Alberta
**Mentoring
Partnership**
Your Mentoring Resource
albertamentors.ca

Framework for

Building Mentoring Relationships in Schools

Alberta
Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

Framework For Building Mentoring Relationships In Schools

This publication is intended to provide foundational information, implementation strategies and resource references to assist school authorities and school personnel in establishing and/or enhancing mentoring programs in Alberta schools.

The resource is intended for:

- School Personnel
- School Administrators
- School Leadership Teams
- Teachers and Support Staff
- School Counselors and Learning Coaches
- Parent Councils
- Community Partners

This publication is available to view online or download as a PDF file from the Alberta Mentoring Partnership website: www.albertamentors.ca. For additional information and/or enquiries contact: questions@albertamentors.ca

Every reasonable effort has been made to provide proper acknowledgement of the original sources of any material referenced in this publication. Information is accurate, to the best of our knowledge, at the time of production. The publisher would welcome any information regarding errors or omissions.

The material in this publication may be used, reproduced, stored or transmitted for educational purposes and on a non-profit basis, with the exception of material cited for which the Alberta Mentoring Partnership does not own copyright.

"We relish news of our heroes, forgetting that we can be extraordinary to someone too."

HELEN HAYES

Table of Contents

Introduction

A Framework for
Building Mentoring Relationships in Schools

This framework is a resource for schools and school authorities that want to implement a mentoring initiative for children and youth who could benefit from being involved in a mentoring relationship.

This framework includes:

- an overview of possible approaches and models of school-based mentoring relationships
- an outline of benefits for different models of mentoring
- a list of resources to support in-school mentoring relationships
- sample templates for planning a school-based mentoring initiative.

The Alberta Mentoring Partnership

The Alberta Mentoring Partnership (AMP) is a network of community mentoring agencies, government and youth dedicated to the success of mentoring organizations and programming across the province.

AMP builds the capacity of schools and agencies to create and support quality mentoring relationships and activities by providing access to mentoring resources and toolkits, training materials and research through their website. AMP is also available to answer mentor-related questions and provide assistance using the tools and materials.

The vision of the Alberta Mentoring Partnership is young people thrive through mentoring relationships.

www.albertamentors.ca

Mentoring Overview

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is the presence of a caring individual who provides friendship, advice, support and constructive role-modelling over time. Mentors build stronger communities through the simple act of spending time with a child or youth.

Mentoring creates relationships based on trust and open communication, and helps children and youth foster a sense of belonging, build self-confidence and learn new skills and passions. Talking and spending time with supportive and engaged adults or older youth provides children and youth with positive experiences during periods of heightened brain development. A positive mentoring relationship can help children and youth build a solid foundation that prepares them to adapt to the future demands of the adult world.

Spending time with a young person may seem simple, but science tells us that healthy interactions with supportive adults boost the brain development, mental health, and well-being of children and youth.

Most of us remember someone in our life who acted as a cheerleader, advocate, advisor or role model. Many organizations, including schools, support new employees by matching them with a more experienced colleague who acts as a mentor. Teams and clubs often identify experienced members to guide or mentor new recruits. In Indigenous and cultural communities we often see references to Elders, culture knowledge keepers and leaders guiding and mentoring their community in traditional practices and cultural knowledge and customs.

Many children and youth would benefit from these types of mentoring relationships. Schools across Alberta are working to make this happen in structured and intentional ways.

> "At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has to think with deep gratitude of those who have ignited the flame within us." ALBERT SCHWEITZER

Community-based mentoring

There are a number of community-based organizations that have mentoring as their core business. Big Brothers, Big Sisters is the most well-known example in Alberta.

These organizations match adult volunteers with children and youth for a relationship over a period of time. Community-based mentoring activities tend to focus on recreational and cultural activities and occur in a variety of locations outside the regular school day.

School-based mentoring

A community-based mentoring organization may also form partnerships with schools to support school-based mentoring activities. The organization will recruit, train and support adult or teen mentors to match with individual students. Typically the mentor and student will meet for one hour a week during the school day for the entire school year.

School staff refer individual students who would benefit from a mentoring relationship and provide supervision and support of the mentoring activities that take place at school, often during regular school hours. These types of mentoring activities tend to focus on relationship building and literacy.

A school authority or an individual school may independently organize a mentoring initiative to support specific goals of the school community such as improved academic achievement or school connectedness.

Some school-based mentoring initiatives may focus on career awareness and transition planning. The mentor could be an older student or adult who helps the younger student explore personal strengths and interests or the mentor could have expertise or be working in a career area that is of special interest to the student.

Teen mentoring

Teens are the fastest growing segment of mentors. Teen mentoring initiatives often match high school youth with elementary or middle school students over the course of a semester or school year. Teen mentoring can be done as a course requirement—for example, as a Career and Technology Studies (CTS) module—or as part of an extra- or co-curricular activity. Teen mentoring may also be part of what a community mentoring organization does.

Mentoring as a whole school approach to build school culture

Increasingly, schools are using mentoring relationships to support welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. Mentoring relationships are often a component of school culture-building activities such as cross-age groupings for special events, leadership projects, character education activities, reading initiatives, transition-planning strategies, and cultural and recreational activities. These activities may be one-time events, occasional or regularly scheduled throughout the school year.

Even in these less formal situations, individuals taking on mentoring roles will benefit from related training, reflection and safety guidelines.

Mentoring as a targeted intervention

Mentoring may be a targeted intervention in a school-wide approach to support social-emotional learning, and positive mental health and well-being. For example, mentoring is often identified as an intervention in restorative and trauma-informed practice, as well as a targeted support in a positive behaviour support approach.

Mentoring relationships may also be integrated into service learning, comprehensive school health, and bullying prevention strategies.

See Appendix A-1: Framework Chart

Why is Mentoring Important?

Mentoring is increasingly recognized as a powerful strategy to support the positive development of children and youth. Research confirms that children and youth who participate in a mentoring relationship experience a number of benefits.

School-based mentoring: provides direct and meaningful support for students

- provides direct and meaningful support for students'
- provides an effective strategy for building school connectedness
- reinforces the importance of healthy relationships
- supports resilience
- transcends age, gender, ethnicity, academic ability and social norms.

> *All kids need a little help, a little hope and somebody who believes in them."*
> EARVIN "MAGIC" JOHNSON

School-based mentoring relationships can contribute to positive outcomes for children and youth, including:

- improved attitudes about staying in school
- increased school connectedness
- increased high school completion rates
- improved social skills and behaviour
- strengthened peer, social and family relationships
- reduced risk of involvement in drugs and alcohol
- enhanced academic engagement and achievement
- increased opportunity to develop career paths
- increased resiliency.

