



Building critical social infrastructure:  
The business case for expanding support  
for school based mentoring in Australia



YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK

## Building critical social infrastructure: The business case for expanding support for school based mentoring in Australia

A report prepared for the Youth Mentoring Network and the Dusseldorp Skills Forum by  
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For further information on youth mentoring in Australia visit the Youth Mentoring Network website  
[youthmentoring.org.au](http://youthmentoring.org.au)

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February 2009

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The Youth Mentoring Network wished to acknowledge the contribution of the Dusseldorp Skills Forum in the production of this report.

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Mentoring as social infrastructure

Nation building requires infrastructure – roads, rail, ports, schools, hospitals, and community centres. The business case for expanding school based mentoring addresses an essential component of social infrastructure critical to enabling our young people to lead fulfilling and productive lives.

Young people need positive and robust relationships with adults. Many are hungry for both guidance and acceptance. Yet, a confluence of social factors has diminished the likelihood of developing such relationships for a significant number of young people. A declining adult presence in the lives of young people may, in itself, constitute a major social transformation.<sup>i</sup>

Mentoring programs have emerged as a means to revitalise these relationships. Mentoring provides positive role models for students who do not have supportive relationships with adults within their own families, schools and peer networks. It is a preventative strategy that is yielding positive outcomes for young people around the world. A significant body of evidence and on-the-ground experience points to the significance of one-to-one relationships as a ‘protective’ factor in the lives of vulnerable young people.

Through mentoring young people gain access to a committed adult, someone who will be available every week, for months and sometimes years at a time. Mentors are trained to listen, in a non-judgemental, accepting manner. They turn up, they listen, and they accept. For many young people it is rare to have access to an adult who is not judging, directing, or compelling them, an adult who is not a parent or a teacher. The quality of such a relationship can ‘tip the balance’ in the life of a young person.

### Mentoring through schools

Schooling is a crucial element of the lives of young people. It is a major part of the way young people are inducted into society, and it is a principal means of developing the skills and knowledge needed to

underpin economic health and long term productivity and competitiveness.

We know however that for a significant number of young people, traditional schooling doesn’t work. Many young Australians are not thriving in school. They are failing to reach their own potential, at great cost to themselves and society. The evidence can be found in mediocre retention rates, poor education participation data, indeed in mental health statistics for young people.<sup>ii</sup>

Schools face tremendous challenges in finding ways to support students in danger of withdrawing or disengaging from the school experience. Teachers might be expected to develop one-to-one relationships with their students but they are rarely in a position to do this adequately. Instead most school based mentoring programs draw on community volunteers, adults in the local community who volunteer to make a difference in the life of student.

School based mentoring engages the skills, resources and people from the wider community. It provides a genuine support base for teachers in their challenging and multi-faceted roles. School based programs create additional benefits in terms of intergenerational exchange, relationships across class and social divides, community building and local activism. School based mentoring programs can be a catalyst: brokering, mediating and building strong school-community networks and support arrangements.

In policy terms, the importance of mentoring has been recognised in the Australian *Footprints to the Future Report* (2001) which advised that “every young person needs at least one adult to turn to who will reliably respond, provide support, and be a mentor”.<sup>iii</sup> This advice was given in the context of recommendations about the perceived needs of young people who were disconnected from their communities and in need of personalised, individual support.

### Mentoring works

Mentoring does work. School based programs are effective in reducing the number of students ‘falling through the gaps’. While not exclusively so, most

programs serve a population of students who are not coping with school or at risk of leaving school early.

There is sufficient evidence to be confident about the potential and actual results of good quality mentoring practices. Reports from Australian programs offer a rich vein of successful case studies, experiences and testimonials. Effective mentoring can raise school attendance and school completion. It can support effective transition from school to further training or employment. Mentors help young people to feel better connected to school and to peers. Mentoring can raise confidence, self-esteem and a sense of wellbeing. Mentoring can improve academic performance and classroom behaviour.

One of the most extensive studies of school based mentoring programs (*Making a Difference in Schools: The Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Impact Study*) found that a major benefit reported by students was “the presence of a non-parental adult in their life.....someone they look up to and talk to about personal problems, who encourages them to do their best, cares about what happens to them and influences the choices they make”.<sup>iv</sup>

### **A transformed sector**

The mentoring sector itself has undergone a qualitative transformation. There is now a body of professional good practice that provides a platform for supporting effective matching of mentors and young people. It is clear from the Australian experience that high quality coordination is essential to produce quality programs capable of delivering sustainable benefits for students in the short and long term.

The National Youth Mentoring Network (YMN)<sup>v</sup> has consolidated a plethora of support tools, guidance, quality benchmarks, communications, training and networking opportunities.

School based mentoring strongly aligns with a range of government policies and priorities. A growing number of governments, across a range of portfolios, as well as non-government organisations are funding and supporting mentoring as a valuable intervention. Australia has a strong program base - networks, skilled practitioners, intellectual resources across dozens of programs, and a growing understanding of quality practice.

### **A cost-effective intervention**

School based mentoring is a cost-effective intervention, but it is not without costs. While the mentors themselves are volunteers, the basics – recruiting, screening, training, monitoring and supporting mentors, creating and supporting quality ‘matches’ between mentors and student mentees – requires coordination, consultation and communication. While mentoring itself is a simple and flexible practice, establishment of an effective, well structured mentoring program in schools is a complex and challenging task.

“Linking, brokerage, guidance, advice and intermediary roles are no longer discretionary parts of the education and training landscape - they are crucial elements in turning large and impersonal systems into accessible networks. Done well, these roles represent a powerful way of enabling students to build the self-reliance and informed decision-making necessary to ensure that learning is better accessed and work is well negotiated”.<sup>vi</sup>

Each mentoring match costs around \$1,500 per student per annum on average to coordinate to a minimum acceptable standard of quality. This amounts to an average cost per student of around \$37.50 per match per week (over a 40 week school year). Yet each disengaged, under-employed, and under-skilled young person is estimated to cost the country over \$74,000<sup>vii</sup> over a lifetime.

In 2005, Access Economics estimated that boosting the proportion of young people completing school or apprenticeships to 90 per cent by the end of the decade would increase workforce numbers by 65,000, boost economic productivity, and expand the economy by nearly \$10 billion by 2040. Measures to increase school retention rates would also result in additional annual taxation receipts of \$2.3 billion (in 2005 dollars) by 2040, reducing budget deficits and helping to defray the cost impact of the ageing population. GDP would be raised by 1.1 percent (equivalent to \$9.2 billion) by 2040.<sup>viii</sup>

### **Demographic opportunity**

The baby boomer generation is moving into retirement. Demography is opportunity. It is a generation with a wealth of experience, skills, and resources. Many boomers have a passion for making a difference. It is timely to harness this precious resource on behalf of younger generations. School based mentoring offers a secure and safe environment for mentoring.

