

CHAPTER ONE

SUPPORTING RESEARCH AND NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR MENTORING

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THE RESEARCH TO SUPPORT THE MODEL

*Behind every successful person there is one elementary truth; somewhere, somehow, someone cared about their growth and development. This person was their mentor.*¹

A mentor is an experienced and trusted friend who provides one-on-one support, guidance and encouragement in the development of a mentee.

More formally, Freedman cites Bronfenbrenner at Cornell University who has defined mentoring as

*...a one-to-one relationship between a pair of unrelated individuals, usually of different ages, and is developmental in nature. 'A mentor is an older, more experienced person who seeks to further the development of character and competence in a younger person. Guidance may take many forms, including demonstration, instruction, challenge, and encouragement 'on a more or less regular basis over an extended period of time. Furthermore, this relationship is distinguished by 'a special bond of mutual commitment' and 'an emotional character of respect, loyalty and identification.'*²

In the United States, mentoring is undertaken on a very large scale. It displays many characteristics of a social movement, operating primarily in the private and community sectors, and sometimes with the support of the public sector. Government however can play an important enabling role in sponsoring voluntary mentoring programs.

While there are many individual and relatively isolated mentoring programs in Australia, they are often seen as a marginal, feel-good middle class philanthropy and not a strategic intervention to support youth at risk. A quick glance at the growing body of literature would convince otherwise.

Research identifies the strengths, the weaknesses, the risks and the untapped potential of a mentoring program that attends to:

- the front end (marketing, recruitment and mentor training);
- the implementation phase (program delivery, support and infrastructure); and
- the follow-up (evaluation).

When all three phases are done well, the practical outcomes for young people (and, as a side benefit, for mentors) can be substantial.

Mentoring is not THE solution to youth as risk or to social alienation. But it is one approach that research and experience suggests is worth pursuing.

While volunteer mentors won't single-handedly meet all the interpersonal needs of American youth, mentoring highlights the importance of adult relationships for youth while challenging us to move beyond volunteerism and to implement structural changes capable of increasing opportunities for adult contact in the schools, community organisations, and social programs where young people spend so much

² Dr Beverly Kaye, *Up is Not the Only Way*, 1993

³ In Marc Freedman, *The Kindness of Strangers: Adult Mentors, Urban Youth and the New Volunteerism*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1993, p.31

*of their time. As such, volunteer mentoring amounts to the citizen-participation wing of a broad and promising movement to personalise education and social policy.*³

MENTORING STUDIES

One of the most compelling arguments for the importance of relationships comes from longitudinal research conducted by Emmy Werner, a psychologist at the University of California-Davis. Werner directed a study of 700 children born on the Hawaiian Island of Kauai. All of these children were born in extreme poverty to parents who laboured at local sugar and pineapple plantations. In most cases, one parent was either alcoholic or mentally ill; over the years many of the youth showed signs of mental disturbance.

Using data from the first 30 years of the lives of these children, Werner and her colleague, Ruth S Smith, found that the youth who succeeded showed an ability to locate an adult in addition to their parents who could help them cope with the world:

*Without exception, all the children who thrived had at least one person that provided them consistent emotional support - a grandmother, an older sister, a teacher or neighbour. These are the kids who are good at recruiting a substitute parent who is a good model for them.*⁴

*While Werner's study emphasises the resilience of the youth – including an innate ability to find helping elders – it may be that making those elders easier to find, or actually providing them, might have some impact on at-risk youth who are not yet resilient.*⁵

BIG BROTHER/BIG SISTER AMERICA RESEARCH

Since 1985 there has been widespread enthusiasm for mentoring in the United States of America. Mentoring was seen as a way to address the needs and problems of youth – but there was no firm evidence that mentoring programs produced results. Public/Private Ventures, a development and research organization based in Philadelphia, USA, now provides scientifically reliable evidence that mentoring programs can positively affect young people. This evidence derives from research conducted at local affiliates of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BB/BSA), the oldest, best known and arguably, the most sophisticated mentoring program in the United States. Big Brothers /Big Sisters programs currently maintain 75,000 active matches between a volunteer adult and a young person. Carefully established procedures and criteria govern both the programs and matches.

