



MENTOR
MINNESOTA

Recruitment Toolkit for Mentoring Programs

MENTOR Minnesota's guide to all things recruitment. Includes resources on marketing, outreach, youth-initiated mentoring, and more!



A NOTE ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

August 2023

Mentoring community,

When MENTOR Minnesota solicited community feedback from the State of Mentoring Survey in 2022, the number one need cited by program leaders was recruitment. How can we recruit new mentors in a pandemic-changed landscape? How can we recruit diverse mentors? How do we retain the mentors we recruit?

It can be daunting to start this process from scratch. The MENTOR Minnesota Recruitment Toolkit is designed to be super user-friendly and packed with links and resources to help you get off the ground and running right away. Please view each section as a list of possible action steps to fortify your recruitment plan.

This project was made possible by funding through the Volunteer Generation Fund and the Minnesota Alliance for Volunteer Advancement.

We hope you find the tools you're looking for!

—Sarah Schaefer, M.Ed
MENTOR Minnesota Executive Director



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SECTION 1

PROGRAM EVALUATION

This section includes foundational knowledge of recruitment best practices and provides tools to gain an understanding of where your program stands within that framework.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

PROGRAM EVALUATION

This section includes foundational knowledge of recruitment best practices and provides tools to gain an understanding of where your program stands within that framework.

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

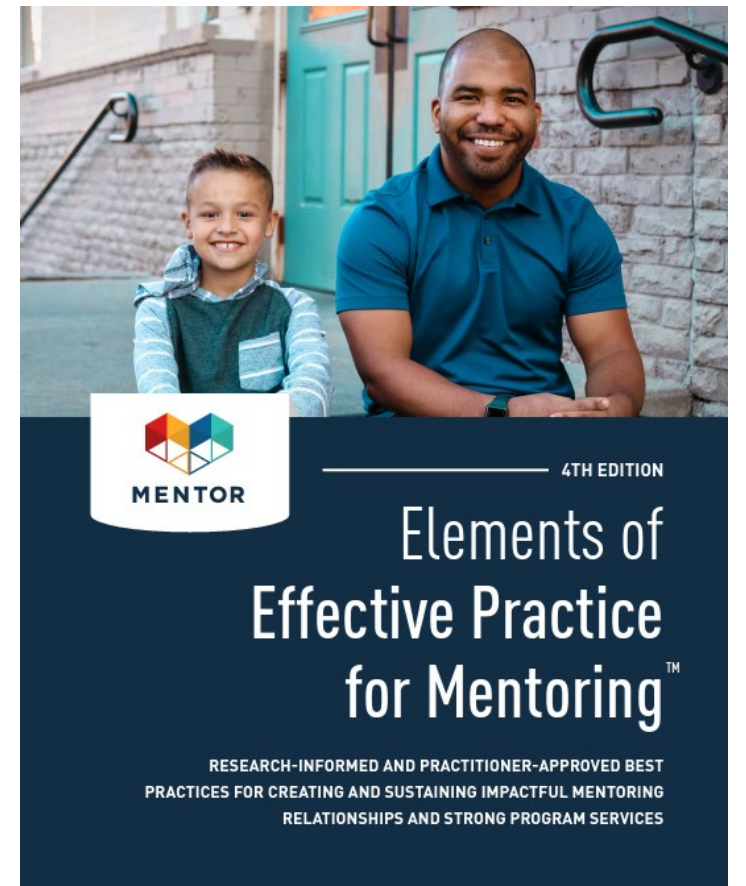
MENTOR's cornerstone publication, the **Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™**, details research-informed and practitioner-approved Standards for creating and sustaining quality youth mentoring programs and consequently, impactful mentoring relationships. The Fourth Edition, released in September 2015, reflects the most up-to-date research, practice, and thinking in the mentoring field.

