Topical Reference List: Effectiveness of School-Based Mentoring Programs

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Abstract

This paper includes a reference list of literature relating to the effectiveness of school-based mentoring programs. In general, the literature seems to indicate that there is a great need for mentoring programs as they are a critical component to any student’s social and emotional development. Mentoring programs aid in building self-esteem, self-confidence and competency, boosts academic performance and broadens horizons. Mentored youth are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, skip school or resort to violence; but are more inclined to do better in school and have better relationships with their parents and peers. Emphasis is placed on Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the premier mentoring organization in the United States.

Keywords: effective mentoring programs, school-based mentoring programs, Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring, mentor-mentee relationship, results of mentoring programs, school-mentoring.
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Mentoring can be referenced back to Greek Mythology, in which “mentor” was a common noun meaning “wise counselor.” Mentor is an appropriate name for such a person because it meant “advisor” in Greek. Today, the word mentor is used in the same manner, to describe a trusted friend, counselor, or teacher, usually a more experienced person. Mentoring programs are common in all types of settings, but serve the purpose of helping at-risk students. Mentors, in schools, provide expertise to students to help them enhance their education experience and ensure that they are socially and emotionally sound.

How does school-based mentoring, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, effect student success? This question outlines the purpose of this study which is to determine the effectiveness of high school based mentoring programs and the impact they have on student performance. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America is used to show the components of a successful program.

References


Abstract: The article offers information on the Peer Mentor Program initiated by the San Marino High School in California to help its at-risk students improve their academic status. It states that under the scheme, poor-performing students are paired with their peers who excelled in classes to assist them in their lessons. Furthermore, it notes that the individuals who need peer mentors are determined by the school psychologist, teachers and counselors. It adds that the school administration also supports the program through providing enough time for the organizers to develop connections between mentees and mentors.


Abstract: This report provides insights into the numerous school based mentoring studies that have been conducted, including the Big Brothers Big Sisters. Three questions are addressed: (1) What are the characteristics of mentor-youth matches in school-based programs? (2) What is the quality of the relationships and (3) What kinds of benefits may be gained from involvement of SBM programs? A final chapter is included that provides some preliminary conclusions about promise and possible limitations of School-based mentoring programs.

**Abstract:** Public/Private Ventures, the leading researchers on youth mentoring topics, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the largest provider of school-based matches, have undertaken a new research project designed to identify best practices for offering mentoring in school settings and the potential for positive impacts on youth participants. This Web Seminar featured the preliminary results from this new impact study. Carla Herrera, the lead researcher for the impact study, presented initial findings and discussed many of the surprising things P/PV learned about how school-based mentoring works best. Subsequent P/PV reports will likely detail the nuances of how these mentoring programs operated, and the specific relationship characteristics that lead to positive outcomes for young people. But this initial report of research findings provides the mentoring field with its best opportunity to date to learn about effective practices and the many program characteristics that distinguish school-based mentoring from other models. This document collects the transcript and slides from the presentation with the supplemental reading materials provided to participants.


**Abstract:** Students who had enrolled in an innovative university-based service-learning class were asked to reflect on their expectations prior to mentoring youth attending high-poverty high schools, and whether they believed they had met these expectations post-mentoring. Findings indicated that students primarily were motivated by learning about the effects of poverty and forming ongoing relationships with their mentees, and that these expectations generally were met as a result of their mentoring experiences. The unique service-learning program, which allowed university students to mentor in youths’ actual high school classes and provided ongoing support for the mentors, may have been critical components of the learning process and is described in detail. Recommendations for future research and implications for replicating similar service-learning programs are discussed.


**Abstract:** This is the first technical assistance packet provides materials to use when creating a school-based mentoring program or strengthening an existing one. The motive behind the guides is to provide local mentoring programs with specific information and resources to support their efforts to offer the highest quality services to the youth they serve. Effective practices and research findings by other organizations including Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, Public/Private Ventures, and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention are included in this packet to ensure that readers are given a solid approach to steps of forming partnerships with schools, designing their program, recruiting, screening, and training mentors and matching them youth; and supervising and supporting the match once it is underway. Research on community-based programs has demonstrated that a strong infrastructure is necessary if the adult-youth relationships are going to be effective and make a positive difference in the lives of youth.