⁴ Marc Freedman, *The Kindness of Strangers: Adult Mentors, Urban Youth and the New Volunteerism*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1993, pp.xii-xiii

⁴ Werner 1982; Goleman 1987

⁵ Marc Freedman, *Partners in Growth: Elder Mentors and At-Risk Youth*, Public/Private Ventures 1988. p13

P/PV conducted the study of 959 youth, half of who participated in the program in BB/BS agencies in Philadelphia, PA; Phoenix, AZ; Wichita, KS; Minneapolis, MN; Rochester, NY; Columbus, OH; Houston and San Antonio, TX.

The 959 youth who applied to the program during the study period were randomly assigned to one of two groups: the treatment group was eligible to receive a Big Brother/Big Sister right away; the control group was required to wait 18 months before being assigned to a Volunteer, often the usual waiting period for a BB/ BS Agency.

At the start of the study, the two groups were statistically identical on all characteristics.

Most of the youth in the research sample were between the ages 10 and 14; nearly 60 percent were members of a minority group; more than 60 percent were boys; and were near poor to poor. Many live in families with histories of substance abuse and/or domestic violence.

P/PV found that Little Brothers and Sisters who met with their "Bigs" regularly for about a year were:

- 46% less likely than their peers to use illegal drugs and 27 % less likely to start drinking;
- 52% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school and 37 % less likely to skip a class;
- more trusting of their parents or guardians, less likely to lie to them, and felt more supported and less criticised by their peers and friends.

The study also concluded that the success of Big Brother\Big Sister Programs could be attributed to the thorough screening of volunteers, the careful matching of Bigs and Littles and the extensive supervision by professional social workers.

NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR AUSTRALIAN MENTORING PROGRAMS

In June 2000, Mentoring Australia, at the time the national association for mentors and mentoring programs, convened a representative group of mentoring practitioners, all of who had significant experience in the development and management of mentoring programs. The workshop was supported by the Dusseldorp Skills Forum, and endorsed by the Career Education Association of Victoria and VETNETwork.

The aim of the meeting was to develop a set of principles which would guide the development, management and funding of quality mentoring programs in Australia.

The following document outlines benchmarks for effective practice in mentoring programs. The principle aim of these 'benchmarks' is to enhance the rigour of mentoring programs by setting standards for responsible mentoring. The benchmarks are also recommended as a platform for government and other bodies to determine eligibility for funding support to mentoring programs. It outlines a core set of principles that is recommended for use in establishing and managing effective mentoring programs and is designed for use by mentors, managers, government and other funding agencies.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

'Mentoring' is defined as "a mutually beneficial relationship that involves a more experienced person helping a less experienced person to identify and achieve their goals".

Effective mentoring:

- Is a relationship that focuses on the needs of the mentee
- Fosters caring and supportive relationships
- Encourages all mentees to develop to their fullest potential
- Is a strategy to develop active community partnerships

While, in the main, mentoring occurs on a one-to-one basis, elements of mentoring may be present in group situations where, under certain circumstances, a one-to-one relationship emerges as an important vehicle for growth and development for mentees. The one-to-one relationship is the key to effectiveness in mentoring.

While most mentors undertake the mentoring role as volunteers, there are circumstances where paid staff take on mentoring responsibilities. Whether paid or volunteer staff become mentors, the role extends beyond a 'mere' employment responsibility.

