A road map to creating a culture of service through mentoring

YouthBuild Mentoring Made Easier
A Quick Reference Guide

YouthBuild USA, version 1.0, 2016
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“A mentor is someone who allows you to see the higher part of yourself when sometimes it becomes hidden to your own view... I don’t think anybody makes it in the world without some form of mentorship. Nobody makes it alone. Nobody has made it alone. And we are all mentors to people even when we don’t know it.” —Oprah Winfrey

Welcome to YouthBuild Mentoring Made Easier, a quick reference guide to the robust collection of web-based mentoring resources currently available for creating a culture of service through mentoring. This guide can be useful to mentoring program staff (new or seasoned), as well as any administrator that has a desire to create or enhance a culture of mentoring at their site.

Congratulations! If you are here, you have taken the first steps as a youth-serving program to expand mentoring as an assumption for opportunity youth (a 16 to 24-year-old individual who is neither in school nor employed). You can think about this document as your personal tour guide through an annotated, hyperlinked Table of Contents that will connect you with the basics of effective mentoring for your YouthBuild program.

You may be asking, “Why Easier? Why not just call it YouthBuild Mentoring Made Easy?”

We don’t want to be accused of false advertising, that’s why! Most things worth doing well are not easy. And if you are talking about providing trust-filled supportive relationships with young people who have struggled with big challenges, yes, mentoring is totally worth it, and yes, so not easy.

But Easier? We’ve got you covered. We want every YouthBuild program to have all the resources to get you going on mentoring. We have the goods. Let this be your guide.
HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

The best way to use this document is in electronic form. If you want to read through it in print, you will get something out of it, but the true value is in the web links that will bring you to more thorough resources for whatever your mentoring needs might be.

This is not like a novel where you would read it beginning to end (unless you want to!). Start with what you need most. Here’s a quick guide to where you might look first:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1: Introduction</th>
<th>This is the road map’s legend and where you are now!</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: What is Mentoring?</td>
<td>Start here for a clear definition of mentoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: The “Pitch” for Mentoring</td>
<td>Read this section if you’re intrigued about mentoring but not sure it’s worth the effort, or if you need language to sell mentoring to your board, director, staff, or other stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Creating a Culture of Service Through Mentoring</td>
<td>AmeriCorps funded YouthBuild programs are in an ideal position to facilitate natural mentoring. Find out how in this chapter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Mentoring Youth Impacted by Special Circumstances</td>
<td>Do you have young people in your program who are gang-exposed or have experienced trauma? Check this out.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: How to Start a Formal Mentoring Program</td>
<td>You’ve bought and sold the pitch and you’re ready to start.</td>
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<td>Chapter 7: The Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring</td>
<td>You want to design or enhance your mentoring effort, while relying on best practices.</td>
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<td>Chapter 8: Documenting and Measuring What is Working</td>
<td>Once you have done mentoring for a while, you want to make sure your mentoring program keeps getting better. Here are some ways to keep track of what matters, and to find out what has worked for other programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 9: Feeding the Golden Goose: Nurturing Mentoring Staff</td>
<td>If staff turnover is a problem in your program, read this.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 10: Nurturing and Retaining Mentors</td>
<td>Take care of your mentors, and your mentors will take care of your program.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chapter 11: Sustaining Mentoring</td>
<td>Keep mentoring going for the long haul.</td>
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If you find yourself getting hung up in any one area, there are people ready to help you. Contact the Mentoring Department at YouthBuild USA for additional support by email at mentoring@youthbuild.org or call 617-741-1262.
CHAPTER 2: WHAT IS MENTORING?

“I think we all need mentors from the same background, who deeply understand our experience; and we also need mentors from different backgrounds who can give us insight into territory we don’t yet understand.” ~ Dorothy Stoneman, Founder of YouthBuild USA

The YouthBuild Mentoring Operations Manual defines mentoring as “support and guidance, provided through a one-to-one relationship with a caring adult, to assist a young person in achieving his or her own developmental goals.” Although mentoring programs come in various forms, including one-to-one, group mentoring, and various adaptations of those, at heart they all have one thing in common: relationships between individuals who trust one another.

The Ready for Mentoring Guide: A Guide for YouthBuild Students describes a mentor in this way: “A mentor is someone you can trust—someone who cares about you and your future, and who takes a personal stake in your success in YouthBuild and in life. YouthBuild mentors are volunteers who can work with you on developing your YouthBuild Life Plan, identifying your strengths and how to make the most of them, and dealing with any challenges you might face at school, work, or in your personal life.”

The center of gravity for all successful mentoring relationships is the personal stake mentors express through their commitment, patience, and time. For the underserved high-risk students represented by YouthBuild, these mentor-stakeholders do what no one else has done before for them:

- Show up on time, every time.
- Do what they say they are going to do.
- Listen more.
- Prejudge less.
- Raise the bar of possibility through exposure.

Mentoring favors the “Steady Eddie” – that reliable, committed adult “stakeholder” who will be there in both the remarkable and unremarkable times. For more on how to build the type of trust
needed for a successful mentoring relationship, read *That Magic Moment: YouthBuild mentors and mentees on what it takes to light the match*.

Both the Mentor and the Mentee Pre-Match Trainings provide good descriptions of mentoring, including what a mentor is and is not.

### What a mentor is (and is not)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A mentor is a …</th>
<th>A mentor is NOT a …</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
<td>Parent</td>
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<td>Guide</td>
<td>Authority figure</td>
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<td>Resource</td>
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<td>Coach</td>
<td>Boss</td>
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<td>Role model</td>
<td>Superhero</td>
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**Mentor and Mentee Pre-Match Training:**

- **Mentor Pre-Match Training Toolkit: A Guide for Staff** (PDF) | PowerPoint Slides
- **Mentee Training Toolkit: A Guide for Staff** (PDF) | PowerPoint slides: Session 1, Session 2, Session 3, Session 4

**BACKGROUND OF YOUTHBUILD MENTORING**

YouthBuild Mentoring was formed in 2009 when YouthBuild USA received funding from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to launch a one-to-one mentoring program for YouthBuild students. That initial funding made it possible to jumpstart mentoring in over fifty local YouthBuild programs throughout the USA and to begin a movement to support mentoring in all YouthBuild programs, available to any young person who has the desire to be mentored. Read more about YouthBuild Mentoring’s history.
Since 2009, YouthBuild USA has received four follow-up grants from OJJDP to expand this initiative to include a one-on-one and group mentoring hybrid model and a twelve-month group mentoring program for young men of color (BRIDGE Mentoring).

Although OJJDP is currently the only federal agency to provide funding for stand-alone mentoring programs, there are quite a few additional funding sources that look favorably on grant applicants who embed a mentoring philosophy within their programs. The Youth Opportunity Corps supplemental funding awarded in 2014-2016 was a combination of OJJDP and CNCS funding to provide AMC members as mentors whose service was to work with economically disadvantaged young people between the ages of 16-24.

