



# Plotting The Course for Success

Mentoring Youth with Disabilities  
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# What is mentoring?

Is it an activity?

Is it a relationship?

# What Is Mentoring?

“Mentoring is a structured activity, built upon a trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee.” -  
NCWD/Youth, 2005

# Why is it important for ALL youth?

- Mentors can help youth navigate the complexities of adolescence and young adulthood; and,
- Mentors can engage and connect youth to productive academic, community, and social life choices.
- The establishment of a supportive adult or peer relationship through mentoring is critical to a youth's ability to link to the world of work, to education and training, and to engage in other productive activities that help them grow.

# Why is it important for Youth with Disabilities?

- Mentors provide a sounding board for YwD
- Mentors give YwD someone to hold them to a different standard
- Mentors can open the door to opportunities

# What can mentors offer?

- A way to engage the business and disability community (companies & disability organizations)
- Mentors with disabilities can supplement your work through bringing the “disability lens”
- Connect w/youth through a reciprocal relationship and because they “want to be there”

# 4 Common Characteristics

While mentoring takes many forms, there are four common characteristics around which mentoring programs should be organized:

- **Mentors and mentees should make a long-term commitment (generally, at least a year);**
- **Mentors should focus on building trust and respect with their mentees;**
- **Mentees and mentors should set high, clear, and fair expectations for themselves and their mentoring partner; and**
- **Mentors and mentees should meet or communicate with enough regularity to develop a strong relationship.**
  - 4-10 hours a month for face to face mentoring is recommended (The National Mentoring Center)
  - 1 hour per week for e-mentoring is recommended (*Connecting to Success*)

# 4 Types of Programs

- Traditional One-to-One
- Peer Mentoring
- Group Mentoring
- E-mentoring

# Traditional One-to-One

A model of mentoring where one adult is paired with one young person. There typically will be an extensive matching process to ensure a strong relationship and it is expected that the commitment will be for one year or longer.

# Peer Mentoring

A mentoring model based on peers providing support and advice to mentees from a shared/similar developmental perspective. Peers can be close in age or further apart, depending on the circumstances.

# Group Mentoring

- One or more adults with a group of youth in a structured setting
- An individual or group of adult volunteers working with several youth in a school or a faith-based program
- A group of employees from one company working with students from a local school in a work-based mentoring program

# E-mentoring

- A contemporary model commonly used in schools in which one (or more) youth is matched with a mentor
- The youth and mentor regularly exchange e-mail messages for a designated prolonged period of time
  - In ideal circumstances, e-mentoring includes occasional face-to-face meetings to provide a more personal connection
- A program coordinator (often a teacher) monitors all correspondence and meetings

# Benefits to Youth

Jekielek, Moore, and Hair (2002) found through a synthesis of research that youth who participate in programs that include stand-alone mentoring or mentoring as one component of a comprehensive intervention have the following positive outcomes, compared with similar youth:

- significant reductions in school absence;
- higher college participation;
- better school attitudes and behavior;
- less drug and alcohol use;
- less likelihood of aggressive behaviors;
- less likelihood of committing misdemeanors or felonies and major offenses;
- more positive attitudes toward their elders and toward helping; and
- improved parental relationships and support from peers.

# Benefits to Others

Mentors and employers also benefit from participating in mentoring.

According to Pardini (n.d.):

- Mentors gain personal and professional satisfaction in helping a student;
- Mentors gain recognition from their peers;
- Mentors gain improved interpersonal skills;
- Mentoring focuses the mentor outside of him/herself; and
- Mentoring promotes deeper understanding of teen and societal problems.

# Benefits to Others

And when mentors are recruited from local companies, mentoring:

- Builds employee, hence, company morale;
- Develops the same skills needed for successful and effective company managers;
- Enhances the image of the company;
- Allows for participation by the company in the total educational process;
- Recognizes the competence of employees;
- Prepares employees to take on greater responsibilities in the corporation;
- Helps the company revitalize the community; and
- Assists in the development of a competent future workforce.

