Lessons learned from the implementation of the Mentoring Enhancement Demonstration Program

Janet Forbush and Roger Jarjoura
American Institutes for Research
Welcome!

• This is a special webinar event about a very special research project

• Our presenters today:
  • Janet Forbush – Independent Consultant, Mentoring Program Development & Evaluation
  • Roger Jarjoura – Principal Researcher at AIR

• Today we focus on implementation and enhancements developed

• November 30th we dive deep into outcomes and results

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Housekeeping...

- All attendees muted for best sound
- Type questions and comments in the question box
- We will pause halfway through and at the end for Q&A
- Session is being recorded and slides will be shared

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LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MENTORING ENHANCEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Janet Forbush and Roger Jarjoura
Acknowledgements

- **Senior Design Team**: Roger Jarjoura, David Altschuler, Janet Forbush, Carla Herrera, Thomas Keller, Manolya Tanyu

- Analysts at AIR: Konrad Haight, Jessica Meckes, and Neal Kar, and Portland State: Martha McCormack

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- We acknowledge the collaboration with Jennifer Tyson, from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and David DuBois, from the University of Illinois-Chicago

- Data Management Team: Kay Logan (Portland State University), and from AIR, Konrad Haight, Nick Read, Nathan Zaugg, Allyson Pakstis, and Christina Murphy

- And of course, all of the staff at each of the MEDP sites!
Disclaimer

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The Mentoring Enhancement Demonstration Program (MEDP)

DuBois et al. (2011) Meta-Analysis

OJJDP developed solicitation for MEDP focused on three of six key moderators of program effectiveness:

- The program included an advocacy role for mentors.
- The program included a teaching/information provision role for mentors.
- Mentors and youth were matched in the program based on similarity of interests

A demonstration approach to understand if and how a general strategy (i.e., encourage and support teaching and/or advocacy in programmatic mentoring relationships) could change local practice and influence youth outcomes.
Context of Structure

• Foundation of DuBois et al. (2011) meta-analysis
• Consultation of DuBois with OJJDP personnel (funder)
• Relationship between OJJDP & Library of Congress
• Creation of solicitation announcement (included evaluation requirement)
Exploration of Research Team Key to Setting Structure

- Learning about expectations of funder and ways to collaborate
- Building relationship with funder on the project
- Learning about grantee collaboratives and participating agencies’ experience in evaluation studies
Cultivating – Fundamental Component of MEDP Strategy

• Regular/consistent communication

• Communication with sites around challenges/expectations from research team

• Intentional TTA regarding research design/approach/facilitation

• Encouragement
**Strategic Approach to Information Sharing**

- Team is comprised of agencies, collaboratives, research team and funder
- Demonstration project – notable investment of OJJDP
- Learning to use findings to inform program practices – our answer was more consistent support
Some Additional Requirements

• A structured relationship between a volunteer adult and one or more youth, with one-on-one or group-mentoring

• Established program sites

• Collaborative must implement a specific program design consistently across all sites

• Must serve 75-100 new/additional youth per site within the first year of implementation in each of the program sites.

• Target age group is 12 to 14 years old
The Youth in the Study

- African American: 43%
- White: 30%
- Latino: 29%
- Native American: 5%
- Asian/Pacific Islander: 2%
- Other: 2%

Age distribution:
- Age 9: 1%
- Age 10: 6%
- Age 11: 26%
- Age 12: 24%
- Age 13: 19%
- Age 14: 18%
- Age 15: 8%
- Age 16: 1%
More about the MEDP Youth at Baseline

Environmental Risk: Family Risk/Stress: 85%
Environmental Risk: Economic Adversity: 76%
Environmental Risk: Peer Difficulties: 52%
Individual Risk: Academic Challenges: 52%
Individual Risk: Mental Health Concerns: 46%
Individual Risk: Problem Behavior: 19%

Counseling or therapy: 27%
Special help at school: 22%
Medication for mental health: 20%
Regular medical appointments: 16%
Learning English as a second language: 2%
Court appointed special advocate (CASA): 1%

Afterschool activities: 68%
Sports team: 52%
School club: 40%
Working at a job for pay: 18%
The MEDP Mentors

- Females 57%
- Whites 63%
- African Amer. 20%
- Latino 15%

Average Age 32

Single 61%

Employed 81%

College Students 31%
More on the Background of the Mentors

- Interacting with children informally: 85%
- Working with youth in a different formal setting: 53%
- Working with youth in a professional setting: 36%
- Mentoring in another program: 24%
- Being a parent: 22%
- Matched with another child in current program: 14%
- Other: 10%
Characteristics of the Matches

Youth and Mentor had the same race/ethnicity in 53% of matches.