## A national priority

Australia needs an agreed, comprehensive and clearly articulated national mentoring policy that drives our collective activity across education, youth, employment, health and other related policy areas.<sup>ix</sup>

Current government funding for school based mentoring is minimal and tenuous. Good programs have come and gone with funding cycles. The proliferation of State and Federal programs and other programs by no means ensures that every student at risk of leaving school early receives the support they need. Most students at risk in this context still fall through the cracks. Cohesive and comprehensive programming and arrangements in this area are essential.

This business case recommends a minimum of three year funding cycles for school based mentoring programs in order that they can establish and maintain commitments from mentors and other stakeholders. Mentoring program coordinators' time is better spent on developing and managing their programs rather than constantly seeking funding opportunities.

Currently, school based mentoring programs serve an estimated 8,000 –10,000 students. Yet many more students would benefit from a quality mentoring experience. Australia was a pioneer in school based mentoring<sup>x</sup> yet other countries such as the United States have seen rapid growth in these programs over the last few years<sup>xi</sup>, while the uptake in Australia has languished by comparison.<sup>xii</sup>

This business case recommends a target of some 25,000 student places (including current students) by 2014. This would be approximately half the number of young people who are 'early exits' from school on an annual basis (45,000–50,000).<sup>xiii</sup> It would also represent some 10 per cent of an average Grade Six cohort of Australian school children.

The support could start in Grade Six or be applied later in the school career of this cohort (e.g. Year Nine or Ten). The principle, though, is to establish a clear preventive platform in order to build a resilient population of young people who will go on to complete their schooling and subsequently engage in further education, training or employment.

This business case recommends a leadership role for the Federal Government in school based mentoring, in partnership with State and Territory Governments.

The relative size of Federal and State contributions is not the subject of a recommendation here, but a guiding principle could be equal contribution. The Federal Government would also be responsible for supporting the non-government school sector. A national mentoring strategy needs to focus on more disadvantaged students given that the risk factors are higher for such students.

The Federal Government's major mentoring activity – Mentor Marketplace Program – is due to cease in June 2009. It is recommended, as a minimum, that funding for this program be applied to the national strategy recommended in this business case, with an explicit focus on school students. A carefully targeted and focused strategy will have greater impact than the diffuse activities supported under the current program. The major justification for this refocus is that school based mentoring provides a more powerful early intervention impact than later age interventions.<sup>xiv</sup> While at school, young people are a captive audience. This is the time in their lives when they can easily be given the support they need to prepare for life after school. A school focus is also more closely aligned to a range of national goals around skills and education for young people.

## Doing it well

It would not be appropriate to scale up the response too quickly. New funds need to build carefully on existing practice. It is essential that high quality benchmarks be mandatory for new programs. Without careful screening, training, monitoring and support for longer term mentoring relationships, the benefits will not be reaped. Mentoring program coordinators will need training and professional development.

Mentoring, as a medium for relationship building, should be long term. The research literature suggests a minimum of 9 –12 months (one school year) to achieve longer term benefits.<sup>xv</sup> Evidence also indicates longer term matches and closer relationships are associated with stronger impacts.<sup>xvi</sup>

There is a need for better evaluation of Australian programs. Australia lacks in-depth longitudinal, multi-site studies of the benefits of mentoring. There is a need for stronger evaluation frameworks, and more consistent data reporting. Under such a framework, support, guidance and tools should be developed for evaluation so that consistent and meaningful data can

be aggregated across programs. Evaluation activities should build on emerging partnership models (e.g. between education departments, universities and other relevant programs) and follow emerging good practice.

### What we can achieve

We need to be clear and realistic about what mentoring can and can't achieve. Mentoring is not a panacea. Mentoring alone will not transform schools, teaching or parenting. It does not confront the causes of behavioural issues such as bullying. It will be most effective when linked to other policies and programs in education, health and juvenile justice. It should be seen as a powerful tool among a range of other interventions. "The key questions are about what learning and engagement actually takes place; how the landscape is understood and accessed by all students; how initiatives, pathways and programs are connected;

how successfully young people progress from one phase to the next and have the opportunity to retrace their steps; and what benchmarks are set and met."<sup>xvii</sup>

Mentoring does redress a profound breach in youth – adult relationships, and is of tangible and enduring significance to many vulnerable young people and their prospects for a productive and rewarding life.

School based mentoring programs have created a platform through which young people develop their confidence, communication skills, re-engage with schooling, plan for a positive future, discover employment and training opportunities. They can draw upon community expertise and networks that extend well beyond the school.

**It is time for a renewed effort to develop a coherent national approach to mentoring.**





## 1.2 A 10 POINT PLAN: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING A NATIONAL SCHOOL BASED MENTORING STRATEGY

The following ten recommendations suggest a way forward for scaling up a national school based mentoring effort.<sup>xviii</sup>

### Strengthening national policy settings and leadership

**Recommendation 1:** That a national school based mentoring strategy be developed as a platform for significant government investment in the capacity to offer school based mentoring to young people with the aim to:

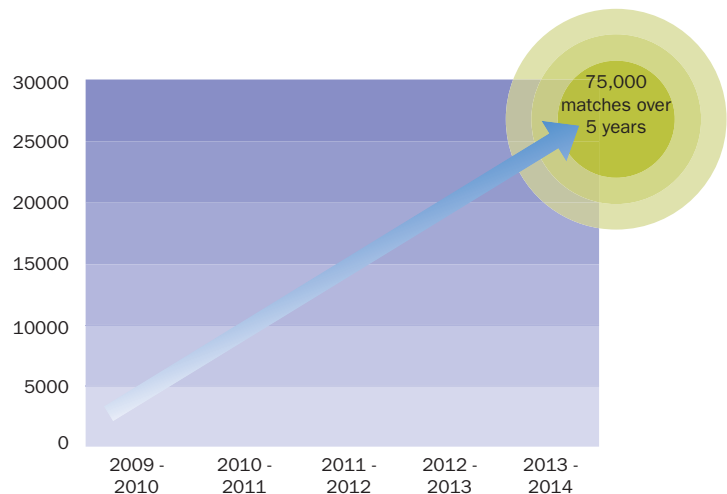
- provide more young people with support to develop their resilience; and
- directly assist young people at important transition points in their lives.

**Recommendation 2:** That a core principle of the strategy be early intervention, assisting young people to cope successfully with school and to complete a Year 12 qualification or its equivalent.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Federal Government take a leadership role in promoting school based mentoring.

### Increasing government funding

**Recommendation 4:** That funding for school based mentoring provision be scaled up to a target of 10 per cent of the current Grade Six student population – a total investment of \$115.3 million over five years, of which \$112.5 million directly supports some 75,000 mentor matches and the remaining \$2.8 million funds the Youth Mentoring Network to undertake program coordinator and mentor development, research, and general support of the mentoring sector.<sup>xix</sup> A genuine federalist approach should be adopted with an appropriate mix of state and federal funding and other forms of support.



### Improving program sustainability and impact

**Recommendation 5:** That funding support for individual mentoring programs be on a minimum of three year funding cycles. Sustainability rests on factors such as adequate funding over an extended period in order to build and maintain a pool of effective mentors, as well as providing the opportunity for long term relationships to develop.

