



THE NEED

High quality mentoring can be transformational for children and youth, as many of us know from our lived experiences. What you may not know is that it's backed by research, which shows mentoring relationships are proven to help youth thrive emotionally, developmentally, and in school.

A recent national study showed one out of every three youth will reach age 19 without the benefit of a positive mentor in their lives.

Nationally, that's 16 million children, and in Eastern Pennsylvania alone, that's more than 388,000 children and youth. Despite the existence of an estimated 200 mentoring programs in the same geographic area, our youth continue to experience a **Mentoring Gap**, where children and youth who need high quality mentors in their lives don't have access.

THE SOLUTION

To close the Mentoring Gap, we need more **high quality mentoring programs** and **high quality mentors** empowering our children and youth. **Quality matters:** high quality mentoring can be transformational, but poor quality mentoring can be harmful. That's where **MENTOR Independence Region** (MENTOR IR) comes in.

To maximize the quality of programs and the likelihood of positive outcomes for children and youth, **MENTOR IR aims to increase the use of research and evidence-based best practices in the mentoring field to improve quality in mentoring programs and equip mentors with the skills they need to facilitate the empowerment of their mentees.**

MENTOR IR works **directly** with mentoring programs and mentors to help them become aware of the research and evidence-based practices that have been shown to increase the likelihood of positive outcomes for youth. We do this through:

- **TRAININGS** that equip participants with the awareness, knowledge and skills needed to apply the *Elements of Effective Practice* (EEP) for youth mentoring to their mentoring work. The EEP is widely accepted as the national and global standards for quality youth mentoring and represents the latest in research and practitioner-led best practices in mentoring programs
- **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** that aids programs in improving their capacity and quality by providing individualized support to mentoring programs
- **QUALITY MENTORING ASSESSMENT SYSTEM** that provides a deep assessment of mentoring programs strengths and areas for improvement and an individualized improvement plan
- **PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING** that facilitates stronger connections among mentoring practitioners, increasing the likelihood of collaboration and shared goals
- **TOOLS AND TEMPLATES** that enhance mentoring programs' ability to align their processes with the *Elements of Effective Practice* -- available free on our website



MENTOR IR WORKS SYSTEMETICALLY TO CLOSE THE MENTORING GAP BY:

- **ADVOCACY** for high quality mentoring, improving awareness of high quality mentoring and its benefits, which helps generate more funding and volunteers for high quality programs
- **MENTORING CONNECTOR** serves as a national registry of mentoring programs as well as a singular entry point for interested mentors to connect to those programs
- **STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS** that aim to bring resources, mentoring champions, and best practices together to close the Mentoring Gap

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **MENTOR IR IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE.** Last year, we trained 487 people on best practices in mentoring and running high quality mentoring programs, representing 50 mentoring programs across the region.
- **OUR TRAININGS ARE HIGH QUALITY.** 99% of training participants indicated they gained relevant knowledge from the training, and rated trainings an average of 4.7 out of 5!
- **MENTORING PROGRAMS ARE IMPROVING THEIR QUALITY.** In 2016, MENTOR IR provided more than 500 hours of one-to-one consultation with mentoring programs on evidence-based mentoring practices, improving the quality of 14 mentoring programs.
- **MORE VOLUNTEERS ARE STEPPING UP TO BE MENTORS.** Last year, more than 315 potential volunteers used the Mentoring Connector database to connect to local mentoring programs.

AFFILIATIONS

MENTOR IR is an affiliate of **MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership**, the unifying champion for expanding quality youth mentoring relationships in the United States.

MENTOR IR is powered by **Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Region**, the third largest BBBS agency in the nation, with more than 100 years of youth mentoring experience. Serving nearly 4,000 children annually, BBBS Independence Region knows that partnership and collaboration are critical to close the Mentoring Gap.

MENTOR IR is a Technical Assistance Provider with the **National Mentoring Resource Center**.



@mentor_ir



/MentorIR



@Mentor_IR



MentorIR.org

Sources:

- DuBois, D. L., Portillo, N., Rhodes, J. E., Silverthorn, N., & Valentine, J. C. (2011). How effective are mentoring programs for youth? A systematic assessment of the evidence. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 12(2), 57-91.
- Bruce, Mary and Bridgeland, John (2014). *The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring*. Washington, D.C.: Civic Enterprises with Hart Research Associates for MENTOR.