GOOD MENTORING PROGRAMS

A responsible mentoring program requires:

- A well-defined mission statement and established operating principles
- Regular, consistent contact between mentor and mentee
- Establishment under the auspices of a recognised organisation
- Paid or volunteer staff with appropriate skills
- Written role statements for all staff and volunteer positions
- Adherence to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) requirements
- Inclusiveness in relation to ethnicity, culture, socio-economic background, gender and sexuality as appropriate to the program
- Adequate ongoing financial and in-kind resources
- Written administrative and program procedures
- Documented criteria which define eligibility for participation in the program
- Program evaluation and ongoing assessment
- A program plan that has input from stakeholders
- Risk management and confidentiality policies
- Use of generally accepted accounting practices
- A rationale for staffing arrangements based on the needs of all parties

A QUALITY CHECKLIST FOR MENTORING PROGRAMS

The following elements are recommended as a checklist for evaluating the effectiveness of mentoring programs.

1. A STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

A statement of purpose developed in consultation with the stakeholders and participants which includes:

- A Mission statement for the program
- A clear statement of the values and philosophies underpinning the program

2. A PROGRAM PLAN

A realistic, attainable, and easy-to-understand operational plan that includes:

- A description of activities and profile of all participants and stakeholders
- An assessment of need
- Goals, objectives, and timelines, for all aspects of the program
- Funding and resource development requirements

3. POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Written policies and procedures that address:

- Rights and responsibilities
- Confidentiality and privacy
- Legal issues
- Insurances (including volunteer insurance)
- Duty of care
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Protection against harassment
- Grievance issues
- Ethical issues
- 'Get out' clauses
- Arrangements for future contacts between mentor and mentee

4. A RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

A recruitment plan for both mentors and mentees that includes:

- Strategies that outline realistic expectations and benefits for those involved in the program
- Ongoing marketing and public relations
- Targeting mentees on the basis of their needs

Eligibility screening for mentors and mentees that includes:

- A formal application process for mentors and mentees
- An initial assessment of the mentee's needs & suitability
- Eligibility criteria for mentors and mentees that relate to the program statement of purpose and needs of the target population
- A personal interview for mentors
- Appropriate screening for mentors, which may include character references, child abuse registry check, and criminal record checks
- Assessment of each mentor's willingness to participate in training and/or orientation

5. MENTOR PREPARATION

An orientation program for mentors and/or mentees that includes:

- An overview of the Program
- Clarification of roles and responsibilities
- Description of eligibility, screening process, and suitability requirements
- Clarification of the level of commitment expected (time, energy, flexibility)
- Confidentiality and liability information
- Do's and don'ts of relationship management
- Boundaries and limitations for the mentor's contact with the mentee
- Identification of the benefits and recognition available to mentors from involvement in the program
- A summary of program policies, procedures and guidelines

A training program for mentors and/or mentees that includes:

- Skilled and experienced staff trainers
- Cultural and social sensitivity, and acceptance of individual differences
- Guidelines on how to get the most out of the mentoring relationship
- Crisis management and problem solving
- Communication skills
- Referral points for other support services
- Ongoing skills development as appropriate

6. A MENTOR/MENTEE MATCHING AND MONITORING STRATEGY

A matching strategy that includes:

- A link with the program's statement of purpose and the program's eligibility criteria
- A rationale for selection
- A statement of understanding detailing the conditions of the mentoring relationship

Value-Added components may include:

- Pre-match social activities between mentors and mentees
- Team building activities to reduce the anxiety of the first meeting

A monitoring process that includes:

- Consistent, scheduled meetings with staff, mentors, and mentees
- A framework for ongoing feedback
- Written records
- Input from community partners and significant others
- A process for managing grievances, recognition, re-matching, interpersonal problem solving, and premature termination of the mentoring relationship

7. MENTOR/MENTEE SUPPORT

Support to Mentors which includes:

- Regular debriefing
- Troubleshooting
- Recognition of the mentor's contribution - especially for volunteers

Value-Added components may include:

