

CHAPTER 5



Operating Mentoring Programs

PURPOSE

This chapter provides the following resources:

1. A game plan or strategy for organizing and managing mentoring programs.
2. Resources and information for career preparation mentoring services.
3. Disability-specific resources.

Chapter 4 addressed the content of mentoring programs; this chapter addresses the business management aspect of the program (how to operate a mentoring program). As mentoring programs grow and come to be recognized as an essential component of the youth “transition system,” many nuts-and-bolts issues related to the management of high-quality mentoring programs have emerged that need to be addressed. This chapter draws heavily from several national resources that reflect the “best-of-the-best” materials within the mentoring system in this country. This chapter is intended to build upon the lessons learned from others by providing examples of program supports that focus on career preparation and strategies for working with youth with disabilities.

The National Mentoring Center has published *Foundations of Successful Youth Mentoring: A Guidebook for Program Development* (Garringer, Fulop, & Renick, 2003). Its research shows that mentoring programs that have incorporated the following five foundations are likely to have long-term success:

1. Strong Agency Capacity
2. Proven Program Design
3. Effective Community Partnerships
4. Sustainable Resource Development
5. Useful Program Evaluation

Two organizations have led the way in helping to organize the body of knowledge for this chapter:

The National Mentoring Center (NMC) is a part of the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory (<http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring>).

The National Mentoring Partnership (NMP) is a coalition of over 20 corporations and non-profit organizations and is an advocate for the expansion of mentoring and a resource for mentors and mentoring initiatives nationwide (<http://www.mentoring.org/>).

The first four components are described in further detail in this chapter. Program Evaluation is described thoroughly in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 centers on marketing strategies that permeate all five of these foundations.

FOUNDATION #1: STRONG AGENCY CAPACITY

There are multiple organizational development resources that an organization can use to guide a process of board and staff reflection to assess the capacity of the institution. According to Garringer, “proper organizational structure and resources are crucial to quality services” and should consist of these ten components:

1. A written statement of purpose and a long-range plan;
2. Consistent support from the parent agency and board;
3. A shared understanding of roles and responsibilities with partner organizations;
4. Qualified and trained staff;
5. Agency reflects the diversity of the community and youth served;
6. Written policy and procedures manual that reflects recognized quality assurance standards;
7. Access to training and technical assistance services;
8. Community awareness of the agency and program;
9. Written long-term funding and sustainability plans; [and]
10. Use of evaluation data for agency purposes (2002).

A written statement of purpose must work in tandem with an organization’s program development plans. Basing operating policies and procedures on the organizational mission will make clear who is being served and why.

For programs serving older youth with disabilities, staff development and technical assistance activities should include building staff competencies in career awareness and working with youth with disabilities.

Mentoring programs are community resources and, as such, must ensure that community awareness and program composition reflect core values regarding racial, ethnic, ability, and gender diversity.

Program development should begin with a needs assessment and a “resource map” – an environmental scan of the community that searches for what already exists (or does not exist) in mentoring, career awareness, work programs, etc. Organizations interested in preparing to serve youth with disabilities may want to look at resources such as the Self-Assessment Guide by NCWD/Youth (http://www.ncwdyouth.info/promising_Practices/#using_guide), which inquires about an organization’s readiness to provide the following:

- Access to high quality standards-based education regardless of the setting;
- Information about career options;
- Exposure to the world of work;
- Opportunities to develop social, civic, and leadership skills;
- Strong connections to caring adults;
- Access to safe places to interact with their peers; and,
- Support services and special accommodations to allow youth with disabilities to become independent adults.

Qualified and Trained Staff. To be successful, mentoring programs must ensure that staff members are available to perform a variety of functions. One person can fill multiple roles, but a team approach works best when recruiting mentors. Table VII shows the variety of tasks and activities that must be performed. Many of these activities may overlap but formal delineation of roles is necessary to ensure that no task goes undone. The program coordinator, who is involved in all phases of the program, must have adequate time to engage in required activities. The beginning of a program or mentoring cycle can be very time-consuming and success often hinges on the ability of the director and coordinator to focus on the program.

- **Administrative board:** any group of paid staff or volunteers that provides advice or guidance to the program director and coordinator but does not take an active role in day-to-day operations.
- **Program director:** the individual who oversees the program and takes responsibility for its overall operation. May or may not be involved in the day-to-day activities. May be a school principal, assistant principal, teacher, social worker, counselor, clergy member, or community-based organization (CBO) administrator or youth service provider.
- **Program coordinator:** the individual who is most heavily involved in the day-to-day operation of the program. Should be active in all phases and familiar with all principle participants, including youth and mentors. The program coordinator should have dedicated time set aside each week to focus on program activities. May be a teacher, counselor, social worker, clergy member, or CBO staff person.

