

# **MENTORING 101:**

## **An Introductory Workshop for New Mentors**

### *Training Handbook*

#### **AGENDA**

##### **Before we begin:**

*There's a notecard on your desk. On one side, write a question you have that you definitely want answered by the end of this training. On the other side, write a fact about yourself that people may be surprised to know (this should be something that you would like to share). Do not share this fact with others before you turn it in.*

##### **Welcome, introductions, expectations**

##### **What make a successful mentoring relationship**

What a mentor is and what a mentor is not

Group Activity: stages of a relationship

Disclosure

##### **Goal setting**

Smart criteria

PYD's five desired outcomes

Group Activity: goals

##### **Boundaries**

##### **Disability etiquette**

##### **Putting it all together (vignettes)**

##### **Program policies and guidelines**

## INTRODUCTION

We are pleased and excited to present *MENTORING 101: An Introductory Workshop for New Mentors*, the result of a collaborative effort between Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD) and Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP).

PYD was the first organization in the United States to address the lack of individual and group mentoring programs for youth with disabilities. Twenty years ago, PYD initiated the application of program models serving “at risk” youth to youth with disabilities, and the results were extraordinary. Today, PYD’s innovative mentoring programs for youth with disabilities include entrepreneurial education, theatre programming, healthcare, fitness, and recreational programs, as well as online mentoring. Through its success as a direct service provider, PYD has become a leader in the mentoring field and an advocate for the inclusion of youth with disabilities on a national level.

MMP is committed to strategically expanding the availability of high quality mentoring programs to meet the needs of **all** youth statewide. MMP is solely dedicated to bringing youth mentoring to scale, ensuring that **all** young people will be connected with caring adults who will listen to them, stand by them, and guide them.

In Massachusetts, more than 70,000 young people ages 15 and under are youth with disabilities. These individuals will soon face major transitions with respect to continuing their education, obtaining employment, and integrating into the community. We know that more than half of all youth with disabilities in Massachusetts leave school before obtaining a high school diploma, a dropout rate three times the statewide average for non-disabled students. In addition to failing to graduate at staggering rates, youth with disabilities are exposed to discrimination and environmental factors that place them at very high risk for depression, low self-esteem, substance abuse, and other high-risk behaviors. Despite these alarming facts, youth with disabilities remain largely underserved by formal youth mentoring programs in the Commonwealth.

Mass Mentoring Partnership’s recently sponsored study *Mass Mentoring Counts*, conducted by the Donahue Institute of the University of Massachusetts, shows that more than 17,000 youth are currently served through mentoring programs in Massachusetts. However, lack of program accessibility, organizational knowledge, and staff training in serving youth with disabilities makes providing services for youth with disabilities in these

programs a challenge gap that must be addressed.

In spring 2006, PYD and MMP responded to this challenge by partnering to be a voice, advocate, and resource for inclusion of youth with disabilities within the mentoring field in Massachusetts. This newly revised *MENTORING 101* is the result of this collaboration. This handbook represents our joint commitment to expanding the availability of high quality mentoring programs to meet the needs of *all* youth statewide.

This training manual was produced as a result of the Inclusion Mentoring Project, an initiative of Mass Mentoring Partnership and Partners for Youth with Disabilities. The work is funded, in part, through the Mitsubishi Electric America Foundation, a non-profit foundation jointly funded by Mitsubishi Electric Corporation of Japan and its U.S. affiliates with the mission of contributing to a better world for all by helping young people with disabilities to maximize their potential and participation in society.

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We also want to acknowledge the excellent editorial work of Jewel Gilbert, as well as the guidance provided by staff members at Mass Mentoring Partnership and Partners for Youth with Disabilities, who lent their expertise and wise counsel throughout this initiative.

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Boston, MA

David Shapiro, CEO  
Mass Mentoring Partnership

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## **UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework for designing curricula that enable all individuals to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning. UDL provides rich supports for learning and reduces barriers to the curriculum while maintaining high achievement standards for all.

The creation of this training and its companion materials was guided by the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), including the following:

UDL provides a blueprint for creating flexible goals, methods, materials, and assessments that accommodate learner differences.

“Universal” does not imply a single optimal solution for everyone. Instead, it is meant to

underscore the need for multiple approaches to meet the needs of diverse learners.

UDL mirrors the universal design movement in architecture and product development. Speakerphones, curb cuts, and close-captioned television—all were universally designed to accommodate a wide variety of users, including those with disabilities.

Embedded features that help those with disabilities eventually benefit everyone. UDL uses technology's power and flexibility to make learning more inclusive and effective for all.

Adapted from *HYPERLINK* "<http://www.cast.org/research/udll/index.html>"<http://www.cast.org/research/udl/index.html>

## **ABOUT MASS MENTORING PARTNERSHIP**

### **Mass Mentoring Partnership: A Statewide Resource for Youth Mentoring**

With a network of more than 135 diverse mentoring programs representing close to 20,000 youth in formal mentoring relationships, MMP is the only statewide umbrella organization solely dedicated to the strategic expansion of youth mentoring in Massachusetts. MMP has a rich history of driving human, intellectual, and financial capital to the field of mentoring

through many avenues, including training and technical assistance to organizations, mentors, and mentees; the execution of high-visibility mentor recruitment campaigns; and the attraction of increased public and private resources to the mentoring movement in Massachusetts.

The roots of MMP go back to 1989, when two Wall Street executives, Ray Chambers and Geoff Boisi, looked to act upon their belief in the impact of wise and trusted adults in the lives of youth. The idea of a National Mentoring Partnership was born—not to supplant direct service youth mentoring programs, but to learn from them, provide training and resources to expand them, and to multiply their number.

The National Mentoring Partnership immediately focused on building locally based partnerships to serve as advocates and resources for the expansion and enrichment of mentoring. In Boston and Philadelphia, the movement took hold immediately. In 1992, Boston leaders Reverend J. Donald Monan, S.J. (then President of Boston College) and Paul C. O'Brien (then CEO of New England Telephone), pioneered a model of enlisting a strong leadership council from business, government, and the mentoring community itself, and opened the doors of the first local Mentoring Partnership, then called Greater Boston One-to-One. From the beginning, the Partnership called upon the experience of established direct service programs, such as Big Brothers, Big Sisters and Jewish Big Brothers & Big Sisters, as well as a diverse group of smaller-scale programs, such as Partners for Youth with Disabilities.

In 1998, to reflect the expansion of mentoring models and a commitment to providing statewide services, Greater Boston One-to-One underwent a name change and became Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP). And in 2007, MMP expanded its organizational presence with the opening of an office in Springfield to support the four counties of Western Massachusetts.

### **Current Programs and Key Achievements**

To expand quality formal mentoring opportunities for youth, MMP's strategic focus is driving human, financial, and intellectual capital to the mentoring movement in Massachusetts.

**Human Capital:** *We build awareness and motivation in key demographic segments to attract much-needed volunteer mentors, and we connect potential volunteers with mentoring opportunities.*

**Web-Based Referral System:** MMP operates the only web-based referral system and telephone hotline in Massachusetts for volunteers seeking to become mentors.

**Red Sox Mentoring Challenge:** MMP and the Boston Red Sox teamed up in Spring

2006 to create the Red Sox Mentoring Challenge, an on-air campaign during the baseball season, asking viewers to “Step Up to the Plate” and become a mentor. The first season resulted in more than 320 mentor referrals, a 500% increase over referrals for that same time period the previous year.

**National Mentoring Month:** Every January, during National Mentoring Month, MMP executes a holistic campaign to recruit mentors. With corporate underwriting for optimal on-air placement, we distribute public service announcements to local stations. Using the National Mentoring Month campaign as a hook with media outlets, we also work with our network of programs to help them gain exposure. In 2007, MMP partnered with Partners for Youth with Disabilities and the Harvard Mentoring Project at Harvard University’s School of Public Health on the production of public service announcements designed to recruit more individuals with disabilities to become mentors.

**Workplace Mentoring Programs:** MMP targets workplace populations and their potential as an efficient source of mentoring pools. We are currently working with more than fifteen corporations to develop and implement mentoring programs by pairing them with schools and organizations in their geographic areas or to introduce employees to mentoring programs in their area that are in need of mentors. Additionally, we have worked closely with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Human Resources Division to help establish, and now promote and support, the most generous mentoring leave policy in the country at eight hours per month for Commonwealth employees.

**Match Activities:** A key challenge for smaller mentoring programs is finding subsidized activities for matches. These activities not only provide structured avenues for mentors and mentees to spend time together; they also contribute greatly to the overall recruitment of mentors and to mentor retention. MMP obtains passes to cultural event and sports events, as well as educational and recreational opportunities, which we distribute to programs to provide to their matches. MMP also organizes the annual Mentoring Night at Fenway Park when 700 matches from across the state attend a Red Sox game together.

**“Be a Champion for a Child” Campaign:** MMP developed the Bernie & Phyl's (Furniture) “Be a Champion for a Child” promotion in conjunction with the New England Patriots, radio station WBCN, and Bianca and Vince Wilfork (N.E. Patriots nose tackle). Each home game of the Patriots’ season, MMP selects one mentor and mentee match to be Vince's match of the game. Each match enjoys a game day experience and is highlighted during the Patriots broadcast.

**Financial Capital:** *We provide information, advice, and guidance to promote mentoring and drive increased investment to the field.*

**Advocacy:** To attract increased public resources, MMP mobilizes our partners in an advocacy campaign. This effort resulted in an 85% increase in the mentoring line item in the state budget for 2006. Additionally, during National Mentoring Month in January 2007,

MMP partnered with Mass Service Alliance to organize the first “Youth Mentoring Day” at the State House.

**Forum on Youth Mentoring:** In January 2007, MMP held the first ever Forum on Youth Mentoring to: raise the overall awareness of the youth mentoring field; make a case for mentoring as a critical component of any initiative focused on achieving positive outcomes for youth; and act as a call to action so that others will invest human financial and intellectual capital in mentoring. More than 110 people attended this inaugural event.

**Liberty Mutual Mentoring Initiative:** MMP partnered with Liberty Mutual on one of the largest corporate investments in mentoring in the country, the Liberty Mutual Mentoring Initiative (LMMI). This program provided: direct funding of \$1.5 million over three years to mentoring programs in ten target communities with the greatest unmet need; research to benchmark the field; and subsidies to fund trainings for the grantees by MMP.

**Procter & Gamble:** MMP was recently one of three agencies selected by Procter & Gamble for funding through its Live, Learn, and Thrive program. With MMP convening and providing direction for this initiative, the funding is assisting three early-stage mentoring programs in Boston with evaluation methods. MMP is using the opportunity to develop case studies and other learning methodologies to leverage the initiative to inform other programs.

