



The Technical Assistance and Training Program for Mentoring System Involved Youth welcomes you to our monthly E-Newsletter. We hope the information will be useful to you and we encourage you to share this newsletter with other staff and agencies that are also mentoring system involved youth. If you find a particular Web site, research article, or helpful fact, we encourage you to send them to us and we will disseminate to the listserv. To read the newsletter online, go to <http://www.mentoringsiyouth.org/publications/Newsletters/October%202008.pdf>

Quote of the Month:

Stand up to your obstacles and do something about them.
You will find that they haven't half the strength you think they have.
~ Norman Vincent Peale

In This Issue:

- 10 Ways that Performance Measurement is Good for Your Program
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- Grant Opportunities



Periodically the TATP Team will share information we believe will be helpful to everyone. This information may focus on building skills, sharing research updates, or identify issues and best practices. Enjoy. And we invite you contact us if you'd like to speak further on any of these topics.

Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is a method of regularly documenting and assessing a project to provide feedback on its results and effectiveness. Performance measurement is often performed by staff of the local program, and is in addition to other evaluation activities being conducted.

10 Ways that Performance Measurement is Good for Your Program

- (1) Program evaluations often are tied to a particular source of funding or involve a significant investment of time on the part of a small number of program staff leading up to the production of a single report that can quickly become dated information about your program. In contrast, performance measurement is done on a regular basis and is an ongoing task within the program that is a shared responsibility of the majority of the program staff and volunteers. As such, the information generated by performance measures is often very timely and relevant and is continuously updated.

- (2) Performance measures provide valuable feedback for managers, allowing for frequent assessments of how the program is doing—this provides managers with the information to maximize benefits for their clients.
 - (3) Performance measures are useful for creating and justifying budgets. When you can confidently state that it will take “this amount” of resources to provide a targeted level of services, resulting in a specific degree of outcomes, you will be amazed how many funders will give you what you ask for. When your requested amount of funding is not anchored to a specified target (in terms of outcomes), then funders think they can make cuts to your budget based on other proposals.
 - (4) Performance measures can establish a link between the activities of your program and the outcomes you are measuring—this helps make the case for the value of your program model. When you can show that certain outcomes are more likely because of the services that your program is provided, you become what we call “evidence-based.”
 - (5) The typical nonprofit program still talks primarily about what the program actually does (we call these outputs) and does not speak to the impact their program is actually having on the clients and the community (what we call the outcomes). The programs that can provide evidence of outcomes find it easier to attract clients, referrals, board members, and funders.
 - (6) Performance measures make it more likely that work will actually get done in your program. They say that what we measure gets done and what we do not measure we cannot actually tell if it is getting done.
 - (7) Performance measures allow you to tell the story of the good work your program is doing. They also provide you with control over defining what “success” will mean in the context of your program. If you leave it to outsiders to judge the effectiveness of your program, they will probably hold the program and the clients to a higher standard than is probably fair (or even reasonable).
 - (8) When you get your entire staff (and your mentors) involved in documenting performance measures, and when they come to understand the connection between their actions and the program outcomes, they are likely to become motivated by the “big picture” and to stay engaged with the program over a longer period of time.
 - (9) Performance measurement, if done well, can help you understand for which clients your program model is best suited. You will also come to understand under which circumstances your model works most effectively.
 - (10) Performance measures will show you ways to “capture” the good work your program is doing by creating artifacts that provide evidence when simply counting and categorizing just won’t do. When you are creative in this way, you will amass a wealth of writings, drawings, photographs, and products that demonstrate the impact your program has on kids. This will relieve some of the pressure you feel to tell your story with numbers.
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Update from the Evaluation Team

It was wonderful working with you last month at the New Orleans meeting. All four projects are moving into high gear!

Now is the time to begin identifying and engaging a comparison group. Having a comparison group will help us demonstrate the positive impact from each of your programs. The comparison group should be composed of youth who are similar to those in your program (ideally, these youth will be on a waiting list to be matched to a mentor).