- Opportunities for involvement in other voluntary services
- A formal launch event
- Ongoing peer support groups for volunteers, mentees, and others
- Ongoing training and development
- Opportunities for discussion of relevant issues, and information dissemination as appropriate
- Networking with appropriate organisations
- Social gatherings of different groups as needed
- An Annual recognition and appreciation event
- Newsletters or other mailings to mentees, mentors, supporters, and sponsors

8. A CLOSURE POLICY

Formal closure steps that include:

- Clear procedures for exiting the program
- Clearly stated policy for future contacts

Value Added components may include:

- Assistance for mentees in defining the next steps to continue achieve personal goals

9. EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

An evaluation process based on:

- Ongoing consultation with stakeholders
- Continuous improvement linked to the program's strategic plan
- Program criteria and statement of purpose

CHAPTER TWO

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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THE SCHOOL-BASED MENTORING MODEL

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE

School-based mentoring is a practical response to the situation of early school leavers. It is a mentoring program designed to support young people in Years 9 and/or 10 to investigate their post-school options.

For many young people the decision to leave school early is made without careful planning. Many students leave school at the end of Year 10 believing, or hoping, they will get an apprenticeship (many students are offered trial apprenticeships over Dec, Jan, Feb) a traineeship, a good job or a place in a particular course. The reality is most of these early school leavers will be unsuccessful in their attempt to seek a positive pathway into employment. Their attempts may fail for various reasons – the 'trial apprenticeship' may never eventuate into a permanent one or the course might be filled by older students. These students then find themselves in a position where they may consider returning to school. If they do choose to return to school they face the disadvantage of having limited subject selection as well as being 4 - 6 weeks behind their peers because of missed classes. If they choose to NOT return to school they invariably follow a pathway of marginalised activities i.e. part-time/casual work, unemployment etc. Many will take casual employment until something better comes along - unfortunately many remain in casual work for extended periods of time.¹

The program seeks mentors from the community to be trained through TAFE and then work in a one-on-one relationship with a potential early school leaver. The program is structured to enable the mentors to spend much of their time with the students out in the community – talking to employers, employees, visiting TAFE Colleges etc. The aim is for the student to get a 'real' picture of what his/her options will be if he/she does leave school. The program provides an opportunity for students to plan their exit from school into a positive destination and discover the many ways that his/her goals can be realised.

As a result of participation in the program, many students make the decision not to leave school. For these students, that decision means a more informed subject choice and a purpose for their extra two years of education. For those who do leave school, their exit is planned to ensure a positive destination and many students continue with the support of their mentor for at least 6 months.

¹ How Young People Are Faring - Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2006

HOW THE MODEL WORKS

There are a number of phases to the School-Based Mentoring Program that are integral to the successful outcomes for those young people who participate.

Program Set Up

Co-ordinator selected. Schools selected and relationships established with key personnel. Links with TAFE established, mentoring course approved and teacher selected. Tracking systems and administration procedures in place.

Mentor Recruitment & Training

Volunteer Mentors (mature-aged unemployed people, retirees and possible secondees from business and education) complete the 27-hour Mentor Training Course (over a three month period) offered through TAFE Outreach.

Mentee Recruitment, Introductions and Matchings

Students are selected for the program based on their indication to leave school before completing their high school education. Participation is entirely voluntary and student numbers are only limited by the numbers of mentors available. Information sessions are held for students, parents and the mentors. An activity session is held with potential mentors and students to assess the dynamics and possible matching of mentors with young people.

Pathways Planning and Career Investigation Program

Students and mentors participate in the program (weekly, at school) and work together on the student's career investigation. Mentor debriefing sessions are held at the completion of each session of the program. This vital phase concludes with a "celebration of learning" event where students present their program findings to peers, friends and family.

Ongoing Mentor Support (6-12 months)

Each young person is offered personal mentor support for a period up to 12 months. The mentor will keep a record of the career development of the young person and look out for opportunities and contacts. There may be a need for mentors to offer a second-chance experience if the young person remains confused about their transition. This support is monitored and encouraged by the program co-ordinator.

What is School-Based Mentoring?



