

AN EVALUATION STUDY OF MENTORING PROGRAMS IN CONNECTICUT

Executive Summary: The Governor's Prevention Partnership

Background: Studies of mentoring programs have demonstrated multiple positive effects related to academic achievement, reduced risk for drug and alcohol use and enrollment in post-secondary education. These studies also identified program characteristics that are associated with the desired mentoring results. This study of almost 500 mentoring pairs in Connecticut programs aimed to determine: 1) the effects of mentoring on youth; 2) the extent to which these mentoring relationships meet critical benchmarks of effective mentoring and 3) the effects of mentoring on mentors

Results

Youth Mentees: The top five effects of mentoring reported by the youth were:

- Feel there are people who will help them if they need it (77%)
- Think it's important to help others (74%)
- Have higher expectations of themselves (71%)
- Feel there are adults who care about them (68%)
- Feel more confident in themselves (68%)

Over half of the mentees feel their relationship with their mentor has affected their commitment to learning as evidenced by the following measures (close to 30 % of the remaining youth said they were already doing OK on these measures).

- Displaying a better attitude toward school
- Earning better grades
- Being well-prepared for school every day
- Showing better behavior in class.

Benchmarks of Effective Mentoring: Connecticut youth fared very well on the three benchmarks for effectiveness, scoring at or above national benchmarks. The three benchmarks include 1) the extent to which the relationship is youth-centered, 2) the level of mentor interest in the mentee and 3) the level of disappointment with the relationship.

Mentors: 95% of mentors were satisfied with the experience and benefited personally by:

- Having a better appreciation for diversity issues (76%)
- Having a better understanding of the education system (77%)
- Learning new things about themselves (88%)

Corporate Mentors Because so many mentors in Connecticut are involved through their company's commitment to mentoring, the study also asked several questions about the relationship of mentoring to their work and attitudes toward their employers.

- 99% believe their company should invest in youth (their future workforce)
- 89% said the mentoring program made them proud to work for their company
- 63% said they feel more productive at work after mentoring
- 62% said they could not be a mentor without the time off from work.
- 57% said they had an improved attitude at work as a result of mentoring