediation intervention and by seventh- and eighth-grade curricula implemented by teachers (Meyer and Farrell 1998).

Results immediately following the intervention revealed that RIPP participants had significantly fewer disciplinary code violations, carried weapons less often, and were suspended less frequently than controls. Participants also improved their knowledge of intervention material, used their school’s mediation program more frequently, and reported fewer injuries from fighting.

In a six-month follow-up study of RIPP, self-report data collected from 169 participants and 184 controls showed significant treatment effects for the frequency of violent behaviors, suppression of aggressive behavior, and knowledge of the intervention material. Impulse control improved significantly among boys, and fewer male students skipped school because of

safety concerns. Significant improvement was seen in girls' reported use of nonviolent methods to address hypothetical conflict situations. School disciplinary data from the first semester of the seventh grade showed that RIPP participants had significantly fewer suspensions than the control group (Farrell, Meyer, and White 1998).

The Washington Community Violence Prevention Program offered fifth and seventh graders in high-crime areas of Washington, D.C., a curriculum to highlight the motivation behind aggressive behavior and develop problem-solving skills. The curriculum built on "Viewpoints," a 10-session intervention for violent juvenile offenders to which three sessions were added: one each on drugs and guns, and one to celebrate completion of the intervention (Guerra and Slaby 1990). Students increased their knowledge about risk factors for violence, changed their attitudes toward violence, and increased social skills shown to affect aggressive behavior. These effects were measured only in the short term (Gainer, Webster, and Champion 1993).

Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders: Thinking and Acting to Prevent Violence is a curricular intervention for middle school students that focuses not only on aggressors, but also on the interrelated roles of victims and bystanders. It is based on the premise that all three players can build the cognitive and social skills needed to resolve problems nonviolently. The curriculum was developed and evaluated in three steps, each involving collaboration among expert advisors, teachers, and students. First, researchers assessed students' cognitive skills, beliefs, and tendency to start a conflict, be a victim, or be a bystander who encourages aggression. Second, a preliminary curriculum was developed, and teachers and students provided feedback on factors such as clarity, relevance, age appropriateness, engagement, and practical utility. Third, the curriculum was evaluated in a study of over 300 high-risk adolescents and a control group. The intervention reduced students' belief that violence is a favorable response to conflict; increased their intent to resolve conflict without aggression, seek relevant information, and avoid conflict; and improved their self-rated behavior, indicating withdrawal of bystander acceptance and encouragement of aggression (Slaby 1998).

Multi-tier interventions

Interventions designed for the general student population may fail to impact children at high risk for aggression. To address the needs of both the general and high-risk student populations,

some practitioners plan interventions with several levels of activities. These multi-tier efforts may combine, for example, a curriculum to be delivered to all students with special small-group activities designed for high-risk youth. Some of these interventions also include activities for parents or the entire family.

One example of a multi-tier effort is the Metropolitan Area Child Study (MACS), an eight-year research trial conducted among elementary school students in urban, at-risk communities. Its goal was to change the thought processes and attitudes that are associated with aggressive behavior and to modify the school environment to foster prosocial development. Three components comprised MACS: a general enhancement classroom intervention, the “Yes I Can” curriculum; a small-group intervention for high-risk children; and a family component for the parents or guardians of high-risk children.

The “Yes I Can” curriculum consisted of 40 lessons delivered twice a week for two years (20 per year) by teachers in first-through sixth-grade classrooms. In the first year, students were taught self-understanding, relationship of self to others, and moral beliefs in order to motivate students to behave in prosocial ways and decrease their acceptance of aggression in social interactions. Also in the first year, teachers received 30 hours of training to help them model prosocial behaviors in the classroom. Year two introduced the themes of control and prosocial action plans to provide children with the skills needed for daily social interactions. The second year included monthly reviews for teachers to address the issues raised during first-year training and to help them develop plans for dealing with everyday classroom concerns.

The second component of MACS was a more intensive program directed at high-risk students. In addition to following the general enhancement curriculum, high-risk students participated in small-group activities designed to change their aggressive beliefs and attributions and give them opportunities to practice positive reactions to a variety of social situations. The small groups met once a week for 12 weeks in the first year and for 16 weeks in the second year. To increase social interaction, small-group participants were designated as leaders for the “Yes I Can” curriculum in the second year. Labeling the small-group activities as “leadership training meetings” helped motivate the high-risk students and improved their social status with peers.

The third component of MACS was family-relationship training. This 22-week program was designed to address several factors

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related to children's antisocial behavior, including inconsistent discipline, low levels of parental monitoring, poor problem-solving skills, defensiveness in family interactions, and a lack of emotional bonding (Huesmann et al. 1996).

The results of this multi-level intervention were mixed. In schools with moderate resources, significant decreases in aggression were found among second- and third-grade students who received the most intensive intervention. However, in schools that had limited resources to devote to the intervention, aggression actually increased after the intervention, even when all three components were implemented. Among children in fifth and sixth grades, aggression increased after receiving general and small-group training, regardless of the school's resource level. These results indicate that a program like that tested in MACS can effectively decrease aggression if begun early and implemented in schools with adequate resources, but negative unintended effects may result when such an intervention is implemented among older students or in schools with limited means (Huesmann 2000).

Incorporate an array of activities and materials in order to hold students' interest and model a variety of ways to prevent or counteract violence.

Diverse activities and materials

Social-cognitive interventions should incorporate an array of activities and materials in order to hold students' interest and model a variety of ways to prevent or counteract violence. Multimedia formats, specifically computer-based interventions, can greatly enhance classroom instruction techniques because they provide flexibility and can spark interest among resistant students (Bosworth et al. 1996). The multimedia approach can adjust the intervention to students' responses, provide students control over the choice of information and sequence of materials, offer one-on-one anonymous interaction between the student and computer, and provide an attractive game-like atmosphere.

One multimedia example is SMART Team (formerly SMART Talk), a computer-based intervention for young adolescents that uses games, simulations, cartoons, animation, and interactive interviews to teach new ways of resolving conflict without violence. Computer characters act as role models who demonstrate anger management, dispute resolution, and perspective-taking to give adolescents strategies for conflict resolution and mediation (Bosworth et al. 1996). The intervention is composed of six modules that may be used in any order without losing continuity or impact.

SMART Team was pilot tested with 102 seventh-grade students in a small-city middle school for a four-week period. The results showed significant increases in knowledge about conflict management and about behavior that escalates conflict; increases in self-reported prosocial behavior and intentions to use nonviolent strategies; and decreases in self-reported discipline problems at home, at school, and in the community. However, there was no difference in the students' confidence in handling conflict situations using nonviolent strategies (Bosworth, Espelage, and DuBay 1998).

The intervention was subsequently implemented in a large school in a major Midwestern metropolis with a diverse socioeconomic population. An evaluation of 516 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders showed that students found the intervention attractive and useful and that the intervention improved students' attitudes toward violence, increased self-awareness, and increased intentions to use nonviolent strategies. However, there were no significant changes in the frequency of aggressive behavior. The findings suggest that multimedia tools may be useful in changing some of the cognitive and psychological factors associated with violence and, therefore, have the potential for changing violent behavior (Bosworth et al. 2000).

Interventions to address the school setting and social norms

If interventions are to be effective in the school setting, issues about the setting itself must be addressed. Practitioners should include components that promote a nonviolent environment throughout the school. At a minimum, schools should have and enforce policies on safety precautions and student conduct. They should also enact non-punitive methods of control, encourage student involvement in academic and after-school activities, and provide continuous support for staff (Mayer 1995, 1999).

A focus on the social context of the schools could help promote social competence and prosocial behavior in children by creating a caring school community (Baker 1998). School psychologists can help assess a school's culture and restructure schools to be more sensitive to social aspects of education, for example, by emphasizing personal responsibility, empathy, and respect for the community.

Addressing violence in the media

Violence is often glorified or romanticized in the news and entertainment media. This type of media coverage can give young people an unrealistic view of the consequences of violence and lead them to believe that violence is accepted—

Social-cognitive interventions should help children deconstruct the violent scenarios they see on television, watch in movies, and hear in song lyrics.

or even expected—in today’s society. Social-cognitive interventions should teach media literacy to help children deconstruct the violent scenarios they see on television, watch in movies, and hear in song lyrics.

Cultural considerations

Planners and practitioners should carefully review intervention materials and make necessary cultural adaptations for their intended participants. Interventions reaching students living in transient neighborhoods, for example, must address the ethnic and language differences that are found in the community’s heterogeneous population (Huesmann et al. 1996).

It may be most effective to provide schools with a core curriculum to which they can add culturally appropriate material without compromising the intervention’s effectiveness. Each school should research educational techniques that might work best for their students; no one technique is appropriate for all schools.

Link social-cognitive interventions with other strategies

Interventions to prevent youth violence should involve multiple segments of children’s social experiences and interactions. Studies have suggested that integrating the components of school-based social-cognitive interventions (e.g., social-skills development) with other types of interventions can improve effectiveness (Goldstein and McGinnis 1998; McGinnis and Goldstein 1998).

The FAST (Families and Schools Together) Track Program is a prime example of blending strategies to prevent youth violence. It combines a social-cognitive curriculum, parent training, and home visits to prevent conduct problems, promote social relations, and improve school performance among elementary school students. It has been implemented in the low-income, high-crime areas of Nashville, Tennessee; Seattle, Washington; Durham, North Carolina; and University Park, Pennsylvania (Bierman and Conduct 1996; Dodge and Conduct 1993).

FAST Track is a multi-level program, consisting of universal and selective components. The universal component has a 57-lesson curriculum (the PATHS curriculum—see page 125) to foster universal development of emotional concepts, social understanding, and self-control. In the target communities, it was delivered to all students in 20- to 30-minute lessons, which were taught approximately three times a week (Catalano et al. 1998).

Additional components were administered to high-risk students—

- Parents of high-risk children took part in training groups designed to promote positive family-school relationships and teach nonaggressive parenting skills (e.g., positive reinforcement, use of time outs, improved self-restraint).
- Home visits were conducted to foster parents' problem-solving skills, self-efficacy, and coping skills.
- High-risk students participated in social-skills training groups.
- Children received tutoring in reading.
- The at-risk children took part in a friendship-enhancement program called Peer Pairing.

The universal curriculum was applied each year for six years—from first through fifth grade—covering the important developmental transitions of school entry and moving from elementary to middle school. Home visits and tutoring took place weekly in the first-grade year; afterward, these activities occurred as dictated by participants' needs (Bierman and Conduct 1996).

At the completion of the first grade, children's social, emotional, and academic skills increased moderately; peer interactions and social status improved; and disruptive behaviors decreased. Parents reported decreased use of physical discipline, increased parenting satisfaction, and increased positive involvement with both their children and the school. Additionally, significant effects were seen in observer ratings of the classroom atmosphere, although assessment of classroom functioning varied by the quality of the FAST Track implementation (Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group 1999a, 1999b).

Coordinating multi-strategy programs

When several strategies are incorporated into a program, you will likely need a diverse implementation staff. Persons best suited to carry out a school-based intervention, for example, may not be qualified to conduct home visits. Select one person or organization to coordinate hiring of staff, keep track of all activities in the various interventions, and monitor staff performance. This will ensure continuity among the interventions and improve the overall effort.

Select Staff Appropriate for Your Intervention

When staffing a social-cognitive intervention, there are basically three options: 1) teachers deliver the intervention in their classrooms; 2) full-time prevention specialists (who are not

Make sure staff members have a strong commitment to nonviolence.

classroom teachers) implement the intervention; or 3) a combination of teachers and other professionals implement it. Each option has advantages and disadvantages, which are discussed below. But regardless of who implements your intervention, make sure staff members have a strong commitment to nonviolence and understand the social and environmental context of participants' lives.

Teachers as implementers

Having teachers implement a social-cognitive intervention may increase the integration of intervention activities with the regular curriculum. And a teacher-based staff may require little or no additional funding. However, if teachers implement the intervention, students may be reluctant to disclose hostile or sensitive emotions. They may feel there is less confidentiality or fear that an admission of negative or aggressive feelings may result in lower grades or disciplinary action.

Be sure that teachers who participate in the intervention do so voluntarily (Aber et al. 1996; Wiist, Jackson, and Jackson 1996; Orpinas et al. 1996). Some teachers may resent the burden of adding extra activities to their already busy class schedule or be reluctant to spend extra time at school to carry out extracurricular intervention activities. These teachers may not devote the effort needed to make the intervention a success. Limit intervention staff to those teachers who are enthusiastic about the activities and their intended results.

In addition to being willing to devote extra effort to a social-cognitive intervention, teachers must believe that violence can be prevented and that the intervention they are implementing will have an impact (Slaby 1998). When teachers do not believe in violence prevention interventions but implement those interventions anyway, they may inadvertently weaken the intervention's effect or cause it to fail. You can assess individual teacher readiness by having teachers rate their beliefs about violence prevention efficacy at three levels:

- General beliefs—Do you believe that violence is preventable? If a teacher does not believe it is, he or she may misrepresent or ignore prevention messages.
- Specific beliefs—To what extent do you believe that prevention strategies and practices can be effective? If a teacher believes that violence is theoretically preventable but does not believe that intervention materials can be useful, he or she may not deliver activities and lessons effectively.