The six evidence-based Standards are intended to be applicable across almost every type of youth mentoring program. Each Standard includes Benchmarks to ensure the safety and effectiveness of mentoring relationships, as well as Enhancements that may be promising, innovative and useful for programs. Additionally, a Program Planning and Management section offers recommendations for designing, building, and strengthening mentoring programs and services.

The Elements of Effective Practice is a great place to start when it comes to thinking through what your mentoring program may need to be successful, but we recognize that this resource is not all-encompassing and encourage you to read other resources and engage with your community and other programs to learn how to best support your program. The Recruitment chapter can be found on page 10 of the EEP. After reading through the EEP, you can walk through the checklist to evaluate where your program is now.

MENTORING CONNECTOR

The **Mentoring Connector** is the only national database of mentoring programs. The Mentoring Connector is a free service that helps quality youth mentoring programs across the country



recruit more local volunteers while greatly increasing visibility for their organizations. Anyone interested in becoming a mentor can search for mentoring opportunities by zip code, ages of youth served, and program type to find and contact programs that interest them. Each year, potential volunteers looking for mentoring opportunities do more than 80,000 searches in this system. MENTOR's **national partners** at the NBA, the White House's My Brother's Keeper initiative, and others use this database on their websites to recruit volunteer mentors.

Your program can add a listing into the mentoring connector for recruiting new volunteers and hopefully mentees too! If you still have questions, check out the **Mentoring Connector Training Resources** and other resources located at the end of this section in the 'section resources'.

MENTOR MINNESOTA CONSULTING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

MENTOR Minnesota offers no-cost technical assistance to youth-serving mentoring organizations. There are a variety of tailored projects that can be done through MENTOR

Minnesota’s consulting, including an NQMS review and general recruitment consulting.

The National Quality Mentoring System (NQMS) creates recognized standards and procedures for the operation of high-quality mentoring programs based on evidence and a process for continuous improvement within a program.

In partnership with its Affiliates, MENTOR has developed a standardized online NQMS tool for Affiliates to utilize with programs in their regions. The online tool is built within MENTOR’s Mentoring Connector and contains a 92 question self-assessment that is aligned to the Fourth Edition of the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™. During the self-assessment, programs indicate whether each item is “in practice” or “out of practice” and rate their current practice to identify areas of strength and improvement. The online tool then supports programs and their local MENTOR Affiliates in generating a custom work plan, which provides the basis of the training and support that Affiliates provide to programs to help improve their practices. MENTOR is working with its Affiliates to build their capacity to provide the NQMS across the country. It should be noted that with the rollout of the updated NQMS this fall, programs who have undergone the assessment will gain priority within the Mentoring Connector.

NATIONAL MENTORING RESOURCE CENTER

The National Mentoring Resource Center serves to provide youth mentoring practitioners with support in incorporating evidence-based practices to support positive youth outcomes. In the fall of 2013, MENTOR analyzed needs and trends in the field across a broad array of stakeholders, including national organizations, MENTOR’s local Affiliates across the country, and grassroots service providers. This analysis informed the initial development of the National Mentoring Resource Center. Future additions and revisions will be informed by ongoing use and feedback of this resource. You can share your thoughts about how the Center can be most effective to the field on our Feedback page. Check out their resources on recruitment including [Recruiting Men as mentors](#), [Effective](#)



Mentor Recruitment, and other general resources for mentoring programs from the NMRC.

PROGRAM STORY



Many programs go through an NQMS review with MENTOR Minnesota consultants to review how they are doing meeting the Elements of Effective Practice benchmarks. Hear what Mentor North had to say about this doing an NQMS review:

“Throughout this NQMS assessment process, Mandy helped keep us on schedule, easily adapted to whatever assortment of staff attended a session, encouraged us to assess and score our own processes but added her insight and opinion when we asked or when she thought we were missing something. Her final report (delivered right on schedule) is very strengths based; she really helped affirm what we do well, as well as where and how we might improve. To to sum up my and Mentor North’s experience [working through the NMRC]: upbeat, encouraging, knowledgeable, collaborative, engaged, reliable, flexible and gently challenging.”