The Corporation for National and Community Service speaks of mentoring as a proven method for ensuring students complete their education.

“The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) supports mentoring for children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances through several of our programs. We believe that caring and capable adults can make a critical difference in the lives of children and youth in need. Mentoring is a proven method to ensure students complete their education. Youth with a mentor more readily attend and engage in school and are therefore more likely to finish high school and continue their education. Mentors model precisely the attitudes and aptitudes youth need to thrive: intellectual curiosity, compassion for others, and determination to succeed.”

- Read more about National Service and Mentoring.

THE YOUTHBUILD MENTORING MODEL

Most YouthBuild Mentoring programs provide a full twelve to fifteen months of mentoring to YouthBuild students by tapping into the natural assets of the youth and community.

The traditional YouthBuild model provides group mentoring over the first three months, and then nine to twelve months of one-to-one mentoring. The initial three month period enables programs to recruit volunteers more easily, build trust between mentors and mentees more quickly, and sustain longer and more effective mentoring relationships.
After the first three months of group mentoring, group activities continue to provide natural settings for mentoring to occur. Additionally, ongoing mentor trainings and group activities serve to support volunteers and to strengthen one-to-one matches.

As a component of the holistic YouthBuild program, mentoring provides the extra support and guidance needed within an established environment of care for at-risk youth.

To learn more about the basic YouthBuild Mentoring program model, check out these resources:

- Overview of YouthBuild Mentoring (online operations manual)
- YouthBuild Mentoring Model Summary (PDF)
- Intro to YouthBuild Mentoring (e-learning module)

YouthBuild USA’s vision is to embed quality mentoring into the DNA of all YouthBuild programs, expand resources focused on the mentoring of “opportunity youth” starting with YouthBuild, and to support mentoring research that raises the level of impact across all community-building, youth-serving programs.

In order to realize this vision, the YouthBuild USA supports mentoring models that adapt to the various needs of all YouthBuild programs while meeting requirements of the OJJDP-funded scope of mentoring for youth under the age of 18. At its core, YouthBuild mentoring in any form holds several basic values, principles, and foundational elements:

- Core Principles of YouthBuild Mentoring (web page)
- YouthBuild USA National Mentoring Alliance Fact Sheet (PDF)
CHAPTER 3: THE “PITCH” FOR MENTORING

“I’ve been with YouthBuild for over twenty years. Mentoring is the strongest tool I’ve seen introduced to our movement in a long time. It’s valuable to our program because it ties our youth to the community and our community to our youth. Let’s come together to make mentoring part of the fabric of YouthBuild.” ~ Marvin Davis, YouthBuild Program Director

If you want to begin, expand, or sustain mentoring within your YouthBuild program, you are going to need information to “sell” it to stakeholders. Why should your program take on one more time-consuming initiative, as well-intended as it may seem? This chapter provides a clear cut case for why mentoring is a key component for elevating all aspects of your YouthBuild program.

YouthBuild mentoring has been proven to increase program completion rates, GED attainment, and job placement. Through community-based mentors, volunteer participation grows, leading to greater community awareness and expanded program outreach and funding opportunities.

The John Jay Research and Evaluation Center YouthBuild USA Mentoring assessment study, an impartial study of YouthBuild mentoring, found that, "... Students who received mentoring during the program were sixty percent more likely to complete the program than students who were not matched with a mentor."

River City YouthBuild and the Impact of Mentoring

To the left you can see just a few of the positive outcomes of mentoring within one YouthBuild program. The River City YouthBuild-AmeriCorps Program is one of over fifty YouthBuild programs across the United States that participated in YouthBuild USA Mentoring. As an example of the significant impact that mentoring has made...
in YouthBuild programs, this case study provides a close-up look at the work of River City, their challenges, innovations, and successes with youth and across their community.

A number of successful prevention and intervention strategies have been identified that address the causes and consequences of the achievement gap among low-income youth. Research has highlighted youth mentoring in particular as an effective strategy, both at preventing delinquency and intervening with juvenile offenders already in the system. This network of support, supplemented and enhanced by a caring adult mentor, is the center of gravity in YouthBuild USA’s mentoring approach. The impact of mentoring in the YouthBuild program model has been proven with YouthBuild young people and successful outcomes.

The evidence for mentoring’s effectiveness is present in YouthBuild Mentoring programs and the work our mentors and students do every day. The YouthBuild Mentoring model is aligned with both best practices and cutting edge research on what makes a strong program.

For more information on gaining buy-in from your stakeholders, see: Making the case for mentoring.

MENTORING AS A TOP-DOWN LEADERSHIP STRATEGY

When mentoring is embedded in the fabric of YouthBuild programs, directors are involved, and mentoring prospers. As stated in a mentoring best practices whitepaper, it is essential that leadership:

- Educates senior management and board members about the importance of mentoring and how it complements the organization’s mission in order to guarantee that mentoring is supported agency-wide.

RESEARCH SHOWS MENTORING:

- Increases high school graduation rates
- Lowers high school dropout rates
- Improves relationships and lifestyle choices
- Improves attitudes about school
- Increases college enrollment rates and higher educational aspirations
- Enhances self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improves behavior, both at home and at school
- Strengthens relationships with parents, teachers, and peers
- Improves interpersonal skills
- Decreases likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use
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- Considers mentoring an integral part of services for youth.
- Trains and orientates staff on the implementation of mentoring into your organization.
- Determines where mentoring will be integrated and will enhance the youth services already provided.
- Utilizes mentoring to achieve positive youth outcomes.

As seen in the previous section, mentoring can have tremendous impact on the overall success of a program. YouthBuild sites across the country have adopted the mentoring philosophy to maximize success and improve program outcomes. In this brief video, Marvin Davis, the Program Director at YouthBuild Gary (IN), speaks to the positive impact of mentoring on his students and his community. Mr. Davis also encourages other YouthBuild Directors to join YouthBuild Mentoring and to view mentoring as an organizational approach that has the young person as the center and heart of success, and which brings together funders, the community, and their many stakeholders.

HOW MENTORING HELPS PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES

Mentors can play a critical role in the positive development and growth of youth. These volunteers assist programs by augmenting the support of day-to-day academics and skills provided by the YouthBuild program. Mentors:

- Assist youth in establishing life plans with goals and objectives
- Provide a space to create another emotional bond with a caring adult
- Help to build trust
- Extend after-hours support
- Open up youth to new networks and potential employment opportunities
- Help young people with the YouthBuild program transition process while providing long-term student contact to the organization
- Become allies and advocates for YouthBuild students and the YouthBuild program.