**Intellectual Capital:** *Mentoring programs are most effective when they are of high quality. We provide training and strategic services to ensure and increase the quality of mentoring programs.*

**Mentoring Institute:** MMP provides training and technical assistance to ensure that programs operate according to *Elements of Effective Practice*, the nationally accepted standards of practice for youth mentoring. This kind of training teaches programs to attain the research-based outcomes that mentoring strives to achieve. We assist programs with program planning and development, capacity building in program operations and management, train mentors and mentees, facilitate kick-off events, and provide ongoing technical assistance. MMP hosts bi-annual networking meetings in four regions of the state to provide a platform for program directors to discuss challenges and best practices. We also distribute e-bulletins that include relevant topics in mentoring, highlight existing programs and matches, and offer resources for program staff.

**Quality-Based Membership Project:** Utilizing research as a foundation, we are engaged in a two-year plan to re-engineer our Training and Strategic Services around a dynamic,

quality-based engagement and connection for mentoring programs at all stages of development. Lead funding from State Street Foundation is enabling MMP to work with a Membership Advisory Committee of program leaders, researchers and funders to develop, pilot and implement a quality-based membership model to support programs in the quest for quality outcomes for youth and to provide a “seal of quality” to programs throughout the state.

**Research:** Using the Liberty Mutual Mentoring Initiative research as a springboard, MMP published *Mass Mentoring Counts*. This publication is the result of a research study conducted in 2006 by the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute and is the broadest statewide research on youth mentoring conducted to date. The study will be repeated in 2008 to capture the most recent data.

## **WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?**

### **What Youth Need to Thrive and Why Mentoring Is a Recommended Avenue**

What do young people need to thrive? Research shows that mentoring can have a huge impact on the development of a young person. In her 2002 book, *Stand by Me*, Dr. Jean Rhodes, a leading expert on mentoring, writes that mentors influence young people in three important ways by:

1. Enhancing social skills and emotional well-being
2. Improving cognitive skills through dialogue and listening
3. Serving as role model and advocate

In its 1998 report to Congress, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reported the following outcomes from the mentoring programs funded by the Juvenile Mentoring Program Initiative (JUMP): “...at-risk youth were less likely to use alcohol and drugs, avoided fights and friends who started trouble, did not join gangs, and did not use guns or knives....Mentoring activities could provide an at-risk youth with personal connectedness, supervision and guidance, skills training, career or cultural enrichment opportunities, a knowledge of spirituality and values, a sense of self-worth, and goals and

hope for the future.”

***Youth have needs that must be met in order for them to thrive. Mentoring can help to meet these needs.***

Young people need to have their basic needs—food, clothing and shelter—met, and they need to feel safe before they can learn and grow. Youth in survival mode do not thrive. As a mentor, a central goal is to assist your mentee to fulfill these challenges that all young people need to tackle as they grow into young adulthood.

*A mentor’s focus is on the developmental necessities illustrated in the chart below:*

**Preparedness:** Young people need to develop competencies and skills to ready themselves for work and adult life. Competencies can be academic, social, emotional, vocational, and cultural.

**Connectedness:** Young people need to belong—to be connected to family and community—to thrive. A growing body of brain research indicates that we are hardwired to connect. It is a core requisite for learning, developing, and interacting with the world.

**Engagement:** Young people need opportunities to engage in meaningful activities, have a

voice, take responsibility for their actions, and actively participate in issues that impact their communities.

Adapted from *HYPERLINK* "<http://www.actforyouth.net/>"*www.actforyouth.net*

## WHAT IS MENTORING?

*“Mentoring is a structured and 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.”*

### **A Mentor is ...**

**...a trusted guide or friend.** Young people often do not have much opportunity to be friends with adults, especially adults who will listen to them.

**...a caring, responsible adult who provides access to people, places, and things outside his/her mentee’s routine environment.** It is important to provide mentees with access to opportunities they otherwise might not have. This does not mean just taking them outside their familiar physical environment from time to time or making introductions to new people, but also challenging them to broaden their own thinking and to consider new ideas or new ways of thinking about things.

**...a positive role model.** Positive role models connect and interact with people in ways that demonstrate behaviors that inspire, encourage, and build confidence in young people.

Mentors who are positive role models give mentees examples of who they can be/become.

**...a resource broker.** Mentors strive to help young people understand how to access resources to meet goals, address problems, and make thoughtful decisions.

Mentors cannot be all things to their mentees. Quite often when mentors run into problems in their relationships, it is because the mentor, the mentee or the parent/legal guardian did not understand the role of a mentor. The mentor may have taken on one of the following inappropriate roles:

### **A Mentor is not...**

**...a parent/legal guardian/family.** The role of the parent or legal guardian (governed by law) is to provide food, shelter, and clothing. The mentor's role is not to fulfill these responsibilities. If the mentor believes the mentee is not receiving adequate support, s/he should contact the mentor program coordinator rather than try to meet these basic needs for the mentee.

**...a social worker.** A social worker is a licensed professional with the skills and training to assist with family issues. If a mentor is concerned about something in the mentee's home life, the mentor should share this with the mentor program coordinator, not assume the role of a social worker and attempt to solve the problem.

**...a counselor, therapist, psychologist or psychiatrist.** A mentor is not a formal counselor, therapist, psychologist or psychiatrist, all of whom are licensed professionals.

**...an ATM.** A Mentor does not need money in order to be a mentor. Mentors give through the time they spend with young people. The value of the support and guidance they provide cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

Also: Programs need clear policies on how money matters will be handled between

mentors and mentees, particularly in community-based programs where the mentor and mentee plan weekly activities. Program staff needs to articulate these policies to both mentors and mentees during their orientation and training. Clear guidelines that are familiar to both volunteers and youth will make it easier for both to navigate what can be a stressful aspect of the relationship. The program's policy should encourage mentors to avoid situations, activities, and actions that can be perceived by young people as "buying" their attention or positive regard. In general, a program policy should emphasize low-cost activities so that neither mentor nor mentee feels uncomfortable about the issue of spending money.

## **MENTOR QUALITIES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO A SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIP**

*A mentoring relationship has a longer-lasting positive impact on a young person when the mentor demonstrates the following qualities:*

### **Commitment:**

Successful mentors have a genuine desire to be part of young people's lives, help them with tough decisions, and see them fulfill their potential. They must be willing and able to be invested in the mentoring relationship for the full term of the program's designated duration. Research has documented that a mentoring relationship that ends abruptly, or before the designated term expected by the mentee, is more harmful than if the mentee were never in a mentoring relationship at all.

### **Respect:**

Mentors who show respect for individuals—their abilities and the right to make their own choices—win the trust of their mentees and the privilege of providing guidance and advice. Mentors should not approach mentees with the attitude that *their* way is better, or that the mentees need to be “rescued.” Especially important to remember is that youth with disabilities do not want things done for them. Like other young people, they want to be part of all decisions that affect them.

### **Active Listening:**

Most people can find someone who will give advice or express opinions. Finding someone who will suspend his/her own judgment and really listen is much harder. Mentors often help simply by listening, asking thoughtful questions, and giving mentees an opportunity to explore their own thoughts with a minimum of interference. Very often, youth with disabilities and other challenges are “spoken for” by parents, teachers, and other adults in their lives. Mentors who demonstrate they value mentees' thoughts and feelings can help build confidence and self-esteem as well as model how young people can communicate with other adults.

### **Empathy:**

“Empathy has been described as being able to listen with not only eyes and ears but also with hearts and minds.” (Jean Rhodes, *Stand by Me*). Effective mentors can feel *with* their mentees without feeling pity *for* them. Even without having had the same life experiences, mentors can empathize with their mentees' feelings and experiences.

*You need to be able to empathize with another person's struggles.*

### **Resourcefulness:**

The ability to see solutions and opportunities as well as barriers leads to successful mentoring. Effective mentors balance respect for the real and serious problems faced by their mentees with optimism about finding realistic solutions. They are practical, sharing their insights and personal experiences to encourage mentees to keep on task and to set goals and priorities. Mentors use their personal experience and knowledge of resources to help mentees identify and fulfill their aspirations.

*As a mentor, you don't have to have all the answers. One of the roles of a mentor is to seek out help, first from program staff, when needed. Sharing and demonstrating the importance of seeking out help and resources when needed can provide a valuable learning experience for your mentee.*

**Patience:**

Mentoring is a challenging experience. Mentors who are able to be patient—even when feeling frustrated—will be most successful and will be able to work with their mentees get through difficult times.

*Mentors who are able to be patient—even when feeling frustrated—will be most successful and will be able to figure out with their mentees how to make the relationship work.*

**Persistence and Consistency:**

As with all relationships, the mentoring relationship goes through stages. Often in the early stages, mentees will do some testing, perhaps to make sure their mentors are really going to stay around. Young people may be used to seeing adults come in and out of their lives.

*You need to be persistent when you set up ground rules for the relationship and when you talk to your mentee about the commitment you have both made. If you keep your commitment, your mentee is more likely to keep his/hers.*

**Flexibility and Openness:**

Effective mentors recognize that relationships take time to develop and that communication is a two-way street. They are willing to take time to get to know their mentees, to learn new things that are important to their mentees (music, styles, philosophies, etc.), and even to be changed by the relationship.

*You need to be persistent and consistent, but you must also be flexible.*

**Open-mindedness:**

Mentors and mentees can be very different from each other. The most important characteristics for a successful mentoring relationship include a willingness by the mentor to appreciate differences and the ability to help mentee do the same.

*Maybe you grew up in different countries, or maybe you come from different socio-economic backgrounds. Maybe your mentee has a disability and you do not. Or maybe*

*you just do not seem to have any interests in common.*

**Value Driven:**

At various points throughout the mentoring relationship, mentors need to encourage and support mentees to think about their own values. To do this successfully, mentors must model their willingness to reflect on their own values and the capacity to show respect for others' values.

*Think about how you can use what you discover about each other's values as a learning experience with your mentee.*

(Adapted from: United Way of America and The Enterprise Foundation, Source: Partnerships for Success: A Mentoring Program Manual, 1990.)