**Recommendation 6:** That funding for school based mentoring programs be considered on the basis of a minimum duration for mentoring relationships of 9–12 months (one school year).<sup>xx</sup>

**Recommendation 7:** That expansion of mentoring programs be undertaken in a measured, incremental approach, building on effective practice and existing infrastructure.

### Understanding and promoting good practice

**Recommendation 8:** That an evaluation framework be established that encourages and supports consistent, coherent, and user-friendly approaches to data collection and evaluation of mentoring programs.

**Recommendation 9:** That the Youth Mentoring Network be supported as a significant catalyst for developing and sustaining quality practice, drawing together mentoring groups across Australia. This should be funded directly by the Federal Government as per Recommendation 4.

**Recommendation 10:** That program funding be conditional on mentoring programs being aligned with the Youth Mentoring Network's National Benchmarks developed in 2007.<sup>xxi</sup>

## 2. CURRENT POLICY AND FUNDING FOR MENTORING IN AUSTRALIA

### 2.1 DEFINITION OF MENTORING

Mentoring aims to provide a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement. The mentor is not a replacement for a parent, nor are they a counsellor or teacher.<sup>xxii</sup> They are a sounding board and confidant to the young person. The goal of a mentor is to help a young person fulfil his or her own potential and discover their strengths.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Mentoring plays a crucial role in supporting young people and their families to participate as active members of our society. Research has shown that ‘a well planned and organised formal mentoring program can provide strong individual support, advice and guidance for the young person and help at important transition points in their life’.<sup>xxiv</sup>

### 2.2 PURPOSE OF SCHOOL BASED MENTORING

School is an important time and place for early intervention and prevention in the lives of young people. Mentoring in schools, or ‘school based’ mentoring, proactively supports young people at risk of disengaging, leaving school early or failing to achieve their potential.

School based mentoring has the potential to assist young people with their personal development, guide them through critical transition phases and engage them in further education, skill development opportunities and the workforce. It is a particularly effective strategy to assist young people from vulnerable families or disadvantaged backgrounds.

School based mentoring takes place at the mentees’ school either during school hours or immediately after. The primary focus is the development of a long term supportive relationship.

### 2.3 POLICY SETTINGS AND FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

The appeal of school based mentoring as a valuable intervention is evident in the way in which it has generated cross portfolio interest from a range of

Federal and State Government agencies. Mentoring readily aligns with current Federal and State Government policies across a number of portfolio areas – youth, health, education and justice.

#### Federal Government policy

School based mentoring clearly complements the Federal Government’s Education Revolution Policy<sup>xxv</sup>, in particular the goals surrounding:

- Improved participation and retention of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students (Principles 4, 43, 45 and 139).
- Supporting students at critical transition points including pre-school to primary, primary to secondary and secondary to work or further education (Principles 28, 43, 45 and 46).
- Assisting students and groups who are currently not participating fully in schooling or who require additional support to reach their potential (Principles 37 and 38).
- Creating schools as sites for community building by developing local partnerships and the sharing of resources, experiences and expertise (Principles 21 and 22).

The ALP school policy emphasises school retention, a focus on skills, and tailored support for transition.<sup>xxvi</sup> It highlights the role of schools as sites for community building, the development of partnerships and sharing of experience and expertise across different social and interest groups, strengthening the social fabric and enhancing the context in which schools work.<sup>xxvii</sup> The policy recognises the need for specific encouragement, support and inspiration for young adolescents at school. The policy also acknowledges that poverty remains the greatest indicator of disadvantage and the single most important barrier to educational success, and promises to establish an innovative system of targeted resource provision to schools with concentrations of students from disadvantaged backgrounds to improve their participation in schooling and their educational outcomes”.<sup>xxviii</sup>

The ALP school policy confirms a guarantee of access

to Year 12 of schooling or its equivalent in other areas of education and training. It acknowledges that “..... *Guidance and support needs to be there when it counts* [emphasis added]. This will require effective policies to encourage young people to stay at school, to develop alternative learning options within and alongside schools and to support students in the world outside school in a highly competitive labour market if they choose to leave”.<sup>xxix</sup>

### **COAG policy**

Recent agreements between the Federal Government and State and Territory Governments provide a platform for a national approach to school based mentoring policy and programs.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Education Agreement<sup>xxx</sup> aims to contribute to a range of outcomes, including all children being engaged in, and benefiting from, schooling; schooling promoting social inclusion and reducing education disadvantage; and helping young people make a successful transition from school to work and further study. School based mentoring could contribute to successful implementation of this agreement.

### **State Government policy and programs**

The Victorian Government is pioneering a strategic, coordinated framework for mentoring young people, ‘Leading the Way: the Victorian Government’s Strategic Framework on Mentoring Young People 2005-2008’. The Mentoring and Capacity Building Initiative (MCBI), delivered through the Office for Youth, Department of Planning and Community Development actively builds partnerships and the capacity of communities, governments, business, and community organisations.<sup>xxxi</sup>

The Queensland Government recognises that mentoring can be a powerful mechanism to support young people to stay engaged with their schooling. The Queensland Community Mentoring Program (QCMP) provides funding to support new and existing school based mentoring initiatives.

The South Australian Department of Education and Children’s Services introduced its Secondary Mentoring Program 2008 - 2010, building on a number of years experience with school based mentoring. The program is part of the State Government’s School to Work Strategy to increase participation in education and training.

The NSW Department of Education and Training supports and manages Plan-It Youth programs and other mentoring programs such as the LEAPS Program (Law Firms Encouraging and Assisting Promising Students).<sup>xxxi</sup> NSW is in the process of developing a mentoring framework for all school mentoring programs.

A related development is the NSW Government’s recent announcement that NSW will raise the school leaving age to ensure NSW students have a world-class education and improved opportunities to go to University or secure employment. From 2010 all students in NSW will complete Year 10.<sup>xxxi</sup> After completing Year 10, students will be required to remain in some form of education, training or employment until they turn 17.<sup>xxxi</sup>

The NSW Government has committed to continue to consult widely during the development and implementation stages of its school leaving age reform. Again, school based mentoring could contribute to successful implementation of this reform in areas such as student engagement in learning, learning support that will enable students to succeed, informing young people about their options, and supporting student choices regarding further education, training, and employment.

### **Government funding arrangements**

On a per annum basis, a generous estimate of the total level of government funds might be around \$5 million for school based mentoring programs across State and Federal Government (see Table 2.1). There are also a small number of general funding programs with an element of student mentoring (see Table 2.2).

These tables do not present a comprehensive analysis of funding arrangements for mentoring but they do provide a guide to the level of current support. A summary conclusion must be that mentoring has been supported by a wide array of government initiatives however financial support is negligible and tenuous.

A number of the programs presented below have closed or are due to terminate. For example, the Federal Mentor Marketplace Program is due to cease in June 2009.