- Personal beliefs—Do you believe that you, personally, can make a difference in helping to prevent violence? A lack of personal efficacy can also limit effectiveness of intervention activities and messages.

You may need to increase readiness by providing evidence that these interventions work and that teachers can have a profound impact on youth violence prevention. For example, presenting a video or case study that shows skeptical teachers who implemented a violence prevention intervention and then noticed positive behavior changes may help convince staffers of their ability and that of the intervention to prevent violence (Slaby 1998).

Other professionals as implementers

In some cases, such as when after-school activities form a significant portion of an intervention, non-teachers may be the ideal implementers. Even when activities take place during school hours, you may opt to employ a staff specifically to implement your effort. This will reduce much of the burden on teachers.

Of course, one obvious disadvantage of hiring non-teacher staffers is the need for significant funding. Funding will be required for additional salaries or consulting fees. Additional funds may also be required to conduct interviews and background checks for these individuals. This funding may come from the schools themselves or from other sources, such as government grants or community organizations.

Both teachers and others as implementers

Having both teachers and other professionals implement your intervention may allow you to reap the benefits and minimize the negative elements that both groups of implementers present. A combined staff can also increase the effectiveness of your intervention. A non-teacher staff can lead intervention activities, and teachers can add reinforcing elements to their regular curriculum.

Train Staff Members

Teachers and others who implement social-cognitive interventions require significant training. Schools and communities must be willing to devote the resources needed for this professional development. In addition to preparing staff members to carry out intervention activities, training should teach them how to do the following (Slaby et al. 1995):

Having both teachers and other professionals implement your intervention may allow you to reap the benefits and minimize the negative elements that both groups of implementers present.

- Organize the school environment to minimize violence.
- Establish sound procedures to respond to violence in the classroom.
- Encourage children to learn nonviolent strategies from peers.
- Develop and implement a broad violence prevention plan for their schools and community.

Training duration

Training should begin with at least three days of intensive course work and interactive exercises. But to be effective, training must be continued for as long as the intervention lasts. Ongoing training or consultation does not need to be on site. Follow-up can be through e-mail or videos, for instance. However, we should note that the effectiveness of different methods of follow-up training has not been determined.

Recruit Participants

When social-cognitive interventions are incorporated into regular curricula (e.g., a health education curriculum), recruitment is typically not necessary. Students can take part in the intervention simply by attending class regularly. However, if your intervention is targeted to high-risk students, you may need to recruit them to participate in special activities that take place outside of the classroom, such as small-group discussions, peer-leadership training, or after-school sessions.

Implement Your Intervention

The effectiveness of a social-cognitive intervention will depend on many implementation factors, including how often and for how long students are exposed to activities and messages, how well teachers and other intervention staffers are supported, and how interested students remain in the activities.

Match the intervention's frequency, intensity, and duration with participants' needs

If you are replicating an evaluated intervention, implement it as presented in the research in terms of frequency, intensity, and duration. When implementing a new intervention, the guidance that follows should help.

Students need frequent contact with intervention activities and materials. However, the actual number of contacts will depend on the material, the age or developmental readiness of participants, and the time needed to practice skills. Older students are better able to digest more information in one sitting. Elementary school students, because of their short attention spans, may need small “doses” of content.

Social-cognitive interventions take a long time to effect changes. A single curriculum with 10 to 15 sessions is likely to be insufficient (Orpinas 1995). Half a school year of violence prevention programming should be a minimum. For the longest-term impact, school districts should consider multi-year models with continuity across years. And for students who come into daily contact with violence outside the school setting, social-cognitive interventions should be a permanent part of school curricula (Slaby 1997).

Support teachers and other intervention staff

Social-cognitive interventions can be taxing for teachers and other staff. Facilitators should receive periodic training, receive feedback and encouragement from supervisors, and be thanked in a variety of ways. Incentives such as extra pay, continuing education units, and extra planning time may help keep intervention staff motivated.

Encourage participants to stay involved

To keep students interested in the intervention, connect the activities to their goals. Show them how the behaviors they are learning will help them get what they want—improved safety at school and in their neighborhood, greater respect from peers, improved academic performance, and perhaps a larger circle of friends.

Make the intervention fun, and relate it to “real life.” Include games and videotape the intervention activities to engage younger children. Use articles from local newspapers or magazines to start discussions about violence. Have students keep a log of violent images they see in the media and nonviolent examples of conflict resolution; use the log to generate class discussions. Ask young participants to share stories that illustrate nonviolent, prosocial behaviors.

Let students know they will receive a tangible reward for completing the intervention. Students—and implementation staff—need a way to publicly acknowledge and celebrate their accomplishments (Aber et al. 1996; Wiist, Jackson, and Jackson 1996; Orpinas et al. 1996).

To keep students interested in the intervention, connect the activities to their goals.

Monitor Progress and the Quality of Implementation

Monitoring, which focuses on the process of implementation, is necessary to ensure that your intervention is on track. To determine if your social-cognitive intervention is reaching the intended population and being implemented as planned—

- Keep attendance records for intervention activities and record what happens during those activities.
- Observe classroom sessions periodically to see how intervention content is being delivered.
- Use staff meetings to obtain feedback from teachers and administrators about intervention delivery.

Review data routinely throughout implementation so you can correct any problems that might jeopardize the success of your effort.

Evaluate Outcomes

Evaluation allows you to assess the effectiveness of your intervention and identify any unexpected outcomes. For a social-cognitive intervention, you'll want to answer these questions:

- Did participants' knowledge about and attitudes toward violence change?
- Did aggressive and violent behaviors decrease?
- Were there any negative unintended effects from the intervention?

To obtain this data, review school records for attendance, truancy, and disciplinary actions. Keep in mind the school district's reporting requirements and the variability across schools in how offenses are reported and recorded. Collect teachers' perceptions of participants' behavior changes and ask students to report changes in their own and in peers' behaviors and attitudes. You can also hire someone who was not involved in the intervention to evaluate students' behaviors; this method may produce the most objective data.

Maintain Results after Implementation

Interventions to prevent youth violence are never finished. While positive changes are often seen right after an intervention ends, those improvements typically dissipate without reinforcement. Orpinas (1995) observed that self-reported aggressive behavior among students who participated in the Second Step program (discussed on page 125) increased as more time passed from the end of program implementation.

To maintain positive effects, practitioners should provide children and adolescents with reinforcing “booster” activities. Lochman (1992), for example, looked at the effects of a school-based anger-coping intervention several years after implementation. Although significant post-implementation results had been reported, there were no effects on delinquency rates or classroom behavior for most participants at the three-year follow-up. A subset of participants who received booster sessions did maintain positive behavior changes.

To maintain positive effects, provide children and adolescents with reinforcing “booster” activities.

Planning and implementing booster activities requires support from teachers, administrators, students, and the community. To achieve this support, share evaluation results with teachers and other school staff so they’ll know that they made a difference; involve intervention “alumni” in follow-up efforts; and establish collaborative relationships between the school and community organizations (e.g., health and wellness centers, youth centers, churches).

Summary

Social-cognitive interventions have been shown to reduce aggressive behavior by youth in the short term. Long-term evaluation, although it has been discussed for years (Coben et al. 1994), continues to be lacking. There are also several limitations to these interventions.

First, some of the more violent youths are not being reached by social-cognitive interventions because they do not attend traditional schools. Second, even with training, teachers and other implementers may vary in their delivery techniques; this variation can affect intervention outcomes. Third, participants may have difficulty translating the new behaviors they learn in school to the “real world.” Finally, improvements in behaviors and attitudes that students and teachers report may not be accurate; awareness of desired outcomes may bias responses of both participants and implementers. Other measures, besides self- and teacher reports, must be developed to obtain more objective data.

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Additional Resources

Publications

The publications listed here provide useful information for practitioners who are planning a social-cognitive intervention

American Psychological Association. *Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1993.

Summarizes a broad set of strategies developed by the APA's-Commission on Violence and Youth. Strategies are based on 50-years of research evidence and practical experience.-

American Psychological Association-
750 First St., NE-
Washington, DC 20002-4242-
Phone: 202-336-5500-
Web site: www.apa.org/books-

Children's Safety Network. *Taking Action to Prevent Adolescent Violence: Educational Resources for Schools and Community Organizations*. Newton, MA: Education Development Center, Inc., 1995.

Describes more than 80 violence prevention curricula and 150-videos.-

Education Development Center, Inc.-
Children's Safety Network-
55 Chapel St. -
Newton, MA 02458-1060-
Phone: 617-969-7100-
Fax: 617-527-4096 -
E-mail: csn@edc.org-
Web site: www.edc.org/HHD/csn-

Elliott DS, series editor. *Blueprints for Violence Prevention. Book Ten: Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies*. Denver: C&M Press, 1998.

Describes in-depth 10 violence prevention interventions that-meet research design and evaluation criteria and have-demonstrated significant deterrence effects.-

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence-
Institute of Behavioral Science-
University of Colorado, Boulder-Campus Box 442-
Boulder, CO 80309-0442-
Phone: 303-492-8465-
Fax: 303-443-3297-
Web site: www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/index.html-

Greenberg MT, Kusche CA. "Preventive Intervention for School-Age Deaf Children." *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education* 1998;3(1):49-63.

Examines the effectiveness of the PATHS curriculum on the social, cognitive, and behavioral status of elementary school-age-deaf children.-

Haynie DL, Alexander C, Walters SR. "Considering a Decision-Making Approach to Youth Violence Prevention Programs." *Journal of School Health* 1997;67(5):165-70.

Focuses on enhancing decision-making skills as one approach to increasing adolescents' ability to manage interpersonal violence- and examines data from a pilot study for insights about- adolescents' ability to make decisions in situations of- interpersonal conflict. Adolescents can be considered fairly- skilled decision makers, and their unique perspective must be- considered to develop effective intervention programs. -

Hudley CA. "Perceptions of Intentionality, Feelings of Anger, and Reactive Aggression." In Furlong M, Smith D, editors. *Anger, Hostility, and Aggression: Assessment, Prevention, and Intervention Strategies for Youth*. Brandon, VT: Clinical Psychology Publishing Co., 1994.

Children who display deviant levels of aggression in school have been found to manifest significantly higher rates of juvenile delinquency, poor overall school adjustment, greater-than-average rates of school drop out, and higher-than-average rates of referral for clinical mental-health interventions. Attributions may be internal factors for human aggressive behavior.

Lochman JE, Lenhart LA. "Anger Coping Intervention for Aggressive Children: Conceptual Models and Outcome Effects." *Clinical Psychology Review* 1993;13:785-805.

Reviews social-cognitive models of children's aggressive behavior and cognitive-behavioral interventions based on these models.

McCord J, editor. *Violence and Childhood in the Inner City*. Cambridge Criminology Series. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Authors consider why so much violence exists in U.S. cities, why some people become violent and others do not, and why violence is more prevalent in some areas. They also discuss how the urban environment affects childhood development, and they review intervention strategies.

Patterson GR, Reid JB, Dishion TJ. *A Social Interactional Approach IV: Antisocial Boys.* (Volume 4 of a series produced by the Oregon Social Learning Center.) Eugene, OR: Castalia Publishing Company, 1992.

Discusses the Oregon Social Learning Center's theory of antisocial behavior and what can be done to help families change these problem behaviors. Also addressed are attendant problems in the areas of peer relations, school failure, self-esteem, and depression. Factors that change the context of family process are taken into account, such as low socioeconomic status and divorce.

Pepler D, Slaby RG. "Theoretical and Developmental Perspectives on Youth and Violence." In Eron LD, Gentry JH, Schlegel P, editors. *Reason to Hope: A Psychosocial Perspective on Violence and Youth.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1994: 27-58.

This chapter reviews a variety of social-cognitive models, their-theoretical foundations, and their applications to violence-prevention.-

American Psychological Association-
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Phone: 202-336-5500-
Web site: www.apa.org/books-

Powell KE, Hawkins DF, editors. "Youth Violence Prevention: Description and Baseline Data from 13 Evaluation Projects." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 1996;12(5 Suppl).

This special issue summarizes the following for 13 projects-designed to reduce youth violence: background, underlying-scientific theory, intervention activities, evaluation design, and-selected baseline data. -

Slaby RG. "Violence Prevention: A Shared Strategy." In Miller S, Brodine J, Miller T, editors. *Safe by Design: Planning for Peaceful School Communities.* Seattle, WA: Committee for Children, 1996.

Discusses how parents and educators can contribute to a national-plan for preventing violence.-

Committee for Children-
2203 Airport Way, South, Suite 500-
Seattle, WA 98134-2027-
Phone: 800-634-4449 or 206-343-1223-
Fax: 206-343-1445-
E-mail: info@cfchildren.org-
Web site: www.cfchildren.org -

Slaby RG, Roedell W, Arezzo D, Hendrix K. *Early Violence Prevention: Tools for Teachers of Young Children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1995.

