

An hourglass-shaped graphic with a globe inside. The top bulb is dark blue, and the bottom bulb is light blue. The globe is a darker shade of blue. The hourglass is centered on the page.

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Report RL34306

*Vulnerable Youth: Federal Mentoring Programs and Issues*

Adrienne L. Fernandes, Domestic Social Policy Division

June 20, 2008

**Abstract.** Five bills have been introduced in the 110th Congress that primarily concern mentoring (S. 379, H.R. 2611/S. 1812, H.R. 5660, and H.R. 5810). Issues relevant to the federal role in mentoring include the limitations of research on outcomes for mentored youth, the potential need for additional mentors, grantees' challenges in sustaining funding, and the possible discontinuation of federal mentoring funding.

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# CRS Report for Congress

## Vulnerable Youth: Federal Mentoring Programs and Issues

Updated June 20, 2008

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Prepared for Members and  
Committees of Congress

# Vulnerable Youth: Federal Mentoring Programs and Issues

## Summary

Youth mentoring refers to a relationship between youth — particularly those most at risk of experiencing negative outcomes in adolescence and adulthood — and the adults who support and guide them. The origin of the modern youth mentoring concept is credited to the efforts of charity groups that formed during the Progressive era of the early 1900s to provide practical assistance to poor and juvenile justice-involved youth, including help with finding employment.

Approximately 2.5 million youth today are involved in formal mentoring relationships through Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of America and similar organizations. Contemporary mentoring programs seek to improve outcomes and reduce risks among vulnerable youth by providing positive role models who regularly meet with the youth in community or school settings. Some programs have broad youth development goals while others focus more narrowly on a particular outcome. A 1995 evaluation of the BBBS program and studies of other mentoring programs demonstrate an association between mentoring and some positive youth outcomes, but the effects of mentoring on particular outcomes and the ability for mentored youth to sustain gains over time is less certain.

The current Administration has proposed new federal structured mentoring since FY2001 (though the Administration has also proposed phasing some of these services out beginning in FY2007). Two programs — the Mentoring Children of Prisoners (MCP) program and Safe and Drug Free Schools (SDFS) Mentoring program — provide the primary sources of dedicated federal funding for mentoring services. The Mentoring Children of Prisoners program was created in response to the growing number of children under age 18 with at least one parent who is incarcerated in a federal or state correctional facility. The program is intended, in part, to reduce the chance that mentored youth will use drugs and skip school. Similarly, the Mentoring program (proposed for elimination for FY2009 by the Administration) provides school-based mentoring to reduce school dropout and improve relationships for youth at risk of educational failure and with other risk factors. The Administration has also supported a pilot project, the Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth (MISIY), which seeks to identify and expand effective mentoring programs for youth in the juvenile justice or foster care systems (Congress appropriated funds for MISIY only in FY2006). Finally, other federal initiatives support mentoring efforts, including the Federal Mentoring Council and dedicated funding for mentoring organizations like BBBS.

Five bills have been introduced in the 110th Congress that primarily concern mentoring (S. 379, H.R. 2611/S. 1812, H.R. 5660, and H.R. 5810). Issues relevant to the federal role in mentoring include the limitations of research on outcomes for mentored youth, the potential need for additional mentors, grantees' challenges in sustaining funding, and the possible discontinuation of federal mentoring funding. This report will be updated as legislative activity warrants.

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# Vulnerable Youth: Federal Mentoring Programs and Issues

Since the mid-1990s, Congress has supported legislation to establish structured mentoring programs for the most vulnerable youth. The Department of Justice's Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP), the first structured federal mentoring program, was implemented in 1994 to provide mentoring services for at-risk youth ages five to 20. The purpose of contemporary, structured mentoring programs is to reduce risks by supplementing (but not supplanting) a youth's relationship with his or her parents. Some of these programs have broad youth development goals while others focus more narrowly on a particular outcome such as reducing gang activity or substance abuse, or improving grades. Research has shown that mentoring programs have been associated with some positive youth outcomes, but that the long-term effects of mentoring on particular outcomes and the ability for mentored youth to sustain gains over time are less certain.

While there is no single overarching policy today on mentoring, the federal government supports multiple mentoring efforts for vulnerable youth. Since FY2001, Congress has passed legislation to provide mentoring services for three groups of these youth: children of prisoners through the Mentoring Children of Prisoners (MCP) program; children at risk of educational failure, dropping out of school, or involvement in delinquent activities through the Safe and Drug Free Schools (SDFS) Mentoring program; and youth in the foster care and juvenile justice systems through the Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth (MISIY). The purpose of the three programs is to improve the outcomes of vulnerable youth across a number of areas, including education, criminal activity, health and safety, and social and emotional development.

The federal government also supports other mentoring efforts. Programs under the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) provide mentoring services, among other supportive activities for youth. In partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), CNCS also leads the Federal Youth Mentoring Council, convened in 2006 to address the ways federal agencies can combine resources and training and technical assistance to federally administered mentoring programs. Further, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention in the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) provides funding for Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America and other mentoring organizations.

This report begins with an overview of the purpose of mentoring, including a brief discussion on research of structured mentoring programs. The report then describes the evolution of federal policies on mentoring since the early 1990s. The report provides an overview of the components and funding for each of the three major federal mentoring programs, as well as a discussion of other federal mentoring initiatives that are currently funded. Note that additional federal programs and

policies authorize funding for mentoring activities, among multiple other activities and services.<sup>1</sup> These programs are not discussed in this report. The report concludes with an overview of issues that may be relevant to mentoring legislation in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress and any discussions concerning the federal role in mentoring. These issues include the limitations of research on outcomes for mentored youth, the potential need for additional mentors, grantees' challenges in sustaining funding, and the possible discontinuation of federal mentoring funding.

## Overview and Purpose of Mentoring

Mentoring refers to a relationship between two or more individuals in which at least one of those individuals provides guidance to the other. In the context of this report, mentoring refers to the relationship between a youth and an adult who supports, guides, and assists the youth.<sup>2</sup> Youth can receive mentoring through informal and formal relationships with adults. *Informal* relationships are those that develop from a young person's existing social network of teachers, coaches, and family friends. This report focuses on *formal* mentoring relationships for vulnerable youth. These relationships are cultivated through *structured* programs sponsored by youth-serving organizations, faith-based organizations, schools, and after-school programs. Volunteers in structured programs are recruited from communities, churches, and the workplace, and undergo an intensive screening process. Youth eligible for services through structured mentoring programs are often identified as "high risk" of certain negative outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of modern structured mentoring programs is to reduce risks by supplementing (but not replacing) a youth's relationship with his or her parents. Some programs have broad youth development goals, while others focus more narrowly on a particular outcome such as reducing gang activity or substance abuse, or improving grades. Structured mentoring programs are often *community based*, meaning that mentored youth and adults engage in community activities (e.g., going to the museum and the park, playing sports, playing a board game, and spending time together outside of work and school). Other programs are characterized as *school based* because they take place on school grounds or some other set location, like a community center. The co-location of mentoring programs in schools facilitates relationships with teachers, who can meet with mentors and refer youth to the

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<sup>1</sup> The White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth, convened in 2003 to identify issues in coordinating federal youth policy, identified approximately 123 federally funded programs administered by 10 agencies with a mentoring component. The task force's final report is available at [[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/white\\_house\\_task\\_force.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/white_house_task_force.pdf)].

<sup>2</sup> See U.S. General Accounting Office, *Student Mentoring Programs: Education's Monitoring and Information Sharing Could Be Improved*, GAO Report GAO-04-581 (Washington, June 2004), p. 6. (Hereafter referenced GAO, *Student Mentoring Programs*.) After this report was issued, the name of the General Accounting Office was changed to the Government Accountability Office.

<sup>3</sup> For further discussion of risk factors and groups of at-risk youth, see CRS Report RL33975, *Vulnerable Youth: Background and Policies*, by Adrienne L. Fernandes.

programs.<sup>4</sup> Mentors provide academic assistance and recreational opportunities and expose youth to opportunities that promote their cognitive and emotional development.

## Origins of Contemporary Mentoring Programs

The origin of today's structured mentoring programs is credited to the efforts of charity groups that formed during the Progressive Movement of the early 1900s. These groups sought adult volunteers for vulnerable youth — defined at the time as youth who were poor or had become involved in the then nascent juvenile court system.<sup>5</sup> These early organizations provided practical assistance to youth, including help with finding employment, and created recreational outlets. The most prominent mentoring organization at the time, Big Brothers (now known as Big Brothers Big Sisters of America), continues today as the oldest and largest mentoring organization in the country with over 275,000 youth ages five to 18 served in 5,000 communities.<sup>6</sup>

The contemporary youth mentoring movement began in the late 1980s with the support of foundations and corporations, including Fannie Mae, Commonwealth Fund, United Way of America, Chrysler, Procter & Gamble, and the National Urban League.<sup>7</sup> In addition, nongovernmental organizations such as One to One in Philadelphia and Project RAISE in Baltimore were established by entrepreneurs seeking to expand mentoring services to vulnerable youth.

The federal government has supported structured mentoring programs and initiatives since the beginning of the contemporary mentoring movement. At that time, mentoring was becoming increasingly recognized by the government as a promising strategy to enrich the lives of youth, address the isolation of youth from adult contact, and provide one-to-one support for the most vulnerable youth, particularly those living in poverty.<sup>8</sup> Among the first projects undertaken by the federal government was a youth mentoring initiative in the early 1990s implemented by the newly created Points of Light Foundation, a federally funded nonprofit organization that promotes volunteering.<sup>9</sup> Then, Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole made the case for mentoring as a way to improve the lives of youth and prepare them

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Student Mentoring Programs*, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> George L. Beiswinger, *One to One: The Story of the Big Brothers Big Sisters Movement in America*. (Philadelphia: Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, 1985), pp. 15-20.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, "OJJDP Helps Big Brothers Big Sisters Celebrate 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary," *OJJDP News @ a Glance*, vol. 3, no. 3, May/June 2004, p. 1. (Hereafter referenced as U.S. Department of Justice, *Big Brothers Big Sisters*.)

<sup>7</sup> Marc Freedman, *The Kindness of Strangers: Mentors, Urban Youth, and the New Volunteerism* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993), p. 5. (Hereafter referenced as Mark Freedman, *The Kindness of Strangers*.)

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, "Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) Guidelines," 59 *Federal Register* 3820, July 28, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> Marc Freedman, *The Kindness of Strangers*, p. 4.



for the workforce.<sup>10</sup> Other early initiatives included the Juvenile Mentoring Program (see below). The federal government also signaled the importance of mentoring during the 1997 Presidents' Summit, which was convened by the living Presidents (at the time) to pledge their support for policies that assist youth. The Presidents and other national leaders called for adults to volunteer as mentors for over two million vulnerable youth.<sup>11</sup>

## Characteristics of Successful Mentoring Programs

Studies of structured mentoring programs, including those that have received federal funding, indicate that the programs are most successful when they include a strong infrastructure and facilitate caring relationships. Infrastructure refers to a number of activities including identifying the youth population to be served and the activities to be undertaken, screening and training mentors, supporting and supervising mentoring relationships, collecting data on youth outcomes, and creating sustainability strategies.<sup>12</sup> The mentor screening process provides programs with an opportunity to select those adults most likely to be successful as mentors by seeking volunteers who can keep their time commitments and value the importance of trust. Further, these studies assert that orientation and training ensure youth and mentors share a common understanding of the adult's role and help mentors develop realistic expectations of what they can accomplish. Ongoing support and supervision of the matches assist mentored pairs in negotiating challenges. Staff can help the pairs maintain a relationship over the desired period (generally a year or more). According to the studies, successful programs are known to employ strategies to retain the support of current funders and garner financial backing from new sources. Finally, the studies demonstrate that successful programs attempt to measure any effects of mentoring services on the participating youth. Programs can then disseminate these findings to potential funders and participants. **Figure 1** summarizes the elements, policies, and procedures of successful mentoring programs.