- A mentoring program that supports those young people intending to leave school before completing their education
- Usually yr 10s....but works well with Year 11s and some Year 9s
- Students are matched with a volunteer mentor from the community and together they work through a planning process to investigate their post-school options

Marginalisation of Young People



Almost 15% of Australian teenagers
(approx 200 000 young people) ,
are neither in full time work or full time education.

School Retention Rates



- National Year 12 retention rates are at 76% in 2005
- Students who don't complete Year 12 are three times more likely to become engaged in marginal activities for extended periods

Role Modelling



According to the 2001 census, 18% of children under 15 years (approx 700,000 children) lived in a household with no employed parent.....the 2006 Social Trends Survey confirms this figure is rising!

Typical Scenarios



Most young people don't leave school with the intention of being 'unemployed' or only working in a casual job.

Students leave school before completing Year 12 to do one of the following:

- TAFE
- Apprenticeship (often starts with a trial)
- Full-time employment

The Reality

- TAFE places are taken up by older students
- Trial apprenticeship doesn't turn into a real apprenticeship..... 'can't afford to keep you on'
- No full-time jobs



Young person takes a casual job until something better comes along

Student Selection

All Year 9/10 students are surveyed to determine whether they intend to leave school at the end of Year 10

All students who are considering leaving school are offered the opportunity to participate in the mentoring program (depending on mentor numbers).

Participation must be voluntary.



Timing

- During sport time or class time every week - approx 1.5 hours each session for the first three months
- Continuing the partnership for 12 months after completion of the program.....often longer



The Mentors



BUSINESS



RETIREEES



COMMUNITY
MEMBERS

Mentor Characteristics?

- clear criminal records check
- good listeners
- like young people
- have some spare time
- make a regular commitment for 12 months
- willing to participate in TAFE training



Are the Mentors Trained?

Training helps the mentors:

- Understand the issues involved in mentoring
- Become more confident
- Be better prepared
- Demonstrate commitment
- Have the support of fellow mentors

*Mentoring in the Community 9803A



The Course

- Interpersonal Skills
- Effective Listening
- Conflict Resolution
- Mentor roles, rights & responsibilities
- Problems faced by today's youth
- Managing difficult behaviour
- Child Protection Legislation
- Confidentiality
- Employment & Training Opportunities
- Topics which meet the needs of the group



Screening



- Mandatory Police/Criminal Records checks
- Extended training -
including Child Protection Legislation
- Interview after training:
 - alternatives
 - TAFE teacher plays a critical role
 - “gut” feeling
- Supervised Mentoring ‘Practicum’

Matching

- Based on personality and interests
- Mentors and Mentees have an opportunity to request a match after initial group activities
- Barbeques /social events provide an opportunity for the mentors and students to “bond”



What do the mentors and students do?

- Getting-to-Know you activities
- Goal Setting
- Planning
- Talking to young employees
- Planning presentations
- Excursions to business
- Excursions to TAFE, Uni, other providers



The Celebration

- Held at the end of the planning and investigation phase
- Students share their learning with peers, mentors, teachers, family and friends
- An opportunity to say 'thank you'



The Celebration

Presentations
can take any
form - video,
talk, display,
diary etc



The School's Role/Responsibility

A decorative graphic consisting of a horizontal bar with a color gradient from dark blue to yellow, and a large, stylized oval shape in shades of brown and orange that overlaps the bar and extends to the right.