This book offers practitioners the latest knowledge on effective-teaching strategies for early violence prevention. Includes-chapters on helping children with aggressive behavior patterns,-encouraging voluntary sharing, and teaching assertiveness skills.-

National Association for the Education of Young Children -
Attn: Resource Sales Department-
1509 16th St., NW-
Washington, DC 20036-1426-
Phone: 202-232-8777 (ext. 604)-
800-424-2460 (ext. 604)
202-328-2604
Fax: 202-328-1846
E-mail: resource_sales@naeyc.org
Web site: www.naeyc.org/resources/catalog/order-info.htm

Slaby RG, Barham JE, Eron LE, Wilcox BL. "Policy Recommendations: Prevention and Treatment of Youth Violence." In Eron LD, Gentry JH, Schlegel P, editors. *Reason to Hope: A Psychosocial Perspective on Violence and Youth*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1994: 447-456.

This chapter deals with the broad issues that policy makers need-to consider in order to reduce youth violence in the U.S.-

American Psychological Association-
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Washington, DC 20002-4242-
Phone: 202-336-5500-
Web site: www.apa.org/books-

Shapiro JP. "The Peacemakers Program: Friends Don't Let Friends Fight." *School Safety Update* 1999;December:6-7.

Describes a multi-modal program for fourth- through eighth--grade students that includes a remediation component for students with serious aggression problems and a focus on violence-related values. The program has been shown to reduce aggression-related disciplinary incidents, including suspensions.-

Jeremy P. Shapiro, Ph.D., Director-
Center for Research, Quality Improvement, and Training-
Applewood Centers, Inc.-
2525 East 22nd St.-
Cleveland, OH 44115-
Phone: 216-696-5800 (ext. 1144)-
Fax: 216-696-6592-
E-mail: jeremyshapiro@yahoo.com-

Trickett PK, Schellenbach CD, editors. *Violence Against Children in the Family and the Community*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 1998.

Brings together the latest findings from researchers on violence and identifies future research needs. Also describes promising interventions that have helped children already affected by violence and suggests strategies for preventing violence before it occurs.-

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Table: Curriculum Scope for Different Age Groups

The table on the following pages will help practitioners develop age-appropriate violence prevention curricula. It is reprinted with permission from:-

Promoting Social and Emotional Learning: Guidelines for Educators. By Maurice J. Elias, Joseph E. Zins, Roger P. Weissberg, Karin S. Frey, Mark T. Greenberg, Norris M. Haynes, Rachael Kessler, Mary E. Schwab-Stone, Timothy P. Shriver. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. pp. 133-138. Copyright ©1997-ASCD. All rights reserved.-

For a copy of the book, contact:-

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development-
1250 N. Pitt St.-
Alexandria, VA 22314-1453-
Phone: 800-933-2723 -
Fax: 703-299-8631-
Web site: www.ascd.org-

	Preschool/Early Elementary (K-2) School	Elementary/Intermediate	Middle School	High School
Personal				
Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can appropriately express and manage fear, helplessness, anger, affection, excitement, enthusiasm, and disappointment • Can differentiate and label negative and positive emotions in self and others • Increasing tolerance for frustration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing feelings in positive ways • Controlling own anger • Labeling observed emotions • Harmonizing of others' feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-aware and self-critical • Harmonizing of own feelings 	<p>All areas should be approached as integrative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening and oral communication • Competence in reading, writing, and computation. • Personal management: self-esteem, goal-setting/self-motivation • Learning to learn skills • Personal and moral evaluations of self, actions, behaviors • Beginning to focus on the future • Exploring meaning of one's life, life in general, transcendence • Taking care of self, recognizing consequences of risky behaviors (sexual activity, drug use), protecting self from negative consequences • Harmonizing of own and others' feelings • Adaptability: creative thinking and problem solving, especially in response to barriers/obstacles • Earning and budgeting money • Planning a career and preparing for adult role • Personal career development/goals—pride in work accomplished
Cognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning to take a reflective perspective—role taking—What is the other seeing? What is the other feeling? What is the other thinking? What is the other intending? What is the other like? • Generating alternative possibilities for interpersonal actions • Emphasis on attention-sustaining skills, recall and linkage of material, verbalization of coping and problem-solving strategies used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing about healthy foods and exercising • Times when cooperation, planning are seen; at times, shows knowledge that there is more than one way to solve a problem • Setting goals, anticipating consequences, working to overcome obstacles • Focusing on strengths of self and others • Ability to think through problem situations and anticipate occurrences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing the importance of alcohol and other drug abuse and prevention • Establishing norms for health • Setting realistic short-term goals • Seeing both sides of issues, disputes, arguments • Comparing abilities to others, self, or normative standards; abilities considered in light of others' reactions • Acknowledging the importance of self-statements and self-rewards 	

	Preschool/Early Elementary (K-2) School	Elementary/Intermediate	Middle School	High School
Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning self-management (e.g., when waiting one's turn; when entering and leaving classrooms at the start and end of the day and other transition times; when working on something in a group or alone) • Learning social norms about appearance (e.g., washing face or hair, brushing teeth) • Recognizing dangers to health and safety (e.g., crossing street, electrical sockets, pills that look like candy) • Being physically healthy—adequate nutrition; screenings to identify visual, hearing, language problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding safety issues such as interviewing people at the door when home alone; saying no to strangers on the phone or in person • Managing time • Showing respect for others • Can ask for, give, and receive help • Negotiating disputes, deescalating conflicts • Admitting mistakes, apologizing when appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiating own activities • Emerging leadership skills 	
Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating feeling and thinking with language, replacing or complementing that which can be expressed only in action, image, or affectivity • Differentiating the emotions, needs, and feelings of different people in different contexts—if not spontaneously, then in response to adult prompting and assistance • Recognizing and resisting inappropriate touching, sexual behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to calm self down when upset and to verbalize what happened and how one is feeling differently • Encouraging perspective taking and empathic identification with others • Learning strategies for coping with, communicating about, and managing strong feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being aware of sexual factors, recognizing and accepting body changes, recognizing and resisting inappropriate sexual behaviors • Developing skills for analyzing stressful social situations, identifying feelings, goals, carrying out requests and refusal skills 	
Key concepts	honesty, fairness, trust, hope, confidence, keeping promises, empathy	initiative, purpose, goals, justice, fairness, friendship, equity, dependability, pride, creativity	democracy, pioneering, importance of the environment (spaceship Earth, earth as habitat, ecological environment, global interdependence, ecosystems), perfection and imperfection, prejudice, freedom, citizenship, liberty, home, industriousness, continuity, competence	relationships, healthy relationships, fidelity, intimacy, love, responsibility, commitment, respect, love and loss, caring, knowledge, growth, human commonalities, work/workplace, emotional intelligence, spirituality, ideas, inventions, identity, self-awareness

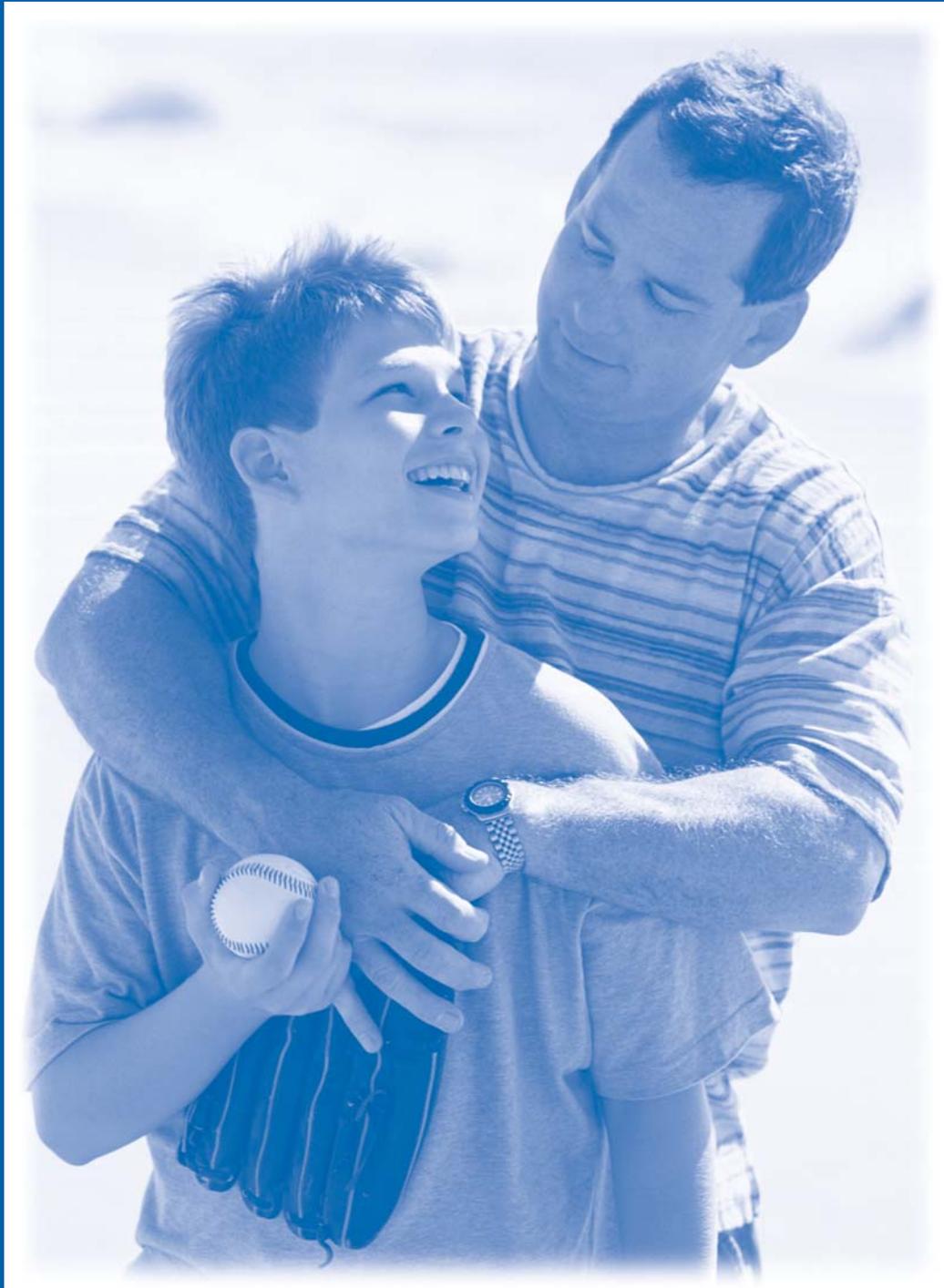
Peers/Social	Preschool/Early Elementary (K-2) School	Elementary/Intermediate	Middle School	High School
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a member of a group: sharing, listening, taking turns, cooperating, negotiating disputes, being considerate and helpful • Initiating interactions • Can resolve conflict without fighting; compromising • Understands justifiable self-defense • Empathetic toward peers: showing emotional distress when others are suffering; developing a sense of helping rather than hurting or neglecting; respecting rather than belittling, and supporting and protecting rather than dominating others; awareness of the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of others (perspective taking) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening carefully • Conducting a reciprocal conversation • Using tone of voice, eye contact, posture, and language appropriate to peers (and adults) • Skills for making friends, entering peer groups—can judge peers’ feelings, thoughts, plans, actions • Learning to include and exclude others • Expanding peer groups • Friendships based on mutual trust and assistance • Shows altruistic behavior among friends • Becoming assertive, self-calming, cooperative • Learning to cope with peer pressure to conform (e.g., dress) • Learning to set boundaries, to deal with secrets • Dealing positively with rejection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choosing friends thoughtfully but aware of group norms, popular trends • Developing peer leadership skills • Dealing with conflict among friends • Recognizing and accepting alternatives to aggression and violence • Belonging is recognized as very important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective behavior in peer groups • Peer leadership/responsible membership • Using request and refusal skills • Initiating and maintaining cross-gender friends and romantic relationships • Understanding responsible behavior at social events • Dealing with drinking and driving

Family			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a family member: being considerate and helpful, expressing caring, and developing capacity for intimacy • Making contributions at home—chores, responsibilities • Relating to siblings—sharing, taking turns, initiating interactions, negotiating disputes, helping, caring • Internalizing values modeled in family • Self-confident and trusting—what they can expect from adults; believe that they are important; that their needs and wishes matter; that they can succeed; that they can trust their caregivers; that adults can be helpful • Intellectually inquisitive—like to explore their home and the world around them • Homes (and communities) free from violence • Home life includes consistent, stimulating contact with caring adults 	
Elementary/Intermediate		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding different family forms and structures • Cooperating around household tasks • Acknowledging compliments • Valuing own uniqueness as individual and as family contributor • Sustaining positive interactions with parents and other adult relatives, friends • Showing affection, negative feelings appropriately • Being close, establishing intimacy and boundaries • Accepting failure/difficulty and continuing effort 		
Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing conflict between parents' and peers' values (e.g., dress, importance of achievement) • Learning about stages in adults' and parents' lives • Valuing of rituals 			
High School				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming independent • Talking with parents about daily activities, learning self-disclosure skills • Preparing for parenting, family responsibilities