PROGRAM EVALUATION RESOURCES

- **Elements of Effective Practice:** View MENTOR’s full Elements of Effective Practice resource page [here](#) or the PDF [here](#).
- **Recruitment Benchmarks Checklist:** Each section of the EEP has the benchmarks broken down separately so you can take a quick inventory of how your program is doing. These are the benchmarks for the Recruitment section. [View the full list of benchmarks](#) for each section of the Elements of Effective Practice.
- **Power of Relationships:** ‘The Power of Relationships: How and Why American Adults Step Up to Mentor the Nation’s Youth is the most comprehensive picture of what adults think about mentoring kids who are not their own. This is a follow-up to MENTOR’s 2014 report, The Mentoring Effect, which is the most comprehensive look at young people’s views on and engagement with mentoring.’
- **Who Mentored You?:** This is an expansive research report on the mentoring movement in the United States. Utilizing data from over 2,600 Americans, the study offers a fresh multigenerational look at the mentoring experiences of all Americans and explores the questions: What is the scope and impact of mentoring relationships? Who is finding the mentoring they need? Who is being left behind?’
- **Mentoring Connector:** Check out the mentoring connector database of mentoring programs.
- **Mentoring Connector One Pager:** The mentoring connector recently underwent some changes, find out what’s new [here](#).
- **List a program in the Mentoring Connector:** Add a program If you’re ready to list your mentoring program in the Mentoring Connector [click here](#), the process is fairly short and simple.
- **Mentoring connector help page:** If you’re having problems with anything ranging from adding your program, resetting your password, responding to a volunteer inquiry and more check out MENTOR’s video tutorials and accompanying PDFs [here](#).
- **MMN Technical Assistance Resources:** MENTOR Minnesota can work with you on specific programmatic goals. Read an outline of what we can accomplish together [here](#) through the Technical Assistance provided by the National Mentoring Resource Center.
- **NMRC sign up:** If you’re interested in applying for Technical Assistance, you can learn more and apply on the National Mentoring Resource Center’s website.
- **NQMS information:** Through Technical Assistance, MENTOR Minnesota can help you do an NQMS review of your program. These reviews work through every chapter of the EEP with your program and develop strategies for program improvement. Learn more about what an NQMS review is [here](#).
- **MENTOR Webinar | National Quality Mentoring System: Why Continuous Quality Improvement Matters:** Check out this video from MENTOR National to hear from Nicki Patnaud on why regular updating to your program’s practices is important.

SECTION 2

MARKETING

From branding to newsletters and PR, this section includes tools to speak about and market your mentoring program.

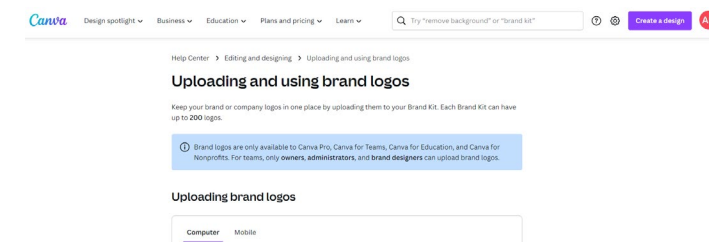
MARKETING

MARKETING OVERVIEW

You can have the greatest program in the world, but without effective marketing, people may not even know it exists. Marketing is about the way you present the program visually and verbally to the world. Effectively articulating what your program does, and representing it well is crucial to attracting new participants. We'll walk through different aspects of marketing below.

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Graphic Design is a vital element of marketing. Design is what most prospective mentors see first, from your logo, the look of your flyers and social media posts. Thankfully, design can be simple. Canva offers free premium accounts to nonprofits that are fairly simple to set up and their program includes a logo maker, a style guide, and templates for social media posts, flyers and more.