- **Partner organization:** an individual or group that provides key elements to the operation of the program. May be the main source of mentors and the provider of resources and space to conduct mentoring activities. The partner organization is often a local business or civic group that is interested in career development activities for youth. It may also be a faith-based organization or CBO that focuses on Youth Development/Youth Leadership programming.
- **Technical assistance provider (TAP):** an individual or group with special expertise in operating mentoring programs. A TAP may be local or remote and provide assistance on an ongoing basis or only at startup. The TAP may provide services for no fee or on a fee for service basis.

When planning or starting mentoring programs, it can be quite useful to include youth, parents, and potential mentors in organizational or evaluation activities.

TABLE VII: THE ROLES OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS AND PARTNERS

↓ TASK OR ACTIVITY ↓	ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD	PROGRAM DIRECTOR	PROGRAM COORDINATOR	PARTNER ORGANIZATION	TA PROVIDERS	YOUTH & FAMILIES	MENTORS
Program Setup and Design	X	X	X		X	X	
Program Administration	X	X	X		X	X	
Management Information System—Design and Reporting		X	X		X	X	
Establishing Community Partnerships	X	X	X	X			X
Recruiting Mentors			X	X			X
Screening Mentors			X	X			
Training Mentors			X		X	X	
Recruiting Youth			X	X			
Developing Program Curriculum		X	X	X	X	X	
Setting Program Goals		X	X	X			
Matching Mentors and Youth			X	X			
Monitoring Mentoring Relationships			X	X			
Resource Development	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Program Evaluation		X	X	X	X	X	X
Dissemination of Outreach Materials			X	X	X	X	X

FOUNDATION #2: PROVEN PROGRAM DESIGN

Proven Program Design allows organizations to utilize established practices that have been shown to work well with others. If the mentees include youth with disabilities, program design should include training and activities that are based on practices used by national organizations that take into account each individual's situation and preferences.

Recruiting Mentors Recruiting skilled volunteer mentors is usually the most difficult and time-consuming part of starting and sustaining a mentoring program. However, the activity of recruiting mentors can lead to increased visibility in the community and may help in forming partnerships and alliances with public and private organizations that did not exist before.

Networking with other area programs that have had success in recruiting mentors can be helpful. Sometimes it is appropriate to utilize youth themselves in the recruitment process; testimonials from previous participants can illustrate the value of mentoring to others. Whatever activities take place, it is important to paint a realistic picture of the mentoring experience. There is nothing worse than a mentor who quits because he or she was misled about the expectations of the role.

When recruiting, be clear about how the skills and experiences of the mentor will be used to engage the youth and the desired outcomes to be achieved. Seek mentors with special skills or experiences that connect best with the youth in the program. Same race or cross race matches each have benefits, but should not be made arbitrarily. Language and other cultural issues are valid considerations when making matches.

When a group of youth is to be matched individually with a group of volunteers, it is worthwhile to have the matches made by someone who knows each youth well and who has spent some time with the volunteers. While application information, such as participants' interests and backgrounds, can be used to make some preliminary decisions, personal contact by program administrators is often worthwhile. See the Exhibits at the end of this chapter for example forms for use in recruitment and other tasks.

Examples of other resources to assist with recruitment include MentorYouth.com (<http://www.mentoryouth.com>), Big Brothers Big Sisters (<http://www.bbbsa.org>), and the National Mentoring Center's guide, *Recruiting Mentors* (http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/topic_recruiting.html).

Screening Mentors Mentors should be screened to determine if the volunteer has the personal characteristics needed to be a mentor and if the volunteer can safely work with children and youth. Screening is done by looking at the volunteer's thoroughly completed application; conducting interviews; doing reference checks; and checking driving records, criminal records, and child abuse registries. Agencies should be as diligent in screening volunteers as they are in screening paid staff, particularly if the mentors will be spending time alone with the youth.

Despite the overwhelming need for mentors, it is reasonable to turn down a volunteer if the applicant does not have the attributes, skills, and personality to be effective. Mentors are more effective if they:

- have experience or interest in working with youth;
- are patient and tolerant of youthful behavior;
- are good listeners;
- are not judgmental or moralistic;
- are tolerant of diversity; and,
- have a history of staying committed.

If an applicant is deemed not qualified, it may be appropriate to engage him or her in other volunteer activities rather than turn him or her away completely.