Here are the steps for forming a comparison group:

- (1) Identify youth who are similar to the youth in your program. We would like a comparison group of 20–40 youth total, but we know you may only be able to recruit a smaller number.
- (2) If not completed previously for the program, obtain parental consent for the youth to participate in the comparison group and administer the MSY Youth Background Form and the MSY Youth Behavior Surveys to the youth. In some cases, program staff may complete the MSY Youth Background Form at baseline (i.e., as soon as you receive parental consent).
- (3) After nine months, administer the MSY Youth Background Form and the MSY Youth Behavior Survey to comparison group youth again. The youth can then be matched if a mentor comes available.

PIRE is providing incentives for participating comparison youth (\$20 giftcards for initial surveys, \$40 at nine months), as well as funds for each grantee to cover some of the costs of recruiting and administering surveys to comparison youth.

Both Hilary and Matt are happy to help you work on forming a comparison group and to help solve problems and challenges that occur. Keep up the good work!



OJJDP Releases Girls Study Group Bulletins

In response to the rising arrest rates of female juveniles in the 1990s, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) convened the Girls Study Group (GSG) in 2004, a research project that aims to gain a better understanding of girls' delinquency and guide policy toward female juvenile offenders. Because the majority of delinquent offenders are boys, very little research exists on female juvenile delinquency. For more information, go to http://www.ncjrs.gov/html/ojjdp/news_at_glance/224013/sf_1.html.

Bulletin Describes Youth Residential Placement Survey

OJJDP has published *Introduction to the Survey of Youth in Residential Placement*. The Survey of Youth in Residential Placement (SYRP) joins the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement and the Juvenile Residential Facility Census in OJJDP's constellation of surveys providing updated statistics on youth in custody in the juvenile justice system. The bulletin, the first in a series, describes SYRP's design and methodology. Subsequent bulletins will discuss survey findings. To access the bulletin, visit <http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/publications/PubAbstract.asp?pubi=240090>.

Group Home Placements Double Risk for Delinquency

Results from a new study found that youth in the child welfare system who enter group homes are about two-and-a-half times more likely to enter the juvenile justice system compared with youth with similar backgrounds who are served in foster care. To learn more, go to <http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative/Resources/Oct08newsletter/JJNews2.aspx>.

Detention Reform in Rural Communities

Although they grow up in a different landscape and culture than children in the cities and suburbs, rural youth suffer similar emotional and behavioral problems and get embroiled in the juvenile justice system at similar rates. The latest report in the Annie E. Casey Juvenile Detention Reform Initiative's Pathways to Juvenile Detention Reform series details a variety of special techniques, tactics, and strategies that can help rural areas accomplish detention reform effectively. To read this report, go to http://www.aecf.org/~media/PublicationFiles/15_Rural_Pathways_r20.pdf.

How Nonprofit Groups can Respond in an Economic Crisis

Changing Our World, a philanthropic services company, takes on questions about the nation's economic downturn and how nonprofits should respond in an online "Economic Q&A." The company suggests starting with the facts before trying to come up with strategies, and if philanthropy is in decline, the best approach is to "move forward." More specifically, the Q&A suggests strategies such as diversify revenue sources, re-examine the case for support, tell the organization's story every day, thank donors often, start cultivating potential board members from places that may recover more quickly than others, keep seeking funds, work with donors and negotiate the terms of giving, and consider a board mini-retreat to address issues and strategies. To read the Q&A, go to http://www.changingourworld.com/site/News2?abbr=abt_&page=NewsArticle&id=6573.

High School Students as Mentors: Findings From the Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Impact Study

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) has released its report on the high school Bigs program of Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, which currently involves close to 50,000 high-school-aged mentors across the country. Using data from a large-scale random assignment impact study of Big Brothers Big Sisters SBM, P/PV found that, on average, high school students were much less effective than adults at yielding effects for the youth they mentor. The research identifies several program practices that were linked with longer, stronger, and more effective high school mentor relationships. To learn more and to download the report, go to http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publication.asp?search_id=0&publication_id=252§ion_id=22.

OJJDP Announces More Than \$293 Million in Grants

U.S. Attorney General Michael Mukasey recently announced more than \$293 million in grant awards to help at-risk youth and improve juvenile justice systems nationwide. These grants, administered by OJJDP, support community efforts to prevent crime and protect public safety through focusing on the well-being of the nation's young people. Of particular focus are this year's mentoring grants, which will focus on the needs of underserved populations, including at-risk youth in Native American and Alaska Native communities and Latino communities that have gang problems. For more information, visit <http://www.ojp.gov/newsroom/pressreleases/2008/ojjdp08116.htm>.