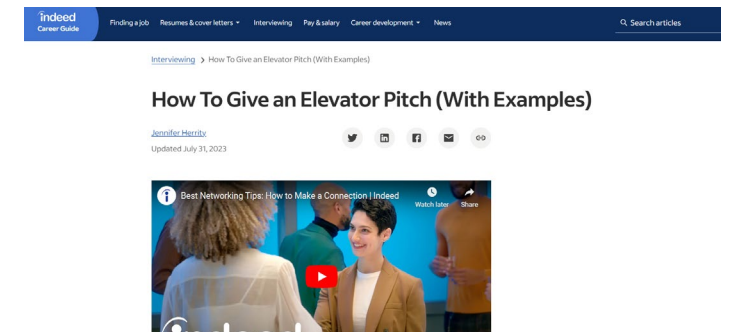
MESSAGING

Proper messaging about your program and who you're looking to recruit is important to attracting the right volunteers and effectively communicating what your program does.



Start with why -- how great leaders inspire action | Simon Sinek |

Start with Simon Sinek's **Start with why** speech to begin thinking about why you do what you do. This is a good base for personal appeal when talking with people in the community.



A more professional elevator pitch is also important to have prepared, different pitches reach different audiences, like funders, mentees and potential mentors. Its important to know what to say to whom. Craft an elevator pitch aimed directly at potential mentors.

If you're looking for a deeper dive into these ideas and more, **Cause Selling—The Sanford Way**, is a book that delves into program messaging. It's aimed more specifically at fundraising, but many of the principles can be applied to recruitment.

NEWSLETTERS

Once you've fleshed out your design and messaging, communications about the program becomes a lot easier. Consistent use of social media and newsletters is important for visibility in the digital landscape.

Newsletters can be made easier through the usage of an emailing platform such as **constant contact** or **mail chimp**. You can save templates and reuse them month to month, and save your email contacts in specific lists.



If you find it difficult to know what to write about, subscribing to other mentoring program newsletters is a great way to get ideas for layout and topics. You can also consult program

participants and caregivers on what content they might like to see in the newsletters.

MENTOR Minnesota highlights a mentoring program each month and what makes them unique. This is a great resource those programs can share out with their networks including other mentoring programs. Consider how you could highlight matches, community partners, or someone else in your community to get people engaged in your mission.

SOCIAL MEDIA

When getting started it's best to use one or two platforms to make sure you have ample capacity for posting and engaging. Linkedin, Facebook, and Instagram are all good platforms to use. After creating your account, follow youth-serving organizations including other mentoring programs, nonprofits, and educational institutions. Creating a [social media calendar](#) and scheduling out your posts each month can help with organization and lower the time needed to have a robust social media presence.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 Book Club Womens history month post 1 sched fb, insta , twi	2	3 EEP post sched fb, insta , twi
6	7 EEP Peer mentoring post sched fb and insta	8 EEP	9 EEP BBP post sched fb, insta , twi	10
13	14 BBM BBP	15 2nd womens history month post sched fb, insta , twi	16	17
20	21 L&L post sched fb, insta , twi	22	23	24
27	28 L&L	29	30	31 Trans Human Rights Day Post sched fb, insta , twi

PUBLIC RELATIONS (RADIO, NEWS)

- PR: Public Relations describes maintaining your organization's public image
- [Press Release](#): an official statement about your organization released to news- it can give informations on topics like new developments with programming, staffing, and other changes

Public Relations with radio and news is important for getting your program's name and mission out there. It's important to be proactive in this area. You can send out press releases when hosting a major event or fundraiser, have high recruitment needs, or have other big changes going on. It's important to have media communication guidelines prepared. This includes who will be the spokesperson for your organization, talking points, and what stories you want to share before getting in touch with media outlets.

You can also craft your own videos when you have a story to tell. These can be self-hosted on your website, YouTube account, newsletter, and shared on social media.

PROGRAM STORIES

Big Brothers Big Sisters is an example of a program with well-known branding and marketing. They tend to use the same colors and style when making posts about events and other announcements. Their modern and easily recognizable logo has helped them become more well-known in the mentoring community.