While Mentoring Coordinators will take the lead with mentors and mentees at many programs, Directors and other staff members play key roles in the success of the mentoring component. The YouthBuild Mentoring Best Practice White paper discusses best practices of four YouthBuild programs: YouthBuild McLean County, Normal, IL; Prevention PLUS, Inc., Forest Park, GA; CCEO YouthBuild, Gardena, CA; and YouthBuild Just-A-Start, Cambridge, MA. Each program shows the
impact a successful mentoring program can have on young people and the YouthBuild program in general, and the white paper lays out the steps necessary to duplicate proven practices.

**Great Match Panel Discussion**
Still not convinced that mentoring helps programmatic outcomes? Watch and listen to the testimony of mentors and mentees showing the powerful impact that mentoring is making at YouthBuild sites around the country. These relationships are changing the lives of YouthBuild students and the volunteers who mentor them, as well as increasing the overall success of YouthBuild programs.

These clips are from a panel discussion at the YouthBuild Mentoring Training Institute in Orlando, FL. The panelists describe how their relationships began, the ways in which mentors support them, and the long-term impact that mentoring is having on their lives. These short videos truly show the power and amazing benefits of YouthBuild mentoring. Watch them now: The Great Match.
CHAPTER 4: CREATING A CULTURE OF SERVICE THROUGH MENTORING

“We’ve never had a mentoring program and once you get it rolling we wondered why didn’t we try this a few years ago. Other students hear about it; other students know about it, it creates curiosity. On a cultural level, it’s helped the students see the value of having a mentor. It’s helped the mentees understand how they have to make a commitment and bring something to the table as well, and I think the mentees are learning that and recognize that. It has widespread consequences in terms of service learning, giving back to the community, and changing the way you view the world.” ~ Director of Education, GAP YouthBuild, MN

Mentoring creates a bridge of service to the community in a number of strategic ways, while assisting young people to successfully complete their goals.

Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps Mentoring (AmeriCorps/CNCS) combines AmeriCorps, mentoring, and criminal justice initiatives that many programs are already implementing at their local sites (Description of a Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps Mentor Member). Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps Mentoring supports programs, mentors and mentees by providing:

- Additional mentoring services to all AmeriCorps YouthBuild Members regardless of age;
- Mentoring relationships with AmeriCorps members for one solid year (300 service hours);
- Assistance to AmeriCorps members’ in identifying and utilizing services as they transition out of YouthBuild;
- Mentoring support that often continues on for months after a member’s exit;
- Monthly opportunities for Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps Mentor Members to serve alongside their YouthBuild AmeriCorps Mentee Members on a construction service project, at a community service event and/or at a program approved alternative service location/project;
- Ongoing support and training for Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps Mentor Members.

Leveraging Local College Partnerships

YouthBuild AmeriCorps Programs that already have strong college and university connections and established community partnerships show tremendous success in meeting overall program outcomes (e.g., YouthBuild Philadelphia, and YouthBuild McLean County). Matt Fisher, Director
of AmeriCorps YouthBuild USA, states that when YouthBuild programs recruit AmeriCorps mentors from local colleges and universities, the mentoring, tutoring, and encouragement that these volunteers provide has an invaluable impact on the mentees and YouthBuild programs.

**Leadership Development Through Service for Youth**

Mentoring offers many leadership development and character-building opportunities that help to build meaningful life-long skills, such as:

- Active participation in their own mentoring process.
- The chance to assist their peers during and after graduation, as seen in the BRIDGE Mentoring Graduate Alumni Mentor.
- Long-term contacts that support youth as they matriculate through the YouthBuild program: YouthBuild Mentoring transitioning to Life-Long mentor.
- Participation in capacity building as YouthBuild Mentoring VISTA’s.

Mentoring service projects have the potential to double the number of participants (mentors and mentees), allow your program to become more deeply involved with the community, and provide wider exposure of your YouthBuild program. A key element of YouthBuild Mentoring is service that strengthens the mentor-mentee bond, while enhancing overall program goals and outcomes (Service Projects and Group Activities).
CHAPTER 5: MENTORING YOUTH IMPACTED BY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

“My expectation [of my mentor] was **someone to help me find my way** and **someone I could talk to**; **someone I could be myself with and not be afraid to do so.** His presence gave me an excuse to not do what everyone else was doing growing up in the ‘hood.’ **He gave me high cover to make different kinds of decisions. He made it normal to be abnormal.** ~ Tommy McClam, former Director of Mentoring, YouthBuild USA

Many YouthBuild mentees have had experiences or circumstances in their young lives that may have traumatized them or left them lacking in certain **developmental assets**. With this in mind, programs need to prepare mentors to work with a more challenging population. Below are important resources that will help your program reach youth who have been impacted by difficult circumstances.

**Trauma-informed Care:** The [Beyond Resilience Training Toolkit](#) (with [PowerPoint slides](#)) provides the materials necessary for YouthBuild program staff to train mentors and program personnel on resilience, trauma, and the resources available to address symptoms of childhood trauma.

**Being our Brothers’ Keepers:** The [BRIDGE Mentoring Toolkit Book I](#) and [Book II](#) contain all the materials needed to run the twelve-month YouthBuild BRIDGE Mentoring program. The BRIDGE Mentoring experience is meant to support young men of YouthBuild make successful transitions from a precarious late adolescence into a healthy and productive adulthood. [PowerPoint slides](#) for training mentors on this group mentoring model are also available.

**Mentoring Gang Exposed Youth:** To better assist you with mentoring gang exposed youth, an organizational assessment can determine your program’s readiness to address these challenges. The following resources will help you to assess your program’s readiness, prepare staff and mentors to work with gang-exposed youth, and determine the type of mentors to
recruit (see the section on Recruiting Mentors in Chapter 7: The Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring).

- **Assessing your program when working with Gang Exposed Youth:** This two-part video series on YouTube, developed by YouthBuild USA and funded by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, provides an organizational framework for basic program assessment in the context of working with gang-exposed young people. Use the following worksheets as you watch the videos:
  - Stepping in to work with Gang-Exposed Youth
  - Organizational Framework: Fundamentals of Assessing Your Program When Working with Gang-Exposed Youth
  - Organizational Framework: Providing a Safe Environment

- **Working with Gang-Exposed Youth: Organizational and Program Assessment Tool:** Gauges program's foundational structure and readiness to support gang-involved youth.

- **Sample YouthBuild Student Drug Contract:** Copy of the LA CAUSA YouthBuild program student drug contract used for working with gang-exposed students.