Mentoring

- Academic Success
- Social Skills
- Career Paths
- Resilience
- School Connectedness
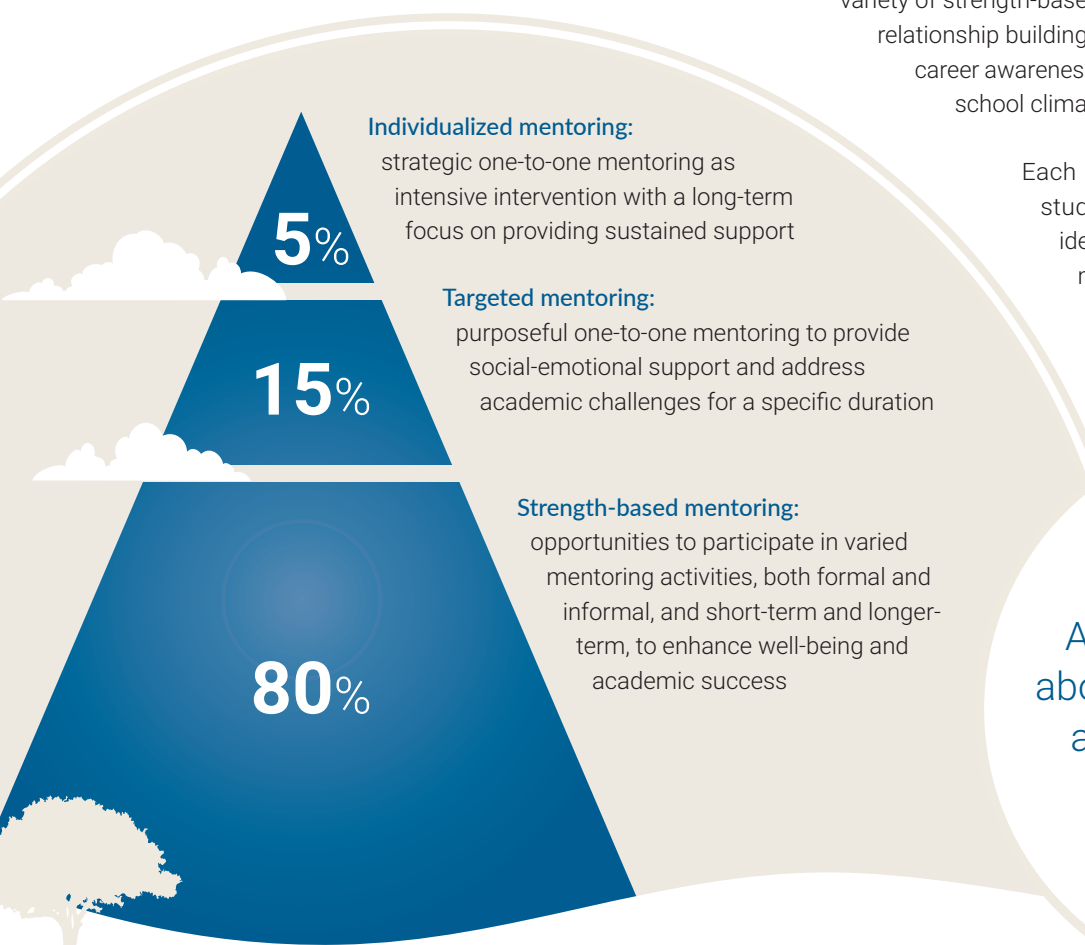
What Approach has the Most Impact?

All children and youth will benefit from positive connections and supportive relationships. However, it is important to consider where particular mentoring efforts will have the most impact.

A review of the literature on resilience indicates that five percent of students may be highly vulnerable to adversity and stress. These students require intense and often long-term interventions that focus on individualized support. For these students, the mentoring relationship will need to be strategic with a long-term focus on providing sustained support.

An additional fifteen percent of students are at-risk of not meeting success and require structured interventions to provide social-emotional support and role modellling. For these students, the most beneficial mentoring relationship will be structured and purposeful and focus on providing one-to-one support.

Eighty percent of children and youth possess many of the internal characteristics and external supports related to healthy development and can benefit from mentoring experiences that enhance well-being and academic success. These students will benefit from a variety of strength-based mentoring activities focused on relationship building, cultural or recreational activities, career awareness, literacy or homework support, or school climate building.

Each school will have its own unique student population and will need to identify the goals and objectives of a mentoring initiative that aligns with the needs and strengths of their students and school community.

Individualized mentoring:
strategic one-to-one mentoring as intensive intervention with a long-term focus on providing sustained support

5%

Targeted mentoring:
purposeful one-to-one mentoring to provide social-emotional support and address academic challenges for a specific duration

15%

Strength-based mentoring:
opportunities to participate in varied mentoring activities, both formal and informal, and short-term and longer-term, to enhance well-being and academic success

80%

At its core, mentoring is about building connections and developing healthy relationships.

Building Success for
Students and School communities

Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments

The Alberta School Act outlines the responsibilities of students, parents and school boards for creating and maintaining welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments that respect diversity and nurture a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self. Welcoming and caring environments support students in building healthy relationships with others and demonstrating respect, empathy and compassion.

Welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments demonstrate the following characteristics.

- Healthy and respectful relationships are fostered.
- Students feel that adults care for them as a group and as individuals.
- Positive mental health is promoted.
- Support is demonstrated through collaboration, high expectations, mutual trust and caring.
- Diversity is respected, celebrated and understood as a strength.
- Children, youth and adults model positive social-emotional skills.

Mentoring relationships contribute to a positive school culture by creating authentic and engaging opportunities to model and teach the skills essential for healthy relationships. Being either a mentee or a mentor can strengthen school bonds and enhance students' feelings of safety and belonging.

School connectedness

School connectedness is the belief by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning and about them as individuals.

A growing body of research in the fields of education, mental health and resiliency indicates that students who feel connected to their school are more likely to engage in healthy behaviours and succeed academically.

Students who experience school connectedness demonstrate:

- increased academic benefits as a result of improved attendance, higher achievement rates, completion of high school and the pursuit of post-secondary education
- reduction of risky behaviours including alcohol and substance abuse and suicide attempts
- enhanced mental well-being related to an increase in resilience factors.

Mentoring relationships can help individual students feel more connected and valued in their school community and can result in improved attendance. Mentoring can also be an effective strategy for learning and valuing diversity as it encourages individuals to get to know one another, identify common interests and concerns, and recognize one another's strengths and contributions.

For students who may be experiencing social isolation, mentoring can provide much-needed emotional and social support. For other students who are experiencing academic challenges, mentoring may be an effective strategy for building new or renewed love of learning and literacy.

Teen and peer mentoring is an effective strategy for creating opportunities for youth to have a positive influence on and make a contribution to their school and community. Being a mentor is an opportunity to develop leadership skills.

Becoming Ethical Citizens

Becoming a teen or youth mentor also provides a context for becoming an Ethical Citizen, a key outcome described in the *Ministerial Order for Student Learning (#001/2013):*

… an Ethical Citizen understands that it is not all about them, … sees beyond self-interest to the needs of the community; … contributes fully to the world … builds relationships through fairness, humility and open mindedness, with teamwork, collaboration and communication; engages with many cultures, religions and languages, values diversity in all people and adapts to any situation; demonstrates respect, empathy and compassion for all people …"

Strength-based Practice to Build Resilience

Resilience refers to the capacity of individuals to cope successfully with stress-related situations, overcome adversity, or adapt positively to change. Resiliency is often compared to a rubber band with the capacity to stretch to almost a breaking point but still spring back into shape.

Research has explored why some individuals are more resilient than others and have the ability to bounce back from difficult or negative experiences and the confidence to explore new experiences with a positive mindset. The research identifies that resilient individuals have protective factors that help them handle situations without being overwhelmed. These protective factors include two broad sets of developmental assets (sometimes called developmental strengths), which include:

- External factors (supports) impacted by supportive relationships with family, peers, school and community that develop assets of support, empowerment, boundaries, expectations and use of time.
- Internal factors (characteristics) focused on personal values, social competencies including cultural sensitivity, a commitment to learning and building a positive identify.

The correlation between assets and school-based mentoring is based on the concept that having a significant relationship with a supportive adult (such as a mentor) will enhance a young person's strengths, resources and ability to be more successful in school and life in spite of challenges and adversity. Research demonstrates a direct relationship between strong developmental assets and enhancing academic success, decreasing negative behaviours, and building capacity in children and youth.

When mentors take a strength-based focus they build caring, respectful relationships with the children and youth they are mentoring. The mentor provides support for positive growth through activities and interactions that are mutually enjoyable, meaningful, challenging, and success-orientated.

All students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, family background or socio-economic status are empowered by relationships that promote developmental assets. While the relationship between student and teacher is a primary and significant one, a single teacher cannot be the only connection for students. Schools need to explore ways to provide opportunities that enhance resilience factors for students and for schools as whole. In Alberta we find a range of approaches: targeted mentoring with community partners such as Big Brothers Big Sisters; school-based mentoring initiatives; and the less formal mentoring relationships that occurs through coaching, special events and other co- and extra-curricular activities.