MARKETING RESOURCES

- [Canva for nonprofits](#):—Canva is a free online software that can be used for creating a variety of media to promote your program's events, resources, and recruitment. It's free to get a premium membership for nonprofits! Learn more about it [here](#).
- [Logos](#): Canva includes a logo maker and style guide and many templates If you need an update to your logo (or need one!) you can do that through canva as well.
- [Know your Why](#): Simon Sinek video In this video, Simon Sinek helps get your gears rolling for why you do the work you do, which can then help you better articulate that to others.
- [Elevator Pitch](#): Check out this in-depth resource from Indeed to learn the ins-and-outs of elevator pitches, and why having one is so important.
- [Jean Rhodes' Why Mentor](#): Read [here](#) about the main 6 reasons people engaged in volunteerism according to Jean Rhodes' Chronicle for Evidence Based-Mentoring
- How to message your program: [Cause Selling—The Sanford Way](#)
- [Social Media Calendar template](#)
- [Meta Business Suite](#) or Hootsuite for scheduling posts
- [Media 101](#): Consult these media 101 tips to be prepared for a variety of media situations.
- [Wild Apricot blog](#): Check out Wild Apricot's tips and information about PR strategies for nonprofits.
- [Video Tips](#): If filming your own videos, consult MENTOR's one-pager on tips to get the most professional shots.
- [Press Release](#): Read more [here](#) about the what/how/why of press releases.



SECTION 3

OUTREACH

Outreach can encompass many things including tabling at events, emailing and meeting with new community partners, and hosting convenings.

OUTREACH

COMMUNITY PRESENCE

Being present and visible in your community does a lot for organization recognition and slowly building relationships with community partners. Over time, this is a great way to build credibility and standing. You can show up at a multitude of community events like pride, parades, city or county events, town hall meetings, and any other large community gatherings. Additionally, school-based events like PTA meetings, resource fairs, and school board meetings will have a great audience to hear about mentoring.

Additionally, it's important to maintain a public presence in the local nonprofit landscape through partnerships, being at local nonprofit convenings, and attending events hosted by local nonprofits.

- Attend community meetings (Check for local conveners, affinity groups, task forces)
- Volunteer at another agency
- Join a local Board or committee
- Attend other agency community events (open houses, celebrations, etc)
- Table at organization's events

HOSTING EVENTS

Hosting outreach events is a great way to spread awareness of your organizations into your current volunteer base's social networks. Host bring-a-friend events and encourage attendees to post on social media about the event. You can also coach mentors on how to talk with friends and family about the organization to increase public awareness and interest in your organization. Events don't need to be complicated, a simple

spread of libations, an info table, a short presentation about the organization, and possibly some games or activities are all you need to host a great event.

THINKING ABOUT WHO YOU SERVE

Reflect on who your mentees are. Consider where they're from, who they look up to, and generally ask them questions about who they want their mentors to be.

Once you identify your target mentors, consider: What group of people and what resources does this group have? It's important to consider and work around barriers your potential mentors face in becoming mentors. For example, queer mentors have long faced stigma around working with youth. How can you break down these barriers to recruit the people you want?

RECRUITING DIVERSE MENTORS

Doing outreach to specific communities is a nuanced topic, but having staff who are reflective of the community being served is a great first step to recruiting volunteers from within specific communities.

PROGRAM STORIES

The Division of Indian Work is a program serving the Minneapolis Indigenous community. They collaborate and support other indigenous organizations in their community and maintain a strong and supportive organization. Through this, they maintain a presence, they stay top of mind and recruit new mentors.