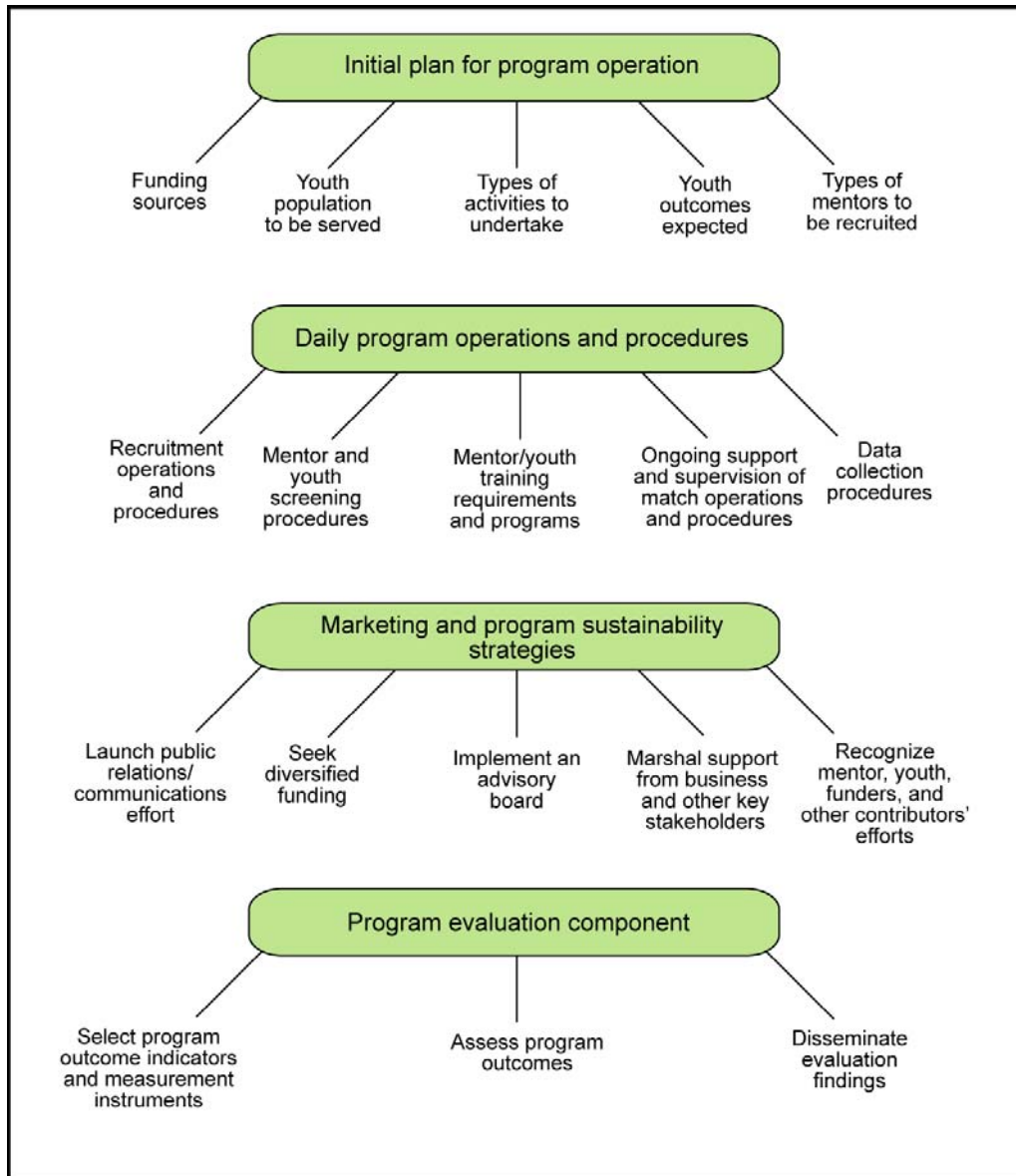
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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> The Presidents' Summit on America's Future, Remarks at the Presidents' Summit on America's Future, available at [[http://clinton3.nara.gov/WH/New/Summit/Remarks\\_index.html](http://clinton3.nara.gov/WH/New/Summit/Remarks_index.html)].

<sup>12</sup> See, Jean Baldwin Grossman, ed., *Contemporary Issues in Mentoring, Public/Private Ventures*, p. 6.; Mentor/National Mentoring Partnership, "Elements of Effective Practice," 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2003; and Jean E. Rhodes and David L. DuBois, "Understanding and Facilitating the Youth Mentoring Movement," *Social Policy Report*, vol. 20, no. 3 (2006), pp. 8-11. (Hereafter referenced as Rhodes and DuBois, "Understanding and Facilitating the Youth Mentoring Movement.")

**Figure 1. Elements, Policies, and Procedures of Successful Mentoring Programs**



<http://wikileaks.org/wiki/CRS-RL34306>

**Source:** Congressional Research Service, based on Figure 1 in GAO, *Student Mentoring Programs*. This information was originally presented in MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, “Elements of Effective Practices,” 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2003.

## Characteristics of Successful Mentoring Relationships

Research on youth mentoring demonstrates that mentoring relationships are likely to promote positive outcomes for youth and avoid harm when they are close, consistent, and enduring.<sup>13</sup> Closeness refers to a bond that forms between the youth and mentor, and has been found to have benefits for the youth. Mentor characteristics, such as prior experience in helping roles or occupations, an ability to appreciate salient socioeconomic and cultural influences, and a sense of efficacy for mentoring youth appear to facilitate close mentoring relationships. Consistency refers to the amount of time mentors and youth spend together. Regular contact has been linked to positive youth outcomes, and relationships become strong if they last one year or longer. Youth in relationships that lasted less than six months showed declines in functioning relative to their non-mentored peers.

## Evaluation of Mentoring Programs

Some studies have found that formal mentoring programs in community-based and school-based settings are associated with improved academic and behavioral outcomes for youth, but that the effects of mentoring on particular outcomes and the ability for mentored youth to sustain gains over time is less certain.

**Examples of the Positive Effects of Mentoring.** A landmark study in 1995 of the Big Brothers Big Sisters of America program compared outcomes of eligible youth who were randomly selected to receive mentoring services (the treatment group) against those eligible youth who were randomly selected to remain on a waiting list for mentoring services (the control group). The study found that 18 months after the youth were assigned to their groups, the mentored youth skipped half as many days of school, were 46% less likely than their control group counterparts to use drugs, 27% less likely to initiate alcohol use, and almost one-third less likely to hit someone.<sup>14</sup>

A 2002 review of studies of major community-based programs (the 1995 Big Brothers Big Sisters evaluation and evaluations of Across Ages, Project BELONG, and Buddy System, among others<sup>15</sup>) with an experimental design — meaning that some youth were randomly assigned to get a mentor — found that the outcomes for youth with a mentor were better than outcomes for their counterparts without a mentor.<sup>16</sup> These outcomes included the following:

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<sup>13</sup> Rhodes and DuBois, “Understanding and Facilitating the Youth Mentoring Movement,” p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Joseph P. Tierney and Jean Baldwin Grossman, with Nancy L. Resch, *Making A Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters*, Public/Private Ventures, reissued September 2000, available online at [[http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/111\\_publication.pdf](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/111_publication.pdf)].

<sup>15</sup> These programs are a sampling of some of the programs profiled.

<sup>16</sup> Susan Jekielek et al., *Mentoring Programs and Youth Development: A Synthesis*, Child Trends, January 2002, available at [[http://www.childtrends.org/what\\_works/clarkwww/](http://www.childtrends.org/what_works/clarkwww/)]  
(continued...)

- *Improved educational outcomes:* Youth in the year-long Across Ages mentoring program showed a gain of more than a week of attended classes. Evaluations of the program also showed that mentored youth had better attitudes toward school than non-mentored youth.
- *Reduction in some negative behaviors:* All studies that examined delinquency showed evidence of reducing some, but not all, of the tracked negative behaviors. Mentored youth in the BELONG program committed fewer misdemeanors and felonies. In the Buddy System program, youth with a prior history of criminal behavior were less likely to commit a major offense compared to their non-mentored counterparts with a prior history.
- *Improved social and emotional development:* Youth in the Across Ages program had significantly more positive attitudes toward the elderly, the future, and helping behaviors than non-mentored youth. Participants in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program felt that they trusted their parents more and communicated better with them, compared to their non-mentored peers.

Similarly, a 2007 study of Big Brothers Big Sisters school-based mentoring programs demonstrated some positive results. This study — among the most rigorous scientific evaluations of a school-based mentoring program — found that mentored youth (randomly selected into the treatment group) made improvements in their first year in overall academic performance, feeling more competent about school, and skipping school, among other areas, compared to their non-mentored counterparts (randomly selected into the control group).<sup>17</sup>

**Some Outcomes Do Not Improve or Are Short Lived.** Although research has documented some benefits of mentoring, findings from studies of mentoring programs show that mentoring is limited in improving all youth outcomes. The 2002 review of mentoring program evaluations found that programs did not always make a strong improvement in grades and that some negative behaviors — stealing or damaging property within the last year — were unaffected by whether the youth was in a mentoring program.<sup>18</sup> In the Big Brothers Big Sisters school-based mentoring evaluation, the nonschool, related outcomes, including substance use and self worth, did not improve.<sup>19</sup> Other research has indicated that mentored youth make

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<sup>16</sup> (...continued)  
mentor/mentorrrpt.pdf]. (Hereafter reference Jekielek et al., *Mentoring Programs and Youth Development*.)

<sup>17</sup> Carla Herrera et al., *Making a Difference in Schools: The Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Impact Study*, Public/Private Ventures, August 2007, pp. 34-35, available at [[http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/220\\_publication.pdf](http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/220_publication.pdf)]. (Hereafter referenced as Herrera et al., *Making a Difference in Schools*.)

<sup>18</sup> Jekielek et al., *Mentoring Programs and Youth Development*, p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> Herrera et al., *Making a Difference in Schools*, pp. 37-38.

small gains or do not sustain positive gains over time.<sup>20</sup> The 1995 Big Brothers Big Sisters study found that mentored youth and non-mentored youth showed decreased functioning over time, although those in the mentoring group declined more slowly than those in the non-mentoring group. Further, the Big Brothers Big Sisters school-based mentoring evaluation found that, in the second year of the program, none of the academic gains were maintained (however, mentored youth were less likely to skip school, and more likely to feel that they would start and finish college).<sup>21</sup> The evaluation also pointed to weaknesses in the program's design, such as high attrition (due likely to the transitioning for some youth to middle school, or high school), limited contact with mentors and youth over the summer, and delays in beginning the program at the start of the school year.<sup>22</sup> The remainder of this report provides an overview of the federal role in mentoring and select federal programs, as well as a discussion of mentoring issues.

## Current Federal Mentoring Programs

As discussed above, there are currently three primary federal mentoring programs, all of which were created since FY2001:

- Mentoring Children of Prisoners program administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS);
- Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring program administered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED); and
- Mentoring Initiative for System-Involved Youth administered by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

**Table 1** shows the appropriation funding levels since FY2002 for the programs, where applicable.

For FY2009, the Administration proposes to fund the Mentoring Children of Prisoners program at \$50 million and to eliminate funding for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring program. No funding is proposed for the Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth initiative. The initiative was funded under a one-time appropriation in FY2006.

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<sup>20</sup> Jean E. Rhodes and David L. DuBois, "Understanding and Facilitating the Youth Mentoring Movement," pp. 3-5.

<sup>21</sup> Herrera et al., *Making a Difference in Schools*, pp. 47-78.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. iv-v.

**Table 1. Appropriations for  
Current Federal Mentoring Programs, FY2002-FY2009**  
(dollars in millions)

<b>Program</b>	<b>FY 2002 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2003 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2004 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2005 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2006 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2007 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2008 Estimate</b>	<b>FY 2009 Request</b>
Mentoring Children of Prisoners (HHS)	n/a	10.0	49.7	49.6	49.5	49.5	48.6	50.0
Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring (ED)	17.5	17.4	49.7	49.2	48.8	19.0	48.5	0
Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth (DOJ)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2.6 <sup>a</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Source:** FY2002 to FY2007 funding data based on information provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools; and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 2007. FY2008 funding data based on U.S. House, Committee on Rules, *Joint Explanatory Statement to Accompany FY2008 Consolidated Appropriations Amendment to H.R. 2764/P.L. 110-161, Division G*. FY2009 funding based on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *FY2009 Justification of Estimates*, pp. D-53 through D-55 and U.S. Department of Education, Safe Schools and Citizenship Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, pp. F-8, F-16.

- a. Funding for the initiative is authorized under Part G of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. Part G received \$10 million for FY2006, of which \$2.6 was a one-time allocation for the Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth. No other DOJ funding source for mentoring is included in this table.

The remainder of this report describes these three programs, other current federal mentoring activities and services, and issues that may arise in any discussions of the federal role in mentoring.