**TABLE 2.1: Government funding for student mentoring programs**

Funding Source	Program	Funding Arrangement
<b>Federal Government</b>	Mentors for our Students, a program where recently retired tradespeople and professionals mentor young people. <sup>xxxv</sup>	\$5 million over four years in 25 communities around Australia from 2008-2012.
<b>Queensland Government</b> Department of Education and the Arts	Queensland Community Mentoring Program	\$600,000 for mentoring projects over a two year period (2007-2009). <sup>xxxvi</sup>
<b>NSW Government</b> NSW Department of Education and Training	Plan-It Youth LEAPS <sup>xxxvii</sup>	Over \$1million per annum through to 2009 for Plan-It Youth. \$100,000 per annum for LEAP
<b>WA Government</b> Part funded by WA Department of Education and Training	School Volunteer Program	\$700,000 per annum.
<b>SA Government</b>	Secondary Mentoring Program (using teachers as mentors)  Previously, the Student Mentoring Program	Government funding for the earlier Student Mentoring Program was \$5.6 million over four years from 2003. Currently \$4.5 million over 3 years 2008 -2010.

**TABLE 2.1: General funding programs that also support some student mentoring programs**

Funding Source	Program	Funding Arrangement
<b>Federal Government</b> Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations	Mentor Marketplace Program (MMP) <sup>xxxviii</sup> , a program encouraging the use of mentoring activities to improve outcomes for young people, particularly those at greatest risk of disconnection from their families, community, education and work.	\$12 million for the Mentor Marketplace Program over four years ending 30 June 2009.  Funding agreements with 26 service providers across Australia.
<b>Federal Government</b> Attorney General's Department	National Crime Prevention Program (NCCCP), a community grants scheme which funds some mentoring programs.	\$20 million in 2004 of which around \$4.5 million was given to programs which stated they had mentoring as a component.
<b>Victorian Government</b>	Leading the Way – Victoria's Strategic Framework for Mentoring Young People	\$2.9 million over 3 years 2005-2008. \$1.8 million over 3 years 2009-2011.

# 3. RATIONALE FOR SCHOOL BASED MENTORING IN AUSTRALIA

## 3.1 WHY MENTORING IS IMPORTANT

Mentoring responds to a number of significant social trends that have diminished the presence of responsive adults in the lives of young people:

- Families often have both parents working. Many are working long and ‘unsociable’ hours to the detriment of the children’s wellbeing.<sup>xxxix</sup>
- Youth cultures are increasingly disconnected from older age cultures and many young people don’t know how to communicate and behave with adults.
- For legal and practical reasons, employees in public systems (teachers, police, social workers) are discouraged from befriending young people.
- More children are being raised in single parent households.
- A significant number of young people live in households with no employed parent.<sup>xi</sup>
- Opportunities for teenagers to work with adults have diminished, with a long term historical decline in full-time employment.
- Only half of students aged 15 years reported that parents spent time ‘just talking’ to them more than once a week.<sup>xii</sup>

Gary Walker, reviewing similar trends in the United States, argues that “These factors have all converged to make declining adult presence in youthful lives a major social transformation”.<sup>xiii</sup>

The presence of supportive, caring non-related adults is a ‘protective factor’ in the lives of vulnerable young people.<sup>xliii</sup> Werner’s longitudinal study found that “children with more protective factors than risk factors in their lives (that is, those defined as resilient) could identify at least one person in their life who had believed in them and offered them support when needed”.<sup>xliii</sup> Mentoring provides a context for young people to develop the protective factors that create more resilience.

Beltman and MacCallum<sup>xlv</sup> argue that theory and research in Australia “support the notion that a mentoring relationship between an adult and a young

person can contribute to the development of resilience and socio-emotional wellbeing”.<sup>xlvi</sup>

“Many kids need somebody to give them a ‘quality ear’ and listen in a non-judgmental way. If a kid has been sidelined by the system or has difficulties at home, the value of being heard, able to speak freely and participate in the wider community, can’t be overstated. Life is sometimes overwhelming for our kids and something that helps them look at the positives in their lives, is vital to their success at school and their future lives.”

Mathew Brown, Principal,  
Wagga Wagga High School, Plan-It Youth, NSW

## 3.2 WHY MENTOR IN SCHOOLS

School is an important time and place for early intervention and prevention in the lives of young people. School based mentoring plays a critical role in supporting young people not coping at school, or at risk of leaving school early. In the later years of secondary school ‘transition’ - through exposure to post-school options, is an important theme.

School based mentoring has the potential to assist young people with their personal development, guide them through critical transition phases and engage them in further education, skill development opportunities and the workforce. It is a particularly effective strategy to assist young people from vulnerable families or disadvantaged backgrounds.

The reasons for mentoring young people during their school years are listed below.

## 1. School based mentoring encourages and supports young people in school to complete suitable education and training.

Mentoring is an effective early intervention strategy in the lives of young people who are not coping at school or at risk of failing to complete their schooling. Currently there are between 45,000 and 50,000 ‘early education exits’ every year from Australian schools.<sup>xlvi</sup>

Early school leaving has a long term impact on the lives of young people and on the Australian society and economy. On average, early school leavers will earn lower wages over a lifetime and are more likely to be unemployed for periods of their lives.<sup>xlvii</sup> According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, early school leavers are two-and-a-half times more likely to be unemployed.

Australia needs highly skilled and well-educated young people to compete in a global economy. Australia can ill afford mediocre retention rates and a significant minority of young people disengaging from education and training.

The 2006 Census found that 71 per cent of 19 year olds had attained Year 12 or equivalent. For young people from poorer backgrounds the completion rate was only 58 per cent.<sup>xlix</sup> For the last decade, retention rates to Year 12 in Australia have not improved. Australia’s Year 12 or equivalent retention rate is low by OECD standards.<sup>l</sup>

Access Economics estimates that boosting the proportion of young people completing school or an apprenticeship to 90 per cent would boost GDP by 1.1 percent (equivalent to \$9.2 billion) by 2040. In NSW, for example, the economy stands to gain an estimate of up to \$2.7 billion if early school leaver numbers are halved by 2050.<sup>li</sup>

Early school leavers are drawn disproportionately from the ranks of low academic achievers. Professor Stephen Lamb, from the University of Melbourne, argues that “Failure to establish meaning in the curriculum or to build satisfactory teaching relationships reduces the possibility of successful learning which is the most important intrinsic motive for staying on at school. Economic pressures to find work and earn a living may hasten early leaving, but where a positive experience of learning has not been established, resistance to these pressures is often ineffectual”. He argues for early intervention, including mentoring as an ‘important vehicle’ for creating a positive learning culture in schools.<sup>lii</sup>

## 2. School based mentoring provides direct emotional and social support to young people at important and stressful transition points in their education and lives.

In the context of schooling and the transition from school to the employment there are increasing stresses on young people:

- Significant social and economic pressures to continue to higher levels of education.
- An intensified school curriculum that leaves less time for personal, social and emotional replenishment. Emphasis on ‘high stakes’ standardised testing leaves less room for teachers to develop close relationships with their charges.<sup>liii</sup>
- The need to negotiate and navigate an uncertain and complex mosaic of study, part-time work, and other responsibilities.<sup>liv</sup>
- A dominant ethic of individualism that places increasing responsibility on young people, asking them to choose and be responsible for significant life choices at earlier ages.
- Teachers themselves are under pressure. They are rarely in a position to create personalised, non-judgemental relationships with disengaging students.

