

Outline for Training High School “Bigs”

Allotted time: 1 ½ – 2 hours minimally

1. Welcome, Introduction
 - Overview of services
 - Contact information (phone, email)
2. Warm up – Get to know you exercise
3. Introduce mentoring
4. Effective communication
 - Confidentiality
5. Cultural diversity
6. Program overview
 - Must cover:
 - Policies and procedures
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Mentor Agreement form
7. Reporting, monitoring, forms, and evaluation

Support to Training Peer Mentors

This overview should be used for facilitation of training high school mentors for peer mentoring programs.

Objectives:

The objective of this training is to help new mentors:

1. Understand the role of a mentor and develop a deeper understanding of the expectations of that role.
2. Develop strategies for effective management of that role.
3. Gain knowledge regarding the overall program policy and procedures.

Facility and time:

Trainers should work with school personnel to develop a timeline for an initial training and follow up training.

- The initial training should allow 1 ½ – 2 hours for completion of the agenda.
- The training is presented in an afterschool time frame with coordination of transportation home for participants.
- The optimal space for training allows mentors to work in small groups, provides privacy for confidentiality, is able to accommodate all participants, provides an opportunity for the facilitator to present materials to the whole group (i.e. board, easel etc.) and if possible can accommodate the group facilitation of large group activities (i.e. cross the line).

Staff should emphasize to prospective mentors that their attendance at the training is required prior to entering the mentoring program.

1) Welcome and Overview

Introduce self and co-facilitator (if appropriate).

Introduce agenda and timeline for completion.

Assure all participants have arranged transportation upon completion of training.

Pass attendance sheet (if this was not done upon entering).

Provide all participants an overview of the agency's services including;

- General history and services provided.
- Location of programs (other schools).
- Hierarchy of mentoring agency and alternate contacts.
- Contact information of school personnel.

2) Warm up Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to introduce the participants to their peer mentors and the group, to begin to form the group as a team and lead into materials.

It is recommended that facilitators choose exercises which include forms of personal introduction, are approximately 10–15 minutes in length and are highly interactive.

3) Role as Mentor

Facilitators should place emphasis on providing volunteers a full understanding of the role they are providing to a mentee. Special emphasis should be made regarding their commitment to this role. Facilitators should also consider the additional support given to a peer mentor based on their life experiences and maturity level.

Exercises here involve the mentors using materials to draw, build or create a mentor (see specific exercises below). The facilitator reviews all completed “mentors” with the whole group, discussing the qualities each mentor has and their importance. Facilitators can add additional traits and also emphasize key roles.

Additionally, during this time an introduction to your agency's mission and program objectives work very well into this exercise. Discussion of the mentor's direct impact on the overall mission is critical. Facilitation of a ‘mission jumble’ is simple process of

achieving this task. A mission jumble breaks your mission statement into individual words which the participants then have to rearrange back into the full statement.

Exercises to be used for this section of the training:

Launching the Mentor Relation-Ship — This activity is available from the National Mentoring Center publication *Training New Mentees: A Manual for Preparing Youth in Mentoring Programs*, a resource originally designed for preparing mentees that has many activities that can easily be adapted for training peer mentors. The full resource can be downloaded at: http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/training_new_mentees.pdf

Roles of a Mentor — This activity is available from the National Mentoring Center publication *Training New Mentors*, a resource that offers many training activities that can be adapted for a peer mentor audience. The full resource can be downloaded at: <http://gwired.gwu.edu/hamfish/merlin-cgi/p/downloadFile/d/20697/n/off/other/1/name/trainingpdf/>

4) Effective Communication

Exercises to be used for this section of the training:

Peanut Butter and Jelly — This activity is also available from the National Mentoring Center publication *Training New Mentees: A Manual for Preparing Youth in Mentoring Programs* (http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/pdf/training_new_mentees.pdf). The facilitation of “Peanut Butter and Jelly” exercise will allow an interactive conversation to cover these topics within the exercise:

- Effective communication
- How age and development affect communication
- Other factors affecting communication
- Confidentiality
- Overcoming communication obstacles

The following questions can be used to direct conversation within the PB&J discussion:

- How could the communication have been more effective?
- What factors play a role in someone hearing you?