## **PRIMARY TASKS OF A MENTOR**

### **Establish a positive, personal relationship with mentee**

Establish mutual trust and respect

Maintain regular interaction

Provide consistent support

Make your meetings enjoyable and fun

### **Help mentee with development of life skills**

Work with your mentee to accomplish this mentoring program's goals of fostering positive attitude towards learning and school

Begin to provide a framework for developing broader life-management skills, such as decision-making, goal setting, and conflict resolution

### **Help mentee access resources**

Provide awareness of community and educational resources available to this young adult and ways to access these resources

Act as a resource "broker" as opposed to a resource "provider"

Act as a guide, advocate, "coach" and supportive friend

### **Increase mentee's ability to interact with diverse people**

Respect and explore differences among people and groups from various background

Provide an introduction to different environments, i.e. workplace vs. school setting; discuss differences in behavior, attitude, and style of dress

Adapted from Mentor Training Curriculum, National Mentoring Working Group convened by United Way of America and One to One Partnership, 1991.

## **STAGES OF THE MENTOR/MENTEE RELATIONSHIP**

At this point, you may be matched with your mentee. Or perhaps you are still looking forward to learning who your mentee will be. Undoubtedly, you are excited about the opportunity that lies ahead and maybe a little nervous, too. Are you wondering what you will do when you first meet? Or how you will be received by your mentee and your mentee's peers and family?

You're probably wondering what to expect as you and your mentee start getting to know each other. Every mentoring relationship is different, and your relationship with your mentee may go through different stages as well. As you begin to spend time with your mentee, it will be helpful for you to keep this in mind. As with any relationship, you will experience ups and downs; but the rewards for your hard work will be great. Just remember, all the feelings and concerns you are experiencing are common to new mentors. To help you get started, we describe the mentoring relationship in three stages, each with its own tips and recommendations:

### **Stage 1: Getting to Know Each Other**

The mentoring relationship begins with a "getting to know you" phase. Here are some things to keep in mind during this stage:

#### **Being predictable and consistent**

During the first stage of the relationship, it is critical to be both predictable and consistent. Keeping scheduled appointments with your mentee is important. Understandably, things come up at times, and appointments cannot be kept. However, in order to speed up the trust-building process, remaining consistent is necessary even if the young person is less consistent than you are.

#### **Anticipating testing**

Some young people may not trust adults. As a result, they use testing as a coping or defense mechanism to determine whether they can trust you. Your mentee might test you by not showing up to a scheduled meeting just to see how you will react. Patience is very important as you work through this together, but be firm when needed. This will help your mentee to understand when his/her behavior is inappropriate and hurtful.

#### **Establishing confidentiality**

Establishing confidentiality helps to instill a sense of trust between you and your mentee. Let your mentee know that whatever s/he wants to share with you will remain confidential, as long as—and it is important to stress this point—what s/he tells you is not going to harm him/her or someone else. Emphasizing these points in the first few meetings with your mentee will be helpful to the relationship.

*Be sure you know the policies of your program around confidentiality and what to do if your mentee gives you information that makes you think s/he will harm her/himself or someone else.*

### **Dealing with Disclosure**

Many young people are not sure how to talk about certain issues in their lives. Youth with disabilities may be apprehensive about disclosing the nature of their disabilities. Young people in foster care may be embarrassed to talk about where they live and why they are not living with their birth parents. During the early stages of the relationship, be understanding and patient with your mentee. S/he might be confused about when and how to talk to you about difficult issues s/he is facing. Remember, it is up to your mentee to decide whether and when to disclose personal information.

If your mentee chooses to share personal information, you may be able to assist in finding ways to disclose this information to other people in his/her life. For example, your mentee may want to think about disclosing information to employers, friends, and colleges. Also, it can be beneficial for youth to disclose disabilities or other sensitive information to colleges and employers so they can have access to accommodations that will increase their chances for success. As a mentor, you can help your mentee decide when, how, why, and whether to disclose information.

How you can help:

Develop a disclosure “script” with your mentee. Role-play the script so s/he is comfortable when the time comes to do it for real.

Assist your mentee in choosing the appropriate person to whom to disclose the information.

Talk with your mentee about choosing an appropriate time for disclosure. This will depend on the individual situation, but it is best to be proactive. Of course, some settings and times are more appropriate than others.

### **Defining ground rules of the mentoring relationship**

Right from the beginning, take some time together to set clear expectations for the relationship:

Talk about the best way to communicate (by telephone or e-mail) and how often you will each commit to being in contact. This is also a good time to talk about the types of activities you will do together.

Lay out the responsibilities of each party is important so both partners feel they are doing their share of the work. Plan and create an environment in which you and your mentee have dedicated, uninterrupted time set aside to meet. This will contribute to a sense of safety and comfort for your mentee.

### **Working with Parents/Guardians**

As a new mentor, you may be apprehensive about how you will be received by your

mentee's family. Remember that your role as a mentor is to provide friendship and guidance. The role of the mentee's parent or guardian is to act as caregiver. Remember, too, that you are a new adult entering their child's life, so it may take time and patience to build trust with parents/guardians. The effort is well worthwhile.

*Research has demonstrated that mentoring relationships are more likely to have positive outcomes for youth when there is a connection and sense of mutual support between parents/guardians and mentors.*

## **Stage 2: Deepening of the Relationship**

Once you have established trust and know more about each other, you can begin working in a more focused way toward the goals you are setting. Here are some ideas to think about:

### **Getting Closer**

Generally, at this stage of the relationship, the mentor and mentee can sense a genuine closeness.

### **Affirming the uniqueness of the relationship**

Once the relationship is developed to this point, do something special or different from what you and your mentee did earlier to affirm the uniqueness of the relationship. For example, go to a museum or a sporting event, or get a photo of yourselves holding up a project you have worked on together.

### **Dealing with ups and downs**

All relationships have ups and downs that continue throughout a relationship, even when you think you have moved on. Be prepared for rough periods and do not assume something is wrong with the relationship if these periods occur occasionally.

### **Seeking support from staff and other resource support**

If a rough period continues, or if you mentor your relationship with your mentee has not reached the second stage, do not hesitate to seek out support from the mentor program coordinator. Sometimes two people—no matter how they look on paper—just don't "click".

This stage may also just be a good time to check in with program staff. Sometimes it is helpful to have a discussion with someone outside the relationship about the commitment and responsibilities of both parties.

## **Stage 3: Time to Say Goodbye**

Sometimes our lives go in directions we are not expecting. If this means that you and your mentee can no longer meet, spend sufficient time helping your mentee to understand the

process of saying goodbye. Of course, some programs by design are limited to a certain duration. However, young people today often have many adults come and go in their lives and are very rarely provided the opportunity to say goodbye. You can help your mentee learn how to handle this process through your role as a mentor.

Initiating some things at the beginning of the relationship can help ease the transition when the time comes. Think about creating a journal together starting with your very first meeting, something that you can both take with you at the end. It could include photos of the two of you at each meeting, or it could be a place to write down thoughts that you each have as you go along your mentoring journey together. This will also eliminate the need to “cram” all your picture-taking into the last week or month of your relationship.

### **Saying goodbye as an ongoing discussion**

There is discussion in the mentoring field about whether programs should encourage or allow mentors and mentees to stay in touch after the required time commitment. Most professional staff believe that the longer a mentor is involved in a youth’s life, the greater the impact. As a result, many programs encourage mentors and mentees to remain in contact even after the program has ended. Others, however, believe the value of learning about healthy closure is as important as the length of the relationship. Programs that follow this philosophy may discourage you from sharing contact information with each other at the end of the required time commitment.

### **Identifying natural emotions, such as grief, denial and resentment**

There may not be someone in your mentee’s life who can help him/her manage saying goodbye. You can help your mentee express emotions by talking about the feelings associated with a relationship ending. Helping your mentee understand that these emotions are common will be helpful throughout his/her life.

### **Providing opportunities for saying goodbye in a healthy, respectful, and affirming way**

Do not wait for the very last meeting with your mentee to say goodbye. Begin to prepare for saying goodbye right from the beginning.

## **DISCLOSURE**

**Disclosure** occurs when a person reveals personal information about himself/herself for a specific purpose. If you have a disability, it may be necessary at some point to disclose information about your disability in order to receive needed accommodations at school, work or in the community.

**However**, it is not always necessary to reveal *all* personal information about one’s disability in order to receive accommodations, the most helpful information to share includes:

How the disability affects one's capacity to learn and/or perform effectively.  
The environment, supports and services one will need in order to access and participate in school, work and the community.

<b>Advantages of disclosure...</b>	<b>Disadvantages of disclosure...</b>
It allows you to receive reasonable accommodations	It can lead to you being treated differently by others

*Tips for helping mentees with disclosure: SHARE*

**Script**

**Help** build confidence

**Accommodations**

**Right setting** (time, place, person)

**Evaluate Pro's and Con's**

## **AFTER ONE YEAR**

*A sample letter to describe the match closure/continuing process after one year:*

Dear Monica,

Congratulations! February marks one year that you have been matched with Brittany. As always, I really appreciate the time, care and kindness you have brought to your mentoring relationship. My job is worthwhile because I have excellent volunteers like you.

This one year mark is a time for celebration and also a time to reflect on next steps. As you may remember, we ask that all matches commit to one year. So, now it's time to consider what you would like to do next. We want your match to continue on as long as possible, so we have some new program policies so you can pick the best fit for you:

*Option 1:* Continuing with **same** expectations of monthly in person activities, weekly phone or email contact. Matches that continue on past the one year mark move to Melanie's caseload; she will solidify these "same expectations" with an in-person meeting with you and Brittany to sign a new match contract.

*Option 2:* Continuing with **new** expectations, can be as little as every other month in person activities and every other week phone or email contact. The important idea here is that you commit to something concrete and manageable for your time. Matches that continue on past the one year mark move to Melanie's caseload; she will solidify these "new expectations" with an in-person meeting with you and Brittany to sign a new match contract.

*Option 3:* Closure, in which we "close the match" in PYD's system and have a closure ceremony to celebrate all that your match has done and accomplished. I would facilitate this meeting.

Questions? Comments? Concerns? Please let me know which option might work best for you. I look forward to supporting you in this next phase.

Sincerely,

Alex

## CLOSURE – MENTOR MATCH DOCUMENTS

### Mentor Satisfaction Survey

Mentor Name:

Date:

Mentee Name:

Phone Number:

Administered by:

Email Address:

# of youth you have worked with through Mentor Match:

### Program Satisfaction:

What have you enjoyed about the program *most* so far?

How could the Mentor Match program be improved?

Was the program staff responsive to your needs in the program (support, contact, and providing adequate accommodations)? What additional support might you have needed?

Did you enjoy the activities and events planned or suggested by the staff? Explain.

Did you and your mentee work on any of the five goals? If so, what did you work on?