The consequences of such pressures are evident in a number of critical indicators:

- In 2007, the Australian Scholarship Group undertook a study of the social and emotional health of young Australians, interviewing 10,000 students from Grade Prep to Year 12. The report found that a large number of students experience social and emotional difficulties.<sup>lv</sup>
- The recently released ARACY Report Card on the Wellbeing of Australian Young People noted that some 11 per cent of students aged 15 years felt “awkward and out of place at school”.<sup>lvi</sup>
- Social and emotional health decreases from primary to secondary school. The ‘Middle Years’ (Years Five to Nine) are a time of heightened vulnerability. “It has been demonstrated that student attitudes, motivation and commitment to school become increasingly less positive in successive years from Years Five to Nine”.<sup>lvii</sup>

### 3. **School based mentoring offers a secure and safe environment.**

School based mentoring programs are able to attract adult volunteers as mentors who would be unlikely to volunteer in community based programs. Many retired or semi-retired people prefer to mentor a young person in the safe and supervised environment of the school.

### 4. **School based mentoring is growing.**

The research literature confirms that schools are a valuable site for mentoring interventions. In the United States, school based mentoring is the fastest growing form of mentoring.<sup>lviii</sup> For one large scale mentoring organisation, Big Brothers Big Sisters in the United States, the number of school based mentoring relationships has grown from 27,000 in 1999 to 126,000 by 2007.<sup>lix</sup>

### 5. **School based mentoring programs have some advantages compared to community based mentoring programs.**

School based mentoring programs:

- are cost effective because they take advantage of existing supervision in the school environment and tap into teacher expertise,

- provide ready access for early intervention programs before young people are 'lost to the system',
- can draw on teachers for referrals,
- support tighter integration of other youth intervention strategies thereby creating a holistic approach to supporting young people in schools,
- are easy to adopt into the school timetable,
- provide an ideal setting for regular debriefing and support of mentors, and
- encourage community participation in youth and education issues.

“The fact that the program runs through the school gives status to the program and confidence to the parents.”

Gail Armstrong, Principal,  
Alexandria High School, Mentor-One, BoysTown, QLD



# 4. OVERVIEW OF MENTORING IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

## 4.1 STATUS OF SCHOOL BASED MENTORING PROGRAMS

### What do school based mentoring programs look like?

While there is diversity across Australian school based mentoring programs, there are some common trends. Most school based programs use one-to-one mentoring, with older adults, face to face and on-site in the school. However, a number of programs combine this with some form of group interaction between mentors and students. e-mentoring appears to be growing (see *Appendix A: The Smith Family's iTrack e-mentoring program*).

The majority of current mentoring programs serve secondary students rather than primary students. In most cases, programs take their referrals on the basis of some kind of risk assessment from the school but participation is voluntary for mentors and mentees.

Mentoring, in general, is not appropriate for 'high risk' or 'high needs' students. Mentors do not have the professional skills to deal with 'high risk' students with multiple issues and significant resources are already directed to those who are most at risk.

For a representation of common trends in Australian school based mentoring programs, see *Appendix B: Snapshot of Australian school based mentoring programs*.

### How many young people benefit from school based mentoring programs?

The Youth Mentoring Network (YMN) estimates that school based mentoring programs currently serve between 8,000 –10,000 students across Australia.

YMN and the Victorian Youth Mentoring Alliance combined have databases with around 100 school based programs registered across Australia. It is difficult to estimate the number of students involved in these programs. A small program in a single school may have between five and ten students; a larger regional program working across a cluster of schools may have over one hundred students involved. A few programs, such as World Vision's Kids Hope AUS and Plan-It Youth, are multi-site programs with hundreds of students involved (see notes below).

### Who runs school based mentoring programs?

There are a few multi-site program models for school based mentoring in Australia. These models provide a framework, support and resources for local practitioners to plan and implement programs in schools, sometimes supported directly by a peak agency. Examples include:

- **Kids Hope AUS** in VIC, managed by World Vision. In 2008 there were around 240 primary schools involved, with some 2500 students.<sup>lx</sup>
- **Plan-It Youth** in NSW, initiated by the Dusseldorp Skills Forum and developed and managed by the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) for NSW programs. In 2006 there were eight regional programs operating in NSW with 77 secondary schools and 1087 students involved.
- **Secondary Mentoring Program** in South Australia, funded and managed by the Department of Education and Children's Services funded 54 teacher-mentors to provide one-on-one support for 1075 students in secondary schools in 2008.
- The **School Volunteer Program** in Western Australia supports mentoring as one of its core activities across schools and had 252 schools with 1700 students involved in 2008.

In addition to these specific school based programs, there are long established mentoring agencies, most notably Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) that have extensive experience and resources. A number of successful school based programs have been built using a BBBS implementation package.<sup>lxii</sup> While BBBS' focus in Australia is mainly community based mentoring, Roma BBBS is conducting a pilot version of the BBBS program in schools. If successful, the model will be implemented in other BBBS locations across Australia.

Management structures differ in one main respect – whether the mentoring program is hosted and managed by education/school personnel, or by a community agency that is independent of schools or education departments. There are some interesting hybrid forms with partnership agencies (such as the Victorian Local



Learning Education Networks). A minority, only seven per cent, are stand-alone entities (YMN Survey 2007).<sup>lxiii</sup>

## 4.2. BENEFITS OF SCHOOL BASED MENTORING PROGRAMS

Australian school based mentoring programs report significant positive changes in their student mentees as a consequence of the mentoring experience. Improvements have been noted across a range of significant indicators - social and emotional wellbeing, peer relationships and social skills, behaviour, school attendance, school 'connectedness', school completion, academic performance, and resilience (see *Appendix C: General findings from the research and evaluation literature on the benefits of school based mentoring*).

Some programs track change in formal ways. They may do this through oral or written feedback from students during and/or at the end of the program. Some use various 'Likert-scale' measures for post-program feedback across a range of indicators. Some use both 'pre' and 'post' measures. Sometimes the feedback is gathered from students, sometimes from mentors, parents and teachers. Other programs provide detailed case studies on individual students.<sup>lxiv</sup>

A number of examples from specific mentoring programs are outlined below.

### Social and emotional wellbeing

A recent Australian evaluation of the NSW **Plan-It Youth** program concluded that "the success of the mentoring relationship appears to be the result of the relatively structured experience which creates a sense of purpose about schooling and its relevance that may have been absent in the students prior to their engagement in the Plan-It Youth program. The ability of the mentors to make the students feel 'special' and to provide students with the opportunity to engage in one-to-one conversations in a non-threatening environment also appears to have been critical in addressing the self-confidence and self-esteem issues which were often characteristic of the students targeted for participation in Plan-It Youth mentoring."<sup>lxv</sup>

### School attendance

One basic measure of the success of mentoring programs is continuing attendance in the program and school attendance in general. A number of programs

"The **Standing Tall** mentoring program has provided a support mechanism for students in the Hamilton community that was sadly lacking. The resilience, self esteem and engagement of many young people has been significantly improved since this program was put in place. The concept that 'it takes a whole village to raise a child', came to fruition with this program. The provision of a significant adult in the lives of the young people involved has created measurable differences that have been acknowledged by the student, their teachers and their parents."