- Teacher time each week (\$)
- Liaison with co-ordinator
- Student selection and support
- Admin (attendance, permission notes etc)
- Debrief with mentors
- Lunch for mentors (\$)
- Excursion costs for mentors and students (\$)
- Celebration (\$)

Mentor Support



- A co-ordinator who is readily available
- Careful screening and matching
- Photo ID cards
- School recognition & support
- De-brief session each week after students leave - school provides lunch
- Financial support for excursions etc
- Meetings with other mentors

Phases of PIY



Pre-Program Preparation

- Negotiate mentor training
- Market to schools, mentors, students

RECRUITMENT and SELECTION

- Mentor Recruitment, Screening and Training
- Student Selection

MATCHING

- Orientation
- Parent Meetings
- Introductions and Matchings

PROJECT

- Career Investigation Project - Mentor/Mentee Activities
- Mentor Debriefing
- Celebration

CONTINUED SUPPORT

- Negotiation of relationship
- Mentor and mentee continue to meet - more activities may be planned

POST SCHOOL SUPPORT????

- Re-negotiation of relationship
- Mentor and mentee continue to meet after the student has left school

What Have We Learnt?



- Partnership is vital - you can't do this alone!
- Training is best over an extended period
- Only one-to-one matching
- Keep parents informed
- Student participation must be voluntary
- Use the benchmarks from Youth Mentoring Network
 - *www.youthmentoring.org.au*

Outcomes (March 2005)

Students (123):

Remaining in or returning to education (inc CGVE)
65.0%

Other positive destinations 28.4%

Marginal activities 5.0%

Currently unknown / Lost contact 1.6%

100%



Costs

For 15-25 students over a year:

- Co-ordination Time
- Travel
- Mentor Training
- Criminal Records Checks
- Mentor support
- Celebration

Interested?



- Go to www.dsf.org.au/plan-it Need to change???
- Go to 'run your own'
- Register - no cost

CHAPTER FOUR

GOVERNANCE, THE CO-ORDINATOR, START-UP AND RISK MANAGEMENT

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GOVERNANCE

It is recommended that when the program is established that a Reference/Advisory Group is formed to ensure the program is guided, resourced, managed and accountable to all of its stakeholders. Recruitment of members should be targeted to ensure there is a good balance of representatives of stakeholders, including young people and mentors, as well as specialist skills/expertise such as mentoring, financial management, marketing and promotion.

The Reference/Advisory Group should take responsibility for:

- strategic planning
- financial management
- selection and performance management of the Program Co-ordinator
- fund raising
- risk management
- compliance
- marketing and promotion
- program monitoring and review

They can also assist with recruitment of mentors.

This group needs to be large enough to get the work done and take account of important stakeholders, but not so large that communication becomes a constraint.

The Reference/Advisory Group needs to decide on how often it will meet, where it will meet, for how long, and its meeting management processes.

THE CO-ORDINATOR

An important element of the model is the dedicated co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is responsible for the day-to-day management of the program including:

- mentor and student recruitment
- mentor screening
- liaison with schools
- liaison with TAFE and implementation of the TAFE training
- matching of students and mentors
- management of information
- support and management of Mentors
- ongoing development of Mentors
- regular reporting to the Reference/Advisory Group
- budgeting and financial reporting

Information regarding strategies for managing mentors and mentees are in Chapters 5 and 6.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

It is important that the co-ordinator keeps up-to-date and accurate records of each match. The co-ordinator should be able to easily provide accurate data on the program including information on:

- the number of mentors – male and female
- the number of students – breaking up this information into boys, girls, NESB students, Indigenous students
- the schools involved
- Destination data of all past students SIX MONTHS AFTER COMPLETING THE PROGRAM. It is important that this information is consistent i.e. all students are surveyed at the same time interval after completing the program

INTRODUCTION TO RISK MANAGEMENT

DISCLAIMER:

The following information is to be used as a guide only and should not be used in place of professional advice regarding insurance and risk management.

The Australian Council for Volunteering recognises the importance of good insurance coverage for those people working as volunteers and the organisations and groups that employ them. Mentors in the School-Based Mentoring model are classified as volunteers. Whilst schools may have insurance that protects the mentors when participating in approved activities, once the student has left school that coverage no longer applies.

Agencies and, where applicable, volunteers are urged to consult their insurance broker or advisor to discuss their specific concerns and to determine a course of action that would best meet their needs.

