LOS ANGELES COUNTY
WIA YOUTH
DIRECTIVE

NUMBER: LACOD-WIAD08-13	SUBJECT: Final Mentoring Policy Definition of Mentoring/Leadership	
DATE: 04/14/08	EFFECTIVE: IMMEDIATELY	Page 1 of 2

TO: WIA Youth Contractors

Purpose
The purpose of this directive is to re-inform all WIA Youth Service Providers about the final policy on mentoring that was approved by the Youth Council on March 14, 2002.

Background
The final mentoring policy is contained in **Attachment A**. This policy was designed with quality standardization and program flexibility in mind, allowing for program flexibility without compromising program quality. The final mentoring policy enables each service provider to implement a program design appropriate to their client and community needs, by allowing each lead agency the option of contracting with a current qualified mentoring program provider or establishing their own in-house mentoring component.

Note that under County policy, all youth service providers are required to provide mentoring **and/or** leadership to each participant, depending on their needs as documented in their Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

Section 129(c)(2)(F) of the Workforce Investment Act defines **Leadership** as:

> Leadership development opportunities are opportunities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors such as:
>
> (a) Exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities;
> (b) Community and service learning projects;
> (c) Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring;
> (d) Organizational and team work training, including team leadership training;
> (e) Training in decision-making, including determining priorities; and
> (f) Citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting, work behavior training, and budgeting of resources.

The Youth Council adopted the following definition for **Adult Mentoring:**

> "[A] relationship over a prolonged period of time between two or more people where older, wiser, more experienced individuals assist youth through the human development process by providing constant, as needed support, guidance, and concrete help to a minor whose at-risk environment increases their chance of exposure to teen pregnancy, academic failure, gangs and violence, use of alcohol and drugs and other at-risk behaviors."

Pursuant to the WIA Regulations, adult mentoring must take place for a **duration of at least twelve (12) months**, which may occur at any time *before or after program exit* (i.e. during the post-program follow-up period).

If you have any questions, please contact Maggie Mireles at (213) 738-2198 or Robert Brieff at (213) 351-8924 or rbrieff@css.lacounty.gov.

JOSIE MARQUEZ, Executive Director
Workforce Investment Board

Attachment

ATTACHMENT A

WIA YOUTH MENTORING POLICY

DEFINITION OF MENTORING

"[A] relationship over a prolonged period of time between two or more people where older, wiser, more experienced individuals assist youth through the human development process by providing constant, as needed support, guidance, and concrete help to a minor whose at-risk environment increases their chance of exposure to teen pregnancy, academic failure, gangs and violence, use of alcohol and drugs and other at-risk behaviors."

DURATION

Pursuant to the WIA Regulations, adult mentoring must take place for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, which may occur at any time before or after program exit (i.e. during the post-program follow up period).

GOAL OF MENTORING COMMITTEE

It is the goal of the Mentoring committee to establish a policy directive that is both standardized and flexible. The County should have a standard in place that is clear but flexible enough to address the particular needs of the service providers' youth population and communities.

MISSION STATEMENT FOR MENTORING PROGRAM

To provide participants with an on-going, safe, and professional relationship through a quality and responsible mentoring program that will enhance youth development.

MENTORING POLICY: STANDARDIZATION AND FLEXIBILITY

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT
(From the Mentoring Committee)

In a political climate of accountability, it is important that hard data be amassed regarding the success of mentoring programs. At the same time, in the spirit of being in the "human" business, we want to assure our service providers that we will work with them on an individual basis to move them along and arrive at an assessment of their mentoring program, one that fits their needs and at the same time meets the minimum standards (i.e. flexibility is a part of this).

Lead Agencies can choose one of the following options to provide quality and responsible mentoring:

1) Existing QA Approved Organization in Place
If the Lead Agency is currently providing for mentoring services through a collaborating organization that is already Quality Assurance (QA) approved (i.e. Boys and Girls Club), then Lead Agency may continue to do so and be in compliance with the mentoring policy.

- The QA approved agency must remain in compliance at all times. This means that an effective and accurate assessment tool must be in place, in accordance with the five (5) criteria below.