Building a strength-based school culture is a process that involves comprehensive and intentional change, resulting in a school environment where all members feel respected and supported, and all students are engaged in and feel connected to the school community.

Resources for mentoring with strength-based practice are available on the Alberta Mentoring Partnership website, including:

- Creating Strength-Based Classrooms and Schools: A Practice Guide
- Strength-Based Mentoring: A Practice Guide for Mentors

> "Life's challenges are not supposed to paralyze you; they are supposed to help you discover who you are."
>
> BERNICE JOHNSON REAGON

A strength-based approach is built on the belief that all children and youth have strengths, capabilities and resources and the ability to recover from adversity. This approach focuses on opportunities, hope and solutions rather than just problems or limitations.

Mentoring Models

What the Research Says

Research indicates that a structured approach to mentoring that creates supported opportunities for sustained relationship will have the most positive and significant impact for the mentee, the mentor and the school community.

However, in school communities there may be a variety of mentoring activities, ranging from informal to structured, and from single events to regularly-scheduled events. In these contexts, mentoring relationships may be one of a number of strategies within the approach and may not be intentionally planned or well-resourced.

School staff are encouraged to consider all of the mentoring opportunities within the school, and to consider how a more structured and intentional approach to planning, implementation and coordination can enhance school culture, student connectedness to school, and school success.

The most effective mentoring initiative:
- is planned and intentional
- establishes goals and measurable outcomes
- sustains relationships for a period of time (typically one school year) with a regular cycle of interactions (typically one hour-per-week)
- provides screening, training and support to mentors
- ensures effective risk-management routines are in place and that schools practice due diligence by taking reasonable care in planning so they are able to make informed decisions that will contribute to the success, safety and integrity of the initiative.

Types of Mentoring Relationships

Mentoring relationships can be organized to support various types of interactions, including:
- **One-to-one:** Matches one mentor in a relationship with one child or youth
- **One mentor with small group:** Matches one mentor in a relationship with a small group of children or youth
- **Team mentoring:** Matches several mentors who work with small groups of children or youth
- **E-mentoring:** Matches one mentor with one child or youth on the Internet, by telephone or through social networks. Risk management is a crucial component of this type of mentoring.

Mentoring relationships can also have different focuses, including:
- **Academic mentoring:** focus is on improving the academic performance of a child, youth or group being mentored, or for teaching specific information or skills.
- **Career mentoring:** focus is on assisting the child, youth or group being mentored in identifying personal interests and strengths, building awareness of career possibilities and post-secondary opportunities, and developing skills and knowledge related to leadership, transition planning and the world of work.
- **Cultural mentoring:** focus is on sharing customs, values and practices of a specific culture, tradition or group.
- **Social-emotional learning:** focus is on supporting an individual or a group through a critical time of development by helping them identify and build strengths and develop skills to address issues and challenges.

Models for School-based Mentoring Initiatives

There are a number of models of what a school-based mentoring initiative could look like, including:

- a partnership with a community mentoring organization
- a collaboration with an community group or organization that offers activity-based programs for children and youth
- an individual school or school authority initiative.

Models for School-based Mentoring Initiatives		
Partnership with a community mentoring agency	Collaboration with an organization that offers activity-based programming for children and youth	Individual school or school authority initiative
A community-based mentoring agency can provide the organization, best practices and mentors. The mentoring organization will be involved in the matching process and support supervision through the school year. The most familiar example in Alberta is schools partnering with local Big Brother Big Sister agencies.	Extra-curricular or co-curricular activities such as noon hour sports, after-school homework clubs or special interest clubs can be opportunities for meaningful mentoring relationships. Examples of this type of model include collaborative partnerships with the Boys and Girls Club, 4-H Clubs and Junior Achievement.	In this model school and/or school authority staff are responsible for the organization of the mentoring initiative, including the recruitment of volunteer mentors. These volunteers could be from another school, a community partner or from a local organization such as a seniors' group.

Whichever model is used, schools need to be aware of school and school authority polices and regulations in relation to volunteers in the schools, student transportation and supervision, and after-school and out-of-school activities. In addition, school principals should be consulted in regard to Alberta Education regulations for off-campus activities, as well as additional school authority requirements related to off-campus activities.

Regardless of when or where mentoring relationships occur it will be important to implement effective risk-management strategies and practice due diligence in protecting the safety of children and youth.

All models will need a school or school authority coordinator to act as the liaison with an agency in a partnership or collaboration, and to take on a leadership role in facilitating programming components of the mentoring initiative at the school or school authorities level.
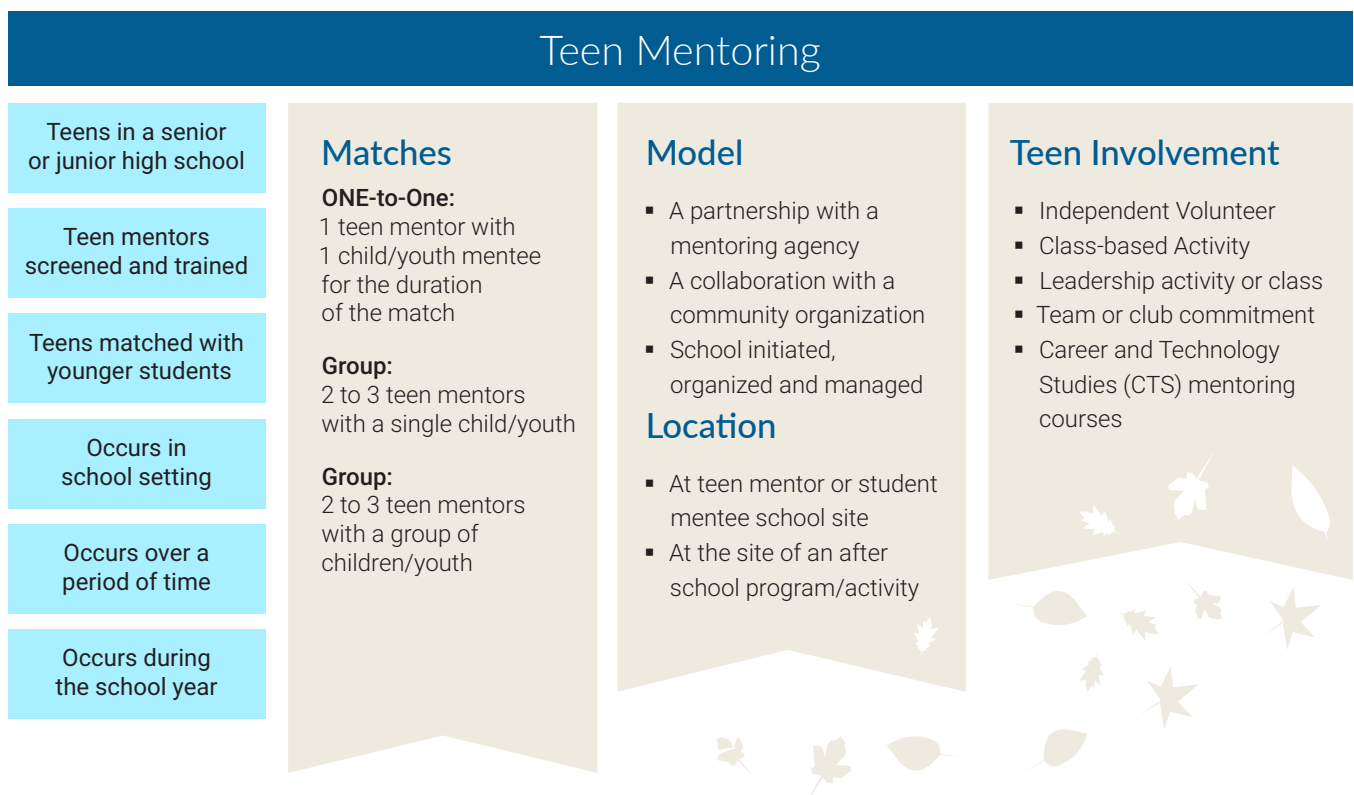
See Appendix A-7: Coordinator Tasks

Teen Mentoring

Research is showing that teens can be powerful and effective mentors for younger children. The impact of the mentoring relationship is equally powerful for the teens mentors. While younger students who are being mentoring benefit from the support and the role-modelling, older students who are acting as mentors report increased confidence, self-awareness and respect.