School-Related	Preschool/Early Elementary (K-2) Early School	Elementary/Intermediate	Middle School	High School
Reasonable Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying attention to teachers • Understanding similarities and differences (e.g. skin color, physical disabilities) • Working to the best of one's ability • Using words effectively, especially for feelings • Cooperating • Responding positively to approval • Thinking out loud, asking questions • Expressing self in art, music games, dramatic play • Likes starting more than finishing • Deriving security in repetition, routines • Able to articulate likes and dislikes, has clear sense of strengths, areas of mastery, can articulate these, and has opportunities to engage in these • Exploring the environment • Self-confident and trusting—what they can expect from adults in the school; believing that they are important; that their needs and wishes matter; that they can succeed; that they can trust adults in school; that adults in school can be helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting academic goals, planning study time, completing assignments • Learning to work on teams • Accepting similarities and differences (e.g., appearance, ability levels) • Cooperating, helping—especially younger children • Bouncing back from mistakes • Able to work hard on projects • Beginning, carrying through on, and completing tasks • Good problem solving • Forgiving after anger • Generally truthful • Showing pride in accomplishments • Can calm down after being upset, losing one's temper, or crying • Able to follow directions for school tasks, routines • Carrying out commitments to classmates, teachers • Showing appropriate helpfulness • Knowing how to ask for help • Refusing negative peer pressure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will best accept modified rules • Enjoys novelty over repetition • Can learn planning and management skills to complete school requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a realistic academic plan, recognizing personal strengths, persisting to achieve goals in spite of setbacks • Planning a career/post-high school pathways • Group effectiveness: interpersonal skills, negotiation, teamwork • Organizational effectiveness and leadership—making a contribution to classroom and school

	Preschool/Early Elementary (K-2) School	Elementary/Intermediate	Middle School	High School
Appropriate Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear classroom, school rules • Opportunities for responsibility in the classroom • Authority clear, fair, deserving of respect • Frequent teacher redirection • Classrooms and school-related locations free from violence and threat • School life includes consistent, stimulating contact with caring adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to comfort peer or classmate in distress, help new persons feel accepted/included • Being in groups, group activities • Making/using effective group rules • Participating in story-based learning • Opportunities to negotiate • Time for laughter, occasional silliness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimizing lecture-mode of instruction • Varying types of student products (deemphasize written reports) • Opportunities to participate in setting policy • Clear expectations about truancy, substance use, violent behavior • Opportunities for setting, reviewing personal norms/standards • Group/academic/extracurricular memberships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance/structure for goal setting, future planning, post-school transition • Opportunities for participating in school service and other nonacademic involvement • Being a role model for younger students
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curiosity about how and why things happen • Recognizing a pluralistic society (e.g., aware of holidays, customs, cultural groups) • Accepting responsibility for the environment • Participating in community events (e.g., religious observances, recycling) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joining groups outside the school • Learning about, accepting cultural, community differences • Helping people in need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and accepting differences in one's community • Identifying and resisting negative group influences • Developing involvements in community projects • Apprenticing/training for leadership roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributing to community service or environmental projects • Accepting responsibility for the environment • Understanding elements of employment • Understanding issues of government
Events Triggering Preventive Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with divorce • Dealing with death in the family • Becoming a big brother or big sister • Dealing with family moves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with divorce • Dealing with death in the family • Becoming a big brother or big sister • Dealing with family moves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with divorce • Dealing with death in the family • Dealing with a classmate's drug use or delinquent behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with divorce • Dealing with death in the family • Dealing with a classmate's drug use or delinquent behavior, injury or death due to violence, pregnancy, suicide, HIV/AIDS • Transition from high school to workplace, college, living away from home

Strategies to Prevent Youth Violence



- Mentoring Strategy

CDC Identity Management System
<http://intra-apps.cdc.gov/cdcidentity/>

Overview of the Mentoring Strategy

The presence of a positive adult role model to supervise and guide a child's behavior is a key protective factor against violence.

Research has shown that the presence of a positive adult role model to supervise and guide a child's behavior is a key protective factor against violence (National Resource Center 1999). The absence of such a role model—whether a parent or other individual—has been linked to a child's risk for drug and alcohol use, sexual promiscuity, aggressive or violent behavior, and inability to maintain stable employment later in life (Beier et al. 2000; Walker and Freedman 1996).

Mentoring—the pairing of a young person with a volunteer who acts as a supportive, nonjudgmental role model—has been touted by many as an excellent means of providing a child or adolescent with a positive adult influence when such an influence does not otherwise exist (Council 1996; Brewer et al. 1995). Evidence has shown that mentoring can significantly improve school attendance and performance, reduce violent behavior, decrease the likelihood of drug use, and improve relationships with friends and parents (Sipe 1996). And the Council on Crime in America (1997) identified mentoring as one of three interlocking crime-prevention strategies (the other two—monitoring and ministering¹—also provide adult contact).

¹Monitoring provides community-based adult supervision of young people who have been in trouble with the law. Ministering means mobilizing and empowering caring adults, through churches, to assume responsibility for the well-being of children in their neighborhoods.

Best Practices of Mentoring Interventions

Many states and cities, community organizations, fraternities and sororities, professional associations, and schools have launched mentoring efforts in the past decade or two. Anecdotal information from these endeavors has indicated that mentoring can be effective in reducing negative behaviors and associated risk factors. However, structured evaluation of mentoring interventions has only recently begun. And although violence prevention is one of many positive results that can come from the relationships formed through mentoring, few interventions have focused on that outcome specifically.

Some researchers note that reliable data about how and why mentoring works is still being developed, but some common-sense wisdom about the best practices for both mentors and programs has emerged (Freedman 1993). Those practices, gleaned from an extensive literature review and consultation with experts in the field of youth violence prevention, are presented here.

Identify the Populations You Want to Reach

Most mentoring efforts target young people at risk for academic and social problems. In a survey of 722 mentoring programs (Sipe and Roder 1999), the majority of interventions were aimed at youths in need of adult role models; often, this status was defined as children from single-parent homes. Other common participant groups were children from low-income families; youths who had been identified as lacking self-esteem or social skills; young victims of abuse or neglect; and young people whose family members abused drugs or alcohol. To determine whom to target in your community, conduct a needs assessment, consider your resources, and consult with local leaders, policy makers, teachers, and community organizations that serve children.

Keep in mind that mentoring may not be viable for the children and adolescents at highest risk, as these populations typically require efforts that begin at a very young age and last for many years (Freedman 1993). Weigh the costs and benefits of engaging children and adolescents with severe behavioral or emotional problems—such as those who have attempted suicide, use drugs, or are in a position to harm themselves or others—in mentoring programs, and determine if other interventions might be more appropriate. Also, because successful mentoring depends on a long-term relationship, avoid targeting young people from whom there is a demonstrated lack of commitment.

Consider the Cultural and Demographic Context of Intended Participants

In most cases, mentors' backgrounds will be significantly different from those of participants in terms of age, lifestyle, ethnicity, and class. Mentoring efforts must take those differences into account and develop activities and techniques for bridging gaps. These interventions must also recognize the power of other influences in the lives of disadvantaged youths, such as poverty, exposure to violence, and lack of parental supervision. For many at-risk young people, mentoring is just a "drop in the bucket."

Mentoring interventions can be community-based or site-based.

Select an Appropriate Setting

Mentoring interventions can be community-based or site-based. The setting should be determined by an intervention's goals, the number of mentors, the number of youths you want to serve, and the types of activities planned.

Community-based mentoring

In a community-based intervention, there is no set location where sessions must occur; the venue may vary by mentor-mentee pair and by session. In Sipe and Roder's survey (1999), slightly more than half of the programs were community-based. The majority of these interventions featured one-on-one sessions between mentors and mentees, and many focused on social or recreational activities. Because the location can vary, community-based efforts often include field trips as part of their activities.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BB/BS), founded in 1904, is the oldest and best-known community-based mentoring intervention in the United States; it has also been studied most. Its mission is to provide young people with one-on-one relationships that help them develop according to their full potential and become confident, competent, and caring adults. There are more than 500 local BB/BS agencies in all 50 states, serving more than 100,000 youths. Mentor-mentee pairs meet one-on-one for three to five hours each week for at least one year. There are no prescribed activities—they may include taking a walk, watching TV, playing games, attending a movie or sporting event, visiting the library, or just sharing thoughts (Elliott 1997).

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV), a nonprofit social-policy development and evaluation firm in Philadelphia, conducted a comparative study of 959 adolescents ages 10 to 16 who applied to BB/BS interventions in 1992 and 1993.² Half of these adolescents were randomly assigned to a treatment group, for which BB/BS matches were made or attempted; the other half were assigned to waiting lists. In the group matched with mentors, the pairs met about three times a month for an average of 12 months; each session lasted about four hours. The treatment and control groups were compared after 18 months to determine what effect one-on-one mentoring had on adolescents' antisocial activities, academic performance, attitudes and behaviors, relationships with family, relationships with friends, self-concept, and social and cultural enrichment.

The study findings, based on self-report data from baseline and follow-up interviews or on evaluation forms completed by agency staff, revealed that the BB/BS program can have a positive effect. Little Brothers and Little Sisters, especially minority adolescents, were less likely than youths in the control group to hit someone or to start using drugs or alcohol. They also had better school attendance, academic performance, and attitudes, and their relationships with parents and peers were better than those for controls. No statistically significant improvements were found in self-concept or in the number of social and cultural activities that participants took part in (Furano et al. 1993; Roaf, Tierney, and Hunte 1994; Morrow and Styles 1995; Tierney, Grossman, and Resch 1996).

Site-based mentoring

Site-based interventions have one particular location where all sessions take place. Most site-based efforts are implemented in schools, but they can also occur in workplaces, churches, community centers, detentions centers, and public housing neighborhoods. Group mentoring interventions with targeted activities—such as academic projects and career- or skill-building exercises—are more likely to be site-based (Sipe and Roder 1999).

School-based mentoring

In school-based mentoring interventions, volunteers meet with children for an hour or two, once or twice a week on school grounds. In these efforts, mentors focus primarily on activities that build academic and social skills, but they also involve the children in fun activities.

² The study was funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, The Commonwealth Fund, the Lilly Endowment, and an anonymous donor.

School-based mentoring programs are fairly new, and it is uncertain whether they work as effectively as “traditional” community-based efforts. But advocates of school-based mentoring have cited several potential advantages, including the following (Herrera 1999):

- They may appeal to volunteers who are reluctant or unable to commit to several hours each week, which is often required in a community-based mentoring program.
- Intervention staff may be better able to supervise and support mentors because they all meet at the same place.
- Teachers and school administrators can also help monitor the intervention’s progress.
- Participating in a mentoring program may increase a young person’s social standing with peers; having a mentor is often perceived as being “cool.”

Another possible benefit of school-based programs is a decreased risk of false accusations of improper conduct. These programs are believed by some mentors—especially males—to be safer than community-based interventions because of the close supervision by teachers and administrators. This perception of safety may increase mentors’ willingness to be paired with children of the opposite sex; this flexibility may allow schools to match a larger number of students with mentors (Herrera 1999).

One of the better-known school-based interventions is the Norwalk Mentor Program. Its goal is to improve self-esteem, attitudes, and attendance of students at risk for behavior problems and poor academic performance. The intervention’s director is employed by the Norwalk public schools. School-based teams of principals, social workers, guidance counselors, teachers, and nurses serve as in-school resources for mentors, and one individual—for example, a principal or social worker—handles administrative details. Volunteer mentors are recruited from local business and industry as well as from community organizations such as municipal agencies, local church groups, retired-teacher organizations, college alumni associations, and fraternal organizations. A liaison between mentors and the school is designated from each participating organization.

Mentors meet with their students on school grounds for at least one hour each week. Activities vary and may include talking, reading, playing a game, and taking part in physical recreation. For mentees in high school, mentoring sessions typically focus on career development, and meetings may occur at mentors’

workplaces. Mentors are encouraged to keep in contact with students over the summer. Parents and guardians are invited to a series of evening workshops and luncheons at the school. Every student who completes high school receives a scholarship for post-secondary education, funded by participating companies through the Norwalk Mentor Scholarship Fund.

Evaluations completed by mentors and teachers after the program's first five years indicate that students benefit from the Norwalk program. As a result of mentoring relationships, 87 percent of students improved their school attendance, 92 percent improved self-confidence, and 96 percent showed greater cooperation in class. Almost all mentors (96 percent) described their relationships with students as excellent or good. And more than 90 percent of mentors and students continue their relationship through elementary and middle school years (Weinberger 1992a; 1992b). The intervention, which in 1992 had more than 800 mentors, was the winner of the 1993 President's Volunteer Action Award. It has been replicated in a number of other cities in the United States and Canada.

Institution-based mentoring

Supplementing traditional services with mentoring may be tempting for institutions that serve young people. However, institutions thinking about implementing a mentoring program must make sure they can dedicate adequate resources to operating that component. Existing staff rarely have enough time or preparation to train, supervise, or support mentors. Additionally, mentors' roles within the institution must be clearly defined so both volunteers and caseworkers understand how mentoring efforts fit with the youths' treatment plans (Mecartney, Styles, and Morrow 1994).