Agencies and organizations that recruit volunteers to work with youth should have policies in place that protect the organization in case of illegal or inappropriate behaviors by volunteers (or by the youth themselves). The Risk Management Resource Center (RMRC) provides free information to help government entities and nonprofit organizations manage their risks effectively. They provide a Volunteer Risk Management Tutorial, (http://www.nonprofitrisk.org/tutorials/ns_tutorial/intro/1.htm).

Training Mentors An important but often overlooked part of mentoring programs is the training of mentors. Because of time and access, many program administrators hurry past training in an attempt to connect the mentor with the mentee quickly so that they can begin spending time together. This rush can be detrimental in the long run because the mentor may be unprepared to handle some of the unpredictable situations that may arise, or the mentor may be unable to engage the youth in a long-term relationship.

According to Fulop, mentoring programs “should have a structured training program for mentors, mentees and [if appropriate] parents/caregivers that includes: a) an overview of the program; b) clarification of roles, responsibilities and expectations; c) discussion of how to handle a variety of situations; and d) concepts and strategies to help build the relationship between the mentors and youth” (2003, pg. 5).

The amount of training needed is dependent on several factors:

- The amount of time the mentor will be spending with the youth;
- The amount of time the mentor and mentee are not supervised;
- The range of activities;
- The experience of the mentor; and,
- The extent of the youth’s needs.

This last factor demands particular attention. Because of privacy and confidentiality, mentors should have only limited access to background information concerning the youth. However, mentors should, if appropriate, have a thorough understanding of the impact of poverty, culture, disability, or other factors that affect the youth’s life.

When the mentees are youth with disabilities, training should include elements of disability etiquette and sensitivity. Mentors should understand that youth with disabilities are youth first and that a disability is only a part of the youth’s life. Mentors should never enter the relationship with any intention of “fixing” a disability (for instance, by getting involved with medical issues).

Mentors should also never treat the individual with a disability with pity.

Long-term mentoring programs may involve specific activities that require additional preparation time for the mentor. These activities may include academics, work activities, social skills development, or others that correspond to what is being taught in a classroom or at a worksite. On-going training may include group meetings and activities with other mentors and may even include mentees in some circumstances.

Training Curriculum for Mentors The National Mentoring Center (NMC) offers training curricula through online learning, tutorials, and publications. These include *Mentoring Program Development: A Start-up Toolkit*, *the Generic Mentoring Program Policy & Procedure Manual*, and NMC’s Training Curriculum, *Strengthening Mentoring Programs*. *Strengthening Mentoring Programs* includes 10 interactive modules on the following topics: targeted mentor recruiting; screening mentors; making and supporting the match; forming and maintaining partnerships; measuring outcomes; and jumpstarting mentors. These all can be found at (<http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring>).

The National Mentoring Partnership also offers training curricula through their own online resources and includes information on program planning and design, management, operations, evaluation, and after school programming. Their materials are available at (http://www.mentoring.org/program_staff/index.php).

FOUNDATION #3: EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

This Guide’s focus is on career-based mentoring. Hence, it is crucial that mentoring programs develop partnerships with public, private, or governmental entities that are involved in workforce development. By collaborating with and drawing on the expertise of businesses, colleges, workforce centers, and other organizations (e.g., chambers of commerce or service clubs), partnerships can do the following:

- Promote mentoring as an integral service strategy and getting involved with other mentoring organizations and networks of youth service providers;

- Provide referrals of youth that can benefit from participation in mentoring (e.g., to educational institutions including alternative schools, high schools, and postsecondary institutions, especially disability support service units; to juvenile justice centers; to mental health programs; and to churches, disability advocacy organizations, neighborhood centers, and others);
- Provide mentors (e.g., individuals from churches; civic, service, and business organizations; disability advocacy groups; neighborhood centers; and others); and,
- Connect youth to the world of work and to career and technical training (e.g., through workforce boards, One-Stop Centers, business organizations, and educational institutions).

In some instances it may be necessary to work with more than one individual in a particular institution in order to accomplish specific mentoring program goals. Programs will need to make choices based on which partnerships are most compatible with the host organization and based on which organizations will generate the most reliable source of mentors.

Building partnerships requires time and attention on the part of the program lead staff and key volunteers supporting the program. Persistence and a consistent presence on the part of these individuals are required for partnerships to thrive, but the payoff can be substantial.

Programs focused on career preparation mentoring must become familiar with the culture of the employer community. The following is adapted from Jucovy (2001, pg. 9-10):

Forming Linkages With Businesses

The strategies for connecting with businesses in order to recruit their employees to serve as mentors are not very different from the partnership-building approaches that are most effective with any organization. Building relationships is a key factor in developing effective partnerships with corporations, and the groundwork for building these relationships can be accomplished by doing a little research.