In Alberta high schools, teen mentors can earn credits for Career and Technology Studies (CTS) mentoring courses. This has the advantage of providing training and support for teen mentors and the school staff providing leadership and supervision.

See Appendix A-2: Mentoring Courses

Typically elementary school students and teen mentors are matched and meet in a supervised setting for one hour a week. They generally engage in class or homework related activities but could also play games, do craft or online projects, and share skill-building activities. The most common goals of teen mentoring relationships are to improve reading and literacy skills, and to build self-confidence through healthy relationships.

Teen Mentoring

Teens in a senior or junior high school	
Teen mentors screened and trained	
Teens matched with younger students	
Occurs in school setting	
Occurs over a period of time	
Occurs during the school year	

Matches

ONE-to-One:
1 teen mentor with 1 child/youth mentee for the duration of the match

Group:
2 to 3 teen mentors with a single child/youth

Group:
2 to 3 teen mentors with a group of children/youth

Model

- A partnership with a mentoring agency
- A collaboration with a community organization
- School initiated, organized and managed

Location

- At teen mentor or student mentee school site
- At the site of an after school program/activity

Teen Involvement

- Independent Volunteer
- Class-based Activity
- Leadership activity or class
- Team or club commitment
- Career and Technology Studies (CTS) mentoring courses

Building teen mentoring into school schedules

Alberta schools are finding a number of creative ways to incorporate dedicated time for mentoring into school schedules. Consider the following examples.

- Teen volunteers provide an after-school sports program for elementary students as the practicum portion of a CTS mentoring course.
- A noon-hour program in a multi-grade school focuses on reading and math skills with teen volunteers acting as mentors and completing the practicum portion of a CTS mentoring course.
- A flex-block in high school or an option block in junior high provides the time for teen mentors to travel to an elementary school to participate in a service learning project.
- A class partnership based on curricular links, such as a high school English class and an elementary language arts class focused on a particular genre of writing, meets as part of regularly-schedule class time.
- The idea of cross-age activities is extended and enriched by organizing sustained activities between teens in an older grade with a younger grade over a school year.
- Scheduled class time for high school Career and Technology Studies (CTS) course is used for mentoring activities.

> "Our students had such a great opportunity to practice positive citizenship by being involved in mentoring and giving back to their community. We're very proud of them." SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Benefits of teen mentoring

There are a number of potential benefits for teen mentors, including:

- improved communication and problem-solving skills
- increased self-confidence, self-concept, social responsibility and appreciation of diversity
- increased feeling of school connectedness resulting in improved attendance, learner engagement and academic performance
- documented volunteer experiences that can be considered for scholarship and employment applications
- increased awareness of valuable contribution teens can make in their community and importance of a life-long commitment to volunteering.

> "I never thought I could make such a difference for someone else—it's like magic!" TEEN MENTOR

Participating in a mentoring relationship with a teen mentor can provide a number of benefits for elementary students, including:

- increased understanding of healthy relationships through the experience of a positive relationship with a teen mentor
- enhanced social-emotional learning through positive role modelling
- enhanced literacy skills and academic growth
- increased feelings of connectedness, positive sense of self and confidence.

Career and Technology Studies (CTS) Mentoring Courses

Mentoring courses for high school students are available as one-credit courses within the Career and Technologies Studies (CTS) program of studies.

CTS courses are opportunities for students to engage in learning experiences that will help them discover and explore their interests in practical and purposeful ways.

The CTS program of studies is organized into five clusters to align related occupational areas with the federal government's National Occupational Classification. Within each cluster there are occupational areas that contain related courses in specific areas.

A pathway is a selection of CTS courses that are connected to competencies specific to an occupational area or desired career path. Students can explore their personal and career interests by creating individual pathways of courses they want to take related to their personal interests and goals. These individual pathways can help a student build skills and knowledge in preparation for post-secondary education, apprentice training, or moving directly into the workforce.

There are five mentoring courses, each one-credit, in the Human and Social Services (HSS) occupational area. This occupational area is part of the larger Health, Recreation and Human Services (HRH) cluster.

Current mentoring courses include:

HSS 1050	Introduction to Mentorship
HSS 2050	Becoming a Mentor
HSS 3060	Extending a Mentoring Relationship
HSS 3070	Peer Mentoring
HSS 3050	Becoming a Mentee

See Appendix A-2: Mentoring Courses

There are a number of ways students can complete the practical components of these courses. For example, an individual student or group of students taking the same mentoring course could:
- connect with a teacher or school administrator to organize opportunities for working with other students in their home school
- with the support of their CTS teacher, connect with a neighbouring elementary or junior high school
- connect with a community organization such as 4-H or the Boys and Girls Club to volunteer as a mentor in an after-school program.

Completion of *HSS 3060 Extending the Mentor Relationship* enables students to apply for a certificate of completion for the Foundations of Mentoring. For additional information, see:
- www.education.alberta.ca/media/1238954/pathways.pdf
- www.albertamentors.ca

Visit Alberta Education's CTS website section for additional information and resources, including:
- Outlines for the five mentoring course
- Information about complimentary CTS courses
- Planning assistance for schools and students
- Learning resources to support CTS mentoring courses
- CTS Pathways booklet

Transition Planning and Career Awareness

Most junior and senior high schools have practices in place to support students as they prepare to transition to post secondary study and/or careers and employment.

Many of these transition-planning activities contain opportunities for mentoring and can offer valuable support for students by providing:

- knowledge and support in exploring and planning post-secondary education and career possibilities
- encouragement, motivation and opportunities to develop self-confidence through times of change
- positive connections with others in a more experienced position
- access to the skills and knowledge of a more experienced person.

A review of current career exploration and transition planning practices in a school or school authority can provide a starting point for developing more intentional and purposeful mentoring relationships. The added benefits of incorporating mentoring relationships into transition planning practice is the opportunity for students to make meaningful connections, build relationships, and feel more connected to their school community.

After-School Mentoring Activities

Schools can consider ways to implement mentoring relationships in an after-school setting to provide academic support, build athletic skills, provide recreational and culture activities, or develop social-emotional skills through a variety of activities.

Schools interested in developing after-school mentoring opportunities should consider the following questions:
- What specific types of activities will align with the interests and needs of students in the school?
- Is an appropriate location available in the school to accommodate the proposed activity?
- If required, how will transportation home after the activity be provided?
- How will supervision by school staff be provided?
- Will there be financial costs to the activities? If so, how will these be covered?
- How will parents be informed of opportunities, indicate their permission, and support participation?
- How will mentors be recruited, screened, trained and supported?
- Will matches be one-to-one or involve small groups or teams of mentors?
- Will mentoring be the primary focus of the activity?
- Can the activity provide the opportunity to build relationships over a sustained period of time?

Benefits of after-school mentoring activities

Any mentoring activities designed to develop regular and sustained relationships will provide benefits for children and youth. After-school activities provide an additional time frame to create opportunities for children and youth to engage in activities that are meaningful for them, and that involve people who are invested in knowing and supporting them.

After-school mentoring activities can provide a number of positive benefits, including:
- reinforcing a sense of belonging in the school community
- providing a time that is more available for volunteer participation
- uniting school and community resources
- reinforcing classroom learning.

After-school activities can provide opportunities to support mentoring relationships with a range of mentors including post-secondary students, senior citizens, community members, corporate employees and teen mentors. Activities could target academic improvement, career exploration, specific skill development or social-emotional learning.