-OR-

2) Will Link with Existing QA Approved Organization
Lead Agency has the option of establishing linkages with an existing organization which is QA approved and is listed on the California Mentoring Initiative (CMI) directory. (The listing is available on: http://www.emt.org/ment_ta.html)

- The QA approved agency must remain in compliance at all times. This means that an effective and accurate assessment tool must be in place, in accordance with the five (5) criteria below.

--OR

3) **Establish Own Individual Mentor Program (IMP)**
Lead agencies can establish their own mentor program by applying their current design and incorporating the training and standards provided by Evaluation Management Training (EMT) toward implementing the five (5) criteria listed below.

Option 3 continued

Opting for Individual Mentor Programs (IMPs)

A. First: Adopt five (5) Criteria
   - Modify existing mentoring service structure to work towards the five criteria indicated under Section I.

B. Second: Timeline for Implementation
   - Agencies opting to implement the Individual Mentor Program will need to submit a plan of action for the timeframe which they will need to attend training, develop, and implement the Mentoring criteria.
   - The period for implementation will take into consideration resource limitations (i.e. staff and funding availability) and participant/community needs, but at no point shall there be a disruption of services to current participants. The timeframe will be discussed further.

C. Third: Enlist EMT To provide Training Workshops and Technical Assistance
   - EMT is available to provide training and guidance on each of the five indicated criteria and how to structure a compliant mentoring program that serves the particular needs of an agency's youth population and community needs. Training is provided through the following:
     1) Mentoring Workshops (see *Resources* below)
     2) Technical Assistance (see *Resources* below)

Agencies that are undecided on whether to choose option 2 or 3 should take an orientation class from EMT to determine which is a more viable option. The orientation will provide an overview of the Quality Assurance Standards (QAS) and enable agencies to explore services and options available to them free of charge.

I. QUALITY STANDARD CRITERIA

All County mentoring services shall contain the following five (5) basic criteria for assessing quality mentoring, in alignment with the Quality Assurance Standards:

1) Selection / Screening Process
2) Training / Education of Mentors/Mentees
3) Matching Process
4) Monitoring Process
5) Closure / Evaluation Process

Note: The State QA standards are more inclusive than the above five criteria. Thus, all QA approved agencies **must**, at the least, have already adopted the five criteria into their program design.

FIVE (5) CRITERIA EXPLAINED (in coordination with the State QAS)

1. Selection / Screening Process

- An application process and review
- Face-to-face interview
- Reference checks for mentors which must include criminal history record checks (finger printing), and may include character references, child abuse registry check, and driving record checks

- Suitability criteria that relate to the needs of the target population, which could include some or all of the following: personality profile; skills identification; gender; age; language and racial requirements; level of education; career interests; motivation for volunteering; and academic standing
- Successful completion of pre-match training and orientation

2. Training / Education or Mentors/Mentees

a) Orientation Phase:

- Program overview
- Description of eligibility, screening process, and suitability requirements
- Level of commitment expected (i.e. time, energy, and flexibility)
- Expectations and restrictions (accountability)
- Benefits and rewards they can expect
- A separate focus for potential mentors and participants
- A summary of program policies

b) Readiness Education Phase:

- Trained staff trainers
- Orientation to program and resource network, including information and referral, other supportive services, and schools
- Skills development as appropriate
- Cultural/heritage sensitivity and appreciation training
- Guidelines for participants on how to get the most out of the mentoring relationship
- Do's and Don'ts of relationship management
- Job and role descriptions
- Confidentiality and liability information
- Crisis management/problem solving resources
- Communication skills development

3. Matching Process

- A commitment to consistency
- A grounding in the program's eligibility criteria
- Ongoing sessions as necessary
- A rationale for the selection of this particular matching strategy from the wide range of available models
- Appropriate criteria for matches, including some or all of the following: gender; age; language; requirements; availability; needs; interests; preferences of volunteer and participant; life experience; and temperament
- Signed statements of understanding that both parties agree to the conditions of the match and the mentoring relationship
- The program may have pre-match social activities between mentor and mentees
- Team-building activities to reduce the anxiety of the first meeting