- 1) Learn what kinds of issues the corporation's employee volunteers are currently involved in. They might, for example, be focusing their efforts on education or environmental issues, on children, youth, or the elderly.
- 2) Learn how the corporation's volunteer efforts are organized. Corporate employee volunteer programs generally fall into two broad categories:

Top-Down Programs: Corporate-sponsored volunteer programs operate with varying levels of internal support. The corporation might simply promote volunteering by posting opportunities. Or it might actively encourage volunteering through, for example, group projects and recognition of volunteers. It might also sponsor volunteer efforts through financial support, including paid time off that employees use in volunteer activities. Nonprofit agencies that want to connect with a corporate-sponsored volunteer program could begin by connecting with a manager in the corporation's community relations or public affairs department.

Bottom-Up Programs: In employee-driven-volunteer programs, employees determine priorities and choose volunteer projects, while the company's role is to promote, support, and recognize the efforts of its employees. Nonprofits that wish to develop relationships with employee-driven programs should start by connecting with interested employees and allowing them to build the internal support in the corporation.

- 3) Decide whether there is a good fit between your agency's mission and goals and the priorities, policies, and procedures of the corporation. If there is not, it is probably a good idea to begin looking for a different corporate partner.
- 4) Establish a personal contact. Then start building the relationship.
- 5) Be concise and clear about what you are requesting. Identify how many volunteers are needed, what they will be doing, whether particular skills are needed to do the work, where and when the work will be done, how frequently employees will be expected to

volunteer, and the length of commitment expected.

6) Be prepared to talk about the benefits to the employees and the corporation. Corporate volunteers are looking for the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to the community, and corporations and their employees are increasingly interested in the impact their contributions will have on the clients served. In addition, corporations benefit from their employees' volunteer activities in a number of ways. These include the following:

- An enhanced reputation in the community;
- Increased employee morale and loyalty to the company;
- Improved employee teamwork; and,
- Increased employee job satisfaction.

If you do recruit mentors through local businesses, make things as easy as possible for the potential volunteers. Hold orientations, intake interviews, and training sessions at the place of business during lunch time or at other convenient hours. Mentoring organizations can also participate in networks with other mentoring organizations in their community and the state. Many states have formal mentoring partnership organizations that organizations can join; these are listed in Appendix 2.

FOUNDATION #4: SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Because there is no stand-alone ongoing federal grant-in-aid source of funds for mentoring programs on the local or state levels, mentoring organizations must be creative in maintaining and developing sources of income to fund their programs. There are sources of federal monies that designate mentoring as an allowable activity, and a growing number of state and local communities that are adopting mentoring as a personal signature initiative as witnessed by the growing placement of mentoring coordinating organizations in states (see Appendix 1).

The passage of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

has helped to spur interest in youth mentoring in the employment and training world because of its emphasis on incorporating youth development principles into the design of workforce preparation programs. A 2004 report from the President's Task Force on Disadvantaged Youth helped to spur federal interest in mentoring programs because of its recommendations regarding the desirability of expanding mentoring programs. Within the disability advocacy community, mentoring is a natural extension of the desire to build the next round of leaders with disabilities to ensure that voices of people with disabilities continue to be heard. There are multiple disability-focused organizations that can be tapped to help support a mentoring program. A list of national organizations that have state or local chapters can be found in Appendix 2. Finally, there are many local, state, and national foundations that are willing supporters of mentoring services.

Developing a Resource Plan

In order to develop a resource strategy related to career preparation, your organization will need to be able to answer the following questions:

- Within your "community" (i.e. local or state government, United Way, state or local foundations) have you identified any dedicated funding streams that explicitly support mentoring programs?
- Have you identified and affiliated with any national, state, or local network of mentoring programs? If so, what is that network doing to promote expansion of mentoring services?
- What criteria are they using in their promotional materials that could assist you with your sustainability efforts?
- Within your "community," what organizations have you identified that need to be your partners?
- What was the basis for that determination?
- Are you connecting with your local WIB, employers, the One-Stop system, the school system, and disability-related organizations such as VR, Centers for Independent Living, etc?
- What are the generally accepted criteria used by funders within your "community" to award and sustain mentoring programs?

FOUNDATION #5: USEFUL PROGRAM EVALUATION

Useful Program Evaluation includes the design and implementation of an evaluation plan and the use of evaluation data for program enhancement. Program evaluation can ensure that your program will operate more efficiently, gain increased marketability, and produce more positive outcomes for youth. Program Evaluation will be discussed in-depth in the next chapter.