Examples of after-school mentoring activities

There are numerous extra- or co-curricular activities that would benefit from mentoring relationships. Consider the following examples.
- A high school sports team partners with a junior high or elementary school and provides a sequence of activity modules during the year. This provides both leadership and coaching roles for the high school students and provides an activity session each week for the younger students.
- A group of high school students in a leadership program partners with students at a neighbouring junior high, on a regular schedule over a school year, to provide friendship, role-modelling and guidance in planning ahead for high school.
- Community-based artists, musicians and/or Elders partner with schools in the area to offer after-school activities that focus on sharing cultural traditions and practices.

E-mentoring

E-mentoring, also know as online mentoring, is a means of providing a mentoring relationship via the Internet. E-mentoring may use a variety of electronic communications available including e-mail, secure websites, or custom communications software. The online communication could be the exclusive connection between mentors and mentees, or it could be in addition to face-to-face interactions. Regardless of whether it is used as a singular or integrated approach, the primary goal of e-mentoring is to provide opportunities for children and youth to develop positive connections with an older individual in a safe and positive relationship.

E-mentoring connects one mentor with one child or youth and the pair typically communicates online on a regular schedule over a course of one school year.

Safeguards must be in place to ensure the safety and privacy of participants and protect everyone involved

Schools interested in establishing an e-mentoring initiative should consider the following questions:
- What is the school or school authority's policy related to computer use and online access for students?
- Will parents support an e-mentoring initiative?
- Are the necessary human and physical resources available to support e-mentoring, including a system for safe and secure connections between mentor and mentee?
- How will mentors and mentees be screened, matched and supported?
- How will e-mentoring be organized to ensure appropriate monitoring and supervision is in place?

Initially e-mentoring was designed to connect students with business and career mentors. More recently e-mentoring initiatives are being used more broadly and they often focus on connecting children and youth with a range of mentors including post-secondary students, senior citizens, corporate employees and teen mentors. E-mentoring can focus on academic improvement, career exploration, specific skill development, relationship building or social-emotional learning.

Benefits of e-mentoring

In addition to the identified benefits of a mentoring relationship, such as supporting social-emotional learning and enhancing academic achievement, e-mentoring can provide specific benefits to mentees and mentors including:
- engaging and meaningful opportunities to develop reading comprehension and writing skills (this could be especially helpful for students learning English as another language—a supportive online relationship would be an opportunity to develop skills and confidence in using the English language)
- opportunities to develop computer and online communication skills
- an option when face-to-face mentoring isn't available, particularly in rural and remote school communities
- a solution for recruiting members who face challenges such as transportation or scheduling associated with face-to-face mentoring
- an exploration of career and educational opportunities with a mentor in a particular career field
- an alternative model that allows mentors and mentees time to give considered responses—this could be of particular benefit for students who are shy and may be reluctant to participate in face-to-face communication.

Examples of e-mentoring

There are numerous possibilities for how e-mentoring can support mentoring relationships. Consider the following examples.
- Post-secondary students pair with junior and senior high students to support career exploration and transition planning.
- Junior and senior high teen mentors pair with elementary students to support literacy and academic improvement.
- Senior citizens pair with students to provide friendship and socialization for both parties.
- Corporate employees pair with junior and senior high school students for career exploration activities.

Designing and Implementing a Mentoring Initiative

When thinking about developing a mentoring initiative in your school, consider the following questions:

- Could we enhance an existing activity to include a more intentional mentoring focus?
- Are there connections between a mentoring initiative and other school goals?
- How can our students benefit from building positive relationships and being more engaged in the school community?
- Is there a community organization we could partner with?

"Have a bias towards action—let's see something happen now. You can break that big plan into small steps and take the first step right away."

INDIRA GANDHI

"Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do." JOHN WOODEN

Moving ahead to develop a mentoring initiative means considering several factors, including the target audience, desired outcomes, source of mentors, possible partnerships and support networks, and required resources and coordination. A sound and reliable plan may take time and effort to develop but it will provide the foundation for a positive mentoring experience. The degree of planning required will vary, depending on the complexity and scope of the initiative.

The following design process and sample planning templates are provided as a roadmap. Each school or school authority needs to consider the process that is most effective for their own particular learning community.

Getting Started – The Exploration

- **Leadership:** Who's directing the exploration?
- **Vision:** What do we want to happen in our school?
- **Profile:** What do we know about our school, school authority, and community?
- **Resources:** What is available in our school, school authority, and community?
- **Roadmap:** What direction do we go next?

Next Steps – The Action Plan

- **Outcome:** What is our goal? What? Who? When? How?
- **Leadership:** Are roles and responsibilities defined?
- **Players:** Who is the team?
- **Resources:** What do we need to have in place?
- **Due diligence:** Do we have the bases covered?
- **Blueprint:** A plan for success

Full Cycle – Celebrate, Reflect, Evaluate Sustainability and Growth

See Appendix A-3 to A-9: planning templates

Getting Started – The Exploration

The idea to implement a mentoring initiative might originate in a number of ways, such as:

- classroom teachers using cross-age reading partners
- school staff engaged in improving school connectedness for students
- school leadership teams setting targets to improve attendance and increase high school completion rates
- counsellors and staff involved in career awareness and transition planning for students
- parents and community partners interested in building cultural awareness and understanding
- a mentoring agency or community organization interested in a partnership with a school
- staff involved in student leadership and athletic programs.

Regardless of the starting point, it will be important to consider all stakeholders in the school community, and what involvement they might have during various phases of development.

See Appendix A-3: Starting Questions

Leadership: Who's directing the exploration?

Initial leadership will depend on the original motivation and scope for the initiative.

For example:

- School or school authority planning goals might lead to identifying mentoring as a strategy to meet educational targets. The leadership could begin as a system-level initiative or as a school-level initiative, led by school administrators.
- The school leadership team might present the concept for discussion at a staff meeting or professional development session.
- A teacher, counselor or group of staff members might present a proposal to the school leadership team for support and discussion around next steps.
- A community mentoring organization or other community organization might request to partner with a school through contact with the school administration.
- Individual schools and school authorities may have staff in various roles who could provide leadership in establishing a working group for the initial exploration phase.

Vision: What do we want to happen in our school?

Establishing a mission statement, along with goals and objectives, will provide vision, direction and clarity for all participants during the planning process.

See A-4 Designing and Implementing a Mentoring Initiative

Profile: What do we know about our school, our school authority, and community?

Understanding the specific strengths and needs in the school, school authority and community helps inform planning and identifies starting points.

See Appendix A-5: Building a School Profile

Resources: What is available in our school, school authority, and community?

Doing an inventory of what is available at the school level and the school authority level will help guide planning. This inventory should consider physical resources such as space and budgets, as well as expertise of staff, professional learning opportunities, and overall support and interest of school community. An important part of the inventory is finding out what resources are available in the community including potential partnerships with mentoring organizations as well as collaborative partnerships with agencies and groups who offer activity-based programming for children and youth.

See Appendix A-6: Resource Matrix

Roadmap: What direction do we go next?

The planning team will review and analyze the findings from the initial exploration and present a recommendation.

Next Steps - The Action Plan

The Action Plan phase will use the information collected during the exploration phase to focus on the specific dimensions of the mentoring initiative.

Outcomes: What is our goal? How will we achieve it?

Using the information you have gathered in *Appendix A-4: Design and Implementation Template* you can now develop specific parameters for the initiative, including who the initiative will benefit and how the initiative model will develop. Taking the time to build a strong action plan will create a solid foundation for the mentoring initiative.

Leadership: Are roles and responsibilities defined?

The type of partnership involved will impact the roles and responsibilities. If there is a partnership with a community-based mentoring agency the main role will be as a liaison between the school and the agency. Initiatives done independently by a school authority or a school will require someone to take on a coordinating role that facilitates planning, implementation, and oversees the actual day-to-day mentoring activities.

See Appendix A-7: Coordinator Tasks

Players: Who is the team?

Some of the players are already in the game and involved in the planning process as project team members or as members of a planning committee. Who else is needed on the team, and what is their role?

Resources: What do we need to have in place?