*The following resources are available behind the YouthBuild Mentoring Community of Practice staff login:*

- **Mentoring Program "Rap Session"** – Group mentoring session aimed at addressing issues and challenges surrounding youth impacted with special circumstances.
- **Kinship Network:** A mentoring support approach for court involved youth
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CHAPTER 6: HOW TO START A FORMAL MENTORING PROGRAM

“Mentoring was ... the missing link to YouthBuild. ... We want to create a mentoring movement in our community. ... Now we have the numbers, now we have more people outside of dedicated staff that are providing support to our young people. Now we have volunteers from the community coming in to support the mentoring program. When we have these mentors it’s not just about volunteering, but also what opportunities do they bring for our young people.” ~ YouthBuild Program Manager, River City YouthBuild, NC

You may be wondering what type of mentoring your YouthBuild program should consider and how much time and effort it will take. Because each YouthBuild site has different resources and varying needs, mentoring is not one size fits all. The following describes one-to-one and group models, and informal and formal mentoring programs; this information should help you to decide which route to take.

TYPES OF MENTORING

One-to-one Mentoring. Also known as “traditional mentoring,” this is where one older and more seasoned mentor is matched with one younger and less experienced mentee. One-to-one mentoring is thought to have the best outcomes, as mentees often develop strong, trusting relationships with caring adults. When trust is created, it inspires mentees to open up about their hopes and dreams and to talk about their obstacles. The major drawback in creating a one-to-one program is the considerable staff time (and therefore the cost) it takes to run this model.

Benefits of One-to-One Mentoring

- Provides each student with a caring adult who focuses solely on them
- Creates an opportunity for developing close mentor and mentee relationships
- Mentees often open up about their hopes and fears and this allows mentors to provide support and encouragement.

Group Mentoring. In this type of mentoring, one or more mentors consistently meet with groups of mentees. A typical make up of groups is two mentors for every six or eight mentees.
Group mentoring often features group discussions, organized curriculum, and experiential activities. For an example of a comprehensive structured curriculum, see YouthBuild’s BRIDGE Mentoring Program. (BRIDGE is a group mentoring model initially developed for males of color, but it can be adapted for mentoring other populations as well.)

YouthBuild’s OJJDP-funded mentoring programs currently require each mentee to experience three months of group mentoring activities, and then nine to twelve months in a one-to-one match. The first three months of group mentoring are structured in a number of different ways. For example, in Heart of Oregon’s Youth Opportunity AmeriCorps Program, staff assigns mentors to classrooms and jobsites, and they also ask mentors to take part in community projects. Heart of Oregon’s YouthBuild Program Director Kara Johnson remarked, “We have found mentors to be so helpful, and mentoring has become such a big part of what we do—funding or not, we will always have group mentoring!”

Benefits of Group Mentoring

- You don’t have to recruit, screen, train, and match one mentor for each mentee, so it takes much less time to run a group mentoring program than one-to-one, and therefore costs less. (If an informal group mentoring program is instituted, funding requirements are extremely low—perhaps not much more than the cost of criminal background checks.)
- Programs can serve more mentees more quickly; because fewer mentors are required, mentees typically don’t have to go on a wait list.
- Mentors can use the power of the group—peers tend to listen to and be more influenced by their cohorts than by adults. (Positive peer influence is most likely to occur in a structured effort, like the BRIDGE Mentoring Program.)

Informal Mentoring. Also known as “natural or spontaneous” mentoring, YouthBuild organizations have a rich history of experienced staff being informal mentors to both students and newer staff. In informal mentoring, mentors and mentees make natural or spontaneous connections, and they decide to develop a relationship that focuses on the mentee’s goals.

This type of mentoring does not have a set structure, nor does it typically have a staff person that is assigned to recruit, screen, train, match, and monitor participants. Informal mentoring is wonderful when it happens, but without a staff person or intentional leadership involved in running an effort, mentoring is much less likely to occur.

Formal Mentoring. It takes considerable time and effort to develop and run, but formalizing operations provides the best chance that mentoring will actually occur and endure. In formal
mentoring, a staff person is designated the “mentoring coordinator” and they are in charge of program operations.

In a formal YouthBuild mentoring program, mentors typically are recruited both from YouthBuild staff and from the community. Enlisting community leaders is an excellent way of recruiting one-to-one or group mentors. These individuals can also become a plus in other ways, and it is not uncommon for these mentors to make connections for additional sources of funding and other resources for YouthBuild sites.

**Youth Initiated Mentoring (YIM).** This is a relatively new approach to mentoring in which youth identify and recruit caring adults from within their existing communities. This gives youth a voice and choice in the recruitment and matching process and it potentially reduces the time staff needs to devote to recruiting volunteers. Building on the strengths of natural mentoring, YIM offers the potential to move beyond many of the limits of traditional mentoring programs, including the high demand for mentors resulting in long wait-lists for mentees. In the YIM model, participants must go through screening, training, and other program processes, just as they do in other structured YouthBuild mentoring efforts. The main difference in YIM is that students identify and recruit their mentors.

YIM is well aligned with YouthBuild USA’s mission to unleash the intelligence and positive energy of low-income youth to rebuild their communities and their lives. It also honors the value YouthBuild places on the community as a source of strength and wisdom in the lives of youth, and respects young people as solution-providers for themselves and the communities in which they live.

YIM Resources:

- **Youth Initiated Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for YouthBuild** is a PowerPoint presentation which provides a good overview of YIM as a strategy.
- The YouthBuild **Mentor Nomination Form** can be useful in the YIM process.
Finding Mentors, Finding Success is an excellent fourteen-page guide that mentees can use to reflect on their needs, and people in their lives who could become a mentor.

Youth Initiated Mentoring is a white paper that provides an excellent brief overview.

**Peer-to-Peer Mentoring.** In this model, older youth mentor younger students. Peer mentoring can be done in a one-to-one or group setting. YouthBuild programs often use “Graduate Mentors,” individuals who have successfully gone through the YouthBuild program, to mentor current students. Peer-to-peer group efforts can use the comprehensive curriculum from YouthBuild’s BRIDGE Mentoring Program. Mentoring coordinators can also pick and choose from 11 documents created by The Foundation for California Community Colleges’ Healthy Transitions; this curriculum focuses on developing peer-to-peer discussion groups and includes fun and interactive exercises.

**E-mentoring.** “E” is for electronic, meaning “mentoring through any electronic platform.” Many YouthBuild mentoring coordinators suggest electronic contact as a way for mentors and mentees to keep in touch after their formal relationship has ended. The YouthBuild publication At the Crossroads: Supporting Your YouthBuild Mentee after Graduation suggests, for example, to vary communication methods. Calling, Skyping, texting, emailing, connecting on social media, and other communication methods cannot replace face-to-face meetings, but they can be invaluable in reinforcing what you did discuss in person. These communication tools can also be used to schedule the next meeting.

**DON’T GO IT ALONE (FINDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS)**

Running a successful YouthBuild mentoring program can be helpful in many ways, as everyone benefits—mentees, mentors, the YouthBuild program staff, and the community. But at the same time, managing a mentoring effort can be a great deal of work. This section describes strategies for reaching out and developing community partnerships (along with links to additional strategies) that will help your organization share the load so that mentoring can survive and thrive in your YouthBuild program.