Resources Supporting Career-Focused Mentoring for Youth With Disabilities

Foundation #1: Strong Agency Capacity

NCWD/Youth has published a paper identifying key knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that youth practitioners need in order to serve *all* youth based upon youth development and workforce development

principles. It provides a listing of the special knowledge required to support youth with disabilities. It can be accessed (<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/background/ksa.doc>).

Foundation #2: Proven Program Design

Two resources from NCWD/Youth can assist in the training of mentors and staff. First, *The Guideposts for Success* can be a useful tool for helping steer youth through the complicated maze of transition (http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/guideposts/index.html). Second, *Youth Development & Leadership: A Background Paper* (<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/background/youthdevelopment.doc>) assists youth service practitioners, administrators, and policy makers in defining, differentiating, and providing youth development and youth leadership programs and activities, which are important components of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

E-MENTORING IN MINNESOTA

The SUMIT (Skills Uniquely Marketable in Technology) Program is a collaborative effort between the St. Paul (MN) Public Schools and community and business partners. Students in the program spend half of their school day on-site and the other half in their regular school setting. Generally comprised of juniors and seniors who have significant disabilities, the class is used in preparation for work experiences, employment, or college classes.

The course includes intensive work-based computer application training and career exploration training in technology fields that may lead to internships in business settings. SUMIT students learn video editing, word processing, data entry, graphic design, animation, telecommunications, and spreadsheet accounting along with individualized assistive technology techniques. SUMIT instructors have developed work-experience opportunities for students to produce publicity videos, animated cartoons and PowerPoint presentations, greeting cards, stationery, calendars, and other documents for district teachers and others outside the school system.

A big part of the program is an e-mentoring partnership that began in 2002 with employees at the Institute on Community Integration (ICI) at the University of Minnesota. ICI is a research and training group that supports individuals with disabilities and their families throughout the country. In the

partnership, ICI volunteers are matched with SUMIT participants for the purpose of establishing relationships that combine personal connections with career related discussions via e-mail and occasional face-to-face meetings.

In each weekly e-mail, the students ask career related questions that the e-mentors respond to. The questions focus on career decision making, practical job seeking tips, and human relations concepts like dealing with conflict at work. The highlight of the SUMIT e-mentoring program is a year-end celebration at the university. Students have breakfast with the e-mentors, spend time at their workstations as a job shadow, and finally, take a tour of the university.

SUMIT students routinely say that e-mentoring is an important part of their school work. They think of their mentors as friends who listen and help them understand work issues and, to an extent, disability issues. As one student recently wrote, "Thank you for helping me think about my future. I feel more confident about going on to college and getting a job. I don't worry so much anymore about whether my vision will keep me back."

For more information about the SUMIT e-mentoring activities, contact Stephanie Fitzgerald at 615-603-4987 or stephanie.fitzgerald@spps.org.

Connecting to Success (CTS), sponsored by the Institute for Community Integration at the University of Minnesota, has developed materials that “guide community organizations, schools, businesses, and state agencies in developing programs and forming e-mentoring partnerships.” The CTS website and training materials, available online at (<http://ici.umn.edu/ementoring>), focus specifically on serving youth with disabilities, but can be used as a resource for any group engaged in mentoring programs. The CTS manual addresses the training needs of program coordinators, employer-liaisons, teachers, mentors, and youth mentees; in addition, it

- provides background information and research features that are useful when seeking program funding;
- can be used to help integrate youth with disabilities into established mentoring programs; and
- can be used to formulate strategies for schools and youth organizations to initiate or strengthen partnerships with local businesses.

Foundation #3: Community Partnerships

NCWD/Youth has published on its website a technical assistance tool, *Building, Developing, and Going to Scale: Grant Funded Programs for Youth in Transition*. Module 1 focuses on collaboration and relationship building. This resource is available at (http://www.ncwd-youth.info/assets/technical_assistance/going_to_scale/MODULE1.doc).

Foundation #4: Sustainable Resource Development

Disability Funders Network (<http://www.disabilityfunders.org>) was established to help private funders respond to disability issues and to show how disability concerns can be an essential part of all philanthropic programs.

Funding for People with Disabilities

(<http://fdncenter.org/learn/topical/disabilities.html#2>) is a resource list of print and online resources compiled by the Foundation Center, a non-profit organization established to help grantmakers and grantseekers.

Foundation #5: Useful Program Evaluation

Resources can be found in next chapter.

EXHIBIT 5.1: PROFILE OF YOUTH

Knowing the characteristics of the pool of potential youth (including youth both with and without disabilities) is an important baseline in order for projects to make a variety of decisions such as what categories of youth should be selected as a priority group for participation.