Initiative goals and details have been identified. This step should identify any gaps in the resources needed to achieve these goals, and provide an opportunity to explore solutions.

Due diligence: Do we have the bases covered?

Practicing due diligence refers to thoughtful attention to the safety and well-being of all stakeholders throughout the planning process. In planning a mentoring initiative, it is necessary to be knowledgeable about school authority policies and regulations in relation to such components as supervision, volunteer screening, and transportation.

See Appendix A-8 to A-9: Planning Checklist

Blueprint for Success

All of the information and actions developed and documented on the planning templates will help school teams develop a solid foundation for a successful initiative. This plan is a blueprint that will serve as your operations manual and help monitor results and evaluate outcomes.

"Small things done consistently in strategic places make change happen."
CILE CHAVEZ

Full Cycle – Celebrate, Reflect, Evaluate

It's important to acknowledge accomplishments and celebrate success during the process. Simple tasks that highlight your initiative and the value of volunteer mentors might include a thank-you note to volunteers, a profile in the school newsletter or website, or an article in a local paper. The end of an initiative cycle might include a group activity with all mentors and mentees sharing their stories with other school authority staff.

It is also important for members of the planning team, including planning committee members and agency personnel if applicable, to take the time to review initiative components and evaluate the strengths of the initiative and address any weaknesses or issues for future cycles

Sustainability and Growth

One of the components to address during the reflection and evaluation process will be the question of how to maintain an initiative to provide sustained and consistent mentoring experiences for children and youth in your school community.

Being able to identify the outcomes of positive mentoring connections and build on the strengths of your initial initiative will certainly contribute to a successful cycle during the next school year.

A Final Word

We continually observe the benefits that result from supporting children and youth as they build connections and develop positive relationships in their school community. Mentoring activities can offer a valuable strategy for developing connections and relationships that support school engagement, develop resilience and provide hope for a future of confident, well-educated and motivated young adults. Mentoring research and related evaluations provide evidence that involvement in a consistent, caring, long-term relationship supports positive outcomes for children and youth.

The possibilities to develop strong and vibrant mentoring relationships within the school context are only limited by our vision and commitment. The focus could be academic support, literacy, social-emotional learning, career awareness and transition planning, or cultural awareness. The structure could be a simple classroom pairing or a more complex initiative in partnership with a mentoring agency.

One fact is common - positive relationships can make a difference in the lives of children and youth. We encourage you to explore ways to expand current practices to include a mentoring focus or implement a new mentoring initiative in your school.

Resources

Alberta Mentoring Partnership (AMP)

The Alberta Mentoring Partnership website provides information and resources to support mentoring initiatives, programs and organizations. The website has a dedicated section for schools and educators. Visit the website at: www.albertamentors.ca to access research, best practices, resources, presentation items, and on-line training for mentors.
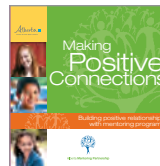
The Alberta Mentor Partnership can also answer mentor-related questions or provide assistance in implementing mentoring tools and resources. They can be reached at the toll-free number 1-888-342-6514 or through email at: questions@albertamentors.ca

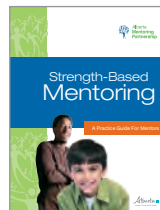## The following resources are Specifically designed to support school-based mentoring.

Aboriginal Mentoring Handbook: What? Why? How? Who?

With an Aboriginal focus, this resource is appropriate for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal mentoring initiatives.
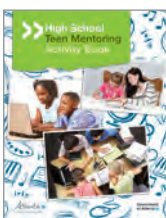
High School Teen Mentoring Handbook

This resource provides information on building a mentoring relationship, surprises and myths about mentoring, developing conversation and listening skills, determining learning preferences and protecting your mentee. Designed for use with the Activity Book and Bin Resources.

High School Teen Mentoring Activity Book

This resource provides activities related to exploring and identifying personal interests and talents, learning patterns, possible career pathways and learning after high school. Designed for use with the Handbook and Bin Resources.

High School Teen Mentoring Bin Resources

This resource provides resources for elementary mentees and high school teen mentors to use in shared activities. Designed for use with the Handbook and Activity Book.

Making Positive Connections

This brochure is designed to promote mentoring with school stakeholders and community partners.

Strength-Based Practice

AMP offers a number of resources to support strength-based practice, including:
- **A Practice Guide for Mentors**
- **A Practice Guide for Classrooms and Schools.**

Teen Mentoring Toolkit

This resource is designed for schools and community organizations choosing to engage students in creating a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe community through positive mentoring relationships. This toolkit identifies key areas for consideration as well as evidence-based practices, strategies and tools for planning, implementing and evaluating teen mentoring initiatives.

Resiliency and Developmental Assets

Resiliency Initiatives www.resil.ca

This website offers a number of free downloadable resources and videos based on a research-informed resiliency framework and strength-based principles of practice.

Search Institute www.search-institute.org

This website offers information and free downloadable resources on building developmental assets of children and youth.

Appendices

Find out how you can contribute to the vision and mission through shared resources and advocacy

Mentoring is a powerful way of lending support to a young person by listening to their perspective, creating a sense of belonging, and growing their skills.

APPENDIX A-1: Framework Chart

Community Based Mentoring	▪ Partnership with a mentoring organization like Big Brothers Big Sisters or other organizations that support mentoring i.e. 4H, service clubs ▪ Matching adult mentors with children and youth ▪ Mentoring would most often occur outside of school time ▪ Could include group mentoring i.e. homework clubs, activity based clubs
School Based Mentoring	▪ Partnership with a community organization who would recruit, screen, and train mentors ▪ School authority or individual school may recruit, screen and train mentors using resources provided by AMP ▪ examples may include a school partnership with a local business, faith-based group, senior centre that would provide the mentors ▪ Mentors meet with their mentee once a week during the school day at the school
Teen Mentoring	▪ Older students mentoring younger students ▪ Research indicates that a two year age difference garners the best outcomes ▪ High school students may be mentoring as part Career and Technology Studies courses, a service learning component in another course, or as an extra curricular activity ▪ Junior high or middle school students may be mentoring elementary students as part of a class or a club ▪ If students are from different schools, older students may travel to the younger students school ▪ The mentors meet with their mentees once and week with the supervision of school staff ▪ The Teen Mentoring Handbook provides information and resources to run an initiative
Mentoring as a Whole School Approach	▪ Cross-graded activities scheduled on a regular basis where students remain in the same groups for the school year and activities have planned outcomes focused on building relationships ▪ Examples include: reading buddies, recess buddies ▪ Mentoring to ease transitions between grades/schools e.g. grade 11 students mentoring incoming grade 9 students
Mentoring as a Targeted Intervention	▪ Mentoring for specific students or a specific group of students with an outcome in mind ▪ May be to support literacy or numeracy skills, to build connections, enhance social/emotional skills ▪ This may be teen mentoring or with an adult and may occur within the school day or outside of school hours

APPENDIX A-2: Mentoring Courses

HSS1050: Introduction To Mentorship
Level: Introductory
Prerequisite: None

Description: Students learn about the characteristics of positive mentoring relationships in their personal lives and society; students prepare to engage in a mentoring relationship; students apply basic mentoring skills to a mentoring relationship and explore considerations for safety related to mentoring.

Supporting Courses: HSS1030 Communicating Skills for Health Professionals; HSS1040 Developing Maturity and Independence; HSS2020 Nurturing Children.

HSS2050: Becoming A Mentor
Level: Intermediate
Prerequisite: HSS1050 Introduction to Mentorship

Description: Students analyze the relationship between mentoring and the wellness of individuals and communities; students build a personal profile to prepare for their role as a mentor and demonstrate mentoring skills.

Supporting Courses: HSS1030 Communication Skills for Health Professionals; HSS2030 Perspectives on Interpersonal Relationships; HSS3050 Becoming a Mentee

HSS3050: Becoming A Mentee
Level: Advanced
Prerequisite: none

Description: Students build a personal profile to engage as a mentee in a successful mentoring relationship to explore career and/or personal goals for citizenship or volunteering in their community.