Do you feel you were helpful to your mentee? Explain why or why not.

How often were you in touch with your mentee?

FORMCHECKBOX About once a week or more

FORMCHECKBOX About once a month

FORMCHECKBOX Less than once a month

FORMCHECKBOX Less than three times

Overall, how do you feel about your experience with Mentor Match?

FORMCHECKBOX It was a good experience.

FORMCHECKBOX It was just okay.

FORMCHECKBOX It wasn't what I had hoped for.

Would you like to be rematched?

Other comments you would like to share about your experience as a mentor or with PYD?

Referrals:

## **GOAL SETTING**

Helping your mentee set personal goals is a natural part of the mentoring relationship. Young people often do not learn goal setting, and their mentoring relationship not only can provide them with the experience of how to set goals but also of how to work toward achieving them. Research shows that a mentoring relationship with structure has a better chance of being successful, and setting goals together is one way you can build structure. The goals you set in Stage I (“Getting to Know You”) and Stage II (“Deepening the Relationship”) will reflect where you are in your relationship.

### **Goal Setting in Stage I**

As you and your mentee are first getting to know each other in Stage I, you may set some short, simple goals to help lay the ground work for longer-range goal-setting later on. When you first meet your mentee, you will be thinking about a framework for planning your get-togethers and developing your relationship. Setting some goals—even small ones—is a helpful way to structure this.

During this early stage, try setting one achievable goal together for the short-term—something easy to accomplish—that will help you decide on activities to do together. For example, you could both bring a photograph to your meeting and share stories. This exercise will also help you get to know each other.

This is also a good time for you, the mentor, to really listen to what your mentee is saying. Working toward your mentee’s goals—what s/he says s/he wants to accomplish—will be important to think about as your relationship progresses.

### **Goal Setting in Phase II**

As your relationship deepens, the goals you work on with your mentee may become more complex. The **SMART** strategy is a helpful tool for setting and achieving goals for you and your mentee. It involves creating a plan where the goals are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-Framed**.

**Specific:** Goals need to be specific. Often we set goals that are so loose, it is nearly impossible to judge whether or not we reach them.

**Measurable:** Goals need to be measurable. Knowing how you will measure success makes it easier to see if you hit your target.

**Achievable:** Goals need to be reasonable and achievable. Setting goals that are out of reach is a setup for failure.

**Relevant:** Goals need to be appropriate. Working to achieve a goal that does not really matter to you is difficult, if not impossible.

**Time-Framed:** Goals need a time frame. Having a set amount of time will give your goals structure. Having a specific time frame gives you the impetus to get started and monitor your progress.

## **GOAL SETTING WITH YOUR MENTEE**

Research shows that a mentoring relationship with structure has a better chance of being successful, and setting goals together is one way you can build structure. Working together to help your mentee achieve his or her goals will also help you get to know each other and deepen your relationship.

### **What are PYD's desired outcomes for our mentees?**

PYD's mission is to empower youth with disabilities to reach their full potential for personal development. This is achieved by working with youth to achieve desired outcomes in the areas of self-esteem, independent living, education and employment, community involvement and building healthy relationships. Examples of desired outcomes in each of the areas are listed below:

Self-esteem – Mentee expresses increased pride about own abilities. Mentee is accomplishing goals set throughout mentoring relationship. Mentee expresses interest in setting new goals. Mentee expresses desire to learn new activities. Mentee discusses developing new friendships. Mentee takes initiative to plan activities with mentor.

Independent living – Mentee has developed money management skills such as banking,

writing checks, and using an ATM. Mentee is able to access Internet independently. Mentee is able to arrange transportation for him or herself, or take public transportation independently. Mentee can communicate his or her needs clearly to mentor, family, teachers or friends. If PCA is necessary, mentee can find and direct PCA to help meet his or her needs.

Education and employment – Mentee improves grades in school. Mentee works to complete applications for further education or employment. Mentee writes resume. Mentee is researching or has enrolled in college, vocational program, or has obtained employment.

Community involvement – Mentee goes on social outings with friends. Mentee can arrange transportation. Mentee takes initiative to find and participate in accessible recreational and community activities. Mentee discusses developing new friendships.

Building healthy relationships – Mentee talks to mentor about his or her concerns. Family and teachers report more positive interactions with mentee. Mentee is consistently interacting with mentor and peers. Mentee utilizes phone and/or Internet to chat with friends. Mentee is displaying improved social skills when communicating with others.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

### *What does this mean?*

Community involvement refers to the mentee's participation in community and extracurricular activities. This could include recreational activities, social outings, volunteering or being a member of a club or group with community members who have similar interests.

### *Why is this important?*

Youth with disabilities often face significant barriers when trying to fully integrate and participate in society. Youth may come up against physical, programmatic or attitudinal barriers. According to current research, 35% of youth with disabilities are completely uninvolved in their communities, compared to 21% without disabilities. In addition, 50% of youth with disabilities nationwide spend most of their out of school hours watching

television. Mentoring provides these youth with an opportunity to get out in the community and engage in new experiences. The youth benefits from exposure to a mentor who can provide a living example of full adult participation in vocational, recreational, and social activities.

*What will these goals look like?*

You and your mentee will work together to come up with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed) goals related to becoming more involved in the community. These goals will vary depending on your mentee's age, interests, aspirations and abilities. It is important to break larger goals down into specific, realistic, and achievable goals for the short-term. Goals should be simple in the beginning, and become more complex as your relationship deepens. The most important thing to remember is that the mentee ultimately makes the decision about what he/she wants to accomplish.

Examples of goals:

Mentee goes on at least one social outing with friends per month.

Mentee finds and participates in at least one accessible recreational and/or community activity in the next three months.

Mentee participates in one volunteer activity per month for the next two months.

*What are some Resources?*

Access to Theatre

An inclusive arts program for youth ages 13-24 in Greater Boston that features arts education workshops, special events, classes and leadership opportunities in inclusive settings.

HYPERLINK "[http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/access\\_to\\_theatre.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/access_to_theatre.htm)" [http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/access\\_to\\_theatre.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/access_to_theatre.htm)

Boston Central

A free family and kids activities newsletter for Boston and New England. HYPERLINK "<http://www.Bostoncentral.com>" [www.Bostoncentral.com](http://www.Bostoncentral.com)

Boston Children's Theatre

One of the oldest children's theatre companies in the country brings together young performers from the inner city to the outer suburbs -- from every neighborhood, socioeconomic group and cultural background -- in a professional setting. HYPERLINK "<http://www.bostonchildrenstheatre.org/home.php>" <http://www.bostonchildrenstheatre.org/home.php>

Boston Youth Zone

At Boston Youth Zone, kids and teens have access to activities and opportunities throughout the city. HYPERLINK "<http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com>"  
[www.Bostonyouthzone.com](http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com)

#### Boston Navigator

Website that allows Boston youth to search for out-of-school time events and activities throughout the city. HYPERLINK "<http://www.bostonnavigator.org/>" <http://www.bostonnavigator.org/>

#### Making Healthy Connections

MHC is a series of interactive discussions and recreational activities designed to help adolescents and young adults, ages 14-22, with disabilities and special health needs prepare for adult life. HYPERLINK "[http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)" [http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)

#### Piers Park Sailing Center

A non-profit community-based organization dedicated to using outdoor education, particularly sailing, to build community, foster cultural understanding, and encourage self-development among youth and people with disabilities. All programs serving children and people with disabilities are provided at absolutely no cost. HYPERLINK "<http://piersparksailing.org/>" <http://piersparksailing.org/>

#### The Peace Drum Project

The Peace Drum Project teaches teens, ages 13-18, to use the arts to tell their own stories. Through workshops given by project staff-artists and guest artists, the teens explore: acting, storytelling, drum making and playing, bookmaking, journals, banner-making and other forms of expression while developing positive relationships with other youth.  
HYPERLINK "[http://www.tribal-rhythms.org/drum\\_descr.html](http://www.tribal-rhythms.org/drum_descr.html)" [http://www.tribal-rhythms.org/drum\\_descr.html](http://www.tribal-rhythms.org/drum_descr.html)

## EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

### *What does this mean?*

Educational and employment goals will reflect the steps a mentee needs to take in order to achieve academic and/or employment success. “Success” for a mentee may vary considerably depending on his or her age, interests, aspirations and abilities. In general, all goals will be designed to prepare the mentee to communicate his or her educational and employment needs/goals to teachers, mentors and family; demonstrate skills needed to access higher education and/or employment (application and financial assistance processes, job counseling, resume writing and interviewing); search for education or employment; and enroll in college or vocational program and/or obtain employment.

### *Why is this important?*

In 2003-2004, the national dropout rate for high-school youth aged 14-21 receiving Special Education services was 31% (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2006; 2009). During the same school year, the Massachusetts dropout rate among youth with disabilities was 48%, which is 17 percentage points higher than the national average. In 2002-2003 Boston Public Schools analyzed dropout rates among students based on demographic data of gender, race, ethnicity, and language (Citizen Commission, 2006). The highest dropout rate of any group, 37%, belonged to Special Education students. Such factors also correspond with an overwhelmingly high proportion of adults with disabilities facing unemployment and poverty. In 2008, PYD conducted a survey of mentees and parents in order to determine the impact of the mentoring relationship on the mentee. When asked about their potential to gain employment about three quarters of youth reported feeling more confident about their educational and employment goals. The additional positive support your mentoring relationship provides for youth with disabilities increases the chance that your mentee will experience a positive and successful educational and employment future.

### *What will these goals look like?*

You and your mentee will work together to come up with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed) goals related to education and employment. These goals will vary depending on your mentee’s age, interests, aspirations and abilities. Because education and employment are such broad topic areas, it is important to break larger goals down into specific, realistic, and achievable goals for the short-term. Goals should be short and simple in the beginning, and become more complex as your relationship deepens. The most important thing to remember is that the mentee ultimately makes the decision about what he/she wants to accomplish.

Examples of goals:

Mentee will read one book to mentor during next visit.

Mentee will spend 30 minutes online during the next week researching job possibilities.

Mentee will practice completing one job application on his or her own by next month’s

meeting with mentor.

Mentee will improve his/her grades in English class by one letter grade next semester.

*What are some Resources?*

ACCESS Center for College Affordability

Provides free financial aid advising to Boston students. Advisors are located at Boston Public High Schools and at their St. James Street offices. (P) 617-778-7195.