## **Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)**

### **Overview**

The Mentoring Children of Prisoners (MCP) Program was proposed as part of the President's FY2003 budget and was signed into law under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments of 2001 (enacted in law in 2002 under P.L. 107-133) as Section 439 of the Social Security Act. The program is administered by the Family and Youth Services Bureau in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families. The program funds public or private entities — in areas of high concentrations of children with parents in prison, including urban, rural, and tribal areas — to provide mentoring services to children of prisoners. Mentoring through the MCP is defined as a structured program that matches each eligible child (with the permission of one or both their parents) to a

screened and trained adult volunteer who serves as a positive role model to the child. This one-on-one relationship, involving activities based in the community and not primarily on school grounds or the workplace, is intended to improve academic and behavioral outcomes. Mentors are to supplement existing caring relationships that the child has with his or her parents, teachers, and other adults. The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-288) expanded the scope of the program by authorizing HHS to enter into a three-year cooperative agreement with a national mentoring support organization to operate a new program that provides vouchers for mentoring services.

**Purpose.** The MCP program was created in response to the growing number of children under age 18 with at least one parent who is incarcerated in a federal or state correctional facility. Between 1991 and 1999, the children-of-prisoners population grew from 936,000 to 1.5 million.<sup>23</sup> Today, an estimated two million children between the ages of four and 18 have a parent in prison or jail.<sup>24</sup> Minority youth are overrepresented among the population. Less than 1% of white children have a parent in prison, compared to 7% of African American children and 3% of Hispanic children.<sup>25</sup>

Studies of children of prisoners show that parental confinement can lead to stress, trauma, and separation problems.<sup>26</sup> The living arrangements of these children often change when a parent is imprisoned. Nearly 65% of children of incarcerated mothers must live with another relative and 6% are placed under the care of a foster care agency.<sup>27</sup> Further, children of prisoners may need to contend with compounding issues, such loss of emotional and financial support provided by the imprisoned parent and stigmatization by peers and others.<sup>28</sup> The trauma of parental incarceration can trigger anti-social behavior in these children. Some children may also have difficulty maintaining contact with their parents. The majority of incarcerated

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<sup>23</sup> Christopher J. Mumola, *Incarcerated Parents and Their Children*, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, August 2000, p. 2, available at [<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/iptc.pdf>].

<sup>24</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *The Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program*, Report to Congress, September 12, 2007, p. 3. (Hereafter referenced as *The Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program*, Report to Congress.)

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, *Mentoring Children of Prisoners Assessment*, 2005, available at [<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/expectmore/summary/10003505.2005.html>]. (Hereafter referenced as Office of Management and Budget, *Mentoring Children of Prisoners Assessment*.)

<sup>27</sup> Elizabeth Inez Johnson and Jane Waldfogel, *Children of Incarcerated Parents: Cumulative Risk and Children's Living Arrangements*, July 2002, p. 2, available at [[http://www.jcpr.org/wpfiles/johnson\\_waldfogel.pdf](http://www.jcpr.org/wpfiles/johnson_waldfogel.pdf)].

<sup>28</sup> Nancy G. La Vigne, Elizabeth Davies, and Diana Brazzell, *Broken Bonds: Understanding and Addressing the Needs of Children with Incarcerated Parents*, Urban Institute, Research Report, February 2008, available at [<http://www.urban.org/publications/411616.html>].

parents reside over 100 miles away from their previous home, and long-distance phone calls may be prohibitively expensive.

In passing P.L. 107-133, Congress cited the success of the Amachi program<sup>29</sup> as a reason for supporting a national program for children of incarcerated parents.<sup>30</sup> The Amachi program was developed by Public/Private Ventures and Big Brothers Big Sisters in Southeastern Pennsylvania, in partnership with secular and faith-based organizations to provide mentors to eligible youth of incarcerated parents.

**Grantee Requirements.** A number of entities may apply for an MCP grant: any state or local government unit, independent school districts, federally recognized American tribal governments, Native American tribal groups (other than federally recognized groups), private nonprofit organizations, and community and faith-based groups. In awarding grants, HHS must consider the qualifications and capacity of the applicants to carry out a mentoring program for children of prisoners; the need for mentoring services in local areas, taking into consideration data on the number of children (and in particular of low-income children) with an incarcerated parent (or parents) in the area; and evidence of consultation with existing youth and family services.<sup>31</sup> Grant funds are to be expended within one year and are to be used for mentoring services exclusively (i.e., not wraparound services or other social services).<sup>32</sup>

Grantees may recruit mentors from the child's family and community, church congregations, religious nonprofit groups, community-based groups, service organizations, Senior Corps, and from the business community. Grantees provide mentor training and criminal background checks, and monitor mentoring relationships. They also evaluate youth outcomes. Grantees are expected to incorporate a message of positive youth development into their programs and coordinate with other organizations to develop a plan that addresses the needs of the entire family.<sup>33</sup> (Positive youth development refers to a philosophy of serving youth

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<sup>29</sup> For further information about the Amachi program, see [<http://www.amachimentoring.org/index.html>].

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Ways and Means, *Promoting Safe and Stable Families Amendments*, report to accompany H.R. 2873, 107<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., H.Rept. 107-281 (Washington: GPO, 2001), p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> HHS has given preference to grantees that have demonstrated a need for mentoring services in their areas based on the concentration of children of prisoners who are currently not mentored. Grantee applicants have determined the number of eligible participants by contacting local school systems for student/parent information and/or the Bureau of Prisons. Others have collaborated with child social service programs such as the foster care system and/or their state prisons. Organizations with well-established ministry programs recruited participants as part of their ministry work.

<sup>32</sup> Office of Management and Budget, *Mentoring Children of Prisoners Assessment*.

<sup>33</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *Mentoring Children of Prisoners Competitive Grant Announcement*, 2007, pp. 5-6, available at [<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/HHS-2007-ACF-ACYF-CV-0029.html>]. (Hereafter referenced as U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Mentoring*

(continued...)



that emphasizes youth empowerment and the development of skills and assets that prepare youth for adulthood.)

**Mentored Youth and Mentors.** Children ages four to 18 (as specified in the MCP grant announcement) are eligible for the program only if their parent is in state or federal prison, although they may continue to receive services if their parent is released from prison during the mentoring relationship; children whose parents are in halfway houses, under supervision, or house arrest are not eligible unless the detention follows a federal or state prison sentence.

Since the creation of the program, through March 2007, the program has served over 57,000 youth in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.<sup>34</sup> In FY2006, over 27,500 youth were served by the MCP.<sup>35</sup> Nearly 70 MCP programs are administered by the Big Brothers and Big Sisters programs (some of these same programs may receive funding through Department of Justice funds for Big Brothers Big Sisters of America; see below for further discussion).<sup>36</sup>

Mentors undergo screenings that include in-depth interviews and criminal background checks. They must commit to attending training and meeting with their assigned youth one hour per week for one year. Mentors are not paid for their participation, except for reimbursement for incidental expenses such as food and mileage on a case-by-case basis.

### **Voucher Demonstration Project: Caregiver's Choice Program**

The Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-288) extended funding and authorization for the Mentoring Children of Prisoners program and authorized a demonstration project to test the effectiveness of using vouchers to deliver MCP services more broadly to youth who have not already been matched to a mentor. The law specified that vouchers would be distributed by an organization with considerable experience in mentoring services for children, and in developing program standards for planning and evaluating mentoring programs for children.<sup>37</sup>

In November 2007, HHS awarded a competitive three-year cooperative agreement grant (which may be renewed for an additional two years) to MENTOR, a national mentoring advocacy group and clearinghouse on mentoring issues, to administer the program. The voucher program is known as the Caregiver's Choice Program.

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<sup>33</sup> (...continued)

*Children of Prisoners Competitive Grant Announcement, 2007).*

<sup>34</sup> Six states (Indiana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, and Vermont) do not appear to have programs funded by the MCP grant.

<sup>35</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, December 2007.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, June 2007.

<sup>37</sup> HHS is required to provide a description of how the organization should ensure collaboration and cooperation with other interested parties, including courts and prisons, with respect to the delivery of mentoring services under the demonstration project.

According to HHS, in the first year of the demonstration project, MENTOR is to begin the program, targeting efforts in geographically diverse targeted communities with high rates of incarceration, crime or poverty, rural populations, or areas with American Indian children.<sup>38</sup> These areas are Atlanta, Chicago, and Philadelphia, as well as the Arizona, Connecticut, Idaho, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Washington.<sup>39</sup> HHS has stated that these targeted efforts are to allow systems to be implemented, reviewed, and adjusted when needed. In years two and three of the demonstration program, the demonstration is to be expanded nationally. In year one, no less than 3,000 vouchers are to be distributed to children and families; in year two, no less than 8,000 vouchers are to be distributed and in year three, no less than 10,000 vouchers are to be distributed.

As required by law, MENTOR is not providing direct mentoring services. HHS reports that the organization is to coordinate with national networks for re-entry and incarcerated families, caregiver support networks, school districts, social service agencies, and faith- and community-based organizations to identify children to participate in the program. Families and caregivers are to be directed to a national call center to enroll in the voucher program and provided with a mentoring information packet that corresponds to the family's stated preferences and provides mentoring options in their community. The voucher for mentoring services is included in the packet and contains an identification code. (This identifier becomes the primary means of data collection and system management for the voucher demonstration project.) The families redeem the vouchers at organizations deemed to be quality providers of mentoring services.

MENTOR is conducting an advertising campaign to encourage mentoring programs to become certified as "quality providers" (allowing them to receive MCP vouchers).<sup>40</sup> MENTOR, in consultation with FYSB, is required to identify quality standards for these providers, including, at minimum, criminal background checks of mentors. It must also monitor and oversee delivery of mentoring services. MENTOR has established several requirements for programs: they must also meet certain volunteer screening and matching requirements, have at least one year of experience matching and supporting mentoring relationships, provide training and orientation to mentors and mentored children and youth, provide ongoing support and case management to matches, and offer clear policies and procedures for ending matches, among other requirements.<sup>41</sup> To be eligible for voucher funding, mentoring organizations must also demonstrate that significant mentoring services can be provided for an eligible child and that after the voucher expires, they can continue

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<sup>38</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, December 2007. Receipt of a voucher is not counted for purposes of determining eligibility of federal or federally supported assistance for the child's family.

<sup>39</sup> See [[http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring\\_1033.pdf](http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1033.pdf)].

<sup>40</sup> For information about the publicity campaign, see [<http://www.mentoring.org/caregivers-choice>].

<sup>41</sup> For additional information about the program's eligibility requirements, see [[http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring\\_1031.pdf](http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_1031.pdf)].

providing such services through non-federal resources. For those organizations with general MCP grants, they must exhaust these funds before receiving funds through the voucher project.

## Funding and Grant Awards

The MCP program, including the voucher component, is authorized to receive “such sums as may be necessary” for every year through FY2011. Funding for the general grant program is distributed on a competitive basis to eligible applicants for up to three years. The size of the average grant is \$186,245 for each year of the three-year period, with grants ranging from \$26,000 to \$2 million per year.<sup>42</sup> (Some of these organizations make sub-awards to other organizations for mentoring services.) Grantees are required to provide a nonfederal share or match of at least 25% of the total project budget in the first and second years of the project, rising to 50% in the third year.

Funding may not be awarded to the national mentoring support organization (i.e., MENTOR for FY2008 to FY2010) to distribute the vouchers unless \$25 million in program appropriations is first available for site-based grants. If funding is available, the organization is to receive up to \$5 million in the first year of the cooperative agreement, \$10 million in the second year, and \$15 million in the third year. The organization’s administrative expenditures for the demonstration project may not exceed 10% of the amount awarded. Individual vouchers of up to \$1,000 can be awarded on behalf of an individual child to redeem for mentoring services.<sup>43</sup>

The MCP program received initial funding of \$10 million in FY2003 and has been funded at approximately \$50 million in each year since then. For FY2009, the Administration proposes to fund the program at \$50 million. **Table 2** shows the level of funding for the program and the number of general grants and vouchers awarded from FY2003 to FY2008, where applicable.

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<sup>42</sup> *The Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program*, Report to Congress, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Mentoring Children of Prisoners Competitive Grant Announcement*, 2007.

**Table 2. Mentoring Children of Prisoners:  
Funding and Grant and Voucher Awards, FY2003-FY2009**  
(dollars in millions)

	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Estimate	FY 2009 Request
Funding							
Appropriated	10.0	49.7	49.6	49.5	49.5	48.6	\$50.0
New Grants Awarded	52	169	0	76	144	0	188
Grants							
In Progress	n/a	52	221	169	220	220	144
Vouchers Awarded	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8,000	13,000

**Source:** FY2002 to FY2007 funding data based on information provided by the U.S. Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau, 2007. FY2008 funding data based on U.S. House, Committee on Appropriations, *Joint Explanatory Statement to Accompany FY2008 Consolidated Appropriations Amendment to H.R. 2764/P.L. 110-161, Division G*. FY2009 funding based on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, *FY2009 Justification of Estimates*, pp. D-53 through D-55.