Rob Vecchiet, Principal,  
Baimbridge College, Standing Tall, VIC

report on such trends.

The Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley Local Learning and Employment Network's **Youth Mentor Assisted Pathways Program** (YMAP) reports that: "With a significant number of the young people involved in the program recognised as having long term issues with absenteeism, it is worth noting that overall attendance at mentoring sessions in 2007 was 79 percent. This is compared to an overall school attendance rate by the same 173 students of just 69 percent."<sup>lxvi</sup>

### School connectedness

Research has shown that school based mentoring plays a key role in improving the learning, social and emotional outcomes for a young person: "mentored youth have better attendance and are more connected to their school, schoolwork and teachers"<sup>lxvii</sup>

A preliminary evaluation of 18 students in the **Mentor-One** program, run by BoysTown<sup>lxviii</sup>, found that:

- 70 per cent of participants reported an improvement in grades since being on the program,

- 70 per cent of participants reported an increased interest in school,
- 73 per cent claim their attendance at school has improved (of which, 60 per cent claim it is 'much' better),
- 76 per cent reported an improvement in their friendships,
- 65 per cent reported an improvement in relationships with family,
- 70 per cent claimed their perceptions for their future had improved.

### School retention and destination

Another powerful measure of success is the 'destination' of the student in the following year. A successful 'destination' would be a student's continuing at school (school retention) or moving to another education, employment or training position (such as an apprenticeship).

The Erebus evaluation of eight **Plan-It Youth** programs summarised 2006 destination data for 599 students.<sup>lxix</sup> The results show high levels of school retention, or alternative training and employment pathways (see *Appendix D: Aggregated destinations data for 2006 students participating in Plan-It Youth*).<sup>lxx</sup> These results demonstrated that more than 90 percent of participants achieve a positive learning or employment destination. This is an important finding given that the participants are selected on the basis that they were intending to leave school early or were vulnerable in some regard.

Erebus also found that:

- More than 90 per cent of students discussed their plans and options for the future with their mentor and 86 per cent did this very often.
- 95 per cent of students said that Plan-It Youth had helped them to make decisions about their future.
- More than 80 per cent of students said they had a better understanding of their strengths because of Plan-It Youth.
- 75 per cent of students said they knew what they would do when they left school after participating in Plan-It Youth.

The Erebus report concluded that "the mentoring approach provided through **Plan-It Youth** can be a

valuable and effective means of helping some young people at risk to make more informed decisions about their education/work pathways. Many examples can be cited where mentoring has made an appreciable difference to an individual student's confidence, communication skills, understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, goals for the future and options available to them. For other students, it has helped to give them a sense of direction and feeling of connectedness that they may not otherwise have experienced. In yet other cases, mentors have gone well beyond what might ordinarily be expected from a program of this kind to support students through extremely difficult personal circumstances. The value of such experiences cannot be underestimated."<sup>lxxi</sup>

In South Australia, aggregate statistics for the **Student Mentoring Program** have been tracked state-wide.

A sample group of project schools in the South Australian Student Mentoring Program submitted data relating to student attendance and achievement (for 357 students across a number of schools in Semester 1, 2005). A significant number of students improved their attendance (40 per cent) and achievement (39 per cent). The programs also reported on retention of students in the following year. The average percentage of students leaving the program who were retained in education, training and/or employment over a three year period from 2003 to 2005 was 90 per cent.

87 per cent of **iTrack** students reported that they had gained a better understanding of possible career paths as a result of their participation in an e-mentoring program run by The Smith Family.<sup>lxxii</sup> 61 per cent reported that the experience had helped them clarify what they wanted to undertake following school.

**SCISCO Career Pathways** mentoring program on the Gold Coast, Queensland reported on 49 students across five schools that completed the program in 2007-08.<sup>lxxiii</sup> 40 remained at school, two went to another school, four joined full-time apprenticeships, two went to other training, and only one student's destination was 'unknown'.

### Academic performance

Griffith University's evaluation of World Vision's **Kids Hope AUS** program<sup>lxxiv</sup> used statistical significance tests to assess the impact of the program. The study sought teacher responses about areas where they judged the students to have made most progress as

well as areas where the teachers thought the students needed most to make improvements (see Table 4.1).

**TABLE 4.1: Kids Hope AUS program – Teachers’ responses to areas of students’ progress and need for improvement.**

Subscale	Areas of Progress (%)	Need for Improvement(%)
<b>Motivation</b>	13.8	9.8
<b>Behaviour</b>	10.9	9.1
<b>Self-esteem</b>	26.8	14.9
<b>Focus</b>	8.0	11.6
<b>Attitude</b>	12.0	4.0
<b>Respect</b>	5.1	1.8
<b>Social Skills</b>	23.2	27.2
<b>Literacy</b>	9.1	8.0
<b>Numeracy</b>	3.6	5.8
<b>Listening</b>	0.7	2.2
<b>Academic (general)</b>	3.3	9.8
<b>All areas</b>	2.5	1.1

“One Principal collared me and said I want this program again next year. He could see the changes taking place when he was looking at the end of year school reports for the students. He had also watched the groups of mentors and students during the mentoring sessions and commented that it was fantastic to watch the dynamics between students and mentors. Another Principal mentioned the value of adults coming into the school each week and their positive impact on the school community.”

Robin Cox, Program Coordinator, **Gr8MATES**, NSW

### Benefits for other stakeholders

While students are the main beneficiaries of school based mentoring programs, mentoring has benefits that extend beyond the school. Drawing on the rich resource of community volunteers, many school based programs create additional benefits in terms of intergenerational exchange, relationships across class and social divides, community building and local activism.

Mentoring programs often draw from isolated groups and community members who are not traditionally volunteers but have much to offer in mentoring relationships.

Program coordinators report a real shift in mentors’ attitudes towards young people and schools. Through participating in the programs mentors gain a better understanding of the issues facing young people and the school system – they become great advocates of young people and education.

“It is fantastic to see kids grow into something more. I am very proud of all the kids and honoured to see their growth into something more. I believe in community and this project squarely connects me to my community.”

Mentor, **Reaching More Kids**, Berry St, VIC

# 5. CASE FOR CHANGE IN AUSTRALIA

## 5.1 SUSTAINABILITY OF MENTORING PROGRAMS

### Funding

Many Australian school based mentoring programs are vulnerable. Programs usually survive on short term funding cycles. They are most often in special grant categories, rather than part of the mainstream education budgets. Even programs that have been established in recent years and demonstrated valuable results have closed down due to funding termination.