HYPERLINK "<http://www.accessboston.org>" [www.accessboston.org](http://www.accessboston.org)

Boston Centers for Youth & Families

The Mission of Boston Centers for Youth & Families is to enhance the quality of life for Boston's residents by supporting children, youth and families through a wide range of programs and services. (P) 617-635-4920. HYPERLINK "<http://www.cityofboston.gov/BCYF/>" <http://www.cityofboston.gov/BCYF/>

Boston Public Library Homework Help

In the Homework Assistance Program, students in grades 3-12 can get free after-school homework help at any library branch. There is also free one-on-one tutoring online with your library card until 10pm each night. (P) 617-859-2212. HYPERLINK "<http://www.bpl.org/homework/>" [www.bpl.org/homework/](http://www.bpl.org/homework/)

DBTAC-New England ADA Center

Provides information and guidance on the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 508, and accessible information technology to individuals living in New England.

*Succeeding in College and at Work: Students with Disabilities Tell Their Stories:*

HYPERLINK "[http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/neada/site/student\\_videos](http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/neada/site/student_videos)" [http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/neada/site/student\\_videos](http://www.adaptiveenvironments.org/neada/site/student_videos)

Disability.gov

Offers job seekers, employers, and employees practical information about finding a job, recruiting and hiring people with disabilities, and job accommodations. It also offers resources on starting a small business and laws and regulations that protect the employment rights of people with disabilities. HYPERLINK "<http://www.disability.gov/employment>"

<http://www.disability.gov/employment>

Education Online

Get extra help in school with Internet tutoring. Educate Online students demonstrate increased performance and confidence in the classroom. HYPERLINK "<http://www.educate-online.com>"

[www.educate-online.com](http://www.educate-online.com)

Job Accommodation Network

Provides employers, employment providers, people with disabilities, their family members and other interested parties with information on job accommodations, entrepreneurship, and related subjects. HYPERLINK "<http://www.jan.wvu.edu>" [www.jan.wvu.edu](http://www.jan.wvu.edu)

### TERi College Planning

TERI promotes educational opportunities for all people of all ages and backgrounds. Advisors at TERI College Planning Centers, located in Boston, Brockton, and Chelsea, Massachusetts, education provide FREE, one-on-one guidance and resources to make planning and paying for college as simple as possible. HYPERLINK "<http://www.tericollegeplanning.org/index.html>" <http://www.tericollegeplanning.org/index.html>

### Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Assists individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment. MRC Main Information numbers: 1-800-245-6543 (Voice/TDD) or (617) 204-3600, Fax (617) 727-1354

HYPERLINK "<http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eohhs2subtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Consumer&L2=Disability+Services&L3=Vocational+Rehabilitation+Services&sid=Eeohhs2>" <http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=eohhs2subtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Consumer&L2=Disability+Services&L3=Vocational+Rehabilitation+Services&sid=Eeohhs2>

### My Skills Tutor

An online program that personalizes tutorials for students so they can brush up on the academic content covered on the SAT exam. HYPERLINK "<http://www.myskillstutor.com>" [www.myskillstutor.com](http://www.myskillstutor.com)

### Next Step, College!

Boston Public Schools Guide to College that features links to resources, information about cool events and much more. HYPERLINK "<http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/college>" [www.bostonpublicschools.org/college](http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/college)

### U.S. Dept. of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy

HYPERLINK "<http://www.dol.gov/odep/index.htm>" <http://www.dol.gov/odep/index.htm>



## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

### *What does this mean?*

Healthy relationship goals are meant to provide youth with skills that are necessary in order for them to develop and maintain positive interactions with teachers, family, employers, mentors, and peers with and without disabilities.

### *Why is this important?*

The ability to maintain healthy relationships is necessary in order for one to engage individuals personally and professionally. Many youth learn social skills subtly or indirectly, through imitating adults' behaviors or through developing relationships with family and peers. However, the development of social skills may be more challenging for some youth with disabilities. Youth with emotional, social and/or behavioral disabilities may not pick up on some subtle cues about human behavior and thus have a difficult time developing relationships. In addition, youth with disabilities who may have experienced social isolation may not have had the opportunity to develop these skills fully. In order to make friends, learn in school, obtain employment, resolve conflict and live independently, youth with disabilities will need to enhance their social competency and relationship building skills.

### *What will these goals look like?*

You and your mentee will work together to come up with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed) goals related to developing healthy relationships. These goals will vary depending on your mentee's age, interests, aspirations and abilities. Goals should be short and simple in the beginning, and become more complex as your relationship deepens. The most important thing to remember is that the mentee ultimately makes the decision about what s/he wants to accomplish.

### Examples of goals:

Mentee utilizes phone and/or Internet to chat with friends at least twice during the next month.

Mentee invites a friend to eat lunch with him/her at school at least once before the next match meeting.

Mentee will practice asking questions and making eye contact with mentor and other individuals he or she comes into contact with during the next match meeting.

### *What are some Resources?*

#### Boston Youth Zone

At Boston Youth Zone, kids and teens have access to activities and opportunities throughout the city. HYPERLINK "<http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com>"

[www.Bostonyouthzone.com](http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com)

### Making Healthy Connections

MHC is a series of interactive discussions and recreational activities designed to help adolescents and young adults, ages 14-22, with disabilities and special health needs prepare for adult life. HYPERLINK "[http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)" [http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)

### National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center

Find information and resource about youth violence prevention. HYPERLINK "<http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/index.asp>" <http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/index.asp>

### Teens Networking Teens

Designs and implements programming that raises teen awareness about domestic violence and sexual assault and reflect the life experiences of today's youth. Design workshops, discussion groups, and educational events all aimed at reducing the incidences of teen dating violence. TNT is a program of the Roxbury Multi-Service Center's violence prevention and intervention unit, Community Programs Against Sexual Assault (CPASA). Located at the John D. O'Bryant Community Youth Center on 434 Warren Street, across from Latin Academy, in the Grove Hall-Dorchester neighborhood of Boston. HYPERLINK "<http://www.bostonyouthzone.com/teenzone/likeitis/TNT/>" <http://www.bostonyouthzone.com/teenzone/likeitis/TNT/>



## **INDEPENDENT LIVING**

### *What does this mean?*

“Independent Living philosophy emphasizes consumer control, the idea that people with disabilities are the best experts on their own needs, having crucial and valuable perspective to contribute and deserving of equal opportunity to decide how to live, work, and take part in their communities, particularly in reference to services that powerfully affect their day-to-day lives and access to independence.” ( HYPERLINK "<http://www.ncil.org/about/WhatIsIndependentLiving.html>" <http://www.ncil.org/about/WhatIsIndependentLiving.html>)

### *Why is this important?*

“Though many people have physical, intellectual, or mental attributes that deviate from the ‘norm,’ disability is manifested in society through purposefully created and maintained physical, programmatic, and attitudinal barriers” ( HYPERLINK "<http://www.ncil.org/about/MedicalAndILModels.html>" <http://www.ncil.org/about/MedicalAndILModels.html>). Individuals with disabilities have the same wants, needs and aspirations as individuals without disabilities. One of these is the desire to live an independent lifestyle where one is free to pursue his or her own goals make his or her own decisions about life. The Independent Living movement seeks to ensure that individuals with disabilities are afforded the same Civil Rights as all individuals. “The Independent Living Model strives to eliminate discrimination by creating a society open to all people, regardless of labels, diagnoses, and society's gross misconceptions about life with a disability and people with disabilities themselves” ( HYPERLINK "<http://www.ncil.org/about/MedicalAndILModels.html>" <http://www.ncil.org/about/MedicalAndILModels.html>).

### *What will these goals look like?*

You and your mentee will work together to come up with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed) goals related to independent living. These goals will vary depending on your mentee’s age, interests, aspirations and abilities. It is important to break larger goals down into specific, realistic, and achievable goals for the short-term. Goals should be simple in the beginning, and become more complex as your relationship deepens. The most important thing to remember is that the mentee ultimately makes the decision about what he/she wants to accomplish.

### Examples of goals:

Mentee practices using the ATM and writing a check at least once by next match meeting.

Mentee arranges transportation for him/herself for next match meeting (including public transportation).

Mentee prepares meal for him/herself and mentor at next match meeting.

### *What are some Resources?*

### Boston Navigator

An online directory of the most current information about Boston's out-of-school time opportunities for youth. Includes information about sports, arts, academics, community service, the environment, etc. HYPERLINK "<http://www.bostonnavigator.org/>" <http://www.bostonnavigator.org/>

### Boston Youth Zone

At Boston Youth Zone, kids and teens have access to activities and opportunities throughout the city. HYPERLINK "<http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com>" [www.Bostonyouthzone.com](http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com)

### Making Healthy Connections

MHC is a series of interactive discussions and recreational activities designed to help adolescents and young adults, ages 14-22, with disabilities and special health needs prepare for adult life. HYPERLINK "[http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)" [http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)

### Money Talks

Consumer guide for teens that explains money management (*from Boston Youth Zone*). HYPERLINK "[http://bostonyouthzone.com/resources/money\\_talks\\_consumer\\_guide.pdf](http://bostonyouthzone.com/resources/money_talks_consumer_guide.pdf)" [http://bostonyouthzone.com/resources/money\\_talks\\_consumer\\_guide.pdf](http://bostonyouthzone.com/resources/money_talks_consumer_guide.pdf)

### National Council on Independent Living

Membership organization that advocates for the rights of individuals with disabilities. HYPERLINK "<http://www.ncil.org/>" <http://www.ncil.org/>

### Personal Care Attendants

To find out more about the Massachusetts PCA Program, contact Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL) Information and Referral Department at 617-338-6665 (voice) 617-338-6662 (TTY) or toll free at 866-338-8085 or go to HYPERLINK "<http://bostoncil.org/pca-program/>" <http://bostoncil.org/pca-program/>



## **SELF-ESTEEM**

### *Why set Goals?*

Research shows that a mentoring relationship with structure has a better chance of being successful, and setting goals together is one way you can build structure. Working together to help your mentee achieve his or her goals will also help you get to know each other and deepen your relationship.

PYD's mission is to empower youth with disabilities to reach their full potential for personal development. This is achieved by working with youth to achieve desired outcomes in the areas of self-esteem, independent living, education and employment, community involvement and building healthy relationships. Your mentee has expressed a desire to work on goals that will enhance his or her **self-esteem**.

### *What does this mean?*

An individual may be described as having high self-esteem if s/he expresses comfort and pride about own and other's abilities and disabilities, has identified his/her own talents and skills, is accomplishing goals, pursuing talents and setting new goals for the future.