Agencies and volunteers in all States and Territories should investigate local statutory requirements.

WHY VOLUNTEER INSURANCE?

Mentors give their services free of charge, yet in doing so expose themselves to a variety of risks. All volunteers need to be confident that in carrying out their voluntary work they are insured against the risk of personal injury and liability.

Equally, an agency using volunteers may find itself legally responsible for injuries and damage. It is in the agency's best interest to ensure that it has the appropriate and adequate insurance for its volunteer workers.

Volunteer insurance protects an agency from financial cost in the event of liability being established for a volunteer's action or injury. It also gives recognition to the importance of volunteer work and it protects volunteers from unnecessary financial hardship.

DUTY OF CARE

Both the organisation and the volunteer have the responsibility to exercise "duty of care". That is, they must take reasonable care to avoid actions or oversights that might reasonably be foreseen to injure others. Legal liability arises where, in the eyes of the court, an organisation or individual has been negligent. In short, agencies are liable for the actions of their volunteers, as for any paid staff member.

The aim should always be to minimise the risk of injury, and the need for volunteers or a member of the public to take legal action, through **good risk management practices and appropriate insurance cover**. An agency can protect itself against a wide variety of risks by having adequate insurance.

RISK MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Risk management is where a reasonable person would foresee the likelihood of injury resulting from an activity or event and therefore not expose their workers or volunteers to that possible injury. The risk management procedure is therefore one that actually prevents the likelihood of injury or shows that you have reasonably tried to prevent the likelihood of injury.

The following measures will help to minimise risks and help protect the agency and its volunteers. Remember the law does not distinguish between paid workers and volunteers in matters of liability!

Ensure Premises and Equipment are Safe.

- Inspect premises and equipment regularly for defects and take steps to protect people from injury.
- Ensure all equipment and machinery is in good condition and safe working order.

Good Recruitment and Training of Volunteer Staff

- Ensure selection procedures succeed in recruiting volunteers suitable for the task. Provide sufficient training to enable volunteers to carry out their tasks.
- Define the nature and the limit of the volunteer's work.
- Adequately supervise volunteers, especially those new to the position.

Provide a Means of Good Communication

- Ensure volunteers have an effective means of communication with those in a supervisory role. This means volunteers have a means of contacting a supervisor whenever they are volunteering.

Record Volunteers' Working Hours

- A signing on and off book and a personal logbook that is checked monthly by a supervisor is an effective means of knowing when your volunteers are active.

Keep Your Insurance Company Informed

- If in doubt about an event or activity ask your insurance broker for advice. Community organisations often undertake activities that are unusual from a business perspective but are neither dangerous nor foolish.
- In most cases the activity will fall within the current insurance policy. However it may be possible to have an extension noted to an existing policy for a small extra charge rather than taking out a new policy.
- Remember, if it is not stated in your policy, presume it is not covered, or check to see if it is an excluded event.
- If your organisation changes activities or takes on special events, your insurance broker should be notified prior to the event.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Any payment to volunteers in the form of a token hourly rate or treating them as if they were sub-contractors effectively means they are not volunteers. Such action leaves the organisation open to a great many risks and legal liabilities. Any payments to cover expenses incurred, should clearly state the nature of the expenditure and should identify it as a reimbursement rather than a payment.

TYPES OF INSURANCE

PUBLIC LIABILITY

This is protection against your legal liability for the organisation's (including employees and volunteers) legal liability for third party personal injury or property damage resulting from the actions of the organisation. It is essential protection for all agencies.

\$10m public liability is commonly available (most funding agreements require public liability cover of up to \$10m) however more and more organizations are requiring \$50m.

Circumstances or activities that should be covered by Public Liability Insurance include:

- all activities, functions services carried out by the organisation (including the volunteers) for example; social functions, fundraisers, fetes, door knocks, services to clients, information and referral services.
- products manufactured and sold, for example, crafts, food, drink.