4. Monitoring Process

- Consistent scheduled meetings with staff, mentors, and mentees
- A tracking system for ongoing assessment
- Written records
- Input from family, community partners, and significant others
- A process for managing grievances, praise, re-matching, interpersonal problem solving, and premature relationship closure

5. **Closure / Evaluation Process**

a) **Closure**

- Private and confidential exit interviews to de-brief the mentoring relationship between:
  - Mentee and staff
  - Mentor and staff
  - Mentor and mentee without staff
- Clearly stated policy for future contacts between mentor and mentee
- Assistance for participating in defining next steps for achieving personal goals (for the mentee)

b) **Evaluation**

- Outcome analysis of mentoring program and relationship

II. RESOURCES FOR EMT

A. Evaluation Management Training (EMT) Website:

http://carsmentoring.org

B. Technical Assistance: As Needed Basis

EMT provides one-on-one training and technical assistance to enable agencies to design an acceptable and specific mentoring program suited to the needs of their youth population and communities, allowing for the possibilities of worksite mentoring and e-mentoring. Technical assistance requests and/or information is available at: http://carsmentoring.org/TA/index.php

C. Mentoring Plus Workshops

1) Mentoring Program Basics for New Managers (Half-Day)
2) Creating a Safe & Effective Mentoring Program. (Two-Day)
3) Creating & Sustaining a Winning match (One-Day)
4) Training Mentors in Relationship Building (One-Day)
5) Responsible Mentoring (One-Day)
6) Mentee Preparedness (One-Day)
7) Developing A Successful Mentor Training (One-Day)

Available by request on: http://carsmentoring.org/workshops/index.php

ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS

Mentoring Program Basics for New Managers

A half-day workshop focusing on two important tools for developing new mentoring programs – the Quality Assurance Standards (QAS) and the mentor training manual. Common obstacles that new managers encounter and the solutions to those challenges will be addressed. This workshop is helpful for organizations that are considering starting a mentoring program.

Creating a Safe & Effective Mentoring Program

A two-day workshop focusing on establishing a mentoring program using the QAS as a developmental framework. This workshop is especially helpful for new mentoring programs.

Creating & Sustaining a Winning Match

A one-day workshop exploring the elements of the matching and mentoring processes. This workshop is for established programs that want to fine turn their mentor/mentee matching strategies.

Training Mentors in Relationship Building

A one-day workshop highlighting relationship building between mentor and mentee as well as cross-cultural mentoring. This workshop is designed for established programs that want to enhance the relationship building between the mentor and mentee.

Responsible Mentoring
A one-day workshop focusing on one of the most challenging facets of mentoring – dealing with difficult subjects including drugs, sex, pregnancy, and various family issues. The success of a mentoring program requires that mentors be well trained to handle such topics, and that agencies provide mentors the support, supervision and clear guidelines they need when these delicate situations arise. This workshop targets established mentoring program staff.

Mentee Preparedness
A one-day workshop focusing on preparing mentees for the mentoring experience. This workshop will explore what programs are currently doing to promote safe, healthy, and successful matches through working with mentees before they are matched.

Developing A Successful Mentor Training
A one-day workshop concentrating on the how to's of developing a mentor training manual and program.

WHAT THE WORKSHOP PROVIDES

The Mentoring Plus Workshops are one-day intensive trainings that make state-of-the-art mentoring practices available to programs throughout California. The goals of the Mentoring Plus Series Workshops are to assist New and existing programs in meeting the Quality Assurance Standards of the California Mentor Initiative (CMI), and to enable youth to benefit from the best mentoring practices available. The workshops, which are designed for both beginning and advanced-level mentor programs, offer the following:

- Free day-long workshops in accessible locations across the state of California
- Comprehensive training curricula developed by consultants in the mentoring field
- Handbook that tracks materials presented, overheads used and activities conducted, and provides supplementary resources
- Directory of training and technical assistance resources, forms for requesting technical assistance, and a publications catalog
- Assessment of "next steps" to help workshop participants "bring the training home"
- Identification of further technical assistance needed by workshop participants
- Networking with other community members interested in mentoring