### *Why is this important?*

An individual's level of self-esteem is a strong variable in fostering his or her well-being. Youth often experience stressors that can build or damper their self-esteem, and youth with disabilities are no different. In fact, youth with disabilities may encounter illness or disability-related challenges in their daily lives that can sometimes result in lower self-esteem. For these youth, it may be especially crucial to bolster self-esteem so s/he learns how to cope with difficult situations. Higher levels of self-esteem provide youth with resilience, or an ability to successfully overcome difficult circumstances. Higher self-esteem may also result in higher life satisfaction and decreased levels of anxiety.

### *What will these goals look like?*

You and your mentee will work together to come up with SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-framed) goals related to bolstering the mentee's self-esteem. These goals will vary depending on your mentee's age, interests, aspirations and abilities. It is important to break larger goals down into specific, realistic, and achievable goals for the short-term. Goals should be simple in the beginning, and become more complex as your relationship deepens.

### Examples of goals:

Mentee will keep a journal and write one positive comment about his or herself everyday for the next month.

Mentee will take initiative to plan an activity for next match meeting.

By the end of the month, the mentee will come up with a new goal for himself/herself to accomplish.

*What are some Resources?*

#### Boston Youth Zone

At Boston Youth Zone, kids and teens have access to activities and opportunities throughout the city. HYPERLINK "<http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com>"  
[www.Bostonyouthzone.com](http://www.Bostonyouthzone.com)

#### Making Healthy Connections

MHC is a series of interactive discussions and recreational activities designed to help adolescents and young adults, ages 14-22, with disabilities and special health needs prepare for adult life. HYPERLINK "[http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)" [http://www.pyd.org/mentoring\\_programs/healthy\\_connections.htm](http://www.pyd.org/mentoring_programs/healthy_connections.htm)

#### Mayor's Youth Council

The Mayor's Youth Council provides Boston's young people with an active role in addressing youth issues. High school juniors and seniors are selected to serve as volunteer representatives of every neighborhood in the city. The young advocates outreach to Boston teens, inform them of existing opportunities and listen to suggestions on what the city can do to improve its youth oriented efforts. HYPERLINK "<http://www.bostonyouthzone.com/myc/>" <http://www.bostonyouthzone.com/myc/>

#### Teens In Print

Want to see your name in print? Teens in Print, a citywide newspaper for teens by teens, is looking for articles, reviews, essays, letters, pictures, poems, art, photos, and stories from BPS

high school students. Contact at: WriteBoston 617-541-2651, HYPERLINK "<http://www.bostontip.com>" [www.bostontip.com](http://www.bostontip.com), HYPERLINK "<http://www.writeboston.org>" [www.writeboston.org](http://www.writeboston.org).

Mail submissions to: Boston Teens in Print  
c/o WriteBoston  
7 Palmer Street  
Roxbury, MA 02119

## Examples

<i>Desired Outcome</i>	<i>Goal:</i>	<i>SMART strategy:</i>
Self-Esteem & Healthy Relationships	Mentee will make new friends in school.	Not very specific. How will this be measured? What is the time-frame?
	<i>Within the next two months, the mentee will have lunch with two new classmates.</i>	<i>SMART</i>
Independent Living	Mentee will ride the T all over Boston.	Is it relevant, does mentee want to ride T? Is it achievable, seems a bit extreme. What is the time-frame?
	<i>Within the next two months, the mentee will ride the T by himself to one of our match meetings.</i>	<i>SMART</i>
Education & Employment	The Mentee will improve her grades by the end of the year.	Not very specific or measurable. Will improve what grades, and by how much?
	<i>The mentee will improve her scores in English class by one grade level (C → B) at the end of the semester.</i>	<i>SMART</i>

## **Activity: Goal-Setting**

Below are some examples of goals that matches may set for mentees.

*Revise the goal so that it meets the criteria for a SMART goal.*

*Identify the desired outcome area(s) that the goal fits within.*

Community Involvement

Education and employment

Building healthy relationships

Independent Living

Self-Esteem

Adam will improve his basketball skills.

Sasha will get better at saving money.

John will communicate more with friends.

*Specific*

**Measurable**

**Achievable**

**Relevant**

MENTEE GOAL and DESIRED OUTCOME	RESOURCES	MENTEE RESPONSIBILITIES	MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES	WILL ACCOMPLISH BY...
<u>Example Goal:</u> Improve score on next math test by 20 points. <u>Outcome:</u> EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT	Math book, Previous test, Study time, Tutoring, Fun activity as incentive	Complete all math homework Study extra 15 minutes a night Practice missed problems from last test	Practice study skills with mentee Assist with math homework Provide incentives / reward for studying	Next math test.

**Time-Framed**

## **BOUNDARIES**

The definition of a boundary is a border or limit. It is very important for mentors to think in advance about setting appropriate boundaries with their mentees. When working with young people, there are *do's* and *don'ts* which are prescribed by the nature of the relationship, the context, and other factors specific to the mentees' age and developmental level. Just as you think about boundaries at work and with different groups of people, it is important for you to always be thinking about what is and is not appropriate in your mentoring relationships. Keep in mind the three types of boundaries:

### **1. Physical**

Be clear with your mentee about what type of physical contact is appropriate. Decide what type of physical contact, if any, you and your mentee will have. For example, is it okay for your mentee to give you a hug at the end of your meetings? If you have a young mentee, will you hold hands when you cross the street?

### **2. Emotional**

Deciding what and how much personal information to share with your mentee can be challenging. Your mentee may bring up sensitive issues such as sexual activity or drug use. Listen without judging, and remember to keep such conversations confidential unless the mentee or someone else may be harmed. How much information you share about yourself will depend upon the age of your mentee and the policies of your mentoring program. *However, do not share if a certain topic makes you uncomfortable or you are not sure whether you should.*

### **3. Social**

Your program most likely has specified guidelines about the meeting schedule you and your mentee will follow. You might meet once a week for an hour. But what if your mentee would like to see you more often? What if s/he would like to talk on the phone every day? Let your mentee know how often and what type of contact is appropriate.

Here are five things you can consider as you make decisions about what is or is not acceptable in your mentoring relationship:

1. Is it safe? Is it legal? Is there potential for harm (physical, social or emotional)?
2. Is it within the rules and guidelines established by your mentoring program?
3. Have your mentee's parents/caregivers told you what they expect and will accept, and it is within those guidelines?
4. Will it contribute to the positive and healthy development of your mentee?
5. Does it fit your comfort level and expectations for your mentoring relationship?

*If the answer to any of the five is no, this may be a sign of a potential boundary conflict. If you have any concerns about an activity or decision, follow up with your program coordinator, your mentee's parents/caregivers, or (depending on the age of the mentee) your mentee to clarify any uncertain areas.*

Source: Search Institute for Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota. Copyright 2007 by Search Institute, Minneapolis, Minnesota (HYPERLINK "<http://www.search-institutue.org/>"[www.search-institutue.org](http://www.search-institutue.org/) . All rights reserved.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Many relationships end because of poor communication; this is also true of mentoring relationships. Developing and practicing the following four communication skills will help when your goal is to open up communication with a young person. You can also help your mentee develop these useful skills.

### **1. Active Listening**

Active listening is an attempt to truly understand the content and emotion of what the other person is saying by paying attention to the verbal and non-verbal messages. To actively listen, you must focus, hear, respect, and communicate your desire to understand. It is *not* a time to be planning a response or conveying how *you* feel.

#### **Skills to use:**

Eye contact

Body language, e.g. open and relaxed posture, forward lean, appropriate facial expressions, positive use of gestures, etc.

Verbal cues, such as “um-hmmm”, “sure”, “ah”, “yes”, etc.

#### **Verbal and non-verbal cues to avoid:**

Body language – slouching, turning away, or pointing a finger

Timing – speaking too fast or too slow

Facial expression – smiling, squirming, raising eyebrows, gritting teeth

Tone of voice – shouting, whispering, sneering, whining

Choice of words – speaking sharply, accusatively, pretentiously, over-emotionally

*Be sure to understand what may or may not be acceptable in your mentee's culture, though. For instance, making eye contact may not be appropriate in some cultures.*

### **2. “I” Messages**

“I” messages keep the focus on you and explain your feelings in response to someone else's behavior.

#### **“I” messages do:**

avoid judgments  
help keep communication open  
communicate information and respect for both people's positions

**“I” messages do not**

accuse  
point a finger at the other person  
place blame

Example: “*I* was really sad when you didn’t show up for our meeting last week. I look forward to our meetings, and I was disappointed not to see you. In the future, I would appreciate it if you could call me and let me know if you will not be able to make it.”

**3. Paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing is a good way to make sure you heard correctly what your mentee said and lets your mentee know that you hear, understand, and care about his/her thoughts and feelings. Paraphrasing enables you to gather information and be able to simply report back what you heard in the message—the facts and the attitudes/feelings that s/he expressed.

*This communication skill is particularly helpful with youth, since youth culture/language is constantly changing.*

**Phrases to use for deciphering *fact***

“So you’re saying that . . .”

“You believe that . . .”

“The problem is . . .”

**Phrases to use for deciphering *feeling***

“You feel that . . .”

“Your reaction is . . .”

“And that made you feel . . .”

*Remember, paraphrasing does not mean evaluating, sympathizing, stating an opinion, offering advice, analyzing or questioning.*

**4. Open-Ended Questions**

Open-ended questions are intended to collect information by exploring feelings, attitudes and views. They are extremely helpful when dealing with young people, who often answer questions with as few words as possible.

**Examples of open-ended questions:**

“How do you see this situation?”

“What are your reasons for . . .?”

“Can you give me an example?”  
“How does this affect you?”  
“How did you decide that?”  
“What would you like to do about it?”  
“What part did you play?”

## **ROADBLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Certain styles tend to “close down” rather than “open up” communication. Following are examples of styles that “close down”:

### **1. Ordering, directing, commanding**

Examples:

“You have to meet me when I say so.”  
“Tell your friend to stop talking to you like that!”  
“Stop complaining!”

### **2. Moralizing, preaching**

(Invoking vague outside authority as accepted truth, using words like *should* and *ought*)

Examples:

“You shouldn’t act like that.”  
“You ought to do . . .”  
“Children are supposed to respect their elders.”

### **3. Lecturing, making logical arguments**

(Trying to influence with facts, counter-arguments, logic, information, or your own opinion)

Examples:

“College can be the most wonderful experience you’ll ever have.”  
“Young people must learn to get along with one another.”

“Let’s look at the facts about college graduates.”

“If kids learn to take responsibility in their neighborhoods, they’ll grow up to be responsible adults.”