Sustainability relies on adequate funding over an extended period in order to build and maintain a pool of effective mentors.

### Mentor recruitment and retention

Program coordinators invest a significant amount of time in the recruitment of mentors and subsequently in keeping them trained, developed, debriefed and feeling supported. A national campaign including a National Youth Mentoring Week, supported by the Federal Government, would raise the profile and status of mentoring and would assist in the recruitment and retention of mentors.

## 5.2 REACH OF MENTORING PROGRAMS

Currently, school based mentoring programs serve an estimated 8,000-10,000 students. Yet many more students would benefit from a quality mentoring experience. An overwhelming majority of mentoring program practitioners believe that there are not enough resources and services in their community to assist in the support of children and young people (74 per cent).<sup>lxxv</sup>

Australia was a pioneer in school based mentoring<sup>lxxvi</sup> yet other countries such as the US have seen rapid growth in these programs over the last few years<sup>lxxvii</sup>, while the uptake in Australia has languished by comparison.<sup>lxxviii</sup>

It is difficult to assess how many young people need mentoring in Australia. Such an assessment has never

“Our challenge is that kids do not want to leave the program, yet others want to come into it. It is a staffing issue. We could easily double the numbers if we had the resources. There is a need.”

Michelle Lockwood, Welfare Officer,  
Alexandria High School, **Mentor-One**, BoysTown, QLD

been attempted. For the purpose of this business case, one guide to the target population is the 45,000–50,000 young people who constitute ‘early education exits’ from Australian schools each year.<sup>lxxix</sup> While it is not the case that there is an exact correlation between these exits and the need for mentoring, this number has been used to help scale a suitable response.

This business case recommends a target of 75,000 youth mentoring places over five years. By 2014 (the fifth year), 25,000 students will be in mentoring places and this represents 10 per cent of an average Grade Six cohort of Australian school children. The fifth year cost would be \$37.5 million (based on the \$1,500 per student mentee per annum cost estimate made below in section 5.3).

## 5.3 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COSTS OF INACTION

It is estimated that the average unit cost of Australian programs is \$1,500 per student mentee per annum (this estimate has been made on the basis of interviews with program coordinators and other leading practitioners and researchers). On a per week basis this is around \$37.50 per match per week (over a 40 week school year). The unit cost, of course, varies according to the nature of the program. If a program uses more extensive screening, training and supervision, the costs will be higher. These are average *minimum* costs.

The main cost is the paid coordinator, and this role is

essential for a well structured quality program. Other costs include:

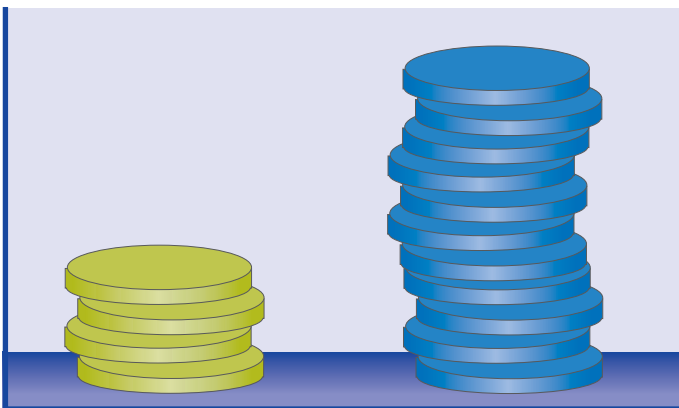
- Coordinator’s travel expenses
- Mentor’s expense reimbursement
- Mentor training and development
- Insurance
- Publicity
- General operating expenses
- Tracking and evaluation.

“The more thorough the training is, the greater the probability of an effective, long-lasting match between a mentor and a student.”

Robin Cox, Program Coordinator, **Gr8MATES**, NSW

What is the cost of not supporting at risk young people?

### Cost of Match vs. Life long costs



Mentoring pair =  
\$1500 per annum  
or 37.50 per week  
(40 wk school year)

\$74,000 per young  
person over the course  
of their lifetime should  
they leave school early

There have been attempts to quantify the social, economic and opportunity costs, of inaction. An Australian study<sup>lxxx</sup> into the lifetime costs of early school leaving estimated that the estimated lifetime cost to the country of each early school leaver is a conservative \$74,000 (a 1999 estimate and therefore much higher now). Half this cost is a direct monetary cost, borne partly by the individual and partly by government. The remaining half is a social cost which falls across the individual, government and the whole community. The overall cost to Australia of one year’s early school leavers is an estimated \$2.6 billion.

In 2005, Access Economics estimated that boosting the proportion of young people completing school or an apprenticeship to 90 per cent by the end of the decade would increase workforce numbers by 65,000, boost economic productivity, and expand the economy by nearly \$10 billion by 2040. Measures to increase school retention rates would also result in additional annual taxation receipts of \$2.3 billion (in 2005 dollars) by 2040, reducing budget deficits and helping to defray the cost impact of the ageing population. GDP would be raised by 1.1 percent (equivalent to \$9.2 billion) by 2040.<sup>lxxxi</sup>

What about the cost of alternative interventions?

This business case has attempted to outline some cost comparisons for alternative approaches (see Table 5.1). While mentoring taps into unpaid volunteers, there are still considerable costs associated with developing and maintaining a well structured program. Even so, school based mentoring is not an expensive intervention, particularly when compared to other professional support services to individual young people. It has the potential to generate benefits well in excess of its costs.

**TABLE 5.1: Cost comparisons of interventions for young people**

Intervention	Cost estimate per student per annum <sup>lxxxii</sup>
School based mentoring	\$1,500
Youth Pathways Program <sup>lxxxiii</sup>	\$1,235 for metropolitan locations and up to \$1,985 for ‘provincial’ locations
Work for the Dole	\$2,000*

\*An ACOSS figure from 1999-2000 financial year.

## 5.4 THE CASE FOR URGENT ACTION

One reason for urgent action is that the Federal Government's major mentoring activity – Mentor Marketplace Program – is due to cease in June 2009. It is recommended, as a minimum, that funding for this program be applied to the national strategy recommended in this business case, with an explicit focus on school students. A carefully targeted and focused strategy will have greater impact than the diffuse activities supported under the current program. The major justification for this refocus is that school based mentoring provides a more powerful early intervention impact than later age interventions.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> While at school, young people are a captive audience. This is the time in their lives when they can easily be given the support they need to prepare for life after school. A school focus is also more closely aligned to a range of national goals around skills and education for young people.



# 6. BUSINESS CASE FOR DEVELOPING A NATIONAL SCHOOL BASED MENTORING STRATEGY: A 10 POINT PLAN

The following recommendations suggest a way forward for scaling up a national school based mentoring effort.

## 6.1 STRENGTHENING NATIONAL POLICY SETTINGS AND LEADERSHIP

**Recommendation 1:** That a national school based mentoring strategy be developed as a platform for significant government investment in the capacity to offer school based mentoring to young people with the aim to:

- provide more young people with support to develop their resilience, and
- directly assist young people at important transition points in their lives.