**Tap into Community Leaders as Mentors and Program Partners**
A case in point: In 2011, River City YouthBuild in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, received the OJJDP mentoring grant. Their initial year was a success, largely because their personable mentoring coordinator was able to recruit mentors from local colleges. But when the coordinator left after year one, most of the college mentors also moved on.

Knowing that mentoring had been vital to student success, the mentoring team put their heads together to try to find a way to keep the program going; the result was that they decided to reach out to experienced adult professionals and community leaders, people that would be around for years to come. To more effectively recruit community leaders, the mentoring team branded the program differently—*each mentor was seen and treated as a champion and an important stakeholder* in the life of their mentee, and in the YouthBuild program. Additionally, each match would be touted as a building block that would serve to strengthen Elizabeth City. And it worked!

The post-mentoring outcomes for the students were remarkable. River City YouthBuild found that students who were mentored were much more likely than their non-mentored counterparts to complete the program, obtain their GED, and achieve their job placement and post-secondary goals. To read the full story, go to [River City YouthBuild and the Impact of Mentoring: A Case Study](#).

### Partnering with Local Agencies to Provide Mentoring Services

Another way to share the load is to develop a partnership with one or more local organizations. The document “[Partnering with Local Agencies to Provide Mentoring Services](#)” includes strategies for developing mentoring collaboratives.

### Regional Mentoring Collaboratives

In many large metro areas, youth mentoring programs come together to form mentoring “coalitions” or “collaboratives.” Convening on a monthly to quarterly basis, these meetings focus on major topics such as mentor recruitment, funding and other resources, educational opportunities on mentoring best practices, and activities and events for mentors and mentees. These meetings are also a good place to find other agencies to partner with to create a combined mentoring effort.
One good example of a collaborative is the South Bay Mentoring Coalition, of San Jose, California.

**State Mentoring Partnerships**

MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership is the leader in advocating for youth mentoring and in organizing youth mentoring nationwide. To this end MENTOR has developed a network of 24 state mentoring partnerships. If your state is listed, contact the governing body to find out about trainings and other resources, as well as other youth-serving organizations near you that could possibly partner with you to create a mentoring program.

### STARTING ON THE RIGHT FOOT: ONBOARDING NEW MENTORING STAFF

When new a mentoring staff person arrives, it’s important to point them in the direction of resources and informational documents as soon as possible. This ensures that a legacy of successful mentoring is carried into the future.

The best person to learn from would be an individual who has had direct experience running a mentoring program. Canvas your agency to see if there is such a person on staff and then ask them to share their knowledge with the new mentoring coordinator. But even if there is no such person, the process for onboarding is fairly consistent across programs; point your new mentoring coordinator to the Quick Start Guide for New YouthBuild Mentoring Coordinators. And be prepared to help this individual to walk through the Guide, while sharing your knowledge about mentoring and the mentoring program.

Additional documents on the COP resources page that new staff should at least scan are:

- Mentor Pre-Match Training Toolkit: A Guide for Staff
- Mentee Training Toolkit: A Guide for Staff

Found at the COP training guides and handbooks link, the following publications are also central in running a structured YouthBuild mentoring program:

- Training YouthBuild Mentors: A Guide for Staff
- Supporting YouthBuild Students in Mentoring Relationships

Additional Resources:

- MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership – The leading youth mentoring organization in the U.S., and the publisher of Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, MENTOR’s site
has links to a wide variety of mentoring documents and other resources. These include free publicity materials, as well as notifications of online and in-person training events. This organization also provides no-cost mentoring technical assistance to any youth mentoring program (see next bullet point).

- **National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC)** Also funded by OJJDP, this is an opportunity for any new or existing YouthBuild mentoring coordinator/staff, serving populations 17 and under, to receive personalized support from an experienced mentoring consultant at no cost (always a great price)!

- **Collaborative Webinar Series (CWS)** -- Funded by OJJDP through the National Mentoring Resource Center and facilitated by MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, the CWS team delivers a webinar each month on a pertinent topic. Each webinar is recorded and is available for later review; mentoring staff can scan this site and review webinars on a variety of mentoring topics.
CHAPTER 7: THE ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE FOR MENTORING

“There are a lot of young people out there that want to do the right thing, that want to learn and grow and that are truly gifted but don’t always have the proper guidance or structure to do it alone. They need people who will step up to the plate and help.”
~ Mentor, Project REBUILD, Inc., Canton, OH

The Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring is a set of evidence-based guidelines for those who want to do mentoring effectively and with the best possible outcomes.

Now in its fourth edition, the Elements describes strategies for implementing youth mentoring efforts. This publication is also available the four-page Elements of Effective Practice checklist version. A good way to learn the Elements is to compare your current (or intended) mentoring program operations with this document. Doing so, you see what you are doing correctly, and you will also be able to identify areas that need strengthening.

Based on research conducted on mentoring programs over the past few decades, the Elements of Effective Practice describe six core tasks (or “elements”) for operating a mentoring program: Recruiting, Screening, Training, Matching and Initiation, Monitoring and Support, and Closure.

Some observations about these tasks:

- Each element is described in a sequential order; recruiting comes before screening, screening before training, and so forth, on down to closure.
- However, there is frequently overlap between elements, as (for example) recruitment is an ongoing process for most programs and additional training may come later in a program cycle as a part of supporting the matches.
- A mentoring effort is as weak as its weakest link—ignoring any one of the six areas can make your program much less effective.
- The six tasks can also be used for time management by tracking or by estimating how long it takes staff to complete each area.

The following is a short description of the six core tasks, along with links for more information:
1. **Recruiting** refers to going out and finding both mentors and mentees to participate. Our advice for this first task is: Get help! It’s best to develop a recruitment team to pitch in.

Recruitment resources:

- [Recruiting Mentors](#)
- [Mentor Recruitment](#) (under “Mentor Recruitment and Screening”)
- [Getting YouthBuild Students Involved](#)
- [Finding Mentors, Finding Success](#) (how youth can recruit their mentors through Youth Initiated Mentoring)
- [Marketing Toolkit](#) (for recruitment letters, brochures, posters, press releases, etc.)

Keeping mentors onboard for more than one mentoring cycle is considered part of “recruiting,” because if you can retain mentors then you can save an incredible amount of time. That is why we have created an entire chapter on *Nurturing and Retaining Mentors* (see Chapter 10).