Youth and Mentor had the same gender in 97% of matches.
## Characteristics of the Collaboratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Program format</th>
<th>Size of mentoring program (number of matches served annually)</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School-based</td>
<td>One-on-one</td>
<td>100 or fewer</td>
<td>Mentoring is primary activity of all agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-based</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>101–400</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Collaboratives

• Variable how much the collaborating agencies had already worked together

• Left to the collaboratives to work out the nature and extent of partnerships

• The evolution unfolded differently across the ten collaboratives with varied degrees of formality, e.g., whether there was a coordinator
Collaboration

• The collaboratives varied on the nature of and the extent to which there is demonstrable collaboration exhibited among the program sites

• In our analysis we assessed:

  – LEADERSHIP and GOVERNANCE by the lead or prime agency,
  – SHARED VISION on the intended mentoring enhancements by the sites
  – CAPACITY AND STRUCTURE as reflected in the adequacy and stability of staffing in each of the sites
Leadership and Governance

• Who the key personnel were mattered
• The involvement of the executive leadership in the grantee organization
• Differences in organizational culture and program practices among partners
• Extent of mentoring experience
• Presence of full-time project director
• Stability among key personnel in lead agency
Shared Vision

• At least one highly competent staff person in each of the partners was important for fidelity

• Creation of tools to guide implementation

• Agreement across partners on the enhancements

• Partners part of same national affiliate organization

• Nature and diversity of communities served

• Start up trainings and collaborative meetings around content of enhancements
Capacity and Structure

• Changes in leadership and key staff were a limiting factor.
• Size of programs—number of participating staff.
• Staff turnover for those supporting the matches created unevenness.
• Staff experience with mentoring and youth development.
• Communication among partners.
The Distribution of Enhancements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Match support</th>
<th>Peer mentor support</th>
<th>Match activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New In-person trainings</td>
<td>Focused mentor support to promote T/A</td>
<td>Online Support Efforts</td>
<td>Program-Sponsored match activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New online trainings</td>
<td>Focused practices (e.g., sparks, goal setting)</td>
<td>In-person mentor groups</td>
<td>Group activities with matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Match activities</td>
<td>More frequent staff contact with mentor</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two of the collaboratives proposed 3 enhancements

There were three collaboratives planning 4 enhancements

Three collaboratives planned to implement 5 enhancements

Two of the collaboratives proposed 6 or 7 enhancements
Extent of Implementation

• Four collaboratives achieved only partial implementation of the enhanced practices

• Six collaboratives implemented the enhancements fully

• Two of those six needed to make adaptations in enhancements to fully implement
MEDP Theory of Change

Moderators:
- Mentor Characteristics, Match Characteristics
- Increased Knowledge About and Access to Community Resources
- Connections to Significant Adults
- Social Emotional Learning
- Community Engagement
- Development of Interests and Talents
- Social Competence (+)
- Academic Performance (+)
- Emotional Well-Being(+)
- Self-Worth (+)
- Perceptions Of Social Support (+)

Moderators:
- Program Structure and Procedures, Quality of Enhancements

Moderators:
- Individual Risk (e.g., Interpersonal History, Social Competencies, Developmental Stage)
- Environmental Risk (e.g., Family and Community Context)

Enhancements To Mentor Training
Enhancements To Ongoing Mentor Support
Mentor Incorporates Teaching Functions Into Role
Mentor Incorporates Advocacy Functions Into Role
Relationship Orientation
Relationship Quality
Relationship Tension
Match Length
Involvement in Delinquency (−)
Juvenile Justice Involvement (−)
Problem Behaviors (−)
Misbehavior in School (−)

Treatments or Control Group
Looking at the First Three Boxes:

- Treatment or Control Group
- Enhancements To Mentor Training
- Enhancements To Ongoing Mentor Support
- Mentor Incorporates Teaching Functions Into Role
- Mentor Incorporates Advocacy Functions Into Role
Looking Closer at the Outcomes

- Relationship Orientation
- Relationship Quality
- Relationship Tension
- Match Length

Increased Knowledge About and Access to Community Resources
Connections to Significant Adults
Social Emotional Learning
Community Engagement
Development of Interests and Talents

- Involvement in Delinquency (-)
- Juvenile Justice Involvement (-)
- Problem Behaviors (-)
- Misbehavior in School (-)
- Social Competence (+)
- Academic Performance (+)
- Emotional Well-Being (+)
- Self-Worth (+)
- Perceptions Of Social Support (+)
Key Challenge to Implementation