Involvement of parents and the community is paramount to the success of mentoring interventions.

Involve Parents and the Community

Involvement of parents and the community is paramount to the success of mentoring interventions. Parents must accept and support the presence of mentors in their children's lives. And the community plays a key role by providing volunteers and an infrastructure to support the intervention overall.

Parents' role

In almost all mentoring efforts, parents are involved at some level. Parental involvement may mean signing a consent form for the child's participation, referring the child to a social-services agency or organization, or taking part in activities along with the mentor and child (Sipe and Roder 1999; Herrera 1999).

Community Support

In order to get the human and financial resources needed to implement a mentoring intervention, you will need your community's support. You can establish this support by first demonstrating a need for your effort. Data about the problem of youth violence and about the potential benefits of mentoring should convince local leaders and policy makers. Also ask for input when developing the intervention's goals and operational plan; this should increase the community's sense of ownership in the effort (NMWG 1991). If your intervention is school-based, make sure you have the support of administrators and teachers (Herrera 1999).

Project RAISE (Raising Ambition Instills Self-Esteem), one of four components of the Baltimore Mentoring Partnership (BMP), is a good example of a program whose foundation rests on community support. Organizations—such as churches, universities, businesses, and fraternities—are recruited to sponsor RAISE interventions for seven years. They recruit mentors from their ranks and provide various other activities throughout the intervention. The goal of Project RAISE is to decrease the dropout rate and improve the life chances of students in inner-city public schools by improving students' self-esteem and school-related behavior and progress, reducing high-risk behaviors such as substance abuse and teen pregnancy, increasing graduation rates, and encouraging the pursuit of further education or training (Freedman 1993; NIJ 1994).

Evaluations of Project RAISE have revealed mixed results. According to BMP, graduation rates for RAISE students were about twice that of students in similar schools who did not participate in the intervention (NMP 2000). An independent evaluation of Project RAISE, which used comparison groups and statistical tests, found some positive results after two years of implementation: the intervention improved student attendance and report-card grades for English. However, most participants remained far below average for overall academic performance and were at risk of dropping out. Additionally, promotion rates and standardized test scores were not affected among students in the middle grades. The effects, though sizable, were not sufficient to neutralize the academic risks students exhibited upon entering the intervention (McPartland and Nettles 1991).

The researchers found that the RAISE model was much more likely to show positive effects when one-on-one mentoring was strongly implemented. Program success was also affected by variations in how sponsoring organizations implemented the model and by the size and composition of the student group served (McPartland and Nettles 1991).

Set Clear Goals and Objectives for Intervention Outcomes and Implementation

Mentoring programs are extremely diverse, in terms of both activities and desired outcomes. Therefore, it is critical that these interventions have clearly stated goals and objectives. These objectives will guide planning decisions for such elements as the number of and qualifications for mentors, and they will provide benchmarks to guide implementation and evaluation. Goals should be set on two levels—the intended accomplishments both for the program as a whole and for individual mentoring sessions.

Intervention goals

In most programs, the over-arching goal is to develop successful relationships between mentors and mentees. In Sipe and Roder's survey (1999), nearly three-quarters of mentoring programs had the general goal of positively impacting the young person's personal development. In many cases, that meant increasing self-esteem, developing positive values, improving conflict-resolution skills, increasing social skills, or improving relationships with family and peers. Other goals identified in that survey were promoting social responsibility and improving school performance, school behavior, and attitudes. About one-fifth of the programs had a goal of decreasing delinquent behavior among participants.

Individual goals

The goals and objectives of individual mentoring sessions may differ significantly among pairs. Mentors should work with mentees and their families (and teachers, if appropriate) to determine desired accomplishments and the steps necessary to achieve them. Mentors may find it helpful to establish a growth plan for the mentee and to review it periodically, with both the mentee and his or her family. Setting a series of short-term goals can increase a mentee's confidence and keep him or her focused and enthusiastic (NWREL 1998). In a violence prevention program by Self Enhancement, Inc., for instance, mentors help students develop individual success plans at the beginning of the intervention. These plans, which outline what the students hope to achieve during mentoring sessions, are reviewed throughout the school year to make sure sessions are progressing as planned (Gabriel et al. 1996).

Goals should be set on two levels—the intended accomplishments both for the program as a whole and for individual mentoring sessions.

When setting individuals' goals, keep the following guidance in mind (Freedman 1993; Sipe 1996; Tierney, Grossman, and Resch 1995):

- The amount of input a mentee has in setting goals should vary with age—the older the child, the greater the input.
- Consider the values and religious beliefs the mentee is exposed to at home—do not try to instill values that may cause conflict between the mentee and his or her family.
- Be realistic—mentors can't eliminate all the risk factors young people face, but they can help young people achieve specific goals and learn how to deal effectively with negative situations.
- Shift goals as warranted by changes in the mentee's life.

Select Your Intervention and Develop Appropriate Activities

The variety of activities that can make up a mentoring intervention is nearly infinite. The activities you choose will depend on the intervention's goals, setting (whether community- or site-based), and format (one-on-one versus group); the mentees' needs and characteristics; and the mentors' experience and commitment levels. Table 7 lists some common activities, but it is by no means exhaustive (Sipe and Roder 1999; Herrera 1999).

Table 7
Mentoring Activities

<i>Social</i>	<i>Event-related (field trips)</i>
talking about life experiences	camping or hiking
having lunch together	attending a concert or an art exhibit
visiting the mentors home	attending a sporting event
<i>Recreational</i>	<i>Life skills-related</i>
playing games or sports	developing a fitness or nutrition plan
doing arts and crafts	attending a cooking class
walking in the park	discussing proper etiquette
going to the mall	participating in a public-speaking class
<i>Academic</i>	<i>Job- or career-related</i>
working on homework	visiting the mentor's workplace
visiting the library	developing a resume
reading together	talking about career options
working on the computer	practicing interview skills
<i>Civic</i>	
helping in a community clean-up effort	
working at a soup kitchen	

Keep the following guidance in mind when planning your activities (Freedman 1993; Sipe 1996):

- Make activities fun as well as educational.
- Focus on activities that promote mutual exchange, rather than on instruction for the mentee.
- Plan activities that offer challenges.
- Provide support and encouragement, but do not solve problems for the mentee.

Make activities fun as well as educational.

Intervention format

Most mentoring interventions have a one-on-one format. Usually, this format matches one mentor with one mentee. However, a mentor can also be matched with several mentees with whom he or she meets individually. The most common examples of the multiple one-on-one format are programs in which retired persons meet individually with several children each day of the week (Sipe and Roder 1999). The Friends of the Children program, based in Portland, Oregon, also uses this format. Their mentors—called “friends”—are paired with up to eight children with whom they meet individually several times a week (Woo 1999).

Mentoring can also be done in a group setting. This format most often matches one mentor with a group of young people. The groups typically include about four or five children, but they can range from two to 20 or 30 youths. Some group programs match two or more mentors with a group of participants. Assigning multiple mentors to a group may have several advantages. It reduces the mentor-to-mentee ratio, allowing for more personal attention for mentees. It allows mentoring programs to reach greater numbers of young people. And it reduces the problems that occur when a mentor is unable to attend a session—if one mentor cannot attend, the group can still meet with the other mentor(s). We should note, however, that very little research has been done on group programs, so we do not know if this format produces effective relationships or if youths derive the same benefits from a group format that they do in a one-on-one program (Sipe and Roder 1999).

Building on others' experience

Identifying existing interventions on which to model your effort can prevent your having to reinvent the wheel. If you know of a mentoring program that had positive effects, try to replicate it. You may want to tailor an intervention to your community, but be cautious in changing key implementation elements, as you may alter the outcome. The *Additional Resources* section on page 194 may help you find ideas for your intervention.

Practitioners must carefully balance the desire to achieve high staffing levels with the need to select staff members who are qualified, dedicated, and able to make a long-term commitment.

Select Staff Appropriate for Your Intervention

Mentoring interventions typically require a large staff. Many volunteers are needed to serve as mentors, and administrative staff are needed to train and support the mentors. Practitioners must carefully balance the desire to achieve high staffing levels with the need to select staff members who are qualified, dedicated, and able to make a long-term commitment.

Recruiting staff

Before you recruit volunteers or a paid staff, clearly define the qualifications required for each position. Indicate the skills and characteristics that mentors and other staff members should possess. Put in writing the specific types of activities to be performed and the time commitment expected (NWREL 1998). The Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, for instance, requires its professional case managers to screen applicants, make and supervise matches, and close matches when eligibility requirements are no longer met or either party can no longer participate fully in the mentoring relationship. They also advise mentors when difficult situations arise (Elliot 1997).

Decide where to look for potential staffers and volunteers. The required qualifications and the intervention's activities will help you determine where the best pool of candidates can be found. The following ideas may help you locate recruits (NWREL 1998; Sipe 1996; U.S. Dept. of Education 1996):

- Contact community-outreach offices at universities or high schools.
- Talk with the public-relations directors of local businesses or corporations.
- Distribute information through local nonprofit organizations.
- Ask radio and television stations to announce volunteer opportunities.
- Advertise in the newspaper or get a human interest story placed.

You can also work with organizations such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), United Way, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to recruit staff. This strategy may help you recruit populations you would otherwise have limited access to. It may also save resources that you can then use for more in-depth screening (Sipe 1996).

Corporate involvement

Ask local businesses and corporations to support your program and help you recruit mentors. One common model of such a corporate partnership is the "adopt-a-school" program in which a business enlists employees as mentors (Herrera 1999). Businesses may also provide facilities for mentoring activities or sponsor field trips. Even if employers do not want to participate directly, they may be willing to give employees time off for mentoring (NMWG 1991). This is a very valuable contribution, as it allows individuals to mentor without affecting their personal or family time. More people may be willing to volunteer under these circumstances.

A study conducted in North Carolina looked at the effectiveness of Supporting Adolescents with Guidance and Employment (SAGE), a community-based program that combined several components designed to prevent violence and other high-risk behavior among young African American males. SAGE included an eight-month African American Rites of Passage (ROP) program, developed by the Durham Business and Professional Chain and the Durham County Health Department; a six-week summer employment experience, sponsored by the

City of Durham Employment and Training Office; and a 12-week Junior Achievement (JA)-style entrepreneurial experience, led by 16 Durham businessmen. Mentoring by successful African American business and civic professionals was a key element of the ROP program, which also included lessons in African American culture and history and training in manhood and conflict resolution (Ringwalt et al. 1996).

Results from an evaluation of the SAGE program suggest that it can have a positive effect on violence-related behaviors and other health risk factors. Self-reports of study participants 18 months after the intervention indicated that SAGE participants carried a gun and sold illegal drugs less often than did participants in the second study group (summer jobs and JA only) or the control group. SAGE participants also experienced decreases in heavy drinking and injuring others with a weapon. At 30-month follow-up, positive effects were decreased, as is typical for prevention interventions. The authors note that the results of the study are limited, as decreases in violence and other risk behaviors were not observed at statistically significant levels (Flewelling et al. 1999).

Career Beginnings is another program with corporate involvement. It is a multifaceted school-to-work initiative that targets disadvantaged high-school juniors and seniors who have average academic and attendance records and demonstrate commitment and motivation. Mentors support students in exploring college and career options through educational workshops, career-specific training, and quality summer work experiences. They also help guide students through the college admissions process or through the process of finding full-time employment. A 1990 evaluation of Career Beginnings compared youths who responded to follow-up interviews at one and two years after assignment with either the intervention group or the control group.³ Researchers found that Career Beginnings participants had a slightly higher rate of attendance than the control group. Intervention participants also had higher levels of college enrollment and higher educational aspirations than nonparticipants receiving comparable amounts of education and job-related services (Cave and Quint 1990; U.S. Dept. of Education 1993).

³ Although youths in the control group did not participate in Career Beginnings, they could receive other services from their schools or communities.

Older adults as mentors

A survey of more than 700 mentoring programs found that approximately 5 percent recruited older adults and retirees as mentors (Sipe and Roder 1999). Evaluations have suggested that these intergenerational programs can produce positive, satisfying relationships that benefit both the youths and elders (Freedman 1988).

Across Ages is one program that pairs high-risk young people with older adult mentors. It is funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and is coordinated by Temple University's Center for Intergenerational Learning. Originally designed as a school-based intervention to prevent drug use, the program has been expanded to address a variety of risk factors. A three-year evaluation of Across Ages revealed that a program of classroom instruction and parent workshops was more effective in preventing drug use when combined with intergenerational mentoring than when implemented alone. While both the mentoring and non-mentoring groups were more likely after the intervention to respond appropriately to peers' offers of drugs or alcohol, students in the Across Ages group also had a greater sense of self-worth and well-being and had fewer feelings of sadness and loneliness (LoSciuto et al. 1996; Taylor et al. 1999). Because of its promise for reducing risk factors and promoting protective factors, Across Ages has been selected by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention as a model to be replicated in several sites across the United States.

