

***Process for Selecting Mentoring Programs for National Mentoring Resource Center Review***  
(Revised 2/8/17)

This document provides an overview of the process that is used to identify and prioritize youth mentoring programs to be reviewed by the National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board. A four step process is followed in accordance with written processes of CrimeSolutions.gov as outlined on [http://www.crimesolutions.gov/about\\_starttofinish.aspx](http://www.crimesolutions.gov/about_starttofinish.aspx): Literature Search, Determination of Eligibility for Review, Prioritization of Programs for Review, MENTOR, OJJDP, and DSG Review of Selected Programs. Typically, these steps are completed on an annual basis.

### **1. Literature Search**

A literature search is carried out by postdoctoral research associates of the National Mentoring Resource Center to identify youth mentoring programs that have the potential both to meet program and evidence screening criteria for inclusion on CrimeSolutions.gov (i.e., Initial Program Screening and Initial Evidence Screening on Crimesolutions.gov) and to qualify as a mentoring program based on the established scope of the National Mentoring Resource Center. The search process consists of:

- 1) An examination of literature reviews and reference lists of current meta-analyses of youth mentoring programs;
- 2) A keyword search in on-line reference databases;
- 3) A perusal of relevant academic journals, publications on mentoring from Public/Private Ventures, and presentations made at the National Mentoring Summit;
- 4) Contacting the youthmentoring listserv, National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board members, current and past OJJDP mentoring research grantees, and authors of relevant studies identified through the other literature search methods;
- 5) Nominations from the field solicited through a posting on the National Mentoring Resource Center website, which is publicized through the Chronicle for Evidence-Based Mentoring and the youthmentoring listserv at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Nominations can also come from anyone in the field including but not limited to, practitioners, program developers, organizations, and experts. All nominations, regardless of source, are required to be made using the Nomination Form currently in use by CrimeSolutions.gov.

### **2. Determination of Eligibility for Review**

The next step in the process is to carry out a full determination of whether each candidate program identified in the Literature Search meets both CrimeSolutions.gov criteria referred to above and falls within the scope of programs to be reviewed by the National Mentoring Resource Center.<sup>1</sup> This process is carried out by National Mentoring Resource Center postdoctoral research associates with the Chair of the Research Board providing oversight and final approval of all eligibility decisions. Programs found to meet the eligibility criteria of CrimeSolutions.gov that do not fall within the scope of the National Mentoring Resource Center are referred to DSG for potential review through other topic area teams of CrimeSolutions.gov.

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<sup>1</sup> The scope of the review activities of the Research Board of the National Mentoring Resource Center is as follows: “*A resource, practice, program, or policy that is intended to promote positive youth outcomes, which include prevention of or reduction in victimization, delinquent behavior and/or juvenile justice system involvement, via fostering of mentoring activity or relationships between young persons (i.e., mentees) and older or otherwise more experienced persons (i.e., mentors) who are acting in a nonprofessional helping capacity.*”

### 3. Prioritization of Programs for Review

The next step is to prioritize programs for review among those found to meet eligibility criteria. The following criteria are used to determine the priority level of each program for review:

- Does the program align with one or more of the following areas identified as priorities in the needs assessment conducted by MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership – Closure, Matching, Monitoring and Support, Cultural Perspectives in Program Design and Delivery, Serving Special Youth Populations, in particular, youth in foster care, youth with mental health concerns, youth involved in the juvenile justice system, and youth with military families?
- Is the program distinct from other mentoring programs already reviewed on CrimeSolutions.gov?
- Does the program incorporate features that were suggested by findings of a rigorous process or impact evaluation of a prior version of the program?
- Does the program incorporate one or more practices rated as promising or effective by the NMRC (see <http://www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php/what-works-in-mentoring/reviews-of-mentoring-practices.html>)?
- Are materials available to support implementation of the program?
- Has the program been evaluated using a randomized control design with a relatively large sample of youth (i.e., 200 or more)?
- Is there an evaluation of the program that has been published within the past 10 years?
- Has the program been evaluated in the U.S. context?
- Does the evaluation design isolate effects of mentoring if multiple component program?

National Mentoring Resource Center postdoctoral research associates assesses which of the above 9 criteria are met for each program. The programs that are selected for review in a given year are those that meet the highest number of these criteria. The order in which these programs are reviewed during the year is determined using a random number generator.

### 4. MENTOR, OJJDP, and DSG Review of Selected Programs

The ordered list of programs to be reviewed, with brief descriptions of the programs, is provided to MENTOR and OJJDP for review. At their discretion, MENTOR and/or OJJDP may request that certain programs be elevated on the list for reasons such as ensuring that emergent needs of the field (as revealed, for example, through technical assistance requests submitted to National Mentoring Resource Center) are addressed in a timely manner and that the field is exposed to new and emerging program models and practices. The Research Board Chair makes the final determination of study prioritization, informed by any recommendations from MENTOR and OJJDP.

The list of programs to be reviewed is also provided to DSG to make sure that a planned NMRC review does not overlap with a planned or in progress DSG review of the same program.

Following these steps, the selected programs are moved into full review by the Research Board Chair for potential inclusion on the National Mentoring Resource Center and Crimesolutions.gov websites following agreed upon procedures.