OUTREACH RESOURCES

- **local nonprofit spaces:** Check out the events Minnesota Council of Nonprofit hosts and promotes to find places to engage with other nonprofit staff and leaders.
- **How to “Do” Critical Mentoring: Making your Program More Culturally Relevant:** Check out the article by Dr. Torie Weiston-Serdan to get your gears turning about critical mentoring.
- **Critical Mentoring Book:** Check out Torie Weiston-Serdan's book, *Critical Mentoring: A Practical Guide*. According to the book's synopsis, “This book introduces the concept of critical mentoring, presenting its theoretical and empirical foundations, and providing telling examples of what it looks like in practice, and what it can achieve.”



SECTION 4

EXTRA CAPACITY

A major concern for many mentoring programs is staff capacity, especially when it comes to recruitment. Finding new volunteers is time-consuming but vital to the success of a program. One way to expand capacity is through hiring vistas, interns and engaging your board of directors to contribute more time and energy to the recruitment efforts.

EXTRA CAPACITY

CALCULATING TIME NEEDED

It's easy to underestimate how long match management really takes. Utilize the [NMRC's staffing calculator worksheet here](#) to gain an understanding of how much time your program needs to reach organizational goals. Then input that info into the [NMRC FTE Calculator Tool](#) to help you calculate the hours needed for each step of creating and maintaining a mentoring match.

EXAMPLE PROJECTS

Once you've determined how much time you have, you can start thinking of tasks that can be delegated to others like VISTA's, interns, Board members and volunteers.

These tasks and projects can be things like:

- Help plan a recruitment event
- Conduct phone interviews with potential recruits
- Speaking about your organization at media events
- Tabling at events

VISTAS

Hiring a year-long VISTA to build capacity through work on a specific project is a great short-term solution when your staff capacity is limited. [MAVA](#), [MCN](#), [Minnesota Alliance with Youth, serve MN](#), and [Ampact](#) are all support agencies for AmeriCorps that can assist you in hosting a VISTA member.

INTERNS

Hiring Interns is another way to add capacity for short-term projects, like one focused on targeted recruitment. Some organizations may offer grants to fund interns and will manage the financial aspect of internships, otherwise, you can think about hosting internally. It's important to have enough capacity to onboard and manage new interns. This can still be a great way to bring fresh eyes to your organization and specialized support to a project.

BOARD ENGAGEMENT

Getting your [Board engaged](#) is another great way to get extra support on specific projects. Having boards join committees dedicated to topics can help support and give new connections in that area. Get started using our board engagement tips and then build out board committees as board members are interested.

VOLUNTEERS

Similar principles from Board Engagement can be applied to volunteers. It's important to not overextend volunteers and make them feel appreciated by your organization, and make sure you are engaging in efficient [volunteer management](#).

PROGRAM STORIES

MENTOR Minnesota has benefited greatly by engaging our Board. For example, by committees like Marketing & Development, we've been able to source great new ideas.

EXTRA CAPACITY RESOURCES:

- [Time Calculator Worksheet](#): Use this worksheet to help you think about all of the sometimes overlooked aspects of program management.
- [NMRC FTE Calculator Tool](#): Once you use the Worksheet for Tasks and Time Estimates, this helps you calculate the hours needed for each step of creating and maintaining a mentoring match.
- [Board engagement](#): Check out this one-pager from MENTOR Minnesota on the basics of engaging your board
- [Volunteer management](#): Managing volunteers can pose some challenges, learn tips and tricks from the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.



SECTION 5

PARTNERSHIPS

Community Partnerships is a broad concept, this encompasses how and why you're building relationships with institutions, community leaders, companies, and organizations.

PARTNERSHIPS

PARTNERSHIP FORMATION

Building community is slow and vital, it's less about what you can gain or achieve from a partnership and more about lifting each other up and building trust and dependability. To determine who to partner with, consider who your mentees and mentors are, what communities they're in, and how you're building partnerships with those demographics. For example, if you're working with college students, how are you building partnerships with affinity groups.