Supporting Courses: HSS1030 Communicating Skills for Health Professionals; HSS1050 Introduction to Mentoring

HSS3060: Extending the Mentoring Relationship
Level: Advanced
Prerequisite: HSS2050: Becoming A Mentor

Description: Students demonstrate effective strategies for enhancing resiliency in the context of a mentoring relationship. Students examine unique populations that commonly occur in communities and adapt mentoring activities to meet the needs of supported populations and cultural differences, including differences related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives.

Note: Successful completion of this course enables the student to apply for a certificate of completion for Foundations of Mentoring issued by the Alberta Mentoring Partnership, in collaboration with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Supporting Courses: HSS1030 Communication skills for Health Professionals; HSS2030 Perspectives on Interpersonal Relationships; HSS3050 Becoming a Mentee; HSS3070 Peer Mentoring

HSS3070: Peer Mentoring
Level: Advanced
Prerequisites: HSS1080 Leadership Fundamentals 1; HSS3050 Becoming a Mentee; HSS3060 Extending the Mentoring Relationship.

Description: Students examine the Positive Youth Development Model and assist in the planning, facilitation and assessment of a peer mentoring program for a specific community.

Parameters: Access to an existing Peer Mentoring Program, or a Peer Mentoring Program can be initiated.

Supporting Courses: CCS 3080 Community Enhancement; HSS1030 Communicating Skills for Health Professionals; HSS1040 Developing Maturity and Independence; HSS2030 Perspectives on Interpersonal Relationships; HSS2080 Fundamentals of Leadership 2

For more information see Alberta Education CTS page

APPENDIX A-3: Starting Questions

The following questions can provide a starting point for discussion to determine whether the development of a mentoring initiative would be right for your school or school authority. It might also be helpful to identify where you need to collect more information or do a follow-up action.

- How does the school authority support creating a positive school climate?
- How is this reflected in goals and priorities at the school authority level?
- How is our school actively engaged in creating a positive school culture?
- Do we need to build understanding of the importance of school culture with stakeholders? (If so, which groups do we need to work with?)
- Would mentoring provide a strategy to support student connectedness in our school?
- Is our school culture conducive for mentoring relationships? (If not, what would we have to change?)
- Would mentoring align with our school priorities and goals? How?
- Do we need more information about the types of and contexts for mentoring relationships?
- Do we need more information about the value of mentoring relationships?
- Are there resources in our school, school authority or community to help us explore mentoring?
- Are there some mentoring relationships currently in place in our school?
- What activities are currently happening in classrooms or extra-curricular activities that have a mentoring component?
- What mentoring activities and initiatives currently exist in the community?
- Are any of our students being served by community agencies involved in mentoring activities?

- What partnerships or collaborations could the school or school authority develop to support mentoring in our school?
  - school council or other parent organizations?
  - community organizations and agencies?
  - local business or regional corporations?
  - local or regional post-secondary institutions?
- Which students in our school could benefit from a mentoring relationship?
- What would the goals of the relationship be?
- What type of mentoring focus should we consider:
  - academic performance?
  - literacy?
  - social-emotional learning?
  - career awareness and transition planning?
  - recreational?
  - cultural?
- Who could be the source for volunteer mentors:
  - parents?
  - community groups or individuals?
  - business or institutions?
  - teen mentors?
  - others?
- Who will take a leadership role to move the exploration ahead?
- Do we require any specific support at the school authority level?
- Will we need to develop strategies for building a shared understanding of mentoring with:
  - key school authority staff?
  - school staff?
  - parents?
  - students?
  - community-at-large?

Designing and Implementing a Mentoring Initiative – Planning Templates

1 Getting Started

The Exploration

Taking stock of the situation

Leadership

Vision

Profile

Resources

Roadmap
Review information and analyze initiative feasibility, capacity and structure.

2 Next Steps

The Action Plan

Specific and detailed

Target

Leadership

Players

Resources

Due Diligence

Blueprint
Initiative structure and operations in place. Mentoring activities begin.

Designing and Implementing a Mentoring Initiative – Planning Templates

3 Full Cycle
Celebrate, Reflect, Evaluate

4 Sustainability and Growth
Looking ahead to future cycles

APPENDIX A-4:
Initiative Planning: Mission and Goals

Mission Statement

As a result of initial brainstorming and discussion it will be useful to develop a broad statement to describe the overall purpose of the initiative. This will facilitate planning and help keep implementation on target. A clear mission statement will also be useful for communicating with the school community and with community partners. A mission statement should answer the following questions in a clear simple statement:

- What do we want the initiative to achieve?
- Who is the target population?
- How do we plan to accomplish this work?

Goals of Mentoring Initiative

Identify what results you want to see as a result of mentoring. For example, increasing high school completion rates, improving reading skills, increasing attendance rates, building career awareness, building school connectedness. Write these results as a goal statement.

For each goal identified, outline specific steps required, including who will be responsible for what action and when the actions should occur.

APPENDIX A-5:
Building A School Profile

Mapping the total school environment can provide a starting point to celebrate strengths and identify target areas for growth and development. A review of the profile can highlight existing groups and activities that provide opportunities to implement or enhance mentoring relationships. Areas to consider in the profile are indicated below.

Grade Levels
(with number/grade) _____

Cultural Diversity _____

Location ☐ Urban ☐ Rural ☐ Remote ☐ Transportation Impact

Programs Types
☐ Regular Program ☐ Gifted Program ☐ Knowledge & Employability (High School)
☐ Culture/Ethnic Focus ☐ Special Education ☐ Advanced Placement (High School)
☐ Language Program ☐ Sport Academy ☐ International Baccalaureate PY/MY/DY
☐ Other_____

Complimentary Programs and Activities
☐ Cross-Age & Buddies ☐ Leadership ☐ Safe and Caring Schools
☐ Citizenship ☐ Locally Developed ☐ School Culture
☐ Developmental Assets ☐ Reading Club ☐ Traditions in Cultures
☐ Other_____

Parent Involvement
☐ Parent Council ☐ Fundraising Society ☐ In-School Volunteers
☐ Other_____

Existing Partnerships
☐ Cultural Association ☐ Community Business ☐ Community Service Club Or Group
☐ Mentoring Agency ☐ Post-Secondary Institute ☐ Provincial Health Initiative
☐ Corporation ☐ Sport Association ☐ Provincial or National Program
☐ Other Schools ☐ Other_____

School Schedule Components
☐ Class Blocks ☐ Semesters ☐ Before & After School Blocks
☐ Option Blocks ☐ Flex Blocks ☐ Noon Block
☐ Other_____

Human Resources
☐ Jurisdiction Level ☐ Teaching Staff ☐ Coaches
☐ School Administration ☐ Support Staff ☐ Health Program Staff
☐ Counsellor ☐ Parents ☐ Success Coach
☐ Curriculum Specialist ☐ Other_____

Student Profile

Attendance Patterns ☐ Full Time ☐ Part-Time ☐ On-Line Courses ☐ Other_____

Participation Trends
☐ Extracurricular Activities ☐ Student Leadership ☐ School Teams
☐ Fine Arts ☐ Recreational Athletics ☐ Competitive Athletics
☐ Special Interest Clubs ☐ Other_____

Future Path Trends
☐ Apprenticeship ☐ Technical Institute ☐ Workforce
☐ Community College ☐ University ☐ Undecided
☐ Other_____

Strength(s) _____

Target(s) for Growth _____

School Target Areas

☐ Academic (i.e. reading, spelling, oral language, writing, math skills, other curriculum areas)

☐ Social (i.e. attitudes towards learning & school, self-confidence, interaction with others, involvement in activities)

APPENDIX A-6:
Resource Matrix

	Available At School Site	Available Within School Authority	Available In Community	Available From Other Sources
Volunteers / Mentors				
Existing Activities/ Initiatives				
Cultural / Ethnic Advisors				
High School (CTS) Mentoring And Complementary Courses				
Coordinator Or Liaison				
Matching, Screening & Training Procedures For Volunteers				
Facility / Space				
Transportation				
Financial Support				
Other				

APPENDIX A-7:
Coordinator Tasks

The scope of responsibilities and specific tasks will depend on the type and structure of the mentoring initiative. For example:

- mentoring at a single school site may require limited coordination but should have a designed contact person in place to facilitate relationships.
- a collaboration involving a number of schools in a single school authority, or with other school authorities, will require more co-ordination.

