THE GOVERNOR'S PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP

Youth Mentoring Overview

The Governor's Prevention Partnership provides mentoring programs and youth development professionals with the knowledge and resources needed to help young people thrive. By collaborating with The Governor's Prevention Partnership, you will learn how to harness mentoring best practices and cutting-edge research to create a vibrant mentoring program and facilitate transformational mentoring experiences.

• Program Development and Improvement

• Marketing and Communication Skills

• Different Program Models

• Mentoring Specific Populations

• Inclusivity Training

• Supplemental Trainings

• Supporting Mentoring at Large

Submit a request for Technical Assistance and more information at **GPPCT.org/NMRC**.

Youth mentoring is a powerful tool for fostering personal and academic growth among young people. Different mentoring models cater to various needs, providing unique benefits and addressing specific challenges.

For more resources on mentoring, to volunteer to become a mentor, or to refer a young person to a mentoring program, visit The Governor's Prevention Partnership website at **gppct.org**.

Program designs vary by format, setting, and structure. The related benefits, challenges, and best practices for these program features are highlighted below.

For more detailed information, specific guidelines, and case studies, please refer to the full reports and reviews available at the **National Mentoring Resource Center** and other related resources.

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❯ Format

|	Benefits	Challenges	Best Practices
Informal, Natural or Everyday Mentors provide guidance, support, and wisdom through less structured and spontaneous mentoring relationships that emerge organically through everyday interactions between the mentor and the younger person. Examples include school bus drivers, family members, neighbors, or friends.	• Naturally occurring mentoring relationships	• Because mentoring relationships are organic, some youth who need mentors but lack networking skills may not find mentors • Contact may be inconsistent or time limited	• Train community at-large and youth serving providers on everyday mentoring strategies • Use positive feedback and encouragement • Help youth develop relationship skills and expand their social support networks
Formal Mentors interact with youth through formal mentoring or positive youth development programs and must adhere to the program procedures, including formal training, a screening process that involves doing background checks, and making a commitment to meet with their mentee for a specific amount and duration of time.	• Programs supply structure such as background checks, training, policies and procedures, and ongoing staff support for mentors, mentees, and families • Ability to rematch if the match ends prematurely	• Must recruit mentors • Finding suitable matches between mentors and mentees with similar interests, backgrounds, and cultural characteristics • Keeping mentors and mentees consistently engaged • Requires staffing to do mentor recruitment, matching, monitoring matches and other program activities • Need to secure funding to cover staffing and program activities	• Adhere to the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring • Have written policies and procedures • Provide ongoing match support with contact with mentors and mentees monthly • Have identified focus of mentoring • Regularly evaluate the progress and outcomes of the mentoring relationship
Content Mentors are trusted persons who inspire and guide the mentee through content-driven interactions e.g., tutors, coaches, educators. The relationship between content mentors can be informal and flexible or formal and more structured.	• Focused on skills the youth wants to learn • Informal and flexible interactions • Can be included in informal or formal mentoring		

❯ Structure

Benefits	Challenges	Best Practices
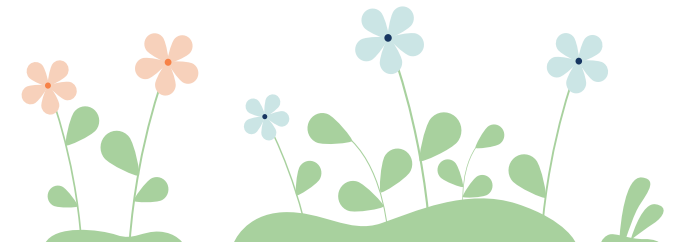
One-to-One Mentoring involves one mentor offering individualized support and guidance to one mentee.

- Provides individualized attention, support, and goal setting
- Individualized attention fosters strong, trusting relationships
- Addresses mentee-specific challenges or needs

- Relies on mentors to coordinate visits and mentoring activities
- Mentors incur the costs of travel and admissions fees to community events
- Must have mechanisms for mentors to report to the program when visits occur

- Carefully match mentors and mentees based on common interests and needs
- Set clear expectations and goals
- Provide ongoing training and support
- Regularly evaluate the progress and outcomes of the mentoring relationships

Group Mentoring involves one or more mentors working with a small group of mentees. This approach leverages the dynamics of group interactions to foster learning, support, and development among participants.