2. **Screening** refers to a set of activities undertaken to determine whether a volunteer has the time, commitment, and personal qualities to be a safe and effective mentor. It also refers to a similar set of activities to assess whether prospective mentees, and their parents or guardians, have the time, commitment, and desire to participate in the program. Typically, screening a mentor involves an in-person interview by staff, a criminal background check (and child abuse registries, etc.) and personal reference checks. If mentors are allowed to drive mentees, a DMV printout and proof of insurance are required. (Find more information on all these steps at [Screening Your Mentors](#)). Mentees are also screened to make sure they meet eligibility requirements, such as age and motivation.

3. **Training** prepares participants for mentoring and also makes them accountable. It is essential to train mentors before they are matched. A pre-match training is usually two to four hours long, and it covers subjects such as: what a mentor is and isn’t, do’s and don’ts, how to develop trusting relationships, program rules and guidelines, and communication skills. Mentees and parents (of minors) should also be provided orientations on these topics so that everyone will be on the same page.

Training Resources:

- [Training Mentors](#)
- [Resources for YouthBuild Mentors](#)
- [Mentee Training Toolkit: A Guide for Staff](#)
Ongoing training is also important, especially for mentors. Many programs hold three or four ongoing trainings yearly and require mentors to attend at least twice. In addition to gaining new information, ongoing trainings are a great way for mentors to open up about what’s going on in their relationships, and to receive encouragement and suggestions. To facilitate discussion, ask each mentor to discuss one obstacle and one success they are having with their mentee(s) (while emphasizing that anything mentors hear about any mentee is confidential).

Below are two curricula available for ongoing mentor training that deal with mentee trauma:

- **Beyond Resilience Lesson Plan** (and accompanying PowerPoint Slides) contains all the materials you need to equip mentors to accurately identify and effectively respond to the symptoms of trauma in YouthBuild students.
- **At the Cross Roads** (and accompanying PowerPoint Slides) will help equip mentors to successfully perform their critical bridge and support role during the three to six months after the mentee completes the YouthBuild program.
- **Ongoing Training for Mentors: Twelve Interactive Sessions for U.S. Department of Education Mentoring Programs**

Ongoing trainings are also a good time to work with mentors and mentees together on specific goals, such as:

- **Life Plan Activities**, (see also Life Plan Template I and Life Plan Template II).
- **What’s Next? Introduction to Postsecondary Education Planning** is a comprehensive e-learning module that mentors can use with mentees to help create an educational path; this link also contains many educational and career worksheets and activities.
- **What’s Next? College Knowledge** is another interactive e-learning module that focuses on choosing a college, admission and financial requirements, and more.

4. Matching and Initiation. Matching is the process of pairing mentors and mentees in a one-to-one match or in a group setting. Staff decides on a match on the basis of gender, common interests, time availability, and geographic location, among other things.

Initiation is a term that has recently been added to matching, and it refers to kicking off the relationship, usually by setting up a three-way meeting—mentor, mentee, and mentoring coordinator.
One-to-one Matching resources:

- Preparing Mentees for Matching
- Matching Volunteers and Students
- That Magic Moment describes, from the perspective of both mentors and mentees, what it takes to “light the match."

For information on matching within the group setting, see Page 13 of the YouthBuild BRIDGE Mentoring Toolkit: Book I.

5. Monitoring and Support. Monitoring involves a periodic (often monthly) check-in with both the mentor and mentee (and parents, if the mentee is a minor). Monitoring can be done face-to-face, by phone, email, or written log. “Support” describes the actions that mentoring staff take when obstacles arise in the match, such as matches not meeting, one or both people not liking their counterpart, or someone is breaking the rules. Support also involves thanking mentors for their service (see Nurturing and Retaining Mentors in Chapter 10).

Monitoring and Support resources:

- Supervising and Supporting Matches
- Match Check-Ins and “Red Flags”
- Supporting and Honoring Matches
- Mentor/Mentee Relationship Cycle
- Building Trust in Mentoring Relationships handout can be used in pre-match and ongoing trainings, or in face-to-face supervision (perhaps when a match is not going well), as can Getting the Match Off to a Good Start.
- Supervising and Supporting Matches contains the Match Check-in Sheet, and the List of Match Check-in Questions.

Suggesting fun and productive strategies is also part of match support; take a look at Match Activities, which includes the documents: Sample Life Plan 1& 2, One-to-One Mentoring Activities, and Sources of Group Activities.

6. Closure refers to the ending of the formal mentor and mentee commitment. With most YouthBuild mentoring programs, this happens between twelve and fifteen months after the match is made. The most important aspect of closure is the emotional well-being of the mentee. For safety and liability reasons, closure also entails having mentors and mentees (and parents of minors) acknowledge when a match is no longer under the supervision of the program.
At the Crossroads is a training that staff can provide to mentors prior to graduation from YouthBuild. This training helps mentors to assist mentees in making important decisions during this critical transition period.

Transitioning to Post-Grad Mentoring contains forms and surveys that staff can use for the closure process. The document Match Transition and Celebration Ritual provides strategies mentors can use for both planned and premature closure.

This has been a short synopsis of the Elements of Effective Practice. Please remember that these tasks are key to running a sound mentoring effort. It is a good strategy to look at the Elements both during program design and during implementation.
There are a number of questions good leaders naturally ask about any aspect of their program. They want to know if they are doing things in the best and most efficient way possible, but they also want to know if their approach is in fact working.

With mentoring it’s no different. Here are resources that can be used to document, measure, and even improve your mentoring effort.

- **Program Self-Assessment** (PDF). This document includes a set of self-assessment questions that can be helpful to your YouthBuild program as you implement mentoring services. These questions are designed to help the mentoring coordinator, program director, mentoring advisory committee, and the rest of your team think through the many decisions to be made as you begin integrating mentoring into your YouthBuild program.

- **Mentor-Mentee Information** (spreadsheet). All OJJDP funded programs use MentorCore for tracking mentor and mentee matches. However, if you are not an OJJDP or Youth Opportunity grantee, you will still need a basic method for keeping track of your mentors and mentees. This spreadsheet will work.

- **YouthBuild Mentoring Evaluation Framework**. For programs interested in a more formal evaluation of the impact of mentoring on their youth, this document provides a starting point for collaboration between the program and a professional evaluator.

- **Turning on a Dime**. In 2013, Tommy McClam and Kelly Belmonte led a breakout session at the National Mentoring Summit called "Turning on a Dime: The 3 Keys, 4 Steps, and 1 Killer App needed when you must change now." This presentation was developed to equip mentoring program leaders with practical tools for rapid response strategic action, and for creating a culture of ongoing assessment, learning, and change. Resources from this session are available [here](#).