Abstract: Public/Private Ventures’ report, *High School Students as Mentors*, draws on data from our large-scale, random assignment impact study of the BBBS school-based mentoring program. Ten BBBS agencies participated in the evaluation, involving 1,139 youth in 71 schools nationwide. Half of the youth (the “Littles”) were randomly selected to be matched with volunteer mentors (their “Bigs,” who were almost evenly divided between adults and high school students), while the other half did not receive mentoring. The youth, their teachers and their mentors were surveyed at three points during the 15-month study. We also surveyed and interviewed BBBS staff and interviewed key school personnel.


Abstract: Formal mentoring programs have historically tended to match youth with same-sex mentors; more recently, mentoring programs designed specifically for girls have begun cropping up in response to theories on gender and adolescent girls’ psychological health and development, which suggest girls have particular psychosocial needs and ways of relating. Yet, there have been few empirical studies that explicitly examine the relational processes in adolescent girls’ relationships with female mentors from the perspectives of the participants themselves. In the present study, qualitative interviews conducted with 12 female youth–adult pairs of participants (*N* = 24) in a one-to-one community-based mentoring program were analyzed thematically using a holistic-content approach. Examining these participants’ narratives about their experiences in the program, three interrelated relational processes were identified: (a) engaged and authentic emotional support; (b) the development of new skills and confidence through collaborations; and, (c) experiences of companionship that provided relief from daily stresses.

*Editors’ Strategic Implications:* The focus on female dyads and relationships will richly inform further studies of the process of mentoring and provide insights for practitioners of a variety of gender-specific prevention programs.


Abstract: The article outlines that strategic plan to improve the youth-at-risk dilemma. It analysis the important risk factors that put youth at risk, including teenage pregnancy, chronic truancy, child abuse, and drug and alcohol abuse. It outlines several approaches and programs that would help youth at risk, such as parent education, mentoring, nonviolent conflict resolution, positive reinforcement, and character education. The plan aims to promote nonviolent conflict resolution, establish community-school partnership, and develop community-oriented proactive policing programs.


Abstract: This articles presents a brief background on mentoring in high schools, definitions of mentoring, and a discussion of two broad categories—instrumental and developmental mentoring—and delineated areas requiring further inquiry and development. This issue brief provides an abbreviated recapitulation of the purposes and categories of mentoring and then considers what the research literature tells us regarding components of successful mentoring.

**Abstract:** John Tyler and Magnus Lofstrom take a close look at the problems posed when students do not complete high school. The authors begin by discussing the ongoing, sometimes heated, debate over how prevalent the dropout problem is. They note that one important reason for discrepancies in reported dropout rates is whether holders of the General Educational Development (GED) credential are counted as high school graduates. The authors also consider the availability of appropriate student data. The overall national dropout rate appears to be between 22 and 25 percent, but the rate is higher among black and Hispanic students, and it has not changed much in recent decades. Tyler and Lofstrom conclude that schools are apparently doing about as well now as they were forty years ago in terms of graduating students. But the increasingly competitive pressures associated with a global economy make education ever more important in determining personal and national well-being.


**Abstract:** The transition from primary to secondary education can be a critical period for those children identified as 'at risk' for whom a poor outcome is associated with significant psychosocial morbidity. The effectiveness of mentoring children has shown positive benefits, but little work has focused on the period of transition from primarily to secondary school, particularly in this group. In this study, change in psychosocial and behavioural variables in 'at-risk' children during transition and response to a 10-month mentoring intervention were evaluated. Using data from 88 children via pre-, mid- and post-intervention questionnaires, changes were assessed in self-esteem, resilience, locus of control and mental health difficulties. Positive changes were found in all measures. The study demonstrates improvement in psychosocial outcomes through the transition period, and suggests that mentoring-type intervention may be a helpful service for pupils with mental health difficulties.

**Summary**

The three major themes that exist within these articles include- (1) Answering the question, “why have mentoring programs?” to show the need for school-based mentoring programs as well as addressing who is the recipient of these programs ; (2) The impact of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America school-based mentoring program which provides a guide of successful components of any school-based mentoring program; and (3) The importance of quality mentor-mentee relationships in order to ensure students are safe and truly benefiting from mentoring relationship.