Linking Lifetimes is another intergenerational mentoring program developed by Temple University's Center for Intergenerational Learning. A study conducted by Styles and Morrow (1992) examined the relationships that formed between youths and their mentors at four Linking Lifetimes demonstration sites. The mentees in the programs were youth offenders, teen mothers, and youths living in high-risk neighborhoods. They ranged in age from 12 to 17 years; mentors were 55 years and older. Of the 26 pairs studied, 17 were identified as being satisfied with the relationship. Specifically, members of satisfied pairs indicated that they had feelings of attachment, fondness, and commonality with one another; they felt committed to the relationship and wanted it to continue. Additionally, satisfied youths stated that they felt their mentor was a source of support. Satisfied mentors felt appreciated or believed they made a difference in their youths' lives. It is not clear from this study, however, whether the Linking Lifetimes program had an impact on youths' behaviors or attitudes.

Intergenerational programs can produce positive, satisfying relationships that benefit both the youths and elders.

It takes a special person to be a mentor . . . practitioners must remember that mentoring is not suited for all volunteers.

Criteria for staff and mentors

Mentors provide positive guidance and serve as role models. They act as teachers, confidants, friends, advocates, nurturers, and challengers. They devote many hours to their mentees and form lasting relationships with them. Clearly, it takes a special person to be a mentor, and practitioners must remember that mentoring is not suited for all volunteers. Other roles—such as support staff, tutors, or fundraisers—may be found for volunteers who do not have the qualifications or time needed for mentoring (Freedman 1993).

Although special criteria (to be discussed shortly) must be applied for mentors, all staff members—both volunteers and paid employees—should have the following qualities:

- belief in mentoring
- commitment to and understanding of intervention goals and values
- experience working with children and adolescents
- good organizational skills and attention to detail
- ability to work with people from different cultural backgrounds

Selecting mentors requires a great deal of forethought; being too lenient in your selection process can have very serious consequences. Develop written eligibility criteria to guide staff in making wise, objective selections. Above all else, you want to make sure there is nothing in an individual's past or about his or her character that would make that person unsuitable for mentoring. Red flags include:

- substance abuse problems
- history of child abuse, neglect, or molestation
- previous criminal conviction
- history of acting out or emotional instability
- evasion of child support
- interference with policies or procedures

You'll also want to consider practical matters and aspects of a potential mentor's character, such as—

- **Proximity to the mentee or the intervention site.** If a mentor lives far away, travel time may become an obstacle to regular meetings.
- **Age and other demographic characteristics.** Whether these factors are important will depend on your intervention activities and on your mentees' preferences.

- **Ability to meet regularly and make a long-term commitment.** It would be unwise, for instance, to accept a volunteer who travels frequently or is thinking about moving in a few months.
- **Compassion and tolerance.** Mentors must be caring and accepting of views and attitudes that differ from their own.
- **Desire to spend time with children.** Mentors should enjoy interacting with children and feel comfortable with youths who may be “cold” toward them at first.

Screening mentors

There are several ways to find out if a candidate has the qualifications and qualities you desire in a mentor. The most common screening tools are written applications, face-to-face interviews, reference checks (both personal and employment), and criminal background checks (Sipe and Roder 1999). If the mentor will spend time alone with a child, you should also conduct home visits (NMWG 1991). If mentors are going to transport children, their driving records should be checked. And in some school-based programs, mentors must have proof of health requirements, such as a test for tuberculosis (Weinberger 1992b).

Train Staff and Mentors

The training required for intervention staff members will depend on their roles. For mentors, training content will depend on the activities to be conducted during mentoring sessions and the desired outcome of the overall intervention.

Training for staff members

The individuals you select to recruit and screen mentors should be trained in how to effectively approach organizations, corporations, and individuals about mentoring, as well as how to interview and screen candidates. Recruiters should also learn how to tactfully turn down interested persons without alienating them. Even though someone is ill-suited for mentoring, he or she may be an ideal candidate for a support position. Staffers selected to support mentors should be trained in maintaining enthusiasm among volunteers, developing creative activities for the youths, and resolving conflicts between volunteers and participants.

Mentor training

Mentors should receive comprehensive training before being matched with mentees. Some general areas to address are the roles mentors are expected to play and the overall values,

Mentors should receive comprehensive training before being matched with mentees.

philosophy, and goals of the intervention. Specific areas to cover in training include the following (NMWG 1991; Styles and Morrow 1992; Freedman 1993; Gallup 1998; NWREL 1998; Herrera 1999):

Mentors must be patient and realize that the relationship will be one-sided initially.

- **Trust.** An effective mentoring relationship is built on trust. Keys to gaining the trust of mentees include showing up for meetings and keeping promises.
- **Patience and perseverance.** Youths are likely to feel uncomfortable sharing intimate information. Some youths may be reluctant to talk about anything in the beginning. Mentors must be patient and realize that the relationship will be one-sided initially.
- **Communication skills.** Mentors must be able to share ideas with youths and suggest alternative behaviors and attitudes without sounding like they are passing judgment. And they must listen intently to mentees, while watching their body language and picking up on other cues that might indicate hidden feelings. Good communication skills will help develop the relationship and set a good example for mentees on how to interact with others.
- **Problem-solving skills.** Mentees often face difficult social and academic problems. Mentors should be trained in how to help their young people come up with solutions.
- **Self-esteem building.** One of a mentor's roles is to help the mentee build self-esteem. Teach mentors how to guide their youths in setting initial goals that are attainable quickly and with relative ease. Early accomplishments will help mentees recognize their capabilities and develop pride in their achievements. As the relationship progresses, goals should become increasingly more challenging.
- **Developmental stages.** Mentors need to know about the developmental stages that children and adolescents go through. This will help them better understand mentees' behaviors and develop age-appropriate activities.
- **Cultural and economic issues.** Mentors should be informed about mentees' cultural and economic backgrounds so they can tailor activities to address the challenges mentees face in their families, neighborhoods, and schools. Because no two young people have identical backgrounds, some of this information should be provided to mentors individually when a match is made, rather than in a group training

format.

Provide mentors with a training manual with a summary of material covered in training sessions, additional resources such as whom to contact for help with difficult situations (e.g., case managers or a program director), and suggestions for activities (e.g., lists of appropriate events and field trips). Also include guidelines on appropriate mentor behavior; procedures for handling emergency situations such as injuries; and policies for confidentiality and liability, which should include mandates for reporting physical or sexual abuse and other life-threatening situations.

Plan supplemental training sessions throughout the intervention and offer mentors retraining as their mentees grow into different developmental stages (for example, when the mentee enters middle or high school).

Resources for training

Small sponsoring organizations may not be able to provide complete training. Identify sources of technical assistance for training; for example, partner with a larger organization or with a university.

Recruit Participants

Most mentoring programs are targeted to young people who lack positive adult role models or who have other risk factors for negative behaviors (Sipe and Roder 1999). But how do you find those young people? Sometimes they come to you. The Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, for example, has a waiting list and does not need to recruit. For most other programs, you'll need referrals from teachers or guidance counselors, community organizations that serve children, social service professionals, the local public housing authority, or the criminal justice system. You can also ask parents—through word of mouth or an organized communication campaign—to enroll their children in your program.

It is not enough, however, to simply locate children and adolescents in need. You must also make sure that the youths you recruit are going to be committed to the program. Make sure participants understand what will be expected of them. Also, make sure parents know what their child will be involved in and that they support participation. You can provide this information through—

- written statements, interviews, home visits, and phone calls;
- orientation meetings that describe the role of the mentor, mentee, and parents;

- a handbook for families and mentees.

Provide incentives

Often, the experiences that mentoring relationships offer—improving academic performance, going to a movie, attending a sporting event, or simply having a trusted adult to rely on—are enough to interest young people in a mentoring program. However, if you are having difficulty recruiting intended participants, you may need to offer special incentives. For example, the Kansas City-based Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation offered a monetary incentive to students who participated in Project Choice, a dropout-prevention program implemented in a local high school. If participants—who entered the program as freshmen—remained drug-free, avoided pregnancy, and completed high school on time, they received funds to cover their college tuition (Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation 2000).

Emphasize the opportunities for new and exciting experiences that mentoring presents.

Focus on the positive

Young people may be reluctant to take part in a mentoring program if it is positioned as an intervention or treatment for negative or problem behavior. Practitioners should emphasize the opportunities for new and exciting experiences that mentoring presents (NWREL 1998).

Implement Your Intervention

The success of a mentoring intervention depends largely on the development of trusting, beneficial relationships between young people and adults (or in some cases, older adolescents). To help foster this type of relationship, practitioners should remember three key principles.

First, both the amount and quality of time are important. Interactions between mentors and mentees must occur frequently enough to allow relationships to form. And mentors must be attentive to mentees during all interactions so they feel cared for and understood.

Second, sessions should occur regularly and consistently. Having a set schedule can help mentors improve their attendance rates (Tierney and Branch 1992) and give the young people something to look forward to. Sticking to the schedule helps build trust between the mentor and mentee. This point is extremely important—when a mentor misses meetings, the mentee may feel disappointed, angry, or let down (NMWG 1991). In a young person who is already at risk for academic problems, drug use, or violent behavior, these feelings can be highly destructive.

Finally, sessions should be face-to-face whenever possible. Not only does this type of interaction promote closeness, it allows mentors to notice important things about their mentees, such as body language, signs of physical abuse, or aspects of behavior or appearance that may be cause for concern (e.g., symptoms of depression, the appearance of gang-related tattoos, evidence of being in a fight). When circumstances prohibit a face-to-face meeting, mentors should call or write to their mentees, rather than let days or weeks pass without interaction. For example, one mentor in an intergenerational program wrote letters to his mentee while the youth was in a drug-treatment program (Styles and Morrow 1992).

Match mentors with mentees

The matching of mentors with mentees can be done in a number of ways. Your approach to this process will depend on the intervention's goals and activities and on the preferences of the youths, their parents, and the mentors (Sipe 1996). Whatever criteria you choose, however, put them in writing and apply them uniformly.

Put matching criteria in writing and apply them uniformly.

Common interests

Common interests are very important in a mentoring match (NWREL 1998). In fact, more than two-thirds of interventions in one survey matched mentors and participants according to their interests (Sipe and Roder 1999). Project RAISE (Raising Ambition Instills Self-Esteem), for example, has both mentors and students complete surveys to determine areas of interest and expectations; the results of those surveys guide staff in assigning pairs (Freedman 1993). Relationships in which the mentor and mentee agree on the types of activities they want to participate in tend to be most satisfying to both members of the pair (Sipe 1996).

Gender and race

Some participants—and their parents—may prefer a match with a mentor of the same race or gender. This type of match may make parents and youths feel more comfortable and avoid cultural misunderstandings or misinterpretations (NWREL 1998). However, data have suggested that matching mentors and mentees of different races and genders may also result in satisfying relationships (Sipe 1996). While it is best to honor the preferences of mentees and their parents, practitioners may wish to discuss the potential benefits of a mixed-gender or cross-race match when mentoring activities would be significantly delayed by waiting for a mentor of the same gender or race (Sipe and

Roder 1999).

The Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs have taken race into account when matching their mentors with mentees. They have implemented a special campaign called “Pass It On” to recruit African American men. The campaign is based on the belief that same-race matching helps Little Brothers identify with their mentors (Milloy 1997).

The Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP), funded by the Department of Justice’s Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, considers gender when assigning matches. JUMP practitioners try to match mentors with youths of the same gender. In fact, almost all male mentors are matched with male youths. However, female mentors are matched with male youths about 20 percent of the time. This cross-gender matching occurs because there are many more female JUMP volunteers than there are male volunteers. Although agencies do not use race or ethnicity as criteria for matching, in nearly two-thirds of JUMP pairs, both members are from the same racial or ethnic group.

A full-scale evaluation of JUMP interventions is ongoing. However, a preliminary assessment based on grantees’ feedback has shown that the majority of both youths and mentors are satisfied with their relationships. Additionally, both mentees and mentors believe their relationship had at least a little benefit in terms of improved academic performance and school attendance, prevention of drug and alcohol use, avoidance of fights, prevention of gang involvement, and improved family and peer relations. Slightly more than half of the youths believed that mentoring helped a lot in these risk areas; slightly more than one-third of the mentors believed their efforts had a lot of benefits (OJJDP 1998).

Cultural and economic background

Since one of the goals in a mentoring intervention is to provide youths with positive role models, it may be best to match young people with mentors from similar cultural or economic backgrounds (Freedman 1993; NWREL 1998). Mentees may respond better to mentors who can honestly say they have lived through—and overcome—the same obstacles the youths face.

Geographic proximity and compatible schedules

Consider geographic proximity when matching youths with mentors. If members of the pair live near each other, they will be able to meet more easily and probably more frequently. Also remember that mentors and mentees must have compatible

schedules in order for meetings to be regular and consistent.

Natural and random matching

Some practitioners let mentors and mentees form natural pairings. Workshops and social events allow mentors and participants to get to know one another and to develop their own matches. Another matching method is random assignment, in which no specific criteria are employed.

Match the intervention's frequency, duration, and intensity to participants' needs

Mentoring relationships develop through many interactions over a long period of time. Mentors should meet with their youths for an hour or more each week for at least six months, the minimum length of time typically needed to establish a close, trusting relationship (Freedman 1993; Sipe 1996). Sipe and Roder (1999) found that half of the mentoring interventions in their survey required a one-year commitment.