## Program Performance and Oversight

Of all MCP funds, 4% must be set aside for research, evaluation, and technical assistance related to site-based and voucher-related mentoring services.<sup>44</sup>

**Research.** HHS collects caseload demographics and characteristics from grantee progress reports and from an online data collection instrument, administered by HHS, and used by grantees to input caseload data. This information allows HHS to assess the average number of days that a child is on the waitlist for a mentor, the number of hours that the child met with their mentor over the course of a reporting period, the average number of hours in pre-training/orientation and post-training that mentors received, and the number of staff contacts with mentors to address mentor skills or critical issues. **Table A-1**, in the appendix, displays demographics and characteristics for youth enrolled in the program in FY2006.

In 2006, HHS introduced the Relationship Quality Survey Instrument (RQI) to assess the dynamics of the mentor/mentored youth relationship. The RQI seeks information from youth ages nine and above engaged in long-term (i.e., minimum of nine months by the time the survey is administered in July of each year) mentoring relationships. The survey asks the youth about their satisfaction with the relationship, the extent to which mentors have helped them cope with their problems, how happy the youth feel when they are with their mentors, and whether there is evidence of trust in the mentoring relationship.<sup>45</sup> According to HHS, research has

<sup>44</sup> The percentage of funds set aside for this purpose was increased from 2.5% to 4% under P.L. 109-288.

<sup>45</sup> Department of Health and Human Services, *Mentoring Children of Prisoners Competitive Grant Announcement*, 2007, p. 7.

demonstrated that answers to the questions are predictive of the psychological and academic benefits of mentoring.

**Evaluations.** Pursuant to the original legislation (P.L. 107-133) authorizing the MCP, HHS was required to evaluate the program and submit its findings to Congress no later than April 15, 2005 (see below). The reauthorizing legislation (P.L. 109-288) requires the Secretary to evaluate the voucher demonstration project. The evaluation of the project is to be submitted to the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee no later than 90 days after the end of the second fiscal year the project is conducted. The report is to include the number of children who received vouchers for mentoring services and any conclusions regarding the use of vouchers to deliver mentoring services to children of prisoners. In addition to the evaluations, HHS is required to submit to Congress, within 12 months after the reauthorizing legislation was passed (i.e., September 28, 2007), a report that includes the following: 1) the characteristics of the funded general MCP programs; 2) the plan for implementing the voucher demonstration project; 3) a description of the outcome-based evaluation of the programs, and how the evaluation has been expanded to include an evaluation of the demonstration project; and 4) the date HHS will submit the final report on the evaluation to Congress.

In response to some of these legislative requirements, HHS subcontracted with Abt Associates to conduct process and outcome evaluations of the general mentoring program. A report about the features of the program was submitted to Congress on September 12, 2007. The report discusses the general program's design, strategy, implementation, current operation status, and characteristics. The outcome evaluation has not yet been completed, as required by P.L. 107-133, but survey instruments have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), grantee sites have been selected, and participating grantee staff have received training on administering the surveys. This evaluation is to measure child baseline characteristics and status in a sample of the program's caseload when a mentoring match is first formed. Outcomes are to be measured in a follow-up survey of participating youth 12 to 15 months following the baseline survey. The results are to be matched, through a data sharing agreement, against similar at-risk youth who served as controls in the recent evaluation of the Big Brothers Big Sisters school-based mentoring program (discussed above). (Abt plans to use consistent definitions and other methods to make valid comparisons between the groups.) The evaluation is to assess the operational design of the program as well as child outcomes, including attitude towards and performance in school; relationships with parents, peers, and teachers; self-esteem; and engagement in risky behaviors, including alcohol and drug use. Findings from the evaluation of the general program are likely to be available during FY2010.

As required by P.L. 109-288, an evaluation of the voucher component is in the planning stages and according to HHS, will attempt to use the same methodology and definitions as the general mentoring program, to the extent practicable, given the program design. HHS is to produce an interim report, sometime in calendar year 2008, on the status of the voucher component of the program.

**PART Evaluation.** As part of the FY2005 budget process, the MCP program was evaluated by the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART), an instrument

developed by the current Administration to examine the performance of certain programs across federal agencies. The PART evaluation assessed the MCP's purpose and design, strategic planning, management, and results/accountability. While the program received maximum scores for these first three measurements, it was rated as "Results Not Demonstrated" because the program performance data to assess results had only recently begun to be collected from grantees. In addition, the program also did not meet its mentor match goal. (By FY2007, the program was targeted to make 75,000 matches to date, but instead, 70,425 matches had been made.<sup>46</sup>) According to HHS, mentor match targets were not met because many MCP grantees had never previously received a federal grant and/or were new and formed specifically to operate the grant.<sup>47</sup> In its 2007 Report to Congress, HHS stated that it has taken steps to improve the number of matches, such as conducting site visits to grantees.<sup>48</sup> The program missed the goal of increasing the percentage of mentoring matches that endure at least 12 months in FY2007 (the goal was 60% but the actual share was 34%) and reducing the percentage of matches that terminate at three months or less to 20% (the actual share was 26%). However, the program increased the share of mentored youth in active relationships that have already been sustained more than 12 months, surpassing the goal of 20% by 13 percentage points in FY2007.

**Training and Technical Assistance.** HHS has contracted with Dare Mighty Things (DMT) to serve as the training and technical assistance provider for the program. DMT conducts a needs assessment for MCP grantees, and organizes an annual national conference for all MCP grantees and multiregional workshops throughout the year. DMT also conducts up to 100 days of site visits and provides on-site assistance as needed by phone and email.<sup>49</sup> Through its newsletters, DMT conveys important federal information, a mentor/mentored youth of the month highlight, funding opportunities, and general mentoring information.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to the assistance provided by DMT, the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development at the University of Oklahoma (the contractor for FYSB on select child welfare issues and the Runaway and Homeless Youth program) is developing a peer-to-peer monitoring tool that is to allow for grantees to join federal staff on visits to other grantees to monitor compliance with the legislative intent of the program and to encourage cross-fertilization of ideas

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<sup>46</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, December 2007.

<sup>47</sup> *The Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program*, Report to Congress, p. 11.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, June 2007.

<sup>50</sup> Based on correspondence with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, July 2007. See also *Case Study: Supporting a Government Agency, Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program* on the DMT website, [[http://www.daremightythings.com/company/casestudy/MCP%20052507\\_v2.pdf](http://www.daremightythings.com/company/casestudy/MCP%20052507_v2.pdf)].

between peer mentoring professionals.<sup>51</sup> If the peer reviewers determine that technical assistance is needed (or is requested by an organization), DMT is to be notified and develop a plan for delivering services.

Finally, HHS staff provide direct assistance to grantees.<sup>52</sup> Program specialists assist grantees in grant management, service delivery planning, program start-up and implementation, reporting, and building partnerships. HHS staff monitor grantee activities and oversee detailed quarterly narrative and financial information. The staff also facilitates transfers of promising practices from experienced to less experienced grantees.

## **Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring Program (U.S. Department of Education)**

### **Overview**

The Safe and Drug Free Schools (SDFS) program was enacted as Title IV-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1994 (P.L. 103-382) in response to concerns about increased school violence and drug use among school-aged youth. The program awards funding to states to support activities that promote school safety. In 2001 (P.L. 107-110), the No Child Left Behind Act reauthorized and amended ESEA, and enacted a school-based mentoring program under the SDFS program.<sup>53</sup>

The SDFS Mentoring program is administered by the Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools in the U.S. Department of Education, and provides grants to establish and support mentoring programs that are school based. School-based mentoring refers to mentoring activities that are closely coordinated with school (i.e., involve teachers, counselors, and other school staff who identify and refer students for mentoring services) and assist youth with improving their academic achievement, reducing disciplinary referrals, and increasing their bonding to school.<sup>54</sup> Generally,

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<sup>51</sup> This on-site monitoring tool is to be similar to one that has been used by FYSB's Runaway and Homeless Youth program for the past twenty years. Based on correspondence with U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, October 2007.

<sup>52</sup> *The Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program*, Report to Congress, p. 8.

<sup>53</sup> The SDFS program supports two major grant programs — one for states and one for national programs. The mentoring program is authorized under the national programs grant. For further information, see CRS Report RL33980, *School and Campus Safety Programs and Requirements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Higher Education Act*, by Rebecca R. Skinner and Gail McCallion.

<sup>54</sup> U.S. Department of Education, "Notice of Final Priorities, Requirements, and Selection Criteria Under the Mentoring Program," 69 *Federal Register* 30794, May 28, 2004. (Hereafter referenced as U.S. Department of Education, "Notice of Final Priorities.")

mentored youth are paired with one adult<sup>55</sup> who serves as a positive role model and provides the child with academic assistance (e.g., tutoring, helping with homework, learning a game like chess, developing computer skills), exposure to new experiences that promote positive youth development (e.g., attending concerts and plays, visiting colleges, shadowing mentor at his/her job), and recreational opportunities (e.g., playing sports, creating arts and crafts projects, attending professional sports games).<sup>56</sup> According to a June 2004 GAO report of the program, many of these mentoring activities are carried out on school grounds, but some activities take place in the community and in the workplace.<sup>57</sup>

**Purpose.** The mentoring program targets children with the greatest need, defined as those children at risk of educational failure or dropping out of school, involved with criminal or delinquent activities, or who lack strong positive role models. The purpose of the program is to provide school-based mentoring programs that improve academic outcomes, improve interpersonal relationships, and reduce involvement in delinquency and gang involvement.

**Grantee Requirements.** The Secretary of the Department of Education is authorized to award competitive grants to three entities to carry out the SDFS Mentoring program: (1) local education agencies (LEAs); (2) nonprofit community-based organizations (CBOs), including faith-based groups; and (3) partnerships between LEAs and CBOs. The Secretary prioritizes grant applications that propose a school-based mentoring program, provide high quality background checks and technical assistance, and serve children with greatest need living in particular areas.

In applying for grants, an eligible entity must provide information on the children for which the grant is sought; a description of the method to match children with mentors based on the needs of the children; information on how the entity will recruit, screen, and provide training to mentors; information on the system for managing and monitoring information related to the program's background checks of mentors and procedures for matching children to mentors. Grantees must also make assurances that no mentor will be matched with so many children that the assignment will undermine the mentor's ability to be an effective mentor or the mentor's ability to establish a close relationship (i.e., a one-to-one relationship, where practicable), with each mentored child. Further, grantees must assure that the mentoring program will provide children with certain supports (i.e., emotional, academic, and exposure to new experiences) and assign a new mentor if the relationship between the original mentor and the child is not beneficial to the child.

**Mentored Youth and Mentors.** As noted above, the SDFS Mentoring program targets children with the greatest need. In awarding grants, the Secretary is to prioritize entities that serve children in grades four to eight with greatest need

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<sup>55</sup> In a 2004 GAO analysis of the 121 SDFS Mentoring Program grantees who received awards in FY2002, 75% provided one-to-one mentoring only; 22% provided both one-to-one mentoring and group mentoring; and 3% provided group mentoring only.

<sup>56</sup> GAO, *Student Mentoring Programs*, p. 17.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.



living in rural areas, high-crime areas, or troubled home environments *or* who attend schools with violence problems.<sup>58</sup> The Department of Education does not aggregate demographic and other data on youth participants, and therefore, the number and characteristics of youth that have been served by the program is unknown.<sup>59</sup>

Mentors may be a responsible adult, a postsecondary school student, or a secondary school student. While the Department of Education does not mandate a set amount of hours that mentors and students must meet, it advises that programs require at least one hour each week.<sup>60</sup> Mentors are screened using appropriate reference checks, child and domestic abuse record checks, and criminal background checks; and receive training and support in mentoring. Mentors are uncompensated.

## Funding and Grant Awards

The mentoring program is one component of the Safe and Drug Free Schools program. The SDFS program has two funding streams: one for state grants awarded by formula and another for discretionary national grants. The SDFS mentoring program is funded through the national grants component.<sup>61</sup> The program has received about \$17 million to \$49 million each year since grants were first awarded in FY2002. The average amount awarded for FY2008 to each grantee was \$167,000.<sup>62</sup> There is no match requirement and grantees are ineligible to apply for subsequent SDFS mentoring grants if they are currently receiving funds through the program (though they may apply for other Department of Education grants for which they are eligible).<sup>63</sup> **Table 3** shows the amount of funding appropriated for the program and the number of grants awarded.