Date: November 21, 2008

Location: Chicago, Illinois

Title: Tutor/Mentor Leadership and Networking Conference

Sponsor: Tutor/Mentor Connection

Description: The biannual Tutor/Mentor Leadership and Networking Conference is part of an ongoing effort to improve the quality and availability of tutor/mentor programs in areas of Chicago with high concentrations of poverty. Through the Internet, this conference connects program leaders in Chicago with people and ideas across the country and the globe.

Web site: <http://www.tutormentorconference.org/conference.asp>

Date: November 12–15, 2008

Location: St. Louis, Missouri

Title: 2008 Annual American Society of Criminology Meeting

Sponsor: American Society of Criminology

Description: This year's annual conference of the American Society of Criminology will be held November 12–15 in St. Louis, Missouri, and will offer many juvenile justice-related sessions for the approximately 2,500 expected conference attendees. Sessions featuring OJJDP-sponsored research include "Hispanics in the Juvenile Justice System," "New Juvenile Corrections Data From OJJDP," "Communitywide Gang Problems," and "Interpersonal Dynamics of Girls' Delinquency." Other conference

sessions will focus on a variety of juvenile justice-related topics, including family issues, school-related issues, and risk factors for delinquency.

Web site: <http://www.asc41.com/annualmeeting.htm>



These are just a few grant opportunities that may be applicable to you or partner organizations.

Title: Free PR Services for Nonprofits

Funder: Neotrope

Description: The public relations firm Neotrope is donating \$25,000 worth of free promotional and marketing support to nonprofit organizations to mark its 25th year in business. Half of the 10 awards will be to California-based organizations. Organizations that are selected to receive a grant will be provided with services that may include consulting, public relations assistance, newswire services to promote organization activities to media folk, and Internet marketing. In addition, all 501(c)3 nonprofits are being offered a 20 percent discount by Neotrope whether or not they are selected to receive donated in-kind services.

Award: Amount of each grant will vary.

Eligibility: 501(c)3 nonprofits

Deadline: November 12, 2008

For more information: <http://www.send2press.com/non-profit/index.shtml>

Title: Management Assistance

Funder: Service Grants Program, administered by the Taproot Foundation

Description: Grants consist of technical assistance offered by business professionals in four areas—information technology, leadership development and strategic human resources, marketing and fund-raising, and strategy management. Additional information is available on the foundation's Web site.

Award: Amounts vary.

Eligibility: Organizations that are classified as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and have a mission that fits one of the following categories: education, the environment, health, and social services. Applicants must have at least three full-time employees and an annual operating budget of at least \$350,000. Applicants must be based in and provide direct benefits to residents of the following metropolitan areas: Boston (within the Route 128 boundary); Chicago (Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, or Will Counties); New York City; San Francisco (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco Counties); Seattle (King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties); and Washington (Alexandria, Va., Arlington, District of Columbia, Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties).

Deadline: December 1, 2008

For more information: <http://www.taprootfoundation.org/npo>

Title: Nonprofit Partner Awards

Funder: Excellence in Corporate Philanthropy

Description: Nominations for the Nonprofit Partner Award, part of the Excellence in Corporate Philanthropy Awards, given annually by the Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy. One nonprofit organization will be honored for its partnership with a corporation. Nominations must be submitted by corporations. Additional information is available on the committee's Web site.

Award: \$25,000

Eligibility: Organizations classified as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code that have annual operating budgets of at least \$500,000.

Deadline: December 4, 2008

For more information: <http://www.corporatephilanthropy.org/excellenceawards>

Title: Make it Matter

Funder: Reader's Digest Foundation

Description: To identify people whose stories of giving back inspire others, the Reader's Digest Foundation will donate funds to a nonprofit organization associated with a particular story or cause. Anyone can submit a story about an effective or inspiring group, which will be published on the Web site; the nonprofits selected will receive funds up to \$100,000.

Award: Funds up to \$100,000

Deadline: January 1, 2009

For more information: <http://www.rd.com/make-your-mark-make-a-difference/make-it-matter/article54800.html>