

Title: Training is Key to Relationship Success: Why and how to comply with Training Standard in the Element of Effective Practice for Mentoring

Facilitator and room number: Janis Kupersmidt (Innovation Research & Training, USA); 1.402

Documented by: Angela Grünert

Number of participants: 34

Who are you and to which institution do you belong to?

Dr. Kupersmidt is the President and a Senior Research Scientist at innovation Research & Training (iRT). She is also a licensed clinical child psychologist focusing on delinquent, aggressive, and substance abusing youth. During her research career, she has been the Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on approximately 60 grants or contract awards and has published over 80 papers, chapters, and books on the topics of mentoring, aggression, delinquency, social information processing skills, peer relations, substance abuse, prevention, mindfulness, media literacy education, and positive youth development. In addition, she has authored or co-authored many evidence-based prevention programs (e.g. Preparing for Mentoring, Media Detective, Aware, Buddy Builder programs). She has conducted numerous training workshops around the world and completed over 150 presentations at scientific or professional conferences. Previously, she was an Assistant Professor at the University of Virginia and then, retired as an Associate Professor at UNC-CH to found iRT, where she develops and evaluates programs and services to enhance the lives of youth, families, and communities.

Please see: <http://www.irtinc.us/About/iRTStaff/JanisKupersmidt.aspx>

Starting hypothesis:

Mentoring researchers and programmes seek ways to improve the positive impact of mentoring. Pre-match training is a key programme practice that prepares mentors for being knowledgeable and feeling ready to begin a mentoring relationship. In addition, pre-match training for mentees and their parents or guardians have very positive impacts on match outcomes.

Sequence of content:

The facilitator presented two short videos and a PowerPoint Presentation on the content and results of the *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring (EPPM)*. A research study on training practises with a specific highlight on pre-match trainings.

Main results presented by the facilitator:

Mentoring does not work, if expectations are not realistic: therefore pre-match trainings are substantial for the success of the programme. Research on satisfaction of mentors about pre-training clearly indicates that the majority is more confident to start mentoring and understands their role and the concept of mentoring better.

The quality of the programme has to be based on standards and benchmarks. Therefore mentors, mentees and guardians need to agree on guidelines about programme requirements (match length, frequency, duration of visits, protocols for missing, being late etc).

Safety first! Give priority to risk management – Clear statements on what the policy is concerning transportation, insurance, appropriate physical contact, confidential issues etc are crucial.

Main questions for the discussion:

How to deliver successful and adequate trainings for volunteer mentors, mentees and parents? (Content for different target/age groups, framework of training, time)

Results of the session:

Fixed standards, rules and benchmarks (as described in the EEPM) help parents, mentees and mentors to get prepared, understand the programme and become motivated before it starts. While the programme is running, those standards function as guidelines to secure safety and support.

Main statements highlighting the results of the discussion:

- Recruit mentors and mentees; train them before the mentoring starts; when you initiate and establish relationships: make sure that they are safe; care for mentors.
- “You have to know each other in order to have a successful relationship.”

References:

- mentoringcentral.net
- mentoring.org