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<sup>58</sup> U.S. Department of Education, "Notice of Final Priorities."

<sup>59</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, October 2007.

<sup>60</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, July 2007.

<sup>61</sup> State grants are awarded to states based on a formula that incorporates poverty and population factors. States must use 93% of their allocation to make formula grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) based on poverty factors and each LEA's share of student enrollment in public and private nonprofit elementary and secondary schools. National grants are used primarily for a variety of discretionary programs designed to prevent drug abuse and violence in elementary and secondary schools. For further information, see CRS Report RL33980, *School and Campus Safety Programs and Requirements in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Higher Education Act*, by Rebecca R. Skinner and Gail McCallion.

<sup>62</sup> U.S. Department of Education, Safe Schools and Citizenship Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, pp. F-37. (Hereafter referenced U.S. Department of Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*.)

<sup>63</sup> Based on correspondence with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, December 2007. Also, see U.S. Department of Education, "Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools: Notice of Final Eligibility Requirement," 71 *Federal Register* 70369, December 4, 2006.

In the FY2007, FY2008, and FY2009 budget justifications, the President proposed no funding for the program, on the basis that it has met its objectives. The FY2009 budget also proposes to consolidate the SDFS national grants component, which currently has several sub-programs, into a single-flexible discretionary program.<sup>64</sup>

**Table 3. Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring Program:  
Funding and Grant Awards, FY2002-FY2009**  
(dollars in millions)

Program	FY 2002 Actual	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Actual	FY 2008 Estimate	FY 2009 Request
Funding Appropriated	17.5	17.4	49.7	49.2	48.8	19.0	48.5	0
New Grants Awarded	122	0	163	90	0	170	110	0
Grants In Progress	n/a	122	122	163	253	86	170	170

**Source:** FY2002 to FY2007 funding data based on information provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, 2007. FY2008 funding data based on U.S. House, Committee on Appropriations, *Joint Explanatory Statement to Accompany FY2008 Consolidated Appropriations Amendment to H.R. 2764/P.L. 110-161, Division G*. FY2009 data based on U.S. Department of Education, Safe Schools and Citizenship Education, *FY2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, pp. F-8, F-16.

## Program Performance and Oversight

The No Child Left Behind Act does not specify whether or how the SDFS mentoring program is to be monitored and evaluated, or how grantees are to receive technical assistance and support. However, regulations promulgated in March 2004 specify that grant applicants must include in their application an assurance that they will (1) establish clear, measurable performance goals; and (2) collect and report to the agency data related to the established Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) performance indicators for the mentoring program's grant competition.<sup>65</sup> The Department of Education requires grantees to provide an evaluation of their program at the end of the three-year grant period. Further, the agency established three performance measures for assessing the effectiveness of the mentoring program:

(1) The percentage of mentor-youth matches that are sustained for a period of nine months. The goal for 2007 was 44.9% and the actual figure was 38.6%.

<sup>64</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, p. F-30.

<sup>65</sup> U.S. Department of Education, "Notice of Final Priorities."

(2) The percentage of mentored students who demonstrate improvement in core academic subjects as measured by grade point average after 12 months. The goal for 2007 was 49.6% and the actual figure was 22%.

(3) The percentage of mentored students who have unexcused absences from school. The goal for 2007 was 39.6% and the actual figure was 28.9%.<sup>66</sup>

**Evaluation.** In 2004, GAO conducted a study of the program and made three recommendations to the Department of Education to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the program: (1) explore ways to facilitate the sharing of successful practices and lessons learned among grantees, (2) ensure that the agency uses grantees' single audit reports, and (3) undertake a national study of the program's outcomes.<sup>67</sup> (This second recommendation refers to audit reports of grantees that provide information on weaknesses related to grantee financial management, internal control, and compliance issues; these reports are available through the Office of Management and Budget's Federal Auditing Clearinghouse.) In response to GAO's first recommendation, the Department of Education has developed an electronic listserv to promote communication among grantees. To ensure that the agency monitors single audit reports, the agency began to provide a comprehensive training to grant monitors (of the audit reports) to assist them access the information. In addition, the agency added a requirement to the grant monitoring procedures that directs staff to review audit findings at least annually.

Finally, in response to GAO's third recommendation, the Department of Education has subcontracted with Abt Associates to conduct process and outcome evaluations. To conduct the process evaluation, data on the nature of mentoring program services are to be collected through a survey of the program grantees and mentors to provide context for the outcome evaluation and to provide information to the agency about how the program can improve. According to the department, the outcome evaluation will use a randomized control trial with a sample size of approximately 2,600 students in grades four through eight that are or were mentored at 32 grant sites from the 2004 and 2005 cohorts of mentoring projects.<sup>68</sup> Data are being collected for the student sample on school engagement, academic performance, dropping out of school, the quality of interpersonal relationships, and involvement with high-risk and delinquent behaviors. To measure program impact, student surveys and student school records are to be collected both at baseline and at the end

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<sup>66</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, pp. F-39, F-40.

<sup>67</sup> GAO, *Student Mentoring Programs*.

<sup>68</sup> Approximately half of this sample is to be randomly assigned to be matched with a mentor. The study uses a nonrandom sample of 33 mentoring grantees, meaning that Abt is to select certain grantee organizations for the study. According to ED, many programs could not support a study that randomly assigns students to mentoring. According to ED, the agency will spend \$5.6 million for the national evaluation. Funding began in FY2005 and extends through FY2008. Based on correspondence with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, July 2007.

of the school year. The agency expects the findings to be available in October 2008.<sup>69</sup>

**Training and Technical Assistance.** In 2004, the Department of Education awarded a performance-based contract to EMT Associates, Inc., to operate the Mentoring Program Resource Training and Technical Assistance Center until 2009.<sup>70</sup> The purpose of this center is to ensure that programs funded under the mentoring program receive assistance, as appropriate, in the management and implementation of their projects. Grantees receive assistance with (1) training to ensure that they are using high-quality, evidence-based programs; (2) identifying gaps and weaknesses in their program design; and (3) collaborating with other organizations; and (4) planning for program sustainability.<sup>71</sup> In FY2007, EMT held three regional meetings for more than 500 participants that focused on sustaining projects; and with Department of Education staff, EMT conducted three webinars (web-based seminars).<sup>72</sup> For FY2008, the agency reports that EMT will develop and deliver four webinars; produce four manuals that capture best practices; develop six fact sheets for distribution to grantees via the program's resource center website; develop four new case studies around promising prevention practices among mentoring programs; and conduct two regional training sessions.<sup>73</sup>

Department of Education staff also provide needed assistance to grantees. Mechanisms to assist grantees include a post-award call to ensure that grantees understand established outcomes and to offer technical assistance, semiannual calls to grantees to determine the implementation process and issues and to provide technical assistance, reviews of annual grantee performance reports to determine successes and needed corrective action, monitoring of expenditure rates to determine if grants were expended at an appropriate rate, and visits to a limited number of grantees.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, p. F-47.

<sup>70</sup> Funding for training and technical assistance is approximately \$5.5 million from FY2004 through FY2008. Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, July 2007.

<sup>71</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, October 2007.

<sup>72</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, p. 46.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> This process is described in greater detail in GAO, *Student Mentoring Programs*, pp. 24-26.

## Mentoring Initiative for System-Involved Youth (U.S. Department of Justice)

### Overview

As noted above, the Department of Justice is the first federal agency to have funded a structured mentoring program. The 1992 amendments (P.L. 102-586) to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJJPA) added Part G to the act, authorizing the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to establish a mentoring program, which came to be known as the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). The program was created in response to the perception that youth in high-crime areas would benefit from one-on-one adult relationships.<sup>75</sup> The objectives of JUMP were to reduce juvenile delinquent behavior and improve scholastic performance, with an emphasis on reducing school dropout. From FY1994 through FY2003, Congress appropriated a total of \$104 million (\$4 million to \$15.8 million each year) to the program.

JUMP was repealed by the 21st Century Department of Justice Appropriations Authorization Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-273). This law incorporated the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 2001 (H.R. 1900), which eliminated several juvenile justice programs, including Part G (Mentoring), and replaced it with a block grant program under new Part C (Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Block Grant Program, to be used for activities designed to prevent juvenile delinquency). The act also created a new Part D (Research, Evaluation, Technical Assistance and Training) and a new Part E (Developing, Testing, and Demonstrating Promising New Initiatives and Programs). According to the accompanying report for H.R. 1900, the small amount of funding for JUMP may have been a factor in its elimination. The report states: “In creating this block grant, the [Senate Judiciary] Committee has eliminated separate categorical programs under current law.... Funding for the Part E — State Challenge Activities and Part G — Mentoring Program received minimal funding.”<sup>76 77</sup> The report goes on to say that the Committee does not discourage mentoring activities under the new block grant program.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg, “Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Authorization Act,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 138 (October 7, 1992).

<sup>76</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Education and the Workforce, *Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 2001*, report to accompany H.R. 1900, 107<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. H.Rept. 107-203 (Washington; GPO, 2001), p. 31.

<sup>77</sup> An evaluation of JUMP found that the program did not recruit the desired number of mentors, that many of the relationships appeared to have ended prematurely, and that some youth outcomes did not improve. Nonetheless, the results of the evaluation do not appear to have been a factor in eliminating the program.

<sup>78</sup> The Department of Justice did not request that these funds be discontinued. According to the agency, no letters or budget justifications advocating for these funds to be discontinued were submitted to Congress. Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and  
(continued...)

Since the JUMP program was discontinued, the Administration has requested funding for mentoring under Part C (Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Block Grant Program) and Part E (Developing, Testing, and Demonstrating Promising New Initiatives and Programs), which can fund mentoring demonstration projects.<sup>79</sup> However, Congress has appropriated mentoring funds under a separate mentoring line item titled “Mentoring Part G” or “Mentoring” for FY2005 through FY2008 (no mentoring funds were appropriated for FY2004); the line item does not specify under which part of the JJDP, as amended, the funding is authorized.<sup>80</sup> The Department of Justice has interpreted the appropriations language as requiring the agency to allocate funds pursuant to old Part G.<sup>81</sup>

Most DOJ mentoring activities are coordinated through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.<sup>82</sup> Pursuant to the mentoring line item, OJJDP has allocated funding for mentoring initiatives. For FY2006, OJJDP proposed a new juvenile mentoring project, the Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth (MISIY), to provide mentoring to youth involved in the juvenile justice system or foster care, or juvenile offenders re-entering the community.<sup>83</sup> Congress appropriated \$10 million for mentoring (under the mentoring line item) that fiscal year, with approximately \$2.6 million for the MISIY program and the balance for specific set asides for jurisdictions and other organizations that support youth mentoring, including Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (see page 31 for further discussion of DOJ’s other mentoring efforts).

## Grantees

Entities eligible to apply for MISIY funds include public agencies (state agencies, units of local government, public universities and colleges, and tribal governments) and private organizations (including secular and nonprofit, faith-based groups).<sup>84</sup> The initiative awarded a total of \$1.6 million to four sites (\$400,000 per

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<sup>78</sup> (...continued)

Delinquency Prevention, November 2007.

<sup>79</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, March 2006 and U.S. Department of Justice, *2007 Congressional Authorization and Budget Submission*, p. 141.

<sup>80</sup> See, for example, House Committee on Appropriations, *Making Appropriations for Science, the Departments of State, Justice, and Commerce, and Related Agencies for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2006, and for Other Purposes*, report to accompany H.R. 2862, 109<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., CP-3 (Washington: GPO, 2006).

<sup>81</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, November 2007.

<sup>82</sup> The Bureau of Justice Assistance has provided some funding for mentoring.

<sup>83</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, *FY2005 Budget Justifications*.

<sup>84</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, “Application for Funding: Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth,” available at [<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/06mentoring>] (continued...)

site) for a four-year period (FY2006 to FY2009).<sup>85</sup> (See below for a discussion on the \$1 million in funding for the training and technical assistance provider and the organization conducting the evaluation.) Grantees are not required to provide a match.

The four grantees are nonprofit, youth-serving organizations, and the City of Chicago. (As part of its grant requirements, the City of Chicago was to develop a pilot mentoring program that sub-contracts with community-based organizations.) Each of the organizations is required to meet performance standards that focus on building protective factors (e.g., youth are to gain at least two responsible nonparent adults in their life that support them, experience improved self esteem, and develop better relationships with their families and peers) and improving school outcomes (e.g., greater attendance, higher reading and math scores, and fewer behavior referrals). The four MISIY grantees are described below.