- How their day is going
 - Transference (parents, teachers, etc.)
 - Culture
 - Body language
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- o How would culture affect communication?
 - o What communication is confidential?
 - o When and how does communication breakdown? How do you overcome that?

You may also want to do the exercise called *Pushing the Envelope* — This activity comes from the original version of *Training New Mentors*. It is not in the revised version referenced above, but we have included the full activity below.

PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

OBJECTIVE: To have a firsthand experience with a question of trust

LENGTH: About 10 minutes

YOU WILL NEED TO SUPPLY: Envelopes and paper that, when folded, fits inside the envelopes

STEPS:

1. Thank participants for their contributions to this workshop and say that there are just one or two more things you want to do during this session.

Give each person a piece of paper and an envelope. Say that you want each of them to write down on the piece of paper one thing about themselves that they have never told anyone. Then they should fold the paper, put it inside the envelope, seal the envelope, and write their name on the outside.

Allow a few minutes for them to complete this task. Then ask them to pass the envelopes to you.

2. When you have the envelopes, act as though you are considering opening them—for example, you might look quite interested in them, start to open one, and then stop. (Don't actually open any of the envelopes.) Your goal is to make the participants feel slightly distrustful and uneasy, or at least to make them wonder what's going on. While you are doing this, keep talking casually about mentoring, today's training session, or a similar topic.

After you have created a little tension and uncertainty, smile and return each of the envelopes to its owner.

3. Ask the group how they felt during this exercise. While they will probably talk freely about it—and about issues of trust—be sure the discussion addresses at least these points:
 - There are actually several aspects of trust involved in this exercise. First, participants have to trust you enough that they are willing to write down something about themselves they have never told anyone. (At least some people are likely to have written something other than a profound personal secret.) Then they have to trust you enough to put their names on the envelopes and pass the envelopes to you.
 - Participants should also talk about how they felt when you seemed like you were going to open some of the envelopes. (Even if they wrote something other than a personal secret, your opening the envelope would be a violation of confidentiality and trust.)

Relate the experience participants have just had during this activity to the process of building trust with their mentee.

5) Diversity

The objective of this section of the training is to:

- Support the peer mentor in their understanding diversity
- Provide the participant skills in developing proper filters of conversation
- Assist mentor in understanding personal norms and value systems

Exercises to be used for this section of the training:

Crossing the Line — This activity was discussed during the Webinar. In it, participants all stand on one side of a room with a line running down the middle. The facilitator then makes statements that either apply or don't apply to participants, forcing them to move across the line or not. Examples of statements for mentees might include "if you are part of a minority group, cross the line," "if you have a sibling who lives at home, cross the line," "if you are happy with your grades, cross the line." This activity gets youth reflecting on their own personal characteristics and also visually demonstrates that outward appearances do not always convey the whole picture of who we are.

Exploring Our Identity and Its Impact on the Mentor/Mentee Relationship — This activity is drawn from the Mentoring Resource Center publication *Ongoing Training for Mentors: 12 Interactive Sessions for U.S. Department of Education Mentoring Programs*. The full publication can be downloaded at: http://www.edmentoring.org/pubs/ongoing_training.pdf

Working with the Mentee's Family — This activity also comes from the *Ongoing Training for Mentors* book. Because peer mentors are generally not in contact with the parents of those students they are matched with, several of the scenarios in the activity have been modified to reflect conversations about family life that would take place in a school setting.

6) Program Overview

The final objective of this training is to cover the agency's policies and procedures for program. This should include:

- Program policies for behavior
- Program norms (arrival time, departure, transportation, etc.)
- Expectations of participants while in program
- Understanding of outcome evaluation tools to be completed
- Mentor Agreement form should be signed (this form was included in the handouts for the Webinar)