

Quality Relationship Rubric

Best Practice Resources – Match Support

Use this rubric to identify the strength of youth mentoring relationships. Assign the match a 1-5 rating for each quality indicator, then add all scores together and divide by 5 for an overall match score. Mentoring relationships with a score of 3 or less will require more consistent relationship building support from the program.

Quality Indicator	Needs Support (1)	Building (2)	Cultivation (3)	Attached (4)	Natural/Graduated (5)
Consistency/ Frequency of Interactions How often are the youth and adult meeting?	Interactions with youth are inconsistent and don't meet program expectations. Meetings occur 2 or fewer x per month. Cancelled outings aren't rescheduled.	Interactions are fairly consistent, and usually meet program expectations. Meetings usually occur 3x per month. Cancelled outings are usually rescheduled.	Interactions are consistent, and predominately meet program expectations. Meetings occur weekly and are rarely cancelled, or immediately rescheduled.	Interactions are consistent, and meet program expectations. Meetings occur weekly are at least two hours in length, and are very rarely cancelled.	Interactions are consistent, and meet program expectations. Match interactions have evolved into a natural pattern. Some form of the relationship will likely continue indefinitely.
Length of Relationship How long has the match been meeting?	The relationship is less than 6 months old.	The relationship is less than 9 months old.	The relationship is less than 1 year old	The relationship is between 1 & 2 years old	The relationship is more than 2 years old.
Youth-Centered How often does the mentor take the youth's preferences and interests into account?	Mentor selects activities during interactions. Youth is not encouraged to voice and select what he/she wants to do.	Mentor exposes youth to interesting activities but does not always ask the youth what they would like to do.	Mentor engages with youth in fun, interesting activities primarily selected by the youth.	Youth primarily guides activity choices. Mentor supports youth to identify new activities that he/she enjoys.	Youth guides activity choices. Mentor incorporates innovative activities primarily selected by youth to build confidence, skills, and exposure.
Youth Emotional Engagement What is the youth's level of enjoyment and emotional engagement in the relationship?	Youth demonstrates feelings of unease during interactions with mentor. Behavior may indicate fear, anger, sadness, disappointment, pain or boredom.	Youth may sometimes demonstrate feelings of unease during interactions with the mentor. Behavior may indicate fear, anger, sadness, disappointment, pain or boredom.	Youth very rarely demonstrates feelings of unease during interactions with the mentor and instead predominately demonstrates feelings of comfort, and enjoyment.	Youth frequently demonstrates feelings of enjoyment and excitement during interactions with the mentor as well as increased confidence and curiosity.	Youth frequently demonstrates feelings of confidence, enjoyment and excitement during interactions with mentor, and enthusiastically acknowledges the adult's role as mentor.
Approach of the mentor is consistent w/ program model How does the adult approach interactions with the youth?	Mentor talks more than listens, gives advice, and does not employ supportive communication skills. Mentor acts more like an authority figure than a friend.	Mentor sometimes employs supportive communication skills, but often reverts to a fix-it mindset.	Mentor consistently employs supportive communication skills and is predominately encouraging, consistent, and fun.	Mentor consistently employs supportive communication skills; is encouraging, consistent and fun; models healthy interactions and an on-going respect for	Mentor employs supportive communication skills, is caring, consistent and fun. Mentor consistently models his or her belief in the young person.

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youth’s right to self-determination.

Research demonstrates that mentoring relationships that receive consistent, ongoing program interaction and support are more likely to experience satisfying and ultimately effective relationships.¹ Consistent monitoring and support involves connecting with all parties involved in a mentoring relationship on a regular basis to understand the perspectives of the youth, mentor, and parent. We believe these interactions prove most informative when conducted in-person or over the phone, so that program staff can hear the tone and inferences of participants and ask poignant follow-up questions. We recommend programs check in with the parent, youth, and mentor involved in each mentoring relationship at least once per month to provide consistent, responsive, on-going relationship development support.

Relationships that are well-established or securely attached still require program support; however, these pairs will likely require less frequent or intensive case management as they have evolved to an established, healthy, and trusting relationship. When building caseloads and determining match support needs, a mentoring program supervisor should consider the strength of mentoring relationships under the management/support of each coordinator.

Sample Caseload: 1.0 FTE

- 12 matches with a match score of 2 or less
- 25 matches with a match score of 3
- 8 matches with a match score of 4+

Total Matches: 45

Case Study: Melissa (age 29) and Caitlin (age 11) have been matched for 3 months. The two were matched based on their shared interests in sports, particularly softball. Melissa is a graduate student at the local university and though she typically meets with Caitlin on Thursday afternoons she has rescheduled twice. Caitlin is outgoing and energetic in her interactions with Melissa and enjoys selecting activities to do together. Melissa encourages Caitlin to choose the activity during interactions, though Melissa usually tries to incorporate a quiet reflective activity which Caitlin is not always receptive to.

Calculating the Monthly Match Score for Melissa & Caitlin

Consistency/ Frequency of Interactions:		2
Length of Relationship	1	
Youth Centered	2.5	
Youth Emotional Engagement		3
Developmental Approach	3	

$$2+1+2.5+3+3 = 11.5 / 5$$

Match Score: 2.3

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This mentoring relationship is progressing well, particularly for the length of the relationship. With continued support from program staff on how to keep interactions youth centered, Melissa and Caitlin can continue to build a strong foundation for their mentoring relationship.

ⁱ DuBois, D., Holloway, B., Valentine, J., & Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analysis review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30, 157-197. Courtesy of Oregon Mentors.