Mentor Participation (i.e., Attendance, Engagement)
Ecological Framework as Applied to the MEDP Implementation
Dimensions of Teaching and Advocacy in Mentoring Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching</th>
<th>Curricular</th>
<th>Contextual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Instructing</strong>—leading a planned group learning activity</td>
<td><strong>Influencing</strong>—structuring activity to develop skill or convey lesson prioritized by program or mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Tutoring</strong>—providing individualized assistance focusing on schoolwork</td>
<td><strong>Responding</strong>—structuring activity to develop skill or knowledge valued or desired by mentee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td><strong>Embedding</strong>—capitalizing on opportunities to share knowledge or practice skills during activities primarily designed for other purposes (i.e., incorporating “teachable moments”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td><strong>Partnering</strong>—communicating and collaborating with relevant professionals to support mentee</td>
<td><strong>Representing</strong>—speaking on behalf of mentee in decision-making situations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Empowering</strong>—coaching mentee on how to advocate for self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect</td>
<td>Facilitating access to community resources mentee would not obtain otherwise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheer</td>
<td>Showing up to enthusiastically support mentee interests and activities</td>
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Costs of MEDP

• Overall differences in per capita costs between the EG and BG groups were small, with enhanced mentoring tending to be slightly more expensive.

• EG per capita mean = $2,127.72; BG per capita mean = $2,060.57

• Higher costs associated with
  – Staff time to supervising matches
  – Postmatch trainings
  – Activities and events for EG matches
Mentor Participation in Trainings

PRE-MATCH

POST-MATCH

68%  69%

70%

30%
Match Support by Staff

- EG mentors spent about 50% longer than BG mentors in match support conversations with program staff
Participation in Mentor Support Activities

A* 60% EG 41% BG
R* 57% EG 38% BG
E* 56% EG 34% BG
I* 53% EG 20% BG
F* 43% EG 29% BG
L* 36% EG 18% BG
H* 30% EG 10% BG

EG  BG
Participation in Program-Sponsored Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EG</th>
<th>BG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L*</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F*</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K*</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y*</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching/Advocacy-Related Staff Support
Incorporation of Teaching/Advocacy Functions

• Mentors reported most frequently incorporating teaching functions than advocacy functions into their roles.

• EG youth were more likely than BG youth to report that their mentor was trying to help them reach goals.

• The content of EG mentors’ discussions with their mentees around goals also differed from those of BG mentors, suggesting a more planned approach to goal attainment among the EG matches.

• EG mentors were more likely than BG mentors to agree that their program assisted them in supporting the youth’s spark development.
Mentor Reports of Goal Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EG</th>
<th>BG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L*</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K*</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A*</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>59%</td>
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<td>AZ</td>
<td>64%</td>
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<td>H*</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<td>S</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Did the Mentors Experience the Enhancements?

• EG mentors that attended the enhanced training sessions found them helpful and used tips or pointers offered in these sessions.

• EG mentors reported significantly higher levels of agreement than did BG mentors to the statement: “Program staff have provided suggestions on what I can do with my mentee.”

• Mentors who attended program-sponsored match activities with their mentees found these activities helpful in strengthening their relationships with their mentees. In this respect, there were no significant differences between EG and BG mentors.

• EG mentors rated interactions with other mentors as part of their enhancements as helpful.
# Factors Affecting Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Strong Implementation (6 collaboratives)</th>
<th>Mixed Implementation (4 collaboratives)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Well-established</strong> mentoring programs</td>
<td>• Mentoring is not the primary program component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Homogenous</strong> mentoring structures</td>
<td>• Heterogeneity of mentoring structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Enhancements align</strong> with agency resources and matches served in the program</td>
<td>• Enhancements are a stretch for the agency and the matches served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness</td>
<td>• <strong>Program coordinator</strong> w. decision making authority</td>
<td>• Program coordinator has limited authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Leadership</strong> support</td>
<td>• Agency leadership is not always tuned into staff needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Staff training &amp; monitoring</strong></td>
<td>• Staff monitoring of quality is limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Fidelity to enhancements</strong> is emphasized</td>
<td>• Fidelity to intervention is not well understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Staff has skills/experience</strong> working with mentors</td>
<td>• Staff has limited/no experience in mentoring</td>
</tr>
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How Did MEDP Increase Capacity?

- Enhanced and new materials and tools for training mentors
- Match support and monitoring checklists
- Resources for mentors
- Increased capacity to recruit volunteers and families in the community
- Increased capacity to serve older youth
- Increased agency capacity to support staff
- Increased capacity to use technology
- Networking and partnership with other agencies
Key Learning: Increase the Dosage

• It matters if you increase how much training is provided

• It matters how much contact staff have with mentors

• It matters how much time match spends together focused on advocacy and teaching functions
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THANK YOU
Next Steps

• Sign up for the November 30th webinar on the NMRC website at www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org

• Look for link to the recording and slides next week

• And remember, you can request free technical assistance to implement your own enhancements through the NMRC