Data sources: _____ **Time period covered by data:** _____

	All	Attending High School	High School Dropout	High School Graduate	Attending Post-Secondary
Total youth population, ages 14-25					
Characteristics					
Age: 14-15					
16-17					
18-25					
Female					
Male					
Disability: by type of disability if known					
Autism					
Deafness					
Deaf-Blindness					
Hearing Impairment					
Mental Retardation					
Multiple Disabilities					
Orthopedic Impairment					
Other Health Impairments					
Emotional Disturbance					
Specific Learning Disability					
Speech/Language impairment					
Traumatic Brain Injury					
Visual Impairment, including blindness					
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity or Attention Deficit Disorder					
Race/Ethnicity					
Hispanic					
American Indian/Alaskan Native (only)					
Asian (only)					
Black or African American (only)					
Hawaiian Native or other Pacific Islander					
White (only)					
More than one race					
Other characteristics					
English Language Learner					
Foster Care Youth					
Adjudicated Youth					
Youth with Substance Abuse					
Youth with Mental Health needs					
Single Parent					
Low Income					
Public Assistance Recipient					
SSI Recipient					

EXHIBIT 5.2: SAMPLE FORMAT FOR CONSTRUCTING ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

EXHIBIT 5.2: SAMPLE FORMAT FOR CONSTRUCTING ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

1. Program Sponsor/Funder	2. Types of mentoring program features	3. Connections to schools	4. Connections to WIA agencies and services	5. Number of youth served (Can be expressed as a percent of the eligible population)	6. Number of youth with disabilities served, by type of disability	7. Challenges or barriers to serving more youth with disabilities

EXHIBIT 5.3: SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING PROGRAM, STUDENT APPLICATION FOR A MENTOR

Name: _____ **Age:** _____

School: _____ **Circle grade:** 9th 10th 11th 12th

Homeroom Teacher or Counselor: _____

List classes you are currently taking: _____

What are your favorite subjects in school? _____

List three careers that interest you: _____

List any jobs or volunteer experiences that you have had: _____

List activities or hobbies that you participate in (including sports, arts, student organizations): _____

Emergency Contact: _____

EXHIBIT 5.4: INTEREST SURVEY (FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES)

Name: _____

Check one: _____ Mentor _____ Mentee

Favorite Outdoor Activities _____

Hobbies _____

Favorite Participant Sports _____

Favorite Spectator Sports _____

Favorite School Subjects _____

Dream Job _____

Favorite Movies _____

Favorite Kinds of Music _____

EXHIBIT 5.5: COMPONENTS OF A SCREENING PROCESS

Screening is a process used by organizations to ensure that they select only the best possible applicants for volunteer or paid positions. It is an essential part of an overall risk management program that can be used by nonprofit organizations to protect vulnerable service recipients, other staff members, and the organization itself from exposure to individuals who pose unacceptable, identifiable threats.

What kind of screening process will be appropriate is driven by the requirements of the specific position. The first step in the screening process, therefore, is developing a position description. In addition to the position description, the basic screening process includes the use of written applications, face-to-face interviews, and reference checks. More extensive screening may be required for some positions including various kinds of record checks, observation, specialized interviews, and additional reference checks.

Position descriptions. The duties, responsibilities, required experience, and limitations of the position guide the screening process.

Written applications. Application forms are the most common source of information about applicants for staff positions both paid and volunteer. Application forms that incorporate the following elements provide a solid foundation for screening:

- *Identification*—basic facts about the applicant such as name, addresses for the past several years, and telephone number(s).
- *Qualifications*—education, training and certificates or licenses (with expiration dates) relevant to the particular position sought by the applicant.
- *Experience*—relevant experience, both volunteer and paid, with dates of service, description of duties, and the names of the organization and the applicant's immediate supervisor.
- *Background and references*—if relevant to the position, the application should ask for a listing of any convictions for serious criminal or serious motor vehicle violations; at least three personal references (individuals who are not related, but who know the applicant well) should be requested, as well as the nature of the relationship and the length of time known to the reference.
- *Waiver/consent*—the application should include a statement that the applicant certifies the information provided is true and accurate and authorizes the organization to verify it. Further, the application should require that the applicant specifically waive rights to confidentiality and authorize the organization to perform specific procedures such as criminal history record checks, reference checks, employment verification, etc.

Interviews. The face-to-face interview is the best opportunity for the applicant and organization to size each other up and determine if they share common interests. While an interview is only a part of a comprehensive screening process, it is important as the interview can uncover grounds for rejecting an applicant that were not apparent from the written application. Interviewers need to prepare for and conduct interviews properly. This preparation should include a review of the

EXHIBIT 5.5: COMPONENTS OF A SCREENING PROCESS

requirements for the position as well as the contents of the applicant's application or résumé. Significant questions should be written down so that the interviewer will not forget to ask them and so that there will be consistency among all interviews for the same position. Interviewers should be familiar with the types of questions that can be asked as well as those that should never be asked of an applicant.