“When I was your age, I had twice as much to do as you.”

#### **4. Judging, criticizing, disagreeing, blaming**

Examples:

“You’re not thinking clearly.”

“That’s an immature point of view.”

“You’re very wrong about that.”

“I couldn’t disagree with you more.”

#### **5. Withdrawing, distracting, using sarcasm, humoring, diverting**

Examples:

“Just forget it.”

“Let’s not talk about it.”

“Come on, let’s talk about something more pleasant.”

“We’ve been through this before.”

#### **6. Disregarding communication styles or needs**

The examples above illustrate word choices that are obstacles to communication.

Unwillingness to accommodate a person’s needs in other ways can also present roadblocks to communications.

Examples:

Assuming someone does not communicate or cannot understand because of his/her disability.

Yelling to make yourself understood to someone whose first language is not your own.

### **DISABILITY ETIQUETTE**

One in five Americans has a disability. You may interact every day with someone who has a disability and not even be aware of it. Sometimes people are uncomfortable around people with disabilities and do not know how to act or what to say. Here are some general tips to make communicating easier:

First and foremost, treat people with disabilities with dignity and respect. People with disabilities have different personalities and preferences—to find out what a person wants, ask.

When you meet someone with a disability, it is appropriate to shake hands, even if that person has limited hand use or artificial limbs. Touching hands (or prosthesis) or shaking the left hand in greeting is also appropriate.

Always ask before assisting a person with a disability, and listen carefully to any

instructions. Do not interfere with anyone's full control over his/her assistive devices. For example, before you push someone's wheelchair, make sure to ask if s/he wants to be pushed. Likewise, never move crutches or communication boards out of reach without the owner's permission.

Most people with disabilities enjoy assisting others and want to serve as well as be served.

Do not ask personal questions of someone you do not know well. People with disabilities usually do not want to make the origin or details of their disability the first topic of conversation.

Be considerate of the extra time it might take a person with a disability to get some things done.

Speak directly to the person with a disability rather than to a companion or sign language interpreter who may be present.

Do not be embarrassed to use common expressions such as, "I've got to run now," "See you later," or "Have you heard about..." even if the person you are speaking with does not run, see or hear well. People with disabilities use these phrases all the time!

Some terms that were acceptable in the past, such as "crippled", "deaf and dumb" and "wheelchair-bound" are no longer appropriate because of negative associations. Instead, say "person with a disability," "Mary is deaf (or hard of hearing)", and "Denise uses a wheelchair." This type of language focuses on the person rather than the disability.

Avoid excessive praise when people with disabilities accomplish normal tasks. Living with a disability is an adjustment, one most people have to make at some point in their lives and does not require exaggerated compliments.

Do not lean on a person's wheelchair, which is considered an extension of personal space.

When talking to a person in a wheelchair for more than a few minutes, try to sit to be at eye level.

Do not pet a guide or companion dog who is working.

Give unhurried attention to a person who has difficulty speaking. If you cannot understand what the person has said, do not pretend; ask him/her to repeat it.

Speak calmly, slowly and directly to a person who is hard of hearing. Do not shout or speak in the person's ear. Your facial expressions, gestures, and body movements help in

understanding. If you are not certain you have been understood, write your message.

Greet someone who is visually impaired by telling him/her your name and where you are. If you offer walking assistance, let the person take your arm and then tell him/her when you are approaching inclines or turning right or left.

Many people have disabilities that are not apparent. Just because you cannot see a disability does not mean it does not exist.

Do not let fear of saying or doing something wrong prevent you from getting to know someone who has a disability. If you are unsure of what to say when you first meet, try "Hello!"

Help make community events available to everyone by holding them in wheelchair accessible locations.

**KNOWING YOUR PROGRAM'S GOALS, POLICIES AND**

## **PROCEDURES**

Below are lists of questions to help you gain a better understanding of your mentoring program and prompt you to consider issues you may need to resolve as a mentor.

### **Logistics:**

How is a match made?

How much time/how often do I spend with my mentee?

How will I know what activities I can do with my mentee?

What if the match does not seem to be going well?

### **The Mentees:**

What are the mentees like?

What challenges do they face?

What are their backgrounds?

Why are they in this program?

### **The Relationship:**

What roles will I play?

What should we talk about?

How will I know if I am doing or saying the right things?

Why am I not feeling satisfied with my work with this mentee?

What do I do if I am going on vacation?

Can I give my mentee money or a gift?

How do I answer questions about sensitive issues (e.g. sexuality, drug use, etc.)?

What do I do if my mentee does not open up to me?

### **The Family:**

How do the parents/caregivers feel about their child getting a mentor?

How might the family respond to me?

Do I contact the mentee's parent? Under what circumstances?

How can I know I am helping my mentee when I feel his/her parents are telling them the opposite of what I am telling them?

## MONTHLY SURVEY

Look out for our monthly newsletter for suggestions for match activities, youth opportunities and upcoming PYD events. If you're not receiving the newsletter for some reason, be sure to contact Alex at [afreeman@pyd.org](mailto:afreeman@pyd.org). This newsletter will include a monthly "SurveyMonkey" link that we ask mentors and mentees to fill out each month. By doing so, you helps us keep tabs on our program as a whole, but also support you in your match.

Filling out the survey is easy! It only takes five – ten minutes and the questions are very straightforward:

Name, first and last.

Were you and your mentor able to meet in person this last month?

How many hours (in whole numbers) did you spend with your mentor in this past month (If you did not spend any time with your mentor, please respond with 0)?

Which Mentor Match Desired Outcomes did you address with your mentor this past month (check all that apply):

Healthy relationships  
Community involvement  
Vocation/education opportunities  
Self-esteem  
Independent living skills

How many times in the past month did you communicate with your mentor via email and/or phone?

What in-person activities did you do with your mentor this past month to address one or more of the Mentor Match Desired Outcomes?

Do you have any concerns, questions or comments that would be helped by staff follow-up?

## **APPENDIX**

### **Reporting Abuse or Neglect**

Under Massachusetts law, the Department of Social Services (DSS) is the state agency that receives all reports of suspected abuse or neglect of children under the age of 18. State law requires professionals whose work brings them in contact with children to notify DSS if they suspect that a child has been—or is at risk of being—abused or neglected. DSS depends on reports from professional and other concerned individuals to learn about children who may need protection.

Under Massachusetts law, the Massachusetts Disabled Persons Projection Commission is the state agency that receives all reports of suspected abuse or neglect of any person who is disabled. Under the Massachusetts Disabled Person Protection Law, a disabled person is defined as an individual between the ages of 18-59 who is mentally retarded or otherwise mentally or physically disabled as a result of mental or physical disability; and who is wholly or partially dependent on others to meet his/her daily living needs.

Contact information for Massachusetts Disabled Protection Commission:

1-800-245-0062

1-800-426-9009 (24 hour hotline)

#### **Mentoring Program Staff are Mandated Reporters**

According to the Ombudsman's Office of the Department of Social Services, mentoring program staff are mandated reporters in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and required to follow the procedures outlined in Chapter 119, sections 51 A-E of Massachusetts law. Only paid employees are mandated reporters.<sup>3</sup> Although there is no legal obligation for volunteers to report suspected abuse or neglect of children, mentoring programs are encouraged to familiarize their volunteers with the reporting procedure in their organization and encourage them to fulfill their moral responsibility to care for and protect youth.

Massachusetts law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to the Department of Social Services when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse or neglect. A

written report must be submitted to DSS within 48 hours after the oral report has been made. During the screening and investigation, mandated reporters are required, upon request by DSS, to disclose relevant information to the Department. Failure to make a report can be punished by a fine of up to \$1,000. Under the law, mandated reporters are protected from liability in any civil or criminal action and from any discriminatory or retaliatory action by an employer.

### **How Are Abuse and Neglect Defined by Law?**

Abuse means: The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker that causes or creates a substantial risk of physical or emotional injury or constitutes a sexual offense; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of the individual.

Neglect means: Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth or other essential care.

### **What Does This Mean for Me as a Mentor?**

As a volunteer mentor, you are not mandated by law to report suspected abuse or neglect. However, you do have a moral responsibility to care for and protect the young person you are mentoring.

If you suspect your mentee is being abused or neglected, your response is to immediately report to your mentoring program manager or coordinator. If you cannot contact the program, i.e. at night, on a weekend, or another time when the program is closed, you should contact the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS) directly. DSS procedures for reporting abuse or neglect are included in the handbook appendix along with contact phone numbers for DSS.

Remember, you are expected to make an immediate oral report *not a judgment* about an incident or circumstance. It is the role of the DSS to investigate and make a determination about the information you provide.



# **MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING A GUIDE FOR MANDATED REPORTERS**

## **Introduction**

Under Massachusetts's law, the Department of Social Services (DSS) is the state agency that receives all reports of suspected abuse or neglect of children under the age of 18. State law requires professionals whose work brings them in contact with children to notify DSS if they suspect that a child has been – or is at risk of being – abused or neglected. DSS depends on reports from professionals and other concerned individuals to learn about children who may need protection. The Department receives reports on more than 100,000 children each year.

The Department's primary mission is to protect children who have been abused or neglected in a family setting. DSS seeks to ensure that each child has a safe, nurturing, permanent home. The Department also provides a range of preventive services to support and strengthen families with children at risk of abuse or neglect.

References to Massachusetts's law in this Guide are citations from Chapter 119, sections 51A-E.

## **Who is a mandated reporter?**

Massachusetts's law defines the following professionals as mandated reporters:

Physicians, medical interns, hospital personnel engaged in the examination, care or treatment of persons, medical examiners,

Psychologists, emergency medical technicians, dentists, nurses, chiropractors, podiatrists, optometrists, osteopaths,

Public or private schoolteachers,

Educational administrators, guidance or family counselors,

Day care and child care workers, including any person paid to care for, or work with, a child in any public or private facility, or home or program funded or licensed by the Commonwealth, which provides day care or residential services. This includes child care resource and referral agencies, as well as voucher management agencies, family day care and child care food programs,

Probation officers, clerks magistrate of the district courts, parole officers,

Social workers,

Foster parents,

Firefighters or police officers,

Office of Child Care Services licensors,

School attendance officers, allied mental health and licensed human services professionals,

Drug and alcoholism counselors,

Psychiatrists and clinical social workers.

Mandated Reporters who are staff members of medical or other public or private

institutions, schools or facilities, must either notify the Department directly or notify the person in charge of the institution, school or facility, or his/her designee, who then becomes responsible for filing the report. Should the person in charge/designee advise against filing, the staff member retains the right to contact DSS directly.