- *The Boys and Girls Aid Society's Mentor Portland* program in Portland, Oregon provides mentoring to youth ages 10 to 14 who are in the foster care system or have an incarcerated parent. With its MISIY grant, the organization is implementing a mentoring program for 136 youth in foster care that focuses on one-on-one and team-based mentoring in the community. The youth are to be referred primarily by the Oregon Department of Human Services. Each mentoring pair is to be placed on a team with six other pairs. In addition to meeting with their mentors, youth are expected to attend monthly team activities and community events, and attend a weekend camp with their mentor.<sup>86</sup>
- *Lutheran Family Services of Virginia's Mentor Match* in Roanoke, Virginia, provides one-on-one, community-based mentoring to youth ages 8 to 18 in foster care and the juvenile justice system. With the MISIY grant, the organization anticipates serving 140 additional youth by 2010. Youth are to be recruited through established relationships with the local juvenile court system, the local social services agency, and Lutheran Family Services. The program is to include the following: (1) therapeutic mentoring for children in treatment foster care provided by mentors employed by Lutheran Family Services, involving structured recreation and goal setting, and open dialogue about emotions and problems or other topics; (2) therapeutic mentoring for court-involved youth provided by mentors

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<sup>84</sup> (...continued)

initiative.pdf]. (Hereafter referenced as U.S. Department of Justice, "Application for Funding: Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth.")

<sup>85</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, "OJJDP Awards Foster Mentoring for System Involved Youth," available at [<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/enews/07juvjust/070123.html>].

<sup>86</sup> The Boys and Girls Aid Society's Mentor Portland, Grant Application for Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth, provided to the Congressional Research Service by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, September 2007.

who work with the juvenile justice system; (3) non-therapeutic mentoring for foster care children provided by volunteers; and (4) a volunteer mentor pilot project for system-involved youth provided by volunteers trained in therapeutic mentoring.<sup>87</sup>

- *The City of Chicago, Department of Children and Youth Services*, is using its MISIY funds to support four community-based organizations that provide mentoring to adolescent males who are involved in the juvenile justice system or are at risk for entering the system. These organizations include Agape, Southwest Youth Collaborative, Uchlich Children's Advocacy network, and Building with Books. Youth are to enter the program in 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade and are eligible to remain in the program through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Participants are to be walk-ins or be referred by the Chicago Juvenile Intervention Support Center (JICS), Cook County State's Attorneys Office, and the Cook County Juvenile Probation Department. Each youth is to receive a case manager and service referrals, and is to be assigned a mentor (known as a youth advocate) to help them overcome obstacles to successful enrollment and completion of JICS programs and to achieve regular attendance in the appropriate school program. The MISIY program anticipates assisting youth develop an individual plan to ensure that they are connected to work and/or school.<sup>88</sup>
- *The Mentoring Center* in Oakland, California, serves youth re-entering the community from the Alameda County juvenile residential rehabilitation facility. The organization is using its MISIY funds to develop the Camp Sweeney Transformative Mentoring Program with the long-term goal of reducing re-arrest and re-commitment rates among 240 youth ages 15 to 18. Youth in the program are to participate in: (1) group mentoring and a group counseling program that focuses on behavior change through weekly curriculum-based cognitive behavior sessions; (2) pre-release individual mentoring and case management provided by a case manager that focuses on identifying the needs and services for the youth; and (3) post-release mentoring. The individual mentoring is to be provided through the program's case manager.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Lutheran Family Services of Virginia, Grant Application for Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth, provided to the Congressional Research Service by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, September 2007.

<sup>88</sup> City of Chicago, Grant Application for Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth, provided to the Congressional Research Service by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, September 2007.

<sup>89</sup> The Mentoring Center, Grant Application for Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth, provided to the Congressional Research Service by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, September 2007.



## Evaluations

OJJDP awarded a four-year grant of approximately \$500,000 to the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation in FY2006 to conduct process and outcome evaluations of the program.<sup>90</sup> The process evaluation is to document how the selected mentoring sites adapt mentoring approaches (e.g., individual, group mentoring, counseling); how the programs and/or strategies are being implemented for the target populations; and how these types of mentoring approaches and strategies could impact outcomes for mentoring.<sup>91</sup> The evaluator is also to gather data from the grantees, through annual site visits and telephone interviews, to inform best practices in the mentoring field. These data are to be shared with the training and technical assistance provider.

The outcome evaluation is underway and the first wave of data collection was reported to OJJDP by the end of calendar year 2007. The evaluation measures youth behaviors and their school performance at intake into their respective programs, three months after youth are matched with mentors, and nine months after they are matched. Measured outcomes include short-term outcomes (i.e., quality of match), intermediate outcomes (i.e., academic self-esteem, aggression and violence, delinquency, and substance use), and long-term outcomes (i.e., improved academic performance, involvement with the juvenile justice system, and stability in the foster care system). These data are to be aggregated and compared across the four grant recipients. The data are also to be analyzed in sub-groups, based on race and ethnicity, gender, age, type of participant (foster care youth, juvenile justice youth, or both), and the individual grantee.<sup>92</sup>

The outcome evaluation includes a treatment group — those youth who are in the mentoring programs — and a control group made up of youth who either agree to be on a waiting list for at least six months or are in a local geographic area not served by the grant recipient. The same demographic and survey data is collected from youth in the control group (except they are not be asked for information about the quality of their match) and are to be compared to the data from the treatment group.

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<sup>90</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, “Application for Evaluation of Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth,” available at [[http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/06mentoring\\_eval.pdf](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/06mentoring_eval.pdf)].

<sup>91</sup> The process evaluation involves the monthly collection of data on the date of each mentoring and related activity, duration of each activity, the type of activity (e.g., recreational, academic), location of activity (e.g., at mentoring agency, school), structure of activity (e.g., face to face, by phone), and whether the activity was conducted one-on-one or in a group. These data are to be submitted by each of the four grant recipients electronically.

<sup>92</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, November 2007.

According to OJJDP, the Administration will await results from the evaluation prior to determining whether the program should be expanded.<sup>93</sup>

## Training and Technical Assistance

The Education Development Center (EDC) was awarded a two-year grant of approximately \$500,000 in FY2006 to provide training and technical support to the grantees.<sup>94</sup> To date, EDC had conducted telephone pre-assessments and in-depth assessments of all grantees to determine what type of assistance is needed, as well as on-site and off-site training. EDC has also researched and created a literature review containing resources related to mentoring system-involved youth; created two technical assistance briefs on mentor recruitment and retention; and identified a series of teleconferences targeted to the specific needs of grantees, including one that focuses on recruiting African American male mentors to their programs, among other types of assistance.<sup>95</sup> EDC is working with the grant recipients to develop their plans for becoming financially sustainable.

## Other Federal Mentoring Support

In addition to the three primary mentoring programs, the federal government supports other mentoring initiatives, administered both independently and jointly by the Corporation for National and Community Service, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Justice, and Department of Defense.<sup>96</sup>

## Funding Provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service is an independent federal agency that administers programs to support volunteer services, including volunteering. CNCS is authorized by two statutes: the National and Community Service Act (P.L. 101-610) of 1990, as amended, and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act (P.L. 93-113) of 1973, as amended. The agency has provided mentoring through two of its volunteer organizations, AmeriCorps and SeniorCorps. In FY2005, CNCS devoted more than \$250 million to support approximately 400,000

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid, September 2007.

<sup>94</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, "Application for Training and Technical Assistance for Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth," available at [<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/ttamentoring06.pdf>]. In FY2007, EDC received a supplement of \$197,446.

<sup>95</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, September 2007.

<sup>96</sup> This section is not exhaustive of the mentoring services that may be available through other federal programs and initiatives. See, for example, Executive Office of the President, *White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth Final Report*, October 2003, pp. 165-179, available online at [[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/white\\_house\\_task\\_force.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/white_house_task_force.pdf)].

youth, including 16,000 children of prisoners, through mentoring, tutoring, and related services.<sup>97</sup> (The amount of funding for mentoring alone cannot be disaggregated.<sup>98</sup>) CNCS has also partnered with MENTOR, the mentoring advocacy group, in an effort to match three million youth with mentors by 2010.<sup>99</sup> The campaign has also secured commitments from corporate and foundation partners for funding to support mentoring programs.

**America's Promise.** America's Promise, a national nonprofit children's advocacy organization, was formed after the Presidents' Summit for America's Future was convened in Philadelphia in 1997.<sup>100</sup> The organization promotes five "commitments" (or factors) that attendees at the summit determined to be essential for the success of young people. One of the factors was caring adults who are actively involved in a child's life, such as mentors, parents, teachers, and coaches.<sup>101</sup> America's Promise has promoted mentoring, and the organization is funded through a combination of federal and private funds. The Corporation for National and Community Service has provided some funding. In FY2006, Congress appropriated \$5 million for the organization from the CNCS budget.<sup>102</sup> (Congress did not appropriate funds in FY2007 and FY2008.)

## Funding Provided by the Department of Justice

**Mentoring Funding Generally.** Since JUMP was discontinued in FY2003, through FY2007, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has

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<sup>97</sup> Corporation for National & Community Service, *Issue Brief: National Service and Mentoring*, available at [[http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/06\\_0503\\_mentoring\\_issue\\_brief.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/06_0503_mentoring_issue_brief.pdf)].

<sup>98</sup> Based on correspondence with the Corporation for National and Community Service, December 2007.

<sup>99</sup> Corporation for National and Community Service, "Cross-Sector Leaders Unveil Major New Plan to Close Mentoring Gap," press release, May 3, 2006, available at [[http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/about\\_usafc/newsroom/announcements\\_dynamic.asp?ID=1299](http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/about_usafc/newsroom/announcements_dynamic.asp?ID=1299)]. (Hereafter referenced as Corporation for National and Community Service, "Close Mentoring Gap.")

<sup>100</sup> The five surviving Presidents (at that time) convened the summit to mobilize Americans in all sectors to ensure that all youth have adequate resources to assist them in leading healthy, productive lives.

<sup>101</sup> The organization's 2006 report, *Every Child, Every Promise: A Report on America's Young People*, correlated the presence of the five commitments in young people's lives with success in adolescence and adulthood. The report concluded that children who have at least four of the five commitments are more likely to be academically successful, civically engaged, and socially competent, regardless of their race or family income. The report is available online at [[http://www.americaspromise.org/uploadedFiles/AmericasPromise/Our\\_Work/Strategic\\_Initiatives/Every\\_Child\\_Every\\_Promise/EC-EP\\_Documents/MAIN%20REPORT%20DRAFT%2011.1.pdf](http://www.americaspromise.org/uploadedFiles/AmericasPromise/Our_Work/Strategic_Initiatives/Every_Child_Every_Promise/EC-EP_Documents/MAIN%20REPORT%20DRAFT%2011.1.pdf)].

<sup>102</sup> U.S. Congress, House of Representatives, *Making Appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2006, and for Other Purposes*, report to accompany H.R. 3010, 109<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., H.Rept. 109-337 (Washington: GPO, 2006), p. 41.

awarded more than \$31 million total in funding to support mentoring programs across the country (no funds were appropriated for mentoring programs through the DOJ budget in FY2004).<sup>103</sup> These funds were appropriated under a mentoring line item. Some of this funding has gone to the MISIY program (\$2.6 million in FY2006 only). The balance of this funding has been allocated to community- and faith-based mentoring organizations through competitive awards and specific set asides in appropriation bills. Most of the funding for these organizations has gone to Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (see below). OJJDP has also funded youth-serving organizations such as the National Network of Youth Ministries, Youth Friends, Virginia Mentoring Partnership, People for People, the Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation, and the Messiah College, among others, to provide mentoring to at-risk youth.

***Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.*** In most years from FY1998 to FY2007, the Department of Justice allocated more than \$40 million to Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and its affiliates in specific set asides in appropriation bills.<sup>104</sup> Funding for the national organization (\$12.4 million in FY1998, \$5.0 million in FY2003, \$6.0 million in FY2004, and \$7.0 million in FY2005 and in FY2006) has been used to build a national infrastructure that supports 450 local affiliates in serving one million children (this initiative is known as “Building Capacity for High-Volume Quality Growth”).<sup>105</sup> Congress has also appropriated funds directly to state and regional affiliates, including Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters (\$497,750 in 2003 and \$246,807 in FY2006) and Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Georgia (\$98,948 in FY2004).