Reference checks. Checking references, like interviewing, begins with preparation: becoming familiar with the position description and information provided by the applicant. References may be checked by telephone or through a written request. Most human resource professionals suggest that the initial contact with a reference should be made by telephone. If the reference is able to provide information over the telephone, you will receive the information more expeditiously. In addition, the telephone is an interactive medium permitting follow-up questions for clarification. The reference checker can also assess the non-verbal quality of the information such as the tone of voice, any hesitancy, emphasis, and demeanor. When checking references, a script is useful to ensure that relevant information is collected in a consistent fashion on all applicants. Reference checks should be conducted by the person who will interview the applicant.

Record checks. Depending upon the nature of the position, relevant information may be found in criminal history records, child abuse registries, driving records, and credit bureaus. The use of these information sources needs to be balanced against the cost and relevancy to the specific position in question. In some cases, relevant information may not be readily available to your organization. For example, in New York State, criminal history records may not be accessed unless there is a specific law or regulation permitting the organization to obtain them.

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More about screening. Psychological testing and drug and alcohol screening may be needed for some positions but can be expensive and time consuming. In mentoring programs where there is limited program supervision, the screening process needs to be more thorough to insure the safety of youth, and risk management should include an analysis of how much supervision is available.

Criminal background checks can also be costly. The National Mentoring Partnership (NMP), through a federal grant, has begun SafetyNET, a pilot program that allows local mentoring organizations across the country to access FBI fingerprint-based background checks on new mentoring volunteers. SafetyNET launched on August 15, 2003. More information about SafetyNET is available online at (<http://apps.mentoring.org/safetynet/factsheet.adp>).

EXHIBIT 5.6: MENTOR APPLICATION

Date: _____

Name _____ Social Sec. # _____

Home address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____

Driver's license #: _____

Employer _____

Title _____

Length of employment _____ Supervisor's name _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? _____

If "Yes," please explain _____

Do you object to our agency running a background check on you? _____

MENTORING INFORMATION

Why do you want to be a mentor? _____

Can you meet with a young person as often as our program requires? _____

Do you have any previous experience volunteering or working with youth? _____

What times can you meet with your mentee?

During lunch After school After 5:00 Weekends During regular business hours

Do you have any hobbies or special skills? _____

Would you prefer to be matched with a young person from a specific

Grade level Ethnicity Gender _____

Have you previously worked with a young person who has a disability/disabilities? _____

Can you read or speak other languages besides English? _____

EXHIBIT 5.6: MENTOR APPLICATION (CONTINUED)

REFERENCES

Please list the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three people you would like to use as character references (please list only people you have known for at least a year):

1. Name: _____

Address: _____

Relationship: _____

2. Name: _____

Address: _____

Relationship: _____

3. Name: _____

Address: _____

Relationship: _____

Please read this carefully before signing:

Our program appreciates your interest in becoming a mentor to a child. By signing below, you attest to the truthfulness of all information listed on this application. You agree to let our program confirm all information listed and conduct a federal and state criminal records check.

I have read and understood the program's rules, regulations, and responsibilities for becoming a mentor. If selected I will follow the rules of the program and be a dedicated mentor. I agree to the time commitment of ____ hours/month and ____ months.

(Signature)

(Date)

EXHIBIT 5.7: REFERENCE CHECK WORKSHEET

Date: _____

Applicant name: _____

Reference name: _____

Reference phone #: _____

1) How long, and in what capacity, have you known the applicant? _____

2) How does the applicant relate to people in general? _____

3) How would you describe the applicant? _____

4) Do you feel that the applicant would be a good mentor and role model to a young person? _____

5) Do you think that the applicant relates well to young people? _____

6) To your knowledge, has the applicant ever been convicted of a crime? _____

7) Do you know of any problems or issues that would affect the applicant's ability to work with a young person? _____

8) Do you have any additional comments about the applicant?

EXHIBIT 5.8: PARENT PERMISSION LETTER 1

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are thrilled to announce a newly formed partnership between **XX High School** and **XX Company**, which includes the creation of a new mentoring program. The program is approved by school administration and by the **XX Company**. It is an exciting way for students to engage in a relationship with a caring adult from our business community. Your son or daughter is in a class selected to participate in this program.