When reading a Public Liability policy, ensure that volunteers are specifically noted on the policy or covered as members of the organisation.

In some states Incorporated organisations are required by law to carry a minimum amount of public liability cover and this amount may be increased to suit an organisation's needs. Ensure cover includes on and off the premises. Also ensure that the cover insures against negligent advice being given by members of the organisation, including your volunteers, not just against defective goods (see Professional Indemnity).

The better public liability insurances:

- Offer \$5m cover or more;
- Provide cover for goods sold;
- Cover actions by both paid and volunteer staff;
- Insure against negligent advice given by volunteers and can extend to provide professional risk for the organisation's paid workers (see Professional Indemnity);
- Extend the policies to cover special risks when required, eg concerts, one off special events.

PERSONAL ACCIDENT

Personal accident insurance is essential for volunteers. People who are paid for their services (employees, contractors etc) are covered against accident and injury by Worker's Compensation; Public Liability covers clients and the public. Volunteers, including management committee members where applicable, do not qualify for cover in these categories.

Personal Accident Insurance for Volunteers covers volunteers for any accidental injury, disability or death in the course of their voluntary activities. Ideally, it should also cover volunteers while they are travelling to and from the place where they perform their voluntary duties.

The better volunteer accident insurances:

- Provide a death or capital benefit of \$25,000 to \$100,000 or higher as required;
- Do not limit the age of the volunteer;
- Cover volunteers from the moment they leave home until they return;
- Pay set maximum weekly benefits for temporary disablement;
- Cover extra expenses such as for home help, tutorial benefits and hire of wheelchairs;
- Cover physiotherapy and other non-Medicare expenses;
- Allow for home or car renovations should the volunteer accidentally become a paraplegic or quadriplegic;
- Have small or no deductibles.

MOTOR VEHICLES

Comprehensive

Provides for vehicles owned by the volunteer organisation for loss and/or damage to the owned vehicle or property damage to other vehicles or property.

Non-owned

An organisation can obtain insurance to cover the motor vehicle owned by a volunteer while it is being used on behalf of the organisation. Cover includes while driving to and from the place of voluntary work and driving as part of the volunteer job for reimbursement of excess and loss of no claim bonus only.

A usual requirement of such a policy is that the volunteer's privately owned vehicle has its own comprehensive insurance. Check this point with your insurance broker or advisor and, if it is applicable to your policy, annually sight proof of your volunteer's insurance document.

THIRD PARTY PERSONAL INJURY

Cover for injury to passengers and third parties resulting from a motor vehicle accident is usually covered by the vehicle's registration in each state of Australia.

Each volunteer organisation should check local legislation and ensure that all vehicles used have the appropriate registration and insurance

SAMPLE 4.1: CO-ORDINATOR ADVERTISEMENT

MENTOR PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR

An opportunity exists for an exciting new position co-ordinating the School-Based Mentoring Program (insert location) and based at the (insert location). The School-Based Mentoring Program matches community volunteers with students at local high schools to assist their transition to employment/further education. The person will need to be a motivated self-starter who will be working with a range of people across the community.

This program is a partnership between:
(insert program partners)

The appointment will be (insert permanent, temporary or part –time), commencing insert start date).

Salary: up to \$(insert salary) pa plus a motor vehicle allowance (if applicable)

Essential Criteria:

- commitment to the philosophy of mentoring
- understanding of and empathy with youth at-risk
- ability to work with older members of the community
- demonstrated high level communication skills
- demonstrated management and organisational skills
- an ability to liaise effectively with the business community
- an understanding of and ability to work within the school culture
- understanding of (insert name of governing body) policies and procedures
- a current driver's licence and access to a motor vehicle.
- commitment to EEO and OH&S and the principles of cultural diversity

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience working in a community setting

Interested applicants should submit a one-page Expression of Interest by (insert date) to:

School-Based Mentoring Co-ordinator Position
(insert address)

For further information, please contact
(insert contact details)