- Builds a sense of community and belonging
- Encourages peer learning and support
- Provides multiple perspectives and advice from different mentors
- Helps mentees develop social skills and teamwork abilities

- Managing group dynamics
- Ensuring all mentees receive adequate attention
- Potential for less individualized support compared to one-to-one mentoring

- Clearly define group goals and expectations
- Encourage active participation from all members
- Foster an inclusive environment where all voices are heard
- Use structured activities to guide interactions and learning
- Provide ongoing training and support
- Regularly evaluate the progress and outcomes of the mentoring relationships
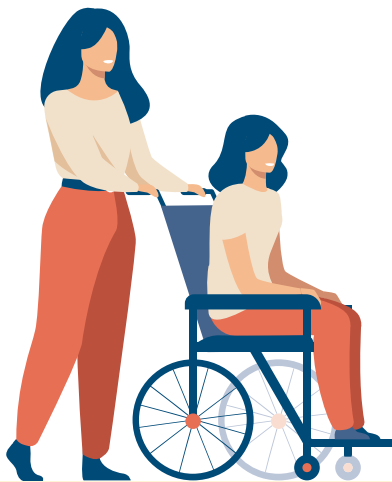
Structure (cont.)

	Benefits	Challenges	Best Practices
Team Mentoring involves two or more mentors, each with a specific mentoring role, working with a group of mentees. Mentors act as team leaders.	• All the benefits of group mentoring with the additional support of two or more mentors • The ability to maximize the unique skills of each mentor	• Coordination of mentoring activities between team mentors	• Adhere to best practices for group mentoring • Hold weekly meetings of team mentors to coordinate mentoring activities • Provide ongoing training and support • Regularly evaluate the progress and outcomes of the mentoring relationships
Peer-to-Peer Mentoring pairs persons of similar age or status to provide mutual support and learning. This model often involves older students mentoring younger peers, though both participants are typically close in age. **Cross-Age Mentoring** matches older youth as mentors with younger children (mentees), usually with an age difference of at least two to three years. This model leverages the influence of older peers to guide and support younger mentees.	• Mentees benefit from having relatable role models • Enhances social connectedness and self-esteem, mutual understanding and empathy for both mentors and mentees • Provides mentors with leadership and responsibility experiences • Creates a supportive peer/near-peer network	• Requires clear program structure and supervision to ensure effectiveness • Ensuring mentors are adequately trained and supported • Potential inconsistent guidance due to the peer mentor's inexperience	• Provide structured activities and supervision • Train participants on building relationship skills • Provide ongoing support and supervision for peer mentors • Establish clear goals and guidelines for the mentoring • Engage parents, school staff, and administrators • Emphasize the importance of empathy, trust, and mutual respect in mentoring relationships

> Setting	Benefits	Challenges	Best Practices
Community-based mentoring occurs at places in the community that are mutually agreed upon by the mentor, mentee, and the mentee's parent/caregiver.	• Allows flexibility in scheduling and choice of activities • Mentoring can take advantage of community resources and events such as museums or sports games.	• Coordinating schedules with parents/caregivers • Mentors can incur the costs of travel and admission fees for community events	• Provide training for mentors, mentees, and parents/caregivers • Have events such as recognition ceremonies for mentors, mentees, and their families • Reach out to the mentee's parent/caregiver to get feedback on the mentoring relationship at least quarterly • Make referrals to other providers to help the mentee's family get services they need
School- or site-based mentoring occurs at a school, a program, or a community-based facility where mentors meet with mentees during specified hours. This model often involves collaboration with teachers and school staff.	• Provides a safe and familiar setting for mentees • Occurs during regularly scheduled hours • Facilitates easy access to mentors • Other mentors or staff can cover if the mentor is not able to meet • Supports academic and personal development within the school- or site-based context • Enhances school and/or program connectedness and engagement	• Coordinating schedules between mentors and mentees during hours available at the school • Balancing academic support with personal development goals	• Integrate mentoring activities with school curricula and programs • Engage teachers and school staff in the mentoring process if school-based • Monitor mentees' academic and personal progress • Provide training that addresses the unique aspects of the school environment
Virtual or E-Mentoring is conducted through the internet via specific software designed for mentoring or cloud-based video conferencing platforms.	• Allows flexibility in scheduling mentoring visits • Can involve internet gaming or educational activities • Transportation is not required	• Both the mentor and mentee must have access to the computer, internet, and any software	• Use mentoring software to monitor mentoring activities

Contact Us

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GPP is a Connecticut-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit that builds statewide capacity to prevent underage drinking and substance use while strengthening strategic alliances to promote the overall well-being of our youth.

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