Since 2009, YouthBuild USA has documented in these white papers several studies of what is working across YouthBuild Mentoring programs:

- **Mentoring Best Practices – December 2010**
The Happiness Factor: Environmental Factors & Personal Qualities of Mentoring Staff That Stay
That Magic Moment: YouthBuild mentors and mentees on what it takes to light the match

CHRONICLING WHAT WORKS IN YOUR PROGRAM

It happens time and again in YouthBuild mentoring programs—over a mentoring cycle, the mentoring coordinator spends hundreds of hours on the tasks that need to be mastered to make the program a success—and then this individual exits the program. A new mentoring coordinator is hired and they begin to get up to speed by reviewing the program’s mentoring documents. Useful information is uncovered, but something crucial is missing—a document that could be more helpful than any other, if only it existed. And now it can. It’s called the “Mentoring Program Operations Narrative.”

The Mentoring Program Operations Narrative is a great way to chronicle the obstacles and successes, and even the resources that program staff members encounter during program implementation. Mentoring coordinators should consider developing this document. It can not only be used to refine operations, but it will provide a “how-to” guide for future mentoring program staff. And importantly, the Mentoring Program Operations Narrative is a great way for an exiting mentoring coordinator to leave his or her legacy!
CHAPTER 9: FEEDING THE GOLDEN GOOSE: NURTURING MENTORING STAFF

You care deeply, I am willing to risk and give others the freedom to risk, I have a deep faith, I have a broad range of skills, I know my community, I am passionate, I have endless vision, and I have a crazy ability to get others to do things they have never done and never thought of doing. ~ YouthBuild Program Director

You’ve been successful at running a program and creating a culture of mentoring at your organization. It was hard work and you don’t want to lose momentum. One big key is to retain the mentoring coordinator, as the costs of turnover can be staggering. Not only does the mentoring coordinator have the knowledge of how to run the program, but mentoring is about building relationships. When the coordinator leaves, it takes a new person a long time to understand the program’s operations and they also have to start over when it comes to building trusting relationships with mentors and mentees. Bottom line, if you can help it at all — don’t let your mentoring coordinator go!

Many excellent strategies for keeping staff can be found in the nine-page YouthBuild publication The Happiness Factor: Environmental Factors & Personal Qualities of Mentoring Staff that Stay. This document describes the findings from a study of YouthBuild programs that had retained the same mentoring coordinator for at least twenty months. Additionally, it outlined the following promising factors for retaining strong and integrated mentoring staff:

1. Commit dedicated and talented staff to the mentoring initiative.
2. Embed mentoring within transition planning, placement, and goal-setting activities.
3. Provide mentoring for all students (not just those under eighteen years old).
4. Put mentoring on the programmatic map (e.g. include mentoring in program meeting agendas and on program-wide calendars).
5. Include all staff, board members, and program champions in mentoring.

Read The Happiness Factor now to find out more about what the most successful directors did differently to retain staff.
THE POWER OF A THANK YOU!

In his book *1001 Ways to Reward Employees*, author Bob Nelson cites a study of 1,500 workers who were asked the question, “What are you currently *not* getting at work, that you would like to have?”

The top five responses were:

1. Manager personally congratulates employees who do a good job.
2. Manager writes personal notes about good performance.
3. Organization uses performance as the basis for promotion.
5. Manager holds morale building meetings to celebrate success.

Of the top 5, only #3, “Organization uses performance as the basis for promotion,” did not have anything to do with some form of a “Thank You!”

The lesson? Thank your employees (and especially, your mentoring coordinator) frequently, and in as many ways as you can. It takes so little time, and the results (a mentoring coordinator who will stay on) are well worth the effort!
CHAPTER 10: NURTURING AND RETAINING MENTORS

“My belief is that the core of every mentoring relationship is taking a personal stake in someone—establishing an emotional bond that says, ‘I am pouring my life, my experiences, my love, and my attention into you.’” – Carlos Campos, former VP for National Service and Mentoring, YouthBuild USA

Many YouthBuild mentoring coordinators comment that recruiting mentors is the most difficult and time-consuming part of their job. So, it makes sense that if mentors stay on for their full commitment (and perhaps beyond), it will save a great deal of staff time. This chapter provides four low-cost, high-reward suggestions for nurturing and retaining mentors:

**Suggestion 1: Create a “Mentor Recognition and Retention Plan”**

Mentors should be honored and nurtured throughout the program. It is not only the right thing to do—it’s good business!

The best way to approach this task is to create a “Mentor Recognition and Retention Plan.” The mentoring coordinator could come up with it working alone, but a team approach is much better. You’ll be surprised at the number of ideas that can be generated by three or four staff members as they brainstorm how and when to recognize mentors. So get the flip chart out!

Categories for brainstorming can include:

- Customer Service (treating mentors as customers)
- Personal/Private Recognition
- Public Recognition
- National Mentoring Month (see publicity materials at this link)

Ideas for honoring mentors also can be found under “Recognition Procedures” in the Generic Mentoring Program Policy and Procedure Manual.

**Suggestion 2: Thank Mentors Every Step of the Way**

Beginning with recruitment and continuing all the way through closure, staff should provide various forms of “Thank You’s,” as this is a low effort, high result action. For more on this, view The Power of a Thank You in the last chapter.
Suggestion 3: Use the *Elements of Effective Practice* to focus your Mentor Retention Efforts

There isn’t a time in the program where you *don’t* have an opportunity to use mentor retention strategies. Below are the *Elements of Effective Practice* with a short description of how to enhance mentor retention every step of the way.

- **Recruitment:** You don’t have a second chance to make a good first impression. From the start, display your commitment to the youth and to the program! Also, be clear about mentor and mentee commitments—if participants are surprised by the commitments and requirements later, they may drop out of the program.

- **Screening:** Don’t keep a good volunteer waiting for too long. The more rapidly staff can get mentors through screening (and training and matching), the more likely they will stick with the program.

- **Training:** Provide a fun and interactive pre-match training. If possible, train mentors in groups, as this will give them that “team feeling.” Focus on realistic and unrealistic expectations for the match (e.g. “Your mentee likely won’t change overnight”) as this will keep mentors from becoming easily frustrated, which could cause them to drop out of the program.

- **Matching and Initiation:** A mentor’s positive experience begins with a good pairing. Match mentors and mentees primarily on the basis of common interests, along with a gut feeling for who might work best together.

- **Monitoring and Support:** When a mentor calls or emails, *respond immediately*. If it takes days to get back, the mentor might think you don’t care. When a disappointed mentor leaves the program, you’re trading minutes for hours—the many more hours you’ll have to devote to recruiting another mentor.

- **Closure:** Help mentors (and mentees) with match closure. If a mentor walks away from the program with positive feelings, it’s much more likely that they’ll volunteer again (and that they’ll tell their friends about the program). Strategies mentors can use for providing closure to their mentoring relationships can be found in Chapter 7 of this Guide.

Suggestion 4: Host Award Ceremonies

When mentors’ efforts are recognized in public, it makes a positive impact. For example:

*Matching Ceremonies.* To make the start of the match special, see [Matching Volunteers and Students](#) for the Commitment Ceremony Template.