# School Based Preparatory Experiences

## Mentoring Focus

- Assisting in the development of a personal development plan
- Identifying resources and supports needed for educational and training enrichment
- Identifying career preparatory needs to include in transition plans
- Providing tutoring support, and informal academic self-appraisal
- Exploring service learning opportunities

# Career Preparation & Work Based Learning

## Mentoring Focus

- Promoting career exploration activities and tools
- Providing information on networking with individuals in a particular field
- Promoting activities to support career goal setting and planning
- Providing information on job shadowing, workplace visits & tours

# Youth Development/Youth Leadership

## Mentoring Focus

- Exploring problem solving and conflict resolution
- Sharing information on community resources related to social, recreational, physical and mental health
- Promoting the role of social, recreational and sports activities
- Assisting with developing and implementing strategies for balancing work, school, and life
- Promoting yd/l experiences
- Promoting community activities and volunteerism
- Promoting youth activities that encourage group participation as well as, collaboration with other individuals and groups.

# Connecting Activities

## Mentoring Focus

- Providing information on resources for self-sufficiency
- Promoting work and life balance
- Promoting cultural activities that promote understanding and tolerance
- Providing information on community services

# Five Foundations of Successful Mentoring Programs

- Strong Agency Capacity
- Proven Program Design
- Effective Community Partnerships
- Sustainable Resource Development
- Useful Program Evaluation

# Useful Program Evaluation

There are four components of an effective evaluation system:

- Organizational commitment and evaluation infrastructure
- Setting and measuring goals
- Collecting data
- Synthesizing and reporting results

What are some challenges  
you encounter on the local  
level?

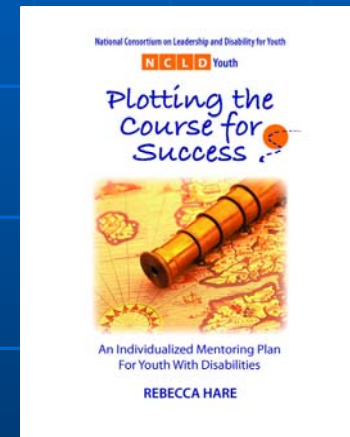
# Resources

# Plotting the Course for Success: An Individualized Mentoring Plan

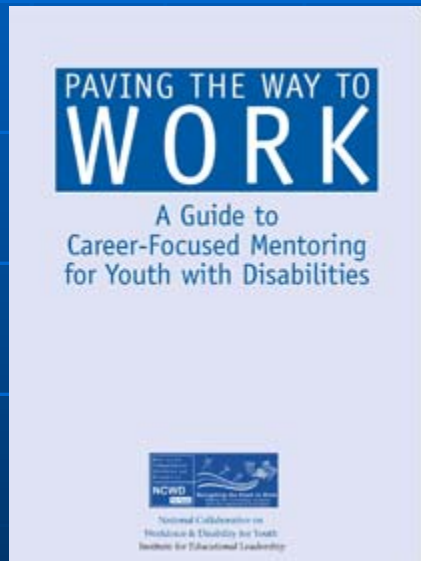
- Grounded in research around effective practice (5 areas of YD/L)
  - **Assessing** the needs of emerging leaders
  - **Actions** to assist them in gaining knowledge, skills, and abilities they desire
  - **Accountability** to ensure both mentor and mentee are dedicated to the process

# Plotting the Course to Success: An Individualized Mentoring Plan for Youth with Disabilities

- Walks mentors and mentees through expectations for mentoring
- Assists mentees in thinking about what they'd like to get out of their mentoring relationship, how they'd like to grow
- Assists in the setting of clear boundaries and expectations for mentees and mentors



# “Paving the Way to Work: A Career Focused Mentoring Guide for Youth with Disabilities”



- **Chapter 1 - A Guide for Career Focused Mentoring**
- **Chapter 2 - A Developmental Context and the Role of Mentoring**
- **Chapter 3 - The Disabilities Context**
- **Chapter 4 - Mentoring Settings and Approaches**
- **Chapter 5 - Operating Mentoring Programs**
- **Chapter 6 - Useful Program Evaluation**
- **Chapter 7 - Marketing a Program**
  
- Available at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info>

# National Programs

- American Association of People with Disabilities, Disability Mentoring Initiative
  - <http://www.dmd-aapd.com>
- Partners for Youth with Disabilities
  - <http://www.pyd.org>

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