TYPES OF PARTNERSHIPS

There are various partnerships to consider building:

- Sponsorship—Partner with a business who would like to provide financial support and/or host mentor recruitment events within their company or organization
- Program space—A business may provide a physical space for mentoring programs to meet at or host events like fundraisers or celebrations
- Recruitment Media support—Partnering with an organization who will allow your program to promote recruitment on their website, put up posters in their business, have a commercial on their podcast, etc.
- School and counselor partnership—getting referrals for young people
- College and university partnership- leverage resources like work study pay or internships to recruit mentors
- Business partnership—Asking a business to offer a free or reduced price opportunity for your mentors/mentees

PROGRAM STORIES

QUEERSPACE collective is a program for and by queer people, thus many of the partnerships they build are within the LGBTQ+ community.



This is shown through their partnerships with organizations like trans healthcare organizations who they refer and partner on events with, [Quatrefoil LGBTQ+ library](#), and the organization [Telling Queer History](#). Finding organizations you share values with can be extremely beneficial in the 'why' of partnership.

The CREW mentoring program partnered with Hollins University to open pathways for students to join the Hollins Riding Team. This partnership not only provides more mentorship opportunities for community to get involved, but it also allows for more young people to learn social & emotional skills to support mental health through those impactful relationships as they are guided by the gentle nature of horses and The CREW's leadership team.

Mentor North partners with local businesses to provide experiences for their matches. They shared that one of the most striking features of Mentor North's programming is the way that its impact ripples out from the enrolled youth to the adults who are connected with them, and then to the greater community. To encourage and remove barriers to community engagement, we maintain an annually updated Activities Pass for our mentor-mentee matches, made possible by more than 30 Twin Ports businesses and organizations willing to offer free or reduced admission.



PARTNERSHIPS RESOURCES

- **Relationship mapping:** This strategy can help insure all youth in a school or organization feel supported by an adult.
- **NMRC Youth initiated mentoring page:** Learn the basics and how to implement youth-initiated mentoring at your program.
- **YouthPAC:** Check out YouthPAC and read submissions from youth, implementing and amplifying



SECTION 6

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Empowering youth to have self-determination and involvement in their mentoring experiences can make those experiences more meaningful, long-lasting, and beneficial.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

NMRC'S RESOURCE ON YOUTH-INITIATED MENTORING

According to the National Mentoring Resource Center, "Youth Initiated Mentoring involves supporting youth with engaging nonparental adults from their social networks (e.g., teachers, family friends, extended family members) in mentoring interactions and relationships. Key elements of the practice may include 1) providing youth with the opportunity to nominate potential mentors from their existing social networks as part of their participation in a formal mentoring program as well as 2) training youth in skills for initiating mentoring interactions or relationships with nonparental adults."

Your program can support youth-initiated mentoring to recruit new mentors to your program. Please consult the resource below from the National Mentoring Resource Center to learn the basics.

PROGRAM STORIES



At [RiseUp Red Wing](#), they have a peer mentoring program where highschoolers mentor younger students. They shared that when it comes to recruiting peer mentors, the high school mentors simply talk to their friends and classmates about what they do. This naturally prompts their peers to sign up as peer mentors themselves. Students who already have a peer mentor enthusiastically spread the word about our program to their friends. This leads their peers to sign up to connect with a high school peer mentor.

Additionally, peer mentors who have younger siblings are motivated to join. They believe their family members would benefit from having a high school peer mentor's guidance.

YOUTH-INITIATED MENTORING RESOURCES:

- [NMRC Youth initiated mentoring page](#): Learn the basics and how to implement youth-initiated mentoring at your program.
- [YouthPAC](#): Check out YouthPAC and read submissions from youth, implementing and amplifying the voices of your own young people's creativity could empower them too!
- [Understanding Youth Initiated Mentoring and Employing this Strategy w/ Youth Today](#)
- [Peer mentoring at CSU and Community of Kids Peer Mentoring](#): Read here about a peer mentoring program where youth helped build the programmatic structure.
- [Sharing Social Capital—National Mentoring Summit 2022 Plenary 3](#): Watch this video to learn more about Social Capital and how it relates to the youth you work with.