Also in FY2007, the Department of Justice awarded Part E (Developing, Testing, and Demonstrating Promising New Initiatives and Programs) funds to Big Brothers Big Sisters under a competitive solicitation (Prevention and Intervention Programs) designed to advance juvenile justice, child protection, or delinquency prevention by expanding knowledge in these areas.<sup>106</sup> The funding is used to support mentoring services for Alaskan Native youth.

***Funding for Targeted Mentoring Activities Beginning in FY2008.*** The FY2008 appropriations law (P.L. 110-161) provides a line item of \$70 million for mentoring grants and directs the Office of Justice Programs (which oversees the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention) to provide a report and spending plan to congressional appropriations committees that detail the scope of the grant program and the criteria and methodology DOJ will employ to award these grants. In its joint explanatory statement to accompany H.R. 2764 (which was signed

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<sup>103</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, December 2007.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, November 2007.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, *OJJDP FY2007 Prevention and Intervention Programs* grant solicitation, available online at [<http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/FY2007/intervention.pdf>].

into law as P.L. 110-161), Congress stated that it expects national programs that have received funding under the Byrne discretionary program<sup>107</sup> or the JJDP A Part E program to be eligible for funding under the mentoring grant program.<sup>108</sup>

Pursuant to P.L. 110-161, the Department of Justice is funding three new mentoring programs beginning in FY2009: National Mentoring Programs, Strengthening Youth Mentoring Through Community Partnerships Program, and Latino Youth Mentoring Program.<sup>109</sup> Although the programs have different purposes, they seek to support mentoring programs in communities and schools and to provide vulnerable youth with one-on-one mentors for at least one year. They also intend to achieve specific goals for the youth, such as improved academic performance or social or job schools and to deter youth from engaging in truancy and gang activity. The programs require applicants to meet three broad objectives, including (1) improve youth outcomes, (2) establish or improve the administration of mentoring programs and strategies, and (3) enhance and improve the organizational capacity and cost effectiveness through training and technical assistance and other strategies. Entities funded by the three programs must report performance data to DOJ that focuses on the number of mentoring program partnerships in place, the number of youth served, the number of youth who offend or reoffend, the number of mentors, and average length of time mentors remain in the program, among other data.

The National Mentoring Programs funding is available for national organizations, including community- and faith-based non-profit entities, that engage in mentoring activities or provide training and technical assistance on mentoring in multiple states. In particular, the program targets organizations that work to increase participation of mentors by underrepresented groups, involve single-parent families, and focus on truancy prevention. The initiative also seeks to promote collaboration among both national youth service organizations and community organizations that support mentoring activities. The program is to fund multiple awards (funding levels not specified) for up to three years.

Entities eligible to apply for the Strengthening Youth Mentoring Through Community Partnerships Program include state governments, units or subunits of local government, and federally recognized tribal governments. These entities must demonstrate they have formed a community partnership with one or more community-based organizations to provide mentoring services. The program is

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<sup>107</sup> Byrne Discretionary Grant program funds activities that are to improve the functioning of the criminal justice system. For additional information, see CRS Report RS22416, *Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program: Legislative and Funding History*, by Nathan James.

<sup>108</sup> U.S. House, Committee on the Appropriations, *Joint Explanatory Statement to Accompany FY2008 Consolidated Appropriations Amendment to H.R. 2764/P.L. 110-161, Division G*, available at [<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/house/appropriations/08conappro.html>].

<sup>109</sup> The solicitations are available online at [<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/FY2008/CommMentoring.pdf>], [<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/FY2008/NatlMentoring.pdf>], and [<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.gov/grants/solicitations/FY2008/LatinoMentoring.pdf>].

intended to encourage collaboration among nontraditional partners (including those that may not have mentoring as their primary mission), but have areas of common or overlapping interest in serving at-risk youth. The program is to fund multiple awards of \$250,000 to \$500,000 for up to three years.

Finally, the Latino Youth Mentoring Program seeks applications from school districts with a demonstrable Latino gang problem. The school district is to establish a mentoring program that reaches Latino youth before they are recruited to gangs as well as to develop their protective factors against gang involvement and other problem behaviors. Mentoring is to take place at high schools; is to be directed by a teacher, social worker, or school psychologist; and is to involve incoming students as mentored youth and older peers as mentors. The program is to award four awards up to \$500,000 each for three years.

Funds have been set aside to evaluate the programs; however, DOJ has not determined how the funds will be used.<sup>110</sup> All program grantees will have access to training and technical services through the National Training and Technical Assistance Center, which contracts with DOJ to assist OJJDP grantees generally.

**FY2009 Budget Request.** As with the FY2008 budget, the Administration's FY2009 budget request does not provide a specific sum of funding for mentoring.<sup>111</sup> The budget proposes to consolidate grants now authorized under the Missing Children's Assistance Act, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, Victims of Child Abuse Act, and other acts into a "single flexible grant program," and OJP would use the funds to make competitive discretionary grants to assist state and local governments "in addressing multiple child safety and juvenile justice needs to reduce incidents of child exploitation and abuse, including those facilitated by the use of computers and the Internet, improve juvenile justice outcomes, and address school safety needs."

## Funding Provided by the Department of Defense

**Youth ChalleNGe Program.**<sup>112</sup> The Youth ChalleNGe Program is a quasi-military training program administered by the Army National Guard to improve outcomes for youth who have dropped out of school or have been expelled. The program was established as a pilot program under the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2003 (P.L. 102-484), and Congress permanently authorized the program under the National Defense Authorization Act for FY1998 (P.L. 105-85). Congress has since provided an annual appropriation for the program as part of the Department of Defense authorization acts. For FY2008, Congress appropriated

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<sup>110</sup> Based on correspondence with the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs June 9, 2008.

<sup>111</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, *FY2009 Performance Budget*, pp. 23 through 26.

<sup>112</sup> Unless otherwise noted, this information is based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Defense, National Guard, June 12, 2008.

\$83.1 million to the program. Currently, 35 programs operate in 28 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Youth are eligible for the program if they are ages 16 to 18 and enroll prior to their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday; have dropped out of school or been expelled; are unemployed; are not currently on parole or probation for anything other than juvenile status offenses and not serving time or awaiting sentencing; and are drug free.<sup>113</sup> From 1993 through 2007, nearly 94,000 youth enrolled and approximately 74,000 youth have graduated from the program.<sup>114</sup> The program consists of three phases: a two-week pre-program residential phase where applicants are assessed to determine their potential for completing the program; a 20-week residential phase; and a 12-month post-residential phase.<sup>115</sup> During the residential phase, youth — known as cadets — work toward their high school diploma or GED and develop life-coping, job, and leadership skills. They also participate in activities to improve their physical well-being, and they engage in community service. Youth develop a “Post-Residential Action Plan (P-RAP)” that sets forth their goals, as well as the tasks and objectives to meet those goals. The post-residential phase begins when graduates return to their communities, continue in higher education, or enter the military. The goal of this phase is for graduates to build on the gains made during the residential phase and to continue to develop and implement their P-RAP.

A core component of the post-residential phase is mentoring in which a cadet works with a mentor to meet his or her goals set forth in the P-RAP. This component is referred to as the “Friendly Mentor Match” process. Parents and youth are asked to nominate at least one prospective mentor prior to acceptance into the program. They are advised to identify an individual who is respected by the youth and would be a good role model. Cadets tend to know their mentors before enrolling in the program; however, members of an applicant’s immediate family or household and ChalleNGe staff members and their spouses are not eligible to become mentors. By week 13 of the residential phase, and prior to the formal matching of a cadet and a mentor, programs are required to use a National Guard-approved curriculum to train the mentors and the cadets for their roles and responsibilities during the formal mentoring relationship.

Mentors be at least 21 years old, of the same gender as the youth (unless otherwise approved by the director of the program), and within reasonable geographic proximity. Mentors must also undergo a background check that includes two reference checks, an interview, and a criminal background investigation that includes a sex offender registry check. In some programs, the mentors are required to initiate the background investigation and have the results provided to the program prior to their acceptance as a mentor. Mentors and cadets begin weekly contact during the last two months of the residential phase and maintain monthly contacts

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<sup>113</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, National Guard, *Youth ChalleNGe Program 2007 Performance and Accountability Highlights*, 2008.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, National Guard, “Youth ChalleNGe Program, About Us,” at [[http://www.ngycp.org/aboutus\\_dependant\\_T2\\_R29.php](http://www.ngycp.org/aboutus_dependant_T2_R29.php)].

during the post-residential phase. Cadets and mentors are encouraged to participate in community service activities or job placement activities. Although the program prefers that the pair meet in person, contact may be made by telephone calls, emails, or letters, particularly for those cadets who enlist in the military or attend school in a different community.

Mentors report each month during the post-residential phase about the cadets' placement activities, progress toward achieving their goals, and the activities associated with the mentoring relationship. Some programs also require the cadets to report monthly about their progress. At the end of the post-residential phase, an exit interview is conducted between program staff and the mentor, and the match is formally concluded.

## Federal Mentoring Council

The chief executive officer of CNCS and the Commissioner of HHS's Family and Youth Services Bureau chair the Federal Mentoring Council ("Council"), which is comprised of the leadership teams of eight federal agencies with multiple youth-focused programs.<sup>116</sup> The Council was created in 2006 to address the ways these agencies can combine resources and training and technical assistance to federally administered mentoring programs, and to serve as a clearinghouse on federal mentoring.<sup>117</sup> The Council was funded in FY2007 through CNCS, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health and Human Services; CNCS has pledged to continue funding the initiative in FY2008.<sup>118</sup> (The current director of the initiative is funded in FY2008 through the CNCS budget.) A national working group comprised of leading mentoring experts and practitioners (including the chief executive officers of MENTOR, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the Boys and Girls Club, and America's Promise, among others) advises and shares effective mentoring practices with the Council.<sup>119</sup>

Since the Council was convened, it has met quarterly to identify federal programs with mentoring components, and training and technical assistance resources for mentoring organizations, which is to be posted on a CNCS-sponsored website; to develop a common set of criteria and broad description of mentoring that

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<sup>116</sup> These leadership teams also serve on the Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention ("Coordinating Council"), established by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-415) and administered by the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The Council's primary functions are to coordinate federal programs and policies concerning juvenile delinquency prevention, unaccompanied juveniles, and missing and exploited children. The Council is led by the Administrator of OJJDP. The Federal Mentoring Council consults with the Coordinating Council.

<sup>117</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Minutes from the Quarterly Meeting on November 30, 2006, p. 10, available at [<http://www.juvenilecouncil.gov/meetings.html>].

<sup>118</sup> Based on correspondence with the Corporation for National and Community Service, December 2007.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.



can be used across agencies; and to explore how agencies can collaborate in research on youth mentoring.<sup>120</sup> The Council has held a public forum on mentoring and is now developing a mentoring initiative for young people aging out of foster care tentatively known as the Foster Youth Mentoring Campaign.<sup>121</sup> The campaign is working to recruit federal employees to serve as mentors. The initiative is to incorporate the recommendations of the White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth, including strategies to assist foster youth as they transition to adulthood. Finally, the Council is drafting an Executive Order on mentoring, which would promote mentoring across agencies, including engaging federal employees as mentors.

## Federal Issues in Mentoring

Six bills have been introduced in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress that primarily concern mentoring.<sup>122</sup> The Mentoring America's Children Act (H.R. 2611/S. 1812) would make changes to the SDFS Mentoring program. The Foster Care Mentoring Act (S. 379) seeks to provide additional mentoring services for youth in the foster care system.<sup>123</sup> Another pending bill (H.R. 5660), introduced by Representative Kendrick Meek, provides tax incentives for adults who provide or facilitate mentoring for adults ages 18 through 21. Finally, the Mentor-Mentee Teen Pregnancy Reduction Act of 2008 (H.R. 5810) would authorize grants for school-based mentoring programs for at risk teenage girls to prevent and reduce teen pregnancy, and to provide student loan forgiveness for mentors participating in the programs.

Issues that may be relevant to any discussions around the federal role in mentoring include (1) the limitations of research on outcomes for mentored youth; (2) the potential need for additional mentors, particularly for vulnerable populations; (3) grantees' challenges in sustaining funding; and (4) the possible discontinuation of federal mentoring funding.

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<sup>120</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Coordinating Council on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, September 14, 2007, meeting, available at [[http://www.juvenilecouncil.gov/materials/2007\\_09/MeetingSummary%209-14-07-ed.doc](http://www.juvenilecouncil.gov/materials/2007_09/MeetingSummary%209-14-07-ed.doc)].