- a collaboration with a community-based group will involve shared planning and increased need for coordination.
- a partnership with a community mentoring agency will most likely require a school liaison role.

The following list provides a range of possible task areas to consider.

	Y	N	Follow- Up
Act as the school lead to investigate mentoring possibilities, develop the scope of the initiative and identify possible mentees or mentors.			
Work with high school administration and staff to develop mentoring opportunities in collaboration with CTS courses.			
Act as the liaison with organizations/agencies: establish initiative parameters and expectations; define respective roles and responsibilities; ensure school and school authority policies and practices are applied; keep school and school authority personnel aware of initiative; and ensure communication between the school and other organization/agency.			
Organize a working space for mentoring sessions and provide a check-in station with required procedures for mentors.			
Plan for appropriate supervision of mentees by school personnel as required by school authority policy and practices.			
Arrange transportation for mentees / mentors if required with attention to school authority policy and practices for transportation and supervision of students.			
Organize orientation sessions for school personnel, parents and mentees to outline the initiative, procedures and events.			
Process and/or collect mentee or mentor applications, parent consent forms and other required documents. Ensure documentation is filed as required.			
Assist with preparation of training events and materials for mentors as required.			
Oversee and/or assist with mentor screening, training, matching and support.			
Monitor and manage the on-site activities: ensure matches provide positive experiences for mentors and mentees; trouble-shoot and communicate with appropriate personnel; plan and/ or assist with recognition and closure activities for mentors and mentees; monitor use of facilities and equipment; and maintain records of attendance and outcomes.			
Initiate/assist with community engagement to explore community collaborations, recruit mentoring volunteers, and create awareness to promote mentoring within the school authority and community at large.			
Manage and/or assist with the production and distribution of communication tools and strategies to recognize and promote mentoring activities at the school, in the school authority and in the community at large.			
Initiate evaluation procedures to monitor progress, success indicators and growth.			

APPENDIX A-8
Planning Checklist

☐ **Opening discussion about the need for and benefits of mentoring relationships**
    ☐ links to current goals and plans for school authority and school
    ☐ links to current resiliency and strength-based practices
    ☐ links to current whole school approaches for supporting welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments

☐ **Follow-up with needs assessment in a particular school**
    ☐ students who would benefit from mentoring: age / grade / group
    ☐ mentoring focus: academic / social-emotional learning / cultural / career awareness and transition planning
    ☐ type of mentoring: one-to-one/small group

☐ **Build a school profile and a checklist for supporting resources in within school authority and community** *(See Appendix A-4)*
    ☐ Gather information to create an overview of school demographics, student population, academic and transition trends, and possible sources for human, financial and physical resources.

☐ **Review school, school authority and Alberta Education policies and regulations**

    Requirements for volunteers in schools
    Is there a standard:
        ☐ application process?
        ☐ screening process?
        ☐ interview?
        ☐ process for criminal records check
        ☐ orientation?
        ☐ sign-in/out process, including identity cards and/or name tags?

    Requirements for transportation (if required)
    Is there a standard:
        ☐ process for booking?
        ☐ budget?
        ☐ field trip procedure?
        ☐ parent consent form?
        ☐ Supervision protocol?

    Parent notice and consents
        ☐ Provide overview of mentoring initiative with details about how their children will be involved, potential benefits, and who to contact for further information
        ☐ Ensure FOIP process is in place to address photos, use of work etc.

    Requirements for supervision:
    Is there an understanding of:
        ☐ requirements related to in-school sessions/ out-of-school sessions/ during transportation
        ☐ procedures and regulations in Alberta Education's Off-Campus Education Handbook
        https://education.alberta.ca/media/371242/offcampus.pdf

☐ **Consider initiative logistics**
☐ Is there an opportunity to partner with an existing mentoring initiative within the school authority or in the community?
☐ Is there a mentoring agency available in the community to implement mentoring in the school?
☐ Is there an opportunity to build a mentoring component into an existing school activity or program?
☐ Are staff resources available to organize and/or support a mentoring program?
☐ Are the required human, financial and physical resources available?
☐ How can a mentoring be accommodated in the school schedule?

APPENDIX A-9:
Due Diligence – Application and Screening Overview

There is a responsibility for any mentoring initiative to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants involved in the mentoring activities. This may be referred to this as **risk management** practice or as practicing **due diligence.**

Schools planning an initiative using mentors from within the school or school authority, such as teen mentors or parent volunteers, may not need to incorporate the full rigor of the application and screening process but will need to meet school and school authority polices and regulations related to volunteers in schools, field trips, off-campus activities, transportation and supervision of students.

Initiatives that involve partnership with an organization, agency or group will need to work collaboratively to meet the requirements of all stakeholder group standards.

Steps in the application and screening process to consider:

1. **APPLICATION:**

   a. Demographic Information.

   b. Include if applicable to situation:
      - Choice of days and times and the preferred grade level, age, gender of mentee.
      - Cultural and ethnic group associations.
      - Languages spoken might be useful information in some situations.

   c. Include as required by school authority policy and/or organization/agency policy:
      - statement of applicant's expectations
      - special interests that might be helpful in the match
      - list of personal references
      - employment history
      - release statement agreeing to a background check and criminal record check
      - release statement agreeing to rules and regulations of the mentoring initiative
      - medical information in specific situations (e.g., T.B test, influenza vaccination, etc).

   d. Include a section for applicants to sign agreement to the expectations for mentors:

      - commitment for specific duration (i.e. one year, school year, etc).
      - participating in training sessions as required
      - being on time for mentoring sessions and any scheduled meetings
      - engaging in the relationship with the appropriately supportive attitude.
      - keeping discussions with the mentee confidential, except where safety or well-being of mentee is at risk.
      - asking for help when needed and accepting guidance from agency and school staff
      - notifying program coordinator or school liaison ASAP if unable to keep the weekly mentoring session.
      - notifying program coordinator or mentee's teacher if there is a significant change in or concern with mentee.
      - refraining from contact with mentee outside the established parameters and supervised locations of the mentoring initiative (i.e., regularly-scheduled time in supervised school setting).

Continues next page

Due Diligence – Application and Screening Overview

2. INTERVIEW:

This may or may not be a requirement but provides an opportunity for school and/or agency staff to be more knowledgeable about the applicant. The discussion could include:

- Personal history, including attitudes, belief systems and personal priorities
- Interests, leisure time activities, education, cultural associations
- Experiences working with children, knowledge of child and youth development
- Level of flexibility, time commitments and mobility (transportation requirements)
- Strengths and areas of need for further training and/or support.

3. PROCESSING:

The mentoring coordinator or agency staff complete the following steps as appropriate for the situation:

- Review application and interview.
- Conduct a check on employment and personal references.
- Collect completed criminal background check
- Retain all information in a secure and confidential manner.

4. NOTIFICATION:

Applicants are notified of acceptance and next steps for orientation, training and mentoring sessions.

Applicant Information	Application Status	Date and initial when completed
Mentor Name:	☐ Application complete	
	☐ Interview completed	
Phone:	☐ References contacted	
	☐ Criminal check received	
Email:	☐ Attended orientation	
	☐ Attended training	
	☐ Other as required	
	☐ Contacted & letter sent	
☐ Matched		
☐ Rejected	☐ Contacted & letter sent	

Notes & Ideas

Alberta Mentoring Partnership
Your Mentoring Resource
albertamentors.ca