Some mentoring programs require mentors to commit to a much longer relationship. The Friends of the Children program in Portland, Oregon, is a mentoring program that pairs high-risk children with full-time, paid "friends" who commit to relationships that last for a child's entire school career. Friends candidates must be able to meet with their youths on a consistent basis over many years and must have a bachelor's degree and experience working with children. Each candidate undergoes extensive background checks before being gender-matched with up to eight young people. Being a "friend" is viewed as a career. All friends receive benefits, including insurance and a 401(k) plan, and a modest monthly expense account (Hallman 1999).

Friends spend at least four hours each week with their children. Activities range from doing homework to going to the park or sharing dreams and ideas, but the overall goal of the activities is the same for all pairs—to teach problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills, honesty, respect for self and others, hard work, and accountability (Friends 1999a, 1999b).

Friends of the Children is in its seventh year, so final results are still several years off. However, the Northwestern Regional Educational Laboratory has conducted a preliminary assessment of the program, and results are encouraging. Their study found that having a mentoring friend can lead to increased self-esteem, better attitudes, and improved communication skills. Additionally, most participants improved their academic performance. In fact, only 2 percent of participants failed to pass their grade in school. Children in the Friends program also avoided contact with the juvenile justice system, and most

Mentoring relationships develop through many interactions over a long period of time.

Interventions in which the staff contacts mentors regularly report better quality matches.

Supervise and support mentors

Sustaining the involvement of mentors is hard work. Mentoring programs must provide ongoing supervision of and support for volunteers to ensure that meetings are taking place regularly and to prevent mentors from becoming discouraged or suffering burnout.

Interventions in which the staff contacts mentors regularly report better quality matches (Sipe 1996). Most programs contact mentors once a month by phone (Sipe and Roder 1999). Some programs institute monthly or bi-monthly support meetings between mentors and staff, during which mentors can address concerns, frustrations, and difficulties. Other programs sponsor events such as picnics, parties, and conferences during which mentors receive gifts of appreciation, are recognized for jobs well done, and share success stories that illustrate how mentors are making a difference in young people's lives (Herrera 1999).

When planning your intervention, develop an infrastructure that can adequately support the mentors. The median ratio of mentors to staff was 20 to 1 in Sipe and Roder's survey (1999). If most of the mentors in your intervention are inexperienced, you may need a larger number of support staff (NWREL 1998).

Encourage continued participation

The drop-out rate for mentoring interventions is fairly high. Some researchers have estimated that half of the relationships fail (Freedman 1993). Mentors must work to keep participants interested in the mentoring relationship. The following guidance for mentors can increase the likelihood that young people will stick with the program (Styles and Morrow 1993; Sipe 1996):

- Listen to the youths and respect their viewpoints.
- Involve mentees in deciding how to spend time together.
- Respect mentees' need for privacy; do not push them to share intimate information.
- Be available to talk at any time.
- Change strategies and goals as mentees get older; if necessary, change mentors to meet mentees'

Monitor Progress and the Quality of Implementation

As with any intervention, monitoring is necessary to make sure your mentoring intervention is being implemented as planned (NMWG 1991). Establish mechanisms to assess the progress of and satisfaction with relationships. These mechanisms can include—

- asking mentors and mentees to sign in for meetings;
- interviewing mentors, mentees, and parents;
- having mentors log activities, accomplishments, and concerns.

If you find that a mentor or youth is frequently missing meetings, follow up with that individual to see if there are transportation problems or time conflicts. If a match is not working, even after considerable effort by the mentor and staff, try to reassign both members of the pair (U.S. Dept. of Education 1996).

Evaluate Outcomes

When the intervention is complete, evaluate whether the overall goals and the goals of individual mentees have been met. Since one goal of any mentoring intervention is to form beneficial relationships, assess the quality of the relationships in your program. Determine how many relationships continued for the duration of the intervention, and ask both mentors and mentees how satisfied they were with their relationships.

Another typical goal of mentoring is to prevent or improve some kind of negative behavior, such as violence, drug use, or poor academic performance. Ask parents and teachers to assess changes in mentees' behaviors; you can also ask the young people themselves to identify any changes in the ways they think or act. Other ways to check the impact of your intervention include assessing dropout rates and checking school detention and suspension records to see if disciplinary actions decreased during the intervention.

Remember to compare the behaviors, attitudes, and academic performance of young people in the mentoring intervention with youths who did not participate in mentoring (i.e., a comparison group) to determine the significance of changes. If, for example, all middle-school students improved school performance and reduced delinquent behaviors during the period of your intervention, you cannot assume that mentoring caused those

changes in participants. They may have occurred without the intervention. Conversely, you may find that, although aggressive behaviors remained the same among participants, aggression increased among young people who did not take part in mentoring. Without a comparison group, you would not recognize the stable rate as significant.

Maintain Results After Implementation

If your intervention achieved positive effects, you will, of course, want to sustain those effects. An important step in maintaining results is providing a supportive transition for mentees. This may be accomplished in a number of ways. Exit interviews between youths and staff, between mentors and staff, and between mentors and youths allow all three groups to discuss the benefits of the program and address concerns about what comes next for the youths. Recognition of mentees' accomplishments—through award ceremonies, banquets, and community or school newsletters—can motivate the young people to continue improving school performance, to avoid drugs or violence, and to seek out other positive relationships with adults.

It's helpful to link youths with other community services and activities, such as scouts and school or church groups, that can help fill any voids created by the end of their mentoring relationships. Assistance should be made available to mentees who have difficulty with the transition (NMWG 1991).

Because some pairings may want to continue their relationship in some capacity after the intervention has ended, practitioners should have in place a policy for future contact. Make sure mentors understand any liability issues that may apply if contact continues outside of the intervention's auspices.

To have the greatest impact, mentoring should be part of a concerted effort that involves several strategies.

Link Mentoring with Other Strategies

The young people involved in mentoring interventions typically have several risk factors for adverse behaviors. Mentoring cannot overcome all of them—it is just one influence among many. To have the greatest impact, mentoring should be part of a concerted effort that involves several strategies, such as those discussed in previous sections of this sourcebook (Freedman 1993; Sipe 1996).

The Children at Risk (CAR) Program is a drug- and delinquency-prevention effort that combines strategies to offer

comprehensive services for at-risk adolescents. These services include the assignment of case managers to participating families, tutoring and other educational activities, and police collaboration to reduce neighborhood crime. Mentoring is provided to about half of the youths in the program. Preliminary results of an outcome evaluation showed that, compared with a control group, CAR participants had almost half the number of contacts with the police and less than half the number of contacts with juvenile courts. A greater percentage of participants were promoted to the higher grade and had lower rates of chronic absenteeism. A full-scale case-control study is under way in high-risk neighborhoods in five cities to assess the effect of mentoring as well as intensive case management, family services, and educational incentives (Harrell 1996).

Summary

Although the mentoring strategy appears promising for preventing youth violence and many other problems facing our nation's young people, there is very little scientific data to demonstrate whether, and under what circumstances, it is effective. More rigorous and systematic evaluations are still needed. In addition, research must address several key issues (Sipe 1996).

First, we must develop more effective ways of recruiting and screening mentors. The largest mentoring program—Big Brothers/Big Sisters—supports 75,000 matches nationwide, but it has almost as many young people waiting to be matched. Fewer than half of the adults who inquired about volunteering during a study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters actually applied to be mentors. Of those, only about one-third successfully completed the screening and matching process; for some, the process took months.

Additionally, mentoring efforts have traditionally been targeted to children in the early- to mid-adolescent years. We must determine how to design effective mentoring programs for teens and pre-adolescent children, as well.

Finally, there is little agreement about the financial resources needed to plan and implement a mentoring intervention. The Big Brothers/Big Sisters program estimates that it costs \$1,000 to support a match for one year. But that cost may not be representative of all programs—researchers suspect the cost is somewhat less. In order to help communities assess the feasibility of mentoring, we must find a way to accurately estimate the costs of developing, supporting, and evaluating such an intervention.

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Additional Resources

Organizations and Their Products

The organizations that follow can provide a wealth of information about developing mentoring interventions. Many have publications and videos to guide you in planning and implementing this type of effort.

100 Black Men of America (BMOA)

A national alliance of leading African American men of business, industry, public affairs, and government who devote their combined skills and resources to confronting the challenges facing African American youths. Through BMOA's mentoring, education, anti-violence, and economic-development programs, volunteers in 82 chapters empower young people by helping them gain a competitive edge.

BMOA National Office

141 Auburn Ave.

Atlanta, GA 30303

Phone: 404-688-5100

Web site: www.100blackmen.org

Web link to local chapters: www.100blackmen.org/chapters.html

Baltimore Mentoring Partnership

A nonprofit organization with the goal of increasing quality mentoring opportunities for Maryland's young people.

Mentoring Resource Center

605 Eutaw St.

Baltimore, MD 21201

Phone: 410-685-8316

Fax: 410-752-5016

The following publications are available from the Baltimore Mentoring Partnership:

Mentoring Manual: A Guide to Program Development and Implementation

Manual for establishing, operating, and evaluating a mentoring intervention for disadvantaged youths. Published by the Abell Foundation, Inc. \$10, Maryland residents; \$25, others.

Partnership Mentoring Manual

Designed to assist school partnerships and others in developing and implementing mentoring interventions. Includes step-by-step instructions and sample forms. Developed in collaboration with the Baltimore City Public Schools and Greater Baltimore Committee. \$5, Maryland residents; \$10 others.

The Two of Us: A Handbook for Mentors

Designed to help mentors get the most from their mentoring relationship. Includes activities and ideas organized around seven themes. \$25.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America

The oldest and largest mentoring intervention in the U.S., this national organization is a federation of 514 BB/BS agencies in all 50 States. They have served millions of children since 1904, primarily in mentoring relationships.

230 North 13th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19107
Phone: 215-567-7000
Fax: 215-567-0394
Web site: www.bbbsa.org

Available from BB/BS of America:

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America Exemplary Efforts

Identifies outstanding advocacy efforts of 15 local BB/BS agencies.

Campus Compact

College-based community-service organization. Student volunteers establish or participate in programs to reduce racial tension, clean up the environment, work with the hungry and homeless, teach children to read, and much, much more.

Box 1975, Brown University
Providence, RI 02912
Phone: 401-863-1119
Fax: 401-863-3779
E-mail: campus@compact.org
Web site: www.compact.org

Available from Campus Compact:

Campus Partners in Learning: Resource Manual for Campus-Based Youth Mentoring Programs

Provides resources and guidelines for college community-service organizations. Topics include orientation, training, planning an intervention, collaborating with schools and community groups, and evaluation. Also includes a resource guide.

Center for Intergenerational Learning (CIL)

Created in 1980 at Temple University, CIL serves as a resource for intergenerational programs. The center runs interventions such as Across Ages, provides training and technical assistance, maintains a resource library, and produces and disseminates materials.

1601 North Broad St., Room 206
Philadelphia, PA 19122
Phone: 215-204-6970
Web site: www.temple.edu/departments/CIL

The following products are available from CIL:

Across Ages Training Manual

Provides step-by-step direction for developing each component of the Across Ages program: (1) intergenerational mentoring, (2) community service, (3) a life-skills intervention, and (4) family activities. Includes program forms, evaluation materials, and training designs. \$25.

Across Ages Video

Highlights the activities and interactions among participants for each of the Across Ages project components. Provides a picture of Across Ages “in action” and promotes the benefits of intergenerational learning. \$25.

Elder Mentor Handbook

Resource for elder mentors. Includes child-development issues, suggested activities, and other relevant information. \$25.

Elders as Mentors: A Training Program for Older Adults (with Facilitators' Guide)

Ten-minute video presents typical mentor scenarios with vignettes that can be used separately in mentor training. Accompanying guide presents process questions and activities. \$65.

Linking Lifetimes Program Development Manual

Guidance for developing intergenerational mentoring interventions. Includes intervention forms and evaluation materials. \$75.

Linking Lifetimes, A National Intergenerational Mentoring Initiative

Developed to recruit older-adult mentors. This 12-minute video features mentor/youth pairs who share their experiences. \$50.

Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV)

CSPV provides assistance to professional groups committed to understanding and preventing violence, particularly youth violence. CSPV maintains a resource database and has developed blueprints for 10 exemplary violence prevention interventions, including Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

Campus Box 442
University of Colorado
Boulder, CO 80309-0442
Phone: 303-492-1032
Web site: www.colorado.edu/cspv

Chicago Housing Authority (CHA)

CHA administers Project Peace, a school-based program that enlists 100 men and women to facilitate group discussions and participate in program activities; many of the volunteers become mentors. The program, which reaches about 1,400 students—most of whom live in public housing—combines the Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents and a special intervention for youths at risk for violence.

CHA Community Relations and Involvement
Phone: 312-567-1831

Friends of the Children

Established in 1993 in Portland, Oregon, this organization serves 43 school communities and approximately 160 children throughout the Portland Metropolitan area. It provides a minimum 10-year commitment to each child, ages 6-7, selected for the program. “Friends” are full-time paid professionals who help children reach their unique potential.