### **As a mandated reporter, what are my responsibilities?**

Massachusetts law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to the Department of Social Services when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse or neglect. You should report any physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse; or any indication of neglect, including malnutrition; or any instance in which a child is determined to be physically dependent upon an addictive drug at birth.

A written report must be submitted to DSS within 48 hours after the oral report has been made. Please note that any mandated reporter who fails to make required oral and written reports can be punished by a fine of up to \$1,000.

During the screening and investigation of a 51A report, any mandated reporter who has information which he/she believes might aid the Department in determining whether a child has been abused or neglected shall, upon request by DSS, disclose the relevant information to the Department. Under the law, mandated reporters are protected from liability in any civil or criminal action and from any discriminatory or retaliatory actions by an employer.

### **Who is a caretaker?**

A “Caretaker” can be a child’s parent, step-parent, guardian, or any household member entrusted with the responsibility for a child’s health or welfare. In addition, any other person entrusted with the responsibility for a child’s health or welfare, both in and out of the child’s home, regardless of age, is considered a caretaker. Examples may include relatives from outside the home, teachers or school staff in a school setting, workers at day care and child care centers (including babysitters), foster parents, staff at a group care facility, or persons charged with caring for children in any other comparable setting.

### **How are abuse and neglect defined?**

Under the Department of Social Services regulations (110 CMR, section 2.00):

**Abuse means:** The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker upon a child under age 18 which causes, or creates substantial risk of, physical or emotional injury; or constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of that individual. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., abuse can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).

**Neglect means:** Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapping condition. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., neglect can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).

**Physical Injury means:** Death; or fracture of a bone, a subdural hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, and any other such nontrivial injury; or soft tissue swelling or skin bruising, depending upon such factors as the child's age, circumstances under which the injury occurred and the number and location of bruises; or addiction to a drug or drugs at birth; or failure to thrive.

**Emotional Injury means:** An impairment to or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior.

**How do I make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect? When must I file it?**

When you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, you should immediately **telephone the DSS Area Office** serving the child's residence and ask for the Protective Screening Unit. You will find a directory of the DSS Area Offices at the end of this Guide. Offices are staffed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. To make a report at any other time, including after 5 p.m. and on weekends and holidays, please call the **Child-At-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200**.

As a mandated reporter you are also required by law to mail or fax a written report to the Department within 48 hours after making the oral report. The form for filing this report can be obtained from your local DSS Area Office. Your report should include:

- All identifying information you have about the child and parent or other caretaker, if known;
- The nature and extent of the suspected abuse or neglect, including any evidence or knowledge of prior injury, abuse, maltreatment, or neglect;
- The circumstances under which you first became aware of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect;
- What action, if any, has been taken thus far to treat, shelter, or otherwise assist the child;
- Any other information you believe might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury and/or person responsible.

Hospital personnel should take photographs of any trauma that is visible on the child and mail or deliver the photographs to DSS with the written report.

As a mandated reporter, you are required by law to also provide DSS with your name, address and telephone number.

We recommend that you inform the family that you have referred them to DSS for help, but do not do so if you think it would increase the risk to the child.

If you have any questions about whether or not to report a situation, please do not hesitate to contact your local DSS Area Office.

### **What happens after DSS receives a report of suspected child abuse or neglect?**

There are several possibilities, depending on the allegations reported and other case-specific circumstances:

If the Department determines there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, a social worker is assigned to investigate the report. The investigation, called a 51B, includes a home visit during which the social worker meets and talks with the child and the care-taker. If DSS determines that the situation is an emergency, the investigation is completed within 24 hours after the report is designated as an emergency. Investigations of all other reports are completed within 10 days.

If the Department determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that an incident of abuse or neglect by a caretaker did occur, the report is **supported** and the Department provides the family with services to reduce the risk of harm to the child. If the report is **unsupported** but the family appears to be in need of services, the Department may offer the family services on a voluntary basis. DSS will notify the mandated reporter, in writing, of its decision.

### **Referrals to the District Attorney**

It is important to note that if the Department determines a child has been sexually abused or sexually exploited, has suffered serious physical abuse or injury, or has died as a result of abuse or neglect, DSS must notify the District Attorney, who has the authority to file criminal charges, as well as local law enforcement authorities for the county where the child resides and where the offense occurred.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES RESOURCES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS</b>	
<b>DSS Website</b>	HYPERLINK " <a href="http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/dss">http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/dss</a> "
<b>DSS Library</b> Information about child abuse and neglect	617-748-2373
<b>DSS Ombudsman's Office</b> 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each workday	617-748-2444

<b>Child-At-Risk Hotline</b>	1-800-792-5200
<b>Foster/Adoptive Care Recruitment Line</b>	1-800-KIDS-508
<b>Kid's Net Connections</b> Foster/Adoptive Helpline	1-800-486-3730
<b>DSS Area Office Directory:</b> (Ask for the Protective Screening Unit)	
<b>BOSTON</b>	<b>CENTRAL</b>
Hyde Park - 617-360-2500 Dimock Street, Roxbury - 617-989-2800 Park Street - 617-822-4700 Chelsea - 617-660-3400	Leominster - 978-466-1500 Whitinsville - 508-234-1000 Worcester - 508-929-2000
<b>NORTHEAST</b>	<b>METRO</b>
Lowell - 978-275-6800 Lawrence - 978-557-2500 Haverhill - 978-469-8800 Cape Ann/Salem - 978-825-3800 Lynn - 781-477-1600	Malden - 781-388-7100 Framingham - 508-424-0100 Cambridge/Somerville - 617-520-8700 Arlington - 781-641-8500 South Weymouth - 781-682-0800
<b>SOUTHEAST</b>	<b>WEST</b>
Attleboro - 508-431-9500 Brockton - 508-894-3700 Fall River - 508-235-9800 New Bedford - 508-910-1000 Cape & Islands - 508-760-0200 Plymouth - 508-732-6200	Pittsfield - 413-236-1800 Greenfield - 413-775-5000 Holyoke - 413-493-2600 East Springfield - 413-205-0500 Springfield - 413-452-3200

## **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

*Identify the stage of the relationship*

*Create one SMART goal to address the issue*

*Identify one resource that could help with this goal*

1. You were paired with a mentee named Michelle less than a month ago. You have met with Michelle for three weeks in a row. Michelle is very quiet. You have tried for the last three weeks to encourage her to talk by asking her about her school, friends and family. Every attempt you make at conversation is quickly squashed by Michelle's difficulty to overcome her shyness. You are starting to get very frustrated by the situation and doubt whether Michelle is even interested in having a mentor.
2. Your mentee Isaiah is a junior in high school. He has a physical disability that necessitates the use of a wheelchair. He has average grades and is a writer for the high school paper. You have talked to Isaiah about the possibility of going to college. He has expressed to you that he is worried about living on his own and caring for himself.
3. You and your mentee Justin have been paired together for almost a year. You are moving to Florida for a new job in 2 months. You have a great relationship with your mentee and have accomplished the goals you set together. However, Justin is worried and upset about your imminent departure.
4. Your mentee Johnny is in the fourth grade and you have been paired with him for 6 months. He has told you a number of times that he hates school and wishes he didn't have to go. When you try to help Johnny with his homework, he loses focus and sometimes even gets angry. You feel frustrated because last week Johnny angrily reminded you that you are not his teacher and you can't make him do his homework.
5. Your mentee Maria has been receiving low grades in school. Her principal told her that she may be kicked off the basketball team if her grades do not improve. Basketball is extremely important to her and she hoped to someday get a basketball scholarship.
6. Luis is in the second grade and you were paired with him about a month ago. You know that Luis has had a lot of changes in his life over the past several months. You don't know all the details, but you do know that in August he went to live with his father. (Luis had previously lived with his mother and two sisters.) Luis has been acting out in school and he has gotten into numerous altercations with other kids.
7. Alexis is 16 years old and has just gotten a part time job. Learning to save money is one of the goals you and your mentee Alexis have set. She is spending the majority of her paychecks on new clothes. She tells you that she has decided that saving money is not that important to her anymore.

8. You have only met with your mentee Tanya once - at the initial mentor/match meeting. You seemed to hit it off with Tanya when you met her. She was very talkative and outgoing. You make plans to meet for lunch the following week. You made sure that Tanya wrote the date down in her calendar. The day of your lunch date arrives and Tanya does not show up. You are disappointed and questioning whether or not to contact Tanya again.

9. You and your mentee Kasi have met with each other four times. Each time the activity has been something that you have chosen. Kasi is outgoing and opens up to you about things that are going on in her life but when you ask her for suggestions for activities, she never has any ideas.

### **EVALUATION FORM**

**I will be able to apply what I learned today to my mentoring experience.**

agree                      somewhat agree                      somewhat disagree  
disagree

**Ideas were presented in a clear manner.**

agree                      somewhat agree                      somewhat disagree  
disagree

**There was sufficient opportunity for interaction and discussion**

agree                      somewhat agree                      somewhat disagree  
disagree

**The trainer was knowledgeable about the topics presented.**

agree                      somewhat agree                      somewhat disagree  
disagree

**I know more about what mentoring is.**

agree                      somewhat agree                      somewhat disagree  
disagree

**I understand my role as a mentor.**

agree                      somewhat agree                      somewhat disagree  
disagree

**I feel confident about goal setting with my mentee.**

agree

somewhat agree

somewhat disagree

disagree

**I know more about mentoring youth with disabilities than I did before the training.**

agree

somewhat agree

somewhat disagree

disagree

**What did you like best about the session:**

**What could be better next time:**

**Do you have any other comments you'd like to share:**

*Mass Mentoring Counts*, Mass Mentoring Partnership and Donahue Institute, UMass Boston, 2006  
([www.massmentors.org/research](http://www.massmentors.org/research))

*Elements of Effective Practice*, MENTOR/The National Mentoring Partnership

Conversation with Ombudsman's Office, Department of Social Services, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, March 2, 2007.

HYPERLINK "<http://www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&PageID=124&c:%5CCfusionMX7%5Cverify/Data%5Cdummy.txt>"[http://www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&PageID=124&c:\CfusionMX7\verify/Data\dummy.txt](http://www.nod.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.viewPage&PageID=124&c:\CfusionMX7\verify\Data\dummy.txt)

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**GOAL-SETTING**

MENTEE: \_\_\_\_\_

MENTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Match Desired Outcomes:

- ◆ Self-Esteem ◆ Independent Living ◆ Education & Employment ◆
- ◆ Healthy Relationships ◆ Community Involvement ◆