<sup>121</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, April 2007.

<sup>122</sup> Other legislation (most notably, H.R. 3168 and S. 990/H.R. 1692) would authorize programs and funding for mentoring, among additional activities. Three resolutions (H.Res. 29, H.Res. 908, and S.Res. 61) establish January as national mentoring month or support the goals of national mentoring month.

<sup>123</sup> An amendment to the College Opportunity and Affordability Act (H.R. 4137) would allow community college students to have \$10 forgiven from their student loans for every hour they dedicate to mentoring an at-risk child. Another bill, the Families Beyond Bars Act of 2008 (H.R. 5654), would authorize a grant program through the Department of Justice for youth-serving organizations that carry out visitation programs for incarcerated parents and their children.

## Limited Research on Mentored Youth Outcomes

A few positive evaluations of mentoring programs may have provided some justification for federal support of these programs.<sup>124</sup> The 1995 landmark study of community-based mentoring programs at select Big Brothers and Big Sisters chapters demonstrated that mentored youth were less likely than their non-mentored counterparts to use drugs and alcohol, hit someone, and skip school, among other outcomes. A recent evaluation of the Big Brothers Big Sisters school-based mentoring program found similar promising results for mentored youth. Nonetheless, findings from these and other studies are limited and/or show that mentoring is limited in improving all youth outcomes. The long-term influence of mentoring for youth is unknown. The 1995 study tracked youth for 18 months, which is among the longest periods of time mentored youth have been studied. No study appears to address issues around how well youth transition to adulthood, such as whether they attend college or secure employment. Further, studies of mentoring programs have shown that some gains made by mentored youth, compared to their non-mentored counterparts, are short-lived and that mentored youth do not improve in certain areas.

A related issue is the use of mentoring techniques, such as group mentoring, that have not been rigorously evaluated. The Mentoring Initiative for System-Involved Youth grant solicitation encouraged applicants to “consider a variety of mentoring approaches, such as one-to-one, group, student/peer, team education, and sports mentoring; professional development coaching; and other approaches best suited to meet the needs of the target population.”<sup>125</sup> Two of the MISIY grantees appear to use group mentoring or team-based mentoring as a primary technique, and one of the programs uses therapeutic mentoring provided by paid case managers.<sup>126</sup> The 2004 GAO report on the Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring program found that 3% of grantees used group mentoring exclusively and that 20% used group mentoring in combination with one-to-one mentoring.<sup>127</sup> Compared to mentoring pairs, these other mentoring techniques have not been thoroughly evaluated.

Finally, researchers have noted that evaluations of certain mentoring techniques are often not in place prior to implementation. In response to GAO’s finding that the SDFS Mentoring program lacked an evaluative component, the Department of

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<sup>124</sup> Gary Walker, “Youth Mentoring and Public Policy,” in David L. Dubois and Michael J. Karcher, eds., *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2005), pp. 510-512. (Hereafter referenced as Walker, “Youth Mentoring and Public Policy.”)

<sup>125</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, “Application for Funding: Mentoring Initiative for System Involved Youth.”

<sup>126</sup> Mentoring programs for juvenile justice-involved youth that employ paraprofessionals may be the most appropriate and cost effective. See Elaine A. Blechman and Jedediah M. Bopp, “Special Populations: Youth Offenders,” in David L. Dubois and Michael J. Karcher, eds., *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2005).

<sup>127</sup> GAO, *Student Mentoring Programs*, p. 15.

Education has contracted with a research organization to evaluate outcomes of students in programs funded by the program.

## Gap in Mentoring Services

A 2002 poll by MENTOR, a mentor advocacy group, estimated that 15 million at-risk<sup>128</sup> youth need a mentor.<sup>129</sup> Recruiting and retaining volunteers appears to be a major challenge for mentoring organizations, including those funded through federal mentoring programs.<sup>130</sup> In its 2004 report of the Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring program, GAO found that new grantees had more difficulty than established grantees in recruiting and supporting mentors.<sup>131</sup> Similarly, HHS reports that some mentors in organizations that receive Mentoring Children of Prisoners' funding have dropped out before being matched with a youth because of the time and energy commitment mentoring entails.<sup>132</sup> While research on mentor recruitment and retention is nascent, it reveals that mentoring organizations tend to attract individuals who are middle aged, educated, and have children in their household, and that word of mouth is among the top strategies for recruiting new volunteers.<sup>133</sup> Further, individuals are likely to remain in formal mentoring programs if they feel adequately prepared to serve as mentors. According to the research on mentoring, retention may be high when programs continually monitor mentoring relationships for effectiveness and respond to the needs of mentors.

To address the perceived mentoring gap, the Corporation for National and Community Service has partnered with MENTOR to match three million youth with mentors by 2010. The campaign has also secured commitments from corporate and foundation partners for funding to support research on mentoring programs and engage their networks of employees in mentoring. The Federal Mentoring Council is also undertaking efforts to recruit federal employees to serve as mentors.

A related issue is that the mentoring gap may be wider for special populations. Mentoring programs primarily serve youth ages 9 through 11 who come to the attention of a parent or teacher, rather than the most at-risk populations, which include, but are not limited to, older youth, runaway and homeless youth, and youth

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<sup>128</sup> This definition encompasses youth with poor academic performance or substance abuse issues, or are sexually active, and may overstate the number of youth who need mentoring.

<sup>129</sup> MENTOR, "The National Agenda For Action: How to Close America's Mentoring Gap," 2006, available at [[http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring\\_399.pdf](http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_399.pdf)], p. 10.

<sup>130</sup> Arthur Astukas and Chris Tanti, "Recruiting and Sustaining Volunteer Mentors," in David L. Dubois and Michael J. Karcher, eds., *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*, (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 2005), p. 245. (Hereafter referenced as Astukas and Tanti, "Recruiting and Sustaining Volunteer Mentors.")

<sup>131</sup> GAO, *Student Mentoring Programs*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>132</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Report to Congress: The Mentoring Children of Prisoners Program*, September 2007.

<sup>133</sup> Astukas and Tanti, "Recruiting and Sustaining Volunteer Mentors," pp. 235-249.

in foster care or the juvenile justice system.<sup>134</sup> According to a 2005 study by MENTOR, less than one-fifth of mentors reported mentoring a youth involved in the juvenile justice or foster care systems or with a parent in prison.<sup>135</sup> However, most of these mentors said they would be willing to work with vulnerable youth populations. Recent efforts to recruit volunteers for vulnerable populations are also underway, as evidenced by two of the three current federal mentoring programs that target youth involved in the foster care or juvenile justice systems and children with imprisoned parents. The three recent DOJ mentoring grants target vulnerable youth, including Latino high school students that attend schools in areas with a significant gang presence. In addition, provisions in the proposed Foster Care Mentoring Act (S. 379) are intended to help recruit mentors for children in the foster care system. These provisions would forgive the federal student loan debt of mentors who serve 200 hours each year, at \$2,000 each year, not to exceed \$20,000 total. Nonetheless, potential mentors may still be discouraged from working with youth facing serious personal difficulties. In addition, creating financial incentives for mentors may raise the concern that this type of mentoring would not be strictly voluntary.

## Sustaining Resources

Some organizations that receive federal mentoring grants report challenges with securing diverse sources of funding and expanding their programs because of limited funding.<sup>136</sup> While the Safe and Drug Free Schools Mentoring program does not require grantees to provide a match, they are ineligible to apply for subsequent grants, even in the last year of the grant cycle. (They may, however, apply for other Department of Education grants for which they are eligible and/or apply for subsequent SDFS Mentoring grants after the grant cycle ends.) For example, grantees awarded funds in FY2007 are only eligible to apply for a subsequent grant after FY2009, the final year of their grant. This may lead to gaps in funding for organizations that rely on federal dollars to sustain their services. According to the Department of Education, grantees must wait to reapply for continuation grants because the agency would like to provide funding opportunities for new grantees and to encourage current grantees to secure other sources of funding.<sup>137</sup>

To improve the prospects that organizations continue providing mentoring services beyond the life of their grants, the three federal mentoring programs provide training and technical assistance to help grantees in becoming financially

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<sup>134</sup> Walker, "Youth Mentoring and Public Policy," pp. 509-510.

<sup>135</sup> MENTOR, "Mentoring in America 2005: A Snapshot of the Current State of Mentoring," 2006, available at [[http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring\\_404.pdf](http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_404.pdf)].

<sup>136</sup> Erika Fitzpatrick, "Surviving Without Uncle Sam's Money: Mentoring Grant Cutoff Sparks Talk About How to Diversify Funding," *Youth Today*, June 2007, p. 10.

<sup>137</sup> Based on correspondence with U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, December 2007. Also, see U.S. Department of Education, "Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools: Notice of Final Eligibility Requirement," 71 *Federal Register* 70369, December 4, 2006.

sustainable.<sup>138</sup> For example, the Education Development Center is working with MISIY grantees to develop strategies and tools to secure additional financial resources. EDC has conducted pre-assessments of the grantees to gauge their need for this type of assistance.<sup>139</sup> Further, pending legislation to reauthorize the Safe and Drug Free Schools program would enable grantees to reapply for additional funding after their grant terminates. The Mentoring America's Children Act (H.R. 2611/S. 1812) would enable grantees to seek additional funding. Specifically, the act provides that in awarding grants, the Secretary must consider entities who have received prior grant funding only if they meet specific criteria: (i) performance during the initial grant cycle was satisfactory, in terms of program design and number of children served (*the bills do not specify which entity or persons are to determine if the performance was satisfactory*); (ii) the subsequent grant is to support expanded services to a new geographic area or target population; and (iii) the eligible entity demonstrates that it is able to provide a 50% match to federal funds for all three years of the new grant. The act would also require first-time grantees to provide a match of at least 10% in the first year, at least 25% in the second year, and 50% in the third year.

## Possible Discontinuation of Select Federal Mentoring Funding

Funding appears uncertain for two of the three primary federal mentoring programs. The Administration has proposed eliminating the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program, claiming that the program has met its objectives.<sup>140</sup> Funding for the program will continue in FY2008, pursuant to the FY2008 appropriations law (P.L. 110-161) signed by the President on December 26, 2007. MISIY is funded as a pilot project that may not continue beyond FY2009, the last year of grant funding. The Administration plans to await results from the evaluation prior to determining the feasibility of expanding the program.<sup>141</sup> However, a pending omnibus crime control bill (S. 2237) proposes to expand the MISIY program to additional sites and authorize an annual appropriation of \$4.8 million for FY2008 to FY2012.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau, November 2007; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools, September 2007; and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, September 2007.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> U.S. Department of Education, *FY 2009 Justifications of Appropriation Estimates*, p. F-16.

<sup>141</sup> Based on correspondence with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, September 2007.

<sup>142</sup> The bill proposes to amend Section 261(a) of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5665(a)) by adding, "The Administrator shall expand the number of sites receiving [MISIY] grants from 4 to 12." *This proposed change appears to be a drafting error.* Section 261(a) does not currently authorize funding *specifically* for MISIY or any other pilot project; rather, it authorizes funds *generally* for demonstration grants and projects.

## Appendix

**Table A-1. Mentoring Children of Prisoners: Demographics and Characteristics of Children, Mentors, and Relationships (FY2006)**

Demographic or Characteristic	
Total Number of Matches	27,525
Average age of youth	11 years
Percent of children who were male	44%
Percent of mentors who were male	38%
Total number of matches that began in FY2006 and were across gender (e.g., female mentor and male youth)	2,461 (8.9%)
Total number of matches that began in FY2006 and were across race or ethnicity (e.g., Asian mentor and white youth)	6,380 (23.2%)
Average number of days youth was waiting for a mentor	53 days
Share of children with fewer than 12 hours of regular mentor/youth contact during the past quarter (i.e., four-month period)	24%
Share of children with 12 to 24 hours of regular mentor/youth contact during the past quarter	22%
Share of children with more than 24 hours of regular mentor/youth contact during the past quarter	32%
Share of children for whom the frequency or length of their contacts with mentors is unknown	22%
Average number of initial pre-match training/orientation(s) per mentor	5
Average number of hours post-match training per mentor	4.5
Average number of staff follow-up contacts in person or by phone per mentor per fiscal quarter addressing the following: key mentor skills, commitment, or mentor's response to child crisis or other critical issue in child's life	15.7

**Source:** Congressional Research Service presentation of data provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, June and December 2007.