44 NE Morris
Portland, OR 97202
Phone: 503-281-6633
Fax: 503-281-6819
Web site: www.friendstochildren.org

The Mentoring Center

Located in Oakland, California, the Mentoring Center provides technical assistance and training to organizations that wish to establish a mentoring intervention. Director Martin Jacks has developed a grid to help groups identify their intervention goals by characterizing interventions as “soft,” “medium,” “hard,” or “hard-core,” and identifying the types of youths and mentors best served by each approach.

1221 Preservation Park Way
Oakland, CA 94612-1216
Phone: 510-981-0427

Mentoring USA

Mentoring USA (MUSA), which evolved from Former First Lady Matilda Cuomo’s New York State Mentoring Program, is a community- or site-based intervention that matches mentors with children in grades K through 8. MUSA mentors meet with youths one-on-one for at least four hours every month over the course of a year.

Stephen Menchini, Director
113 East 13th St.
New York, NY 10003
Phone: 212-253-1194
Fax: 212-253-1267
Web site: www.helpusa.org/mentoring/mentor.htm

The National Mentoring Partnership

(formerly One to One | The National Mentoring Partnership)
The partnership—designated by America’s Promise: The Alliance for Youth to be its lead partner for mentoring—brings together leaders from diverse sectors and encourages them to recruit mentors, support existing mentoring interventions, and begin new mentoring initiatives. There are currently 14 affiliates in cities nationwide. In addition to creating and sustaining partnerships, the National Mentoring Partnership implements public education and policy initiatives and develops and distributes products that explain how to start a new mentoring intervention or expand an existing one.

1400 I St., NW, Suite 850
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-729-4340
Fax: 202-729-4341
Web site: www.mentoring.org/f_resources.html

The publications that follow are available from the National Mentoring Partnership:

ABCs of Mentoring Kit™

Guide to developing mentoring programs in the workplace. Includes video, manuals, templates, and recommendation for evaluation. \$39.99.

Building Local Mentoring Partnerships

Learn how to rally community leaders to connect more young people with mentors. Free.

Mentoring: Elements of Effective Practice

Requirements and essentials for starting and maintaining a mentoring intervention. Free.

Mentor Training Curriculum

Comprehensive guide for training mentors. Includes training outlines and handouts. \$29.95.

National Mentoring Technical Assistance Corps Directory

List of experts available to train and consult on developing, strengthening, or expanding mentoring interventions. \$5.

Network of Mentoring Partners

A guide for information, connections, and consultation about mentoring through a national network. Free.

National Mentoring Partnership's Guide to Workplace Mentoring

Assists businesses in establishing school-based interventions. Includes case studies of workplace interventions and step-by-step instructions. \$5.

National Mentoring Partnership Start Up: A Guide

Guides communities in developing a local One to One affiliate. Provides the start-up strategy for developing a Leadership Council, conducting a feasibility study, performing a needs assessment, and creating an operation plan for the first year. \$100.

Select Mentoring Resources

A directory of materials on mentoring that are available from a variety of sources. Free.

Spirit of Excellence: A Manual for Mentoring and Tutoring African-American Children and Youth

Provides information on child development, discipline, encouragement, self-esteem building, and tutoring. Includes suggested reading lists for different age groups. \$5.

Team Works Operations Manual and Team Works Trainers' Guide

Describes how to replicate a school-based intervention that creates teams of mentors and middle-school students. The trainers' guide includes all materials needed to conduct the intervention training.

National Organization of Concerned Black Men, Inc.

Founded in 1975 to help minority youth develop pride in their heritage while maximizing educational opportunities and promoting social consciousness and responsibility. Youth mentoring is among their programs.

1232 M St., NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 888-395-7816
E-mail: gljr@erols.com
Web site: www.libertynet.org/cbmno

Norwalk Mentor Program

Provides several products (listed below) that describe how to establish a school-based intervention.

Norwalk, Connecticut, Public Schools
125 East Ave.
Norwalk, CT 06852-6001
Phone: 203-854-4011

Connections from School to Career

A 48-page activity book for mentors to work on with their students in grades 7 through 12. \$10.

The Mentor Handbook: A Guide for Adult Volunteers, Sponsoring Companies, or Organizations and Schools Involved in a One-to-One Mentor/Student Support Program

Written by Dr. Susan Weinberger, Director of the Norwalk Mentor Program, this practical booklet includes successful strategies for developing a school-based mentoring intervention. Also describes sample training programs, mentor roles and responsibilities, and student attributes and attitudes. \$10.

Mirror Mirror on the Wall

A 48-page activity book for mentors to work on with their students in grades K through 7. \$10.

Norwalk Mentor Program: Keeping Kids in School

Information packet describes the six-step process for beginning, maintaining, and evaluating the Norwalk Mentor Program and a school-based mentoring intervention. Includes checklists, sample forms, training guidelines, fundraising ideas, and news clips.

Q/A: Mentoring—Simple, Straightforward Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions About Student Mentor Programs

Booklet answers common questions about mentoring. \$5.50

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Offers an extensive database with information on juvenile justice issues, including mentoring interventions, through the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse.

P.O. Box 6000

Rockville, MD 20849-6000

Phone: 800-638-8736

Fax: 301-519-5212

E-mail: askncjrs@ncjrs.org

Web site: www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org

The following publications are available from the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse:

Guidelines for the Screening of Persons Working with Children, the Elderly, and Individuals with Disabilities in Need of Support

Covers the National Child Protection Act of 1993, state policies and legislation, and a three-part decision-making model to help organizations develop screening policies.

Mentoring: A Proven Delinquency Prevention Strategy

Provides an overview and evaluation of the Big Brother/Big Sisters program.

SafeFutures Marketing Toolkit

Mentoring is one of nine components of the OJJDP's SafeFutures Initiative, a multidisciplinary grant program to encourage more effective partnerships among health, mental health, child welfare, education, law enforcement, and judicial resources. This toolkit offers SafeFutures staff and planning boards the materials they need to effectively promote this innovative approach.

Points of Light Foundation

A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization devoted to promoting volunteerism. Their services include: assisting employers in developing workplace volunteer programs; participating in the development of youth service leaders and youth service programs; providing training and development for volunteer centers across the U.S.; providing products and services to volunteer management professionals; and aiding and encouraging the growth of the family volunteering concept.

1400 I St., NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-729-8000
Fax: 202-729-8100
E-mail: volnet@pointsoflight.org
Web site: www.pointsoflight.org

The following publications available from the Points of Light Foundation's Catalog Service, 800-272-8306:

Church-Based Mentoring: A Program Manual for Mentoring Ministries

A how-to guide for beginning and structuring church-based mentoring interventions. \$9.95.

Partnerships for Success: A Mentoring Program Manual

Provides guidelines for developing structured mentoring interventions in any organization. Developed by the United Way Volunteer and Community Initiatives Division. \$19.95.

Points of Light Volunteer Marketplace Catalog

Catalog of publications, videos, audio cassettes, and promotional specialty items on volunteerism. Includes resources on program management. Free. Also available at www.mindshares.org/POLCatalog.

Prison Fellowship Ministries

A family of ministries that individually address each aspect of the crime problem. Among their outreach efforts is a faith-based mentoring program for youth offenders.

P.O. Box 17500
Washington, DC 20041-0500
Phone: 703-478-0100

Available from Prison Fellowship Ministries are the following products:

Alienation and Restoration: The Power of Mentoring

In this video, young people and mentors speak about their experiences with mentoring.

MatchPoint Leaders' Guide

Contains comprehensive information on mentoring relationships and provides a detailed method for training adults who mentor youth offenders or youths at risk of becoming offenders.

MatchPoint Operations Manual

Includes in-depth information on the ministry model as well as sample letters, assessments, case-management forms, and guidelines for operating a faith-based youth offender program.

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV)

Nonprofit corporation with expertise in policy development, research, technical assistance, and products for school-to-work initiatives. P/PV creates model policies, financing approaches, curricula, and training materials, and it provides technical expertise that can help implement new approaches more broadly, build staff capacity, and strengthen basic institutions involved in youth development. P/PV has conducted research on mentoring interventions and has published its results.

One Commerce Square
2005 Market St., Suite 900
Philadelphia PA 19103
Phone: 215-557-4400
Fax: 215-557-4469
Web site: www.ppv.org

A complete list of publications available from P/PV can be found on their web site. Included among the list is *Mentoring: A Synthesis of P/PV's Research, 1988-1995*, a 76-page document summarizing major findings of P/PV's research and discussing the future of mentoring.

Save the Children

In cooperation with the National Mentoring Partnership and with funding from the Department of Justice, Save the Children has developed the National Mentoring Hotline, which houses a database of more than 1,500 mentoring interventions nationwide. An ad campaign, produced in partnership with the Ad Council, was launched in the fall of 1998 to publicize the hotline and attract potential volunteers.

Attn: Elizabeth Erickson
54 Wilton Road
Westport, CT 06880
Phone: 203-221-4257
Hotline: 877-BE A MENTOR

YMCA of the USA

Interventions designed for at-risk youths are offered at 628 YMCAs; mentoring interventions are offered at 144. YMCA's web site has a link to help you find your local facility.

101 North Wacker Dr.
Chicago, IL 60606
Phone: 312-977-0031
Web site: www.ymca.net

Additional Products

Beginning a Mentoring Program

Contains advice for launching a mentoring intervention, including tips on assessment, staffing, recruiting, matching, and funding. Includes sample forms. \$5.

WQED Pittsburgh
Phone: 800-274-1307

Connections: Linking Youth With Caring Adults—A Guide to Mentoring

Provides information about building effective and lasting mentoring interventions. Outlines categories of mentor interventions, provides case studies, and highlights elements of quality programs.

Urban Strategies Council
Phone: 510-893-2404

Diversity in Mentoring

A video showing how interventions and mentors adapt to the needs of children they serve. Features four profiles of mentor-mentee relationships. \$30.

WQED Video

Phone: 412-622-1300

Fax: 412-622-1488

E-mail: videosales@wqed.org

Faith-Based Mentoring: A Program Manual for Mentoring Ministries

A “how to” approach to beginning and implementing church-based mentoring interventions, with recommendations drawn from actual interventions. Published by United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania and One to One.

Church Mentoring Network

Phone: 215-223-8574

Guide to Mentoring Programs of Greater Los Angeles

Directory to interventions in the Los Angeles area.

One to One California

Phone: 213-627-0311

How to Start a Mentor Program

Based on the Norwalk Mentor Program, this 42-page booklet describes the six steps in setting up a mentoring intervention and includes sample forms. \$1.25

Phi Delta Kappa International

408 N. Union St.

P.O. Box 789

Bloomington, IL 47402-0789

Phone: 800-766-1156

Fax: 812-339-0018

Web site: www.pdkintl.org

Mentoring Guide: A Complete Guide on How to Set Up a Mentorship Program

Prepared through the combined efforts of a variety of groups in San Diego. \$7.

San Diego Consortium & Private Industry Council

1551 Fourth Ave., Suite 600

San Diego, CA 92101

Phone: 619-238-1445

The Mentoring Guidebook: A Practical Manual for Designing and Managing a Mentoring Program

Step-by-step instructions on how to start a generic mentoring intervention. \$15.

National Dropout Prevention Center
Clemson University
209 Martin St.
Clemson, SC 29631-1555
Phone: 864-656-2599
Fax: 864-656-0136
E-mail: ndcp@clemson.edu
Web site: www.dropoutprevention.org

Mentoring in Schools

Includes eight steps for establishing mentoring interventions. Part of the Department of Education's *Creating Safe and Drug-free Schools: An Action Guide*.

Department of Education
Phone: 800-624-0100
Web site: www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/actguid/mentor.html

The New Community Collaboration Manual

Step-by-step guide for building and sustaining collaborations within a community. \$13.95.

The National Assembly
1319 F St., NW, Suite 601
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-347-2080
Fax: 202-393-4517
Web site: www.nassembly.org/html/publications.html

Screening Volunteers to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse: A Community Guide for Youth Organizations

Information from the National Collaboration for Youth on policies for screening and selecting volunteers who work with children. \$14.95.

The National Assembly
1319 F St., NW, Suite 601
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-347-2080
Fax: 202-393-4517
Web site: www.nassembly.org/html/publications.html

Things to Consider in Starting a Volunteer Mentor Program

Provides a brief overview of issues to consider before starting a mentoring intervention.

Virginia Office of Volunteerism

Phone: 800-777-8293

E-mail: vol2@e-mail1.dss.state.va.us

web site: www.dss.state.va.us/program/volunteer/volunteer.shtml

Youth Mentoring Program Directory

Lists a sampling of national and local mentoring interventions.
\$5.

United Way of America

701 N. Fairfax St.

Alexandria, VA 22314-2045

Phone: 703-836-7112

Web site: www.unitedway.org

Youth Mentoring: Programs and Practices

Monograph on a variety of youth mentoring interventions. \$8.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education

Box 40

Teachers College

Columbia University

New York, NY 10027

Phone: 800-601-4868

Web site: <http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu>