*Honor the Mentor at Work.* Consider honoring a mentor at work in front of his or her peers. Provide them with a certificate, coffee mug, t-shirt, etc., and take a few minutes to sing their
praises. This not only makes the mentor feel great, but it’s a good opportunity to recruit additional volunteers (and donors, too!).

*Ongoing Mentor Trainings or School Events.* Recognize mentors in public for their length of service, the number of mentees they’ve taken on (if they have two or more), and for other actions they have taken above and beyond the call of duty.

*Graduation Ceremonies.* Staff could create a separate “mentoring program graduation” event, or mentoring awards could be added to the students’ graduation ceremony. Either way, it’s an opportunity to give mentors who’ve completed their commitments a big “thank you!” Feed them and provide them with “certificates of completion,” and if possible, publically thank each one of them for their efforts. For more ideas about graduation ceremonies, see Sessions 12 and 24 in [BRIDGE Mentoring Book II](#)
BONUS Suggestion: Mentor Recognition Badges!

YouthBuild has developed a fun and innovative way of honoring mentors (and mentees) for their service. The document Mentor Recognition Badges provides a short explanation of how to use these colorful badges and this page also has longer instructions within the “Mentor Recognition Badges Users Guide.” At the same link you can download following types of badges:

- Mentor Relationships
- Life Plan and Life Goal Activity
- Service and Community
- Program Support
- Just-for-Fun
- Levels of Mentoring

The badges can be used to reward mentors, honor extra contributions, motivate matches to try new activities, and create a culture of deeper program involvement. They can be placed on websites and social media or added to displays or end-of-year awards and certificates—so give them a try!
The question now is: Where do we go from here? When it comes right down to it, sustainability of any aspect of your program is all about the ongoing capacity to make the effort – both in terms of human labor and financial resources. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), “Sustainability is the capacity of an organization to achieve long-term success and stability and to serve its clients and consumers without the threat or loss of financial support and the quality of services. Sustainability is about maintaining and continuing program services after a funding period is over and ensuring that the organization has become a permanent part of community resources.” (From Sustaining Grassroots Community-Based Programs: A Toolkit for Community- and Faith-Based Service Providers.)

Of course, that is what we want for mentoring in YouthBuild! In previous sections, we talked about taking care of your people, training staff and mentors in effective practices, and getting the necessary funding to do formal mentoring well. In this chapter we explore what it means to keep the effort going after you have launched.

YOUR NEXT THREE PLAYS

If you have gotten this far, you likely already believe in the power of mentoring and are well on your way toward a fully-fledged mentoring initiative within your program. In fact, you may already have received a grant to get mentoring started, and perhaps you have had one or two cohorts of mentoring pairs go through your program to date.

If you are at that point, you have seen how mentoring can make a big difference in the lives of the young people currently in your program. Knowing what it takes to have an effective
program in terms of staff and resources, you are probably wondering how to make sure going forward that all of your students who want a mentor can have one.

In December of 2012, YouthBuild USA conducted a webinar – Your next three plays – that explored that very challenge with Directors and program staff who participated in the first round of OJJDP mentoring funding. In this training, the following three questions were unpacked:

- To what degree is mentoring a part of your program’s critical operational functions?
- Who knows about the importance of mentoring in your program and do they know how to be a part of it?
- In what ways are you leveraging the good will of your community to sustain mentoring in your program?

Watch the webinar now to find out your next three plays.

OTHER SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCES

Funding Streams for Mentoring Programs
There is no magic formula for how much funding your YouthBuild mentoring program should seek from outside sources; your strategy will be influenced by your chosen mentoring model and objectives (e.g. number of students you wish to serve through mentoring), your external environment, and the resources at your disposal. This document gives a good overview of some
common sources that YouthBuild programs turn to when conducting resource development for mentoring.

**Sustainability Planning Checklist**
This planning worksheet will keep you focused and on track in your efforts to develop a mentoring sustainability plan. The tips in this checklist are useful, in fact, for any area of your program where you need to develop additional resources.

**Show Us the Money! Fundraising for Mentoring Programs** (published by EMT Group)
Most of us know that effective fundraising is the key to ensuring the future of mentoring in our programs. Yet the day-to-day challenges of providing services combined with our own insecurities about asking for money often prevent us from planning and implementing meaningful fund development strategies. This interactive, problem-solving workshop is designed to give you the skills, techniques and knowledge you need to sustain your program into the future.

**Sustaining Grassroots Community-Based Programs: A Toolkit for Community- and Faith-Based Service Providers** (published by SAMHSA)
This toolkit by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is designed to help grassroots community- and faith-based organizations develop sustainable program services. It provides helpful information to guide sustainability planning efforts, samples of tools, and actual fill-in-the-blank “planning templates” and worksheets.

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**MENTORING AS A BIRTHRIGHT**

When it gets right down to it, we must sustain mentoring within our programs because it is the right thing to do. There are at least 2.3 million low-income sixteen- to twenty-four-year-olds in the United States who are neither in school nor employed. These young people have also been referred to as “Opportunity Youth.” Globally, over 200 million youth are classified as “working poor” and earning less than $2.00 a day; all are in urgent need of pathways to jobs, education, entrepreneurship, and other opportunities leading to productive and contributing livelihoods. YouthBuild programs provide those pathways by unleashing the positive energy of opportunity youth to rebuild their communities and their lives, breaking the cycle of poverty through a commitment to work, education, community, and family.

YouthBuild Mentoring believes and declares that mentoring is a powerful strategic tool to assist young people in finding success and the powerful energy from within. Consider using the
declaration below (provided by the YouthBuild USA Mentoring Department) to reinforce mentoring in your program.

The Unanimous Declaration of YouthBuild Mentoring

When in the course of a young person’s life it becomes necessary to dissolve the bonds which have hindered their growth, questioned their goodness and labored their communities; and gather among the powers of the earth, the positive energy and intelligence, the equal station to which the laws of nature entitle them to be compelled to act and publicly proclaim, “We are YouthBuild Mentoring and we declare with passion and conviction ‘A CARING MENTOR IS A BIRTHRIGHT!’ We hold this truth to be self-evident that we are created equal, that we are endowed with certain rights, that among these are belonging, independence, generosity, and mastery; that to secure this right every young person will have the opportunity to have a mentor, deriving their just power from the consent of the youth -- a mentor to love and guide them, a mentor who will create that powerful enabling feeling that someone has taken a personal stake in them, in their community, and in the uplifting and advancement of mankind.
“He supports me when I am feeling down... and keeps me motivated. I do things now that I never would have done before like going to poetry events instead of getting in trouble and doing drugs with my friends. I want to make a difference now and be more politically active. I feel like I have a friend now.” – Mentee, CCEO YouthBuild, CA

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