The mentoring program promises to bring classroom learning together with application in the real world of work. It will give students real-life experience and a purpose for expressing themselves. Since some of the activities will be done using e-mail, it will provide the opportunity for students to practice writing, keyboarding, and the responsible use of technology while connecting students to adults who offer academic encouragement and career information.

As a participant in the program, your son/daughter will be matched with an employee at the **XX Company**. They will exchange e-mails and will have opportunities to visit each other at the work site and at our school. In the e-mails, both student and mentor are encouraged to discuss school learning, homework, career information, and other interests. Some classroom assignments will be designed around the e-mail exchanges. All meetings between students and mentors will be supervised, and e-mails will be monitored by the teacher.

We are set to begin the program in **(date)** and end in **(date)**.

We are asking three things from you:

1. Complete and return the permission slip for your son/daughter's participation.
2. Encourage your son or daughter to be an active participant.
3. Talk to your son or daughter about his/her experience with mentoring.

If you have any questions, please contact **Mr./Mrs./Ms. XX** at **Telephone**

Thank you!

I give my son/daughter, _____, permission to have a **XX Company** Mentor and to go on field trips and other planned activities of the program.

Parent/guardian signature _____ Date _____

Emergency Contact: _____

EXHIBIT 5.9: PARENT PERMISSION LETTER 2

Dear Parent,

Your son or daughter has been asked to participate in the _____ Program offered through our school. In the program, he or she will be matched with an adult volunteer mentor who will meet him or her on the school grounds and will act as a tutor in subjects specified by your child's teachers, as well as a role model and source of friendship and encouragement. The activities between your son or daughter and the mentor will be closely monitored and structured by the classroom teacher. The school faculty and staff believe that he or she will greatly benefit from having another positive adult role model in his/her life, and hope that the relationship will lead to increased academic performance, self-esteem, and emotional development.

The mentors that have volunteered for our program have been thoroughly screened and investigated by the school. We respect your role as a parent and will provide every opportunity for you to meet with the mentor and be involved in the development of their relationship.

As your son or daughter goes through the program, his/her teachers will monitor academic performance. All information gathered about the effect of the relationship on his or her school performance is strictly for the purposes of evaluating the program and will be kept confidential.

We feel that these caring adult volunteers will be making an excellent contribution to the quality of education in our school. If you would like for your son or daughter to participate in the program, talk about it with him or her. If s/he is comfortable with the idea of having a mentor, please grant your permission by signing below. One of our staff members will soon be in contact with you about your son or daughter's new mentor.

Thank you for your time. We hope this program will be of great benefit to everyone involved.

Sincerely,

School Principal

I give permission for my son/daughter, _____, to participate in the mentoring program at his or her school. I understand the nature and rules of the school's mentoring efforts and reserve the right to withdraw from the program at any time.

(parent/guardian)

(date)

EXHIBIT 5.10: PARENT PERMISSION FORM — COMMUNITY PROGRAM

I, _____,
the parent/guardian of _____,
permit her/him to participate in the _____ Program.

I have read and understand the rules, regulations, and structure of the Program. I have met with a staff member to discuss my son or daughter's participation.

I understand that the people who serve as mentors in the _____ Program are adult volunteers from the community who have been carefully screened by the organization. The meetings between my son or daughter and his/her mentor will take place both at the site of the program and off-site. All contacts between them are scheduled, monitored by a staff member, and evaluated. Any additional contacts between the mentor and my son or daughter must be scheduled in advance and be approved by me.

I reserve the right to withdraw my son or daughter from the program at any time.

(Parent/Guardian)

(Date)

Emergency Contact: _____

EXHIBIT 5.12: MENTOR/MENTEE ACTIVITY LOG (TO BE FILLED OUT BY MENTOR)

Mentee: _____ **Phone:** _____

Mentor: _____ **Phone:** _____

Match Supervisor: _____

Contact Date	Time/Location of Activity	What activities did you and your mentor do?

Comments about how the match is going:

Please complete this form and return to your match supervisor by the first of every month. Include as much detail about your activities as possible. If you need any assistance with your mentee, please contact your match supervisor immediately.

EXHIBIT 5.13: MENTORING PROGRAM TEACHER/STAFF REFERRAL FORM

Student name: _____ Age: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Requested by: _____ Date: _____
(Teacher/Staff Person)

The individual is being referred for assistance in the following areas (circle all that apply):

Academic issues Behavior issues Study habits Social problems
Criminal activities Family concerns Vocational training Other: _____

Reasons why this youth might benefit from a mentor:

What interests, either in school or out, does the youth have?

What strategies/learning models might be effective for a mentor/tutor working with this youth?

What specific subjects, if any, does the student need assistance with?

Additional comments:

(Signature)