Australia needs an agreed, comprehensive and clearly articulated national mentoring policy that drives our collective activity across school, youth, employment, health and other related policies.<sup>lxxxv</sup> Mentoring should be seen as an important element in the national education agenda for the 21st century.

**Recommendation 2:** That a core principle of the strategy be early intervention, assisting young people to cope successfully with school and to complete a Year 12 qualification or its equivalent.

Schooling is a crucial element of the lives of young people. However a significant number of young people are not thriving in school. School based mentoring aims to establish a clear preventive platform in order to build a resilient population of school children who will go on to complete an appropriate level of qualification. A school focus is also more closely aligned to a range of national goals around skills and education for young people.

**Recommendation 3:** That the Federal Government take a leadership role in promoting school based mentoring.

Given the significance of school completion to national economic and social goals, it is appropriate for the Federal Government to assume a leadership role in

these activities. In addition to funding support, it is recommended the Federal Government's leadership role extend to such activities as:<sup>lxxxvi</sup>

- Promoting a broader concept of mentoring for young people by encouraging and supporting cross-sectoral and cross portfolio approaches to mentoring.
- Integrating and expanding mentoring possibilities into existing community building, youth development, early intervention and learning communities' frameworks.
- Ensuring education, training and employment policies are in place which support mentoring of young people in community and other settings as a key element.
- Considering tax incentives for businesses to become involved in mentoring partnerships.
- Undertaking campaigns to promote better understanding of mentoring in the community such as a National Youth Mentoring Week.
- Recognising and promoting the intergenerational benefits of mentoring young people, including its potential to increase understanding and communication, and promote common bonds between generations.
- Exploring ways of providing incentives, including tax incentives, for retirees to become involved in mentoring programs.
- Encouraging government employees to become youth mentors.

## 6.2 INCREASING GOVERNMENT FUNDING

**Recommendation 4:** That funding for school based mentoring provision be scaled up to a target of 10 per cent of the current Grade Six student population – a total investment of \$115.3 million over five years, of which \$112.5 million directly supports some 75,000 mentor matches and the remaining \$2.8 million funds

the Youth Mentoring Network (YMN) to undertake program coordinator and mentor development, research, and general support of the mentoring sector. A genuine federalist approach should be adopted with an appropriate mix of state and federal funding and other forms of support.

As argued in this business case, current government funding for school based mentoring is minimal and tenuous.

Table 6.1 estimates the cost of implementing a scaled up national school based mentoring strategy over five years, including support for the Youth Mentoring Network. This strategy would, over five years, result in 75,000 young people being matched with a mentor at a total cost of \$115.3 million.

**TABLE 6.1: Proposed Five Year Implementation Budget**

Financial Year	Number of mentoring pairs	Budget Component				
		Associated costs	Coordinator & Mentor Development	Research	Networking, Tools & Resources	Total
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2009 - 2010	5,000	7,500	250	100	150	8,000
2010 - 2011	10,000	15,000	200	100	200	15,000
2011 - 2012	15,000	22,500	200	100	250	23,050
2012 - 2013	20,000	30,000	200	100	300	30,600
2013 - 2014	25,000	37,500	200	100	350	38,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>112,500</b>	<b>1,050</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>115,300</b>

Budget components in Table 6.1 are as follows:

- **Associated costs** – Financial support for mentoring programs based on costs of \$1500 per match, or per student mentee per annum, which includes recruitment, screening, training, travelling, and matching processes in line with the National Youth Mentoring Benchmarks 2007 (Appendix E).
- **Coordinator and Mentor Development** – Financial support for the professional development of program coordinators and mentors in line with the National Youth Mentoring Benchmarks 2007 and international standards on effective mentoring practice. Support of mentor associations including the NSW Active Retirees and Mentors Inc.
- **Research** – Increased research and evaluation of mentoring programs and practice to determine maximum impact.
- **Networking, Tools and Resources** – Financial support for the Youth Mentoring Network to enable it to continue to provide tools, resources, networking forums and support to practitioners and

mentors, and to continue to build good practice within the mentoring sector.

As noted earlier, the Federal Government's major mentoring activity – Mentor Marketplace Program – is due to cease in June 2009. As part of Recommendation 4 above, it is recommended, as a minimum, that funding for this program be applied to the national school based mentoring program strategy.

### 6.3 IMPROVING PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

**Recommendation 5:** That funding support for individual mentoring programs be on a minimum of three year funding cycles. Sustainability rests on factors such as adequate funding over an extended period in order to build and maintain a pool of effective mentors, as well as providing the opportunity for long term relationships to develop.

This business case recommends that funding support for mentoring programs be on a minimum of three year cycles to promote certainty and stability in the crucial 'brokerage' role played by these programs in



harnessing community volunteer mentors on behalf of schools and students.

Funding arrangements need to acknowledge the time and resources required to establish strong and viable networks including school–community links. Mentoring program coordinators' time is better spent on developing and managing their programs rather than constantly seeking funding opportunities.

The body in charge of administering funding for new mentoring programs should work collaboratively with the Youth Mentoring Network in an advisory capacity when making allocations to specific programs.

**Recommendation 6:** That funding for school based mentoring programs be considered on the basis of a minimum duration for mentoring relationships of 9–12 months (one school year).

Mentoring, as a medium for relationship building, should be long term. The research literature suggests a minimum of 12 months to achieve longer term benefits.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Evidence also indicates longer term matches and closer relationships are associated with stronger impacts.<sup>lxxxviii</sup>

**Recommendation 7:** That expansion of mentoring programs be undertaken in a measured, incremental approach, building on effective practice and existing infrastructure.

Scaling up should build on quality programs that are already operational. In addition, it is essential that high quality benchmarks be mandatory for new programs (see Recommendation 10). Without careful screening, training, monitoring and support for longer term mentoring relationships, the benefits will not be reaped. Mentoring program coordinators will need training and professional development.

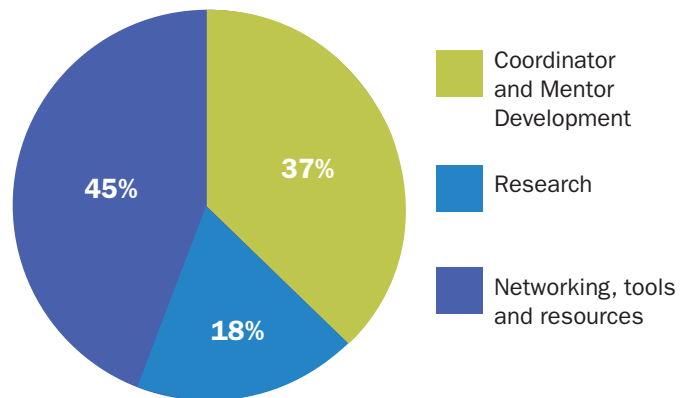
## 6.4 UNDERSTANDING AND PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

**Recommendation 8:** That an evaluation framework be established that encourages and supports consistent, coherent, and user-friendly approaches to evaluating mentoring programs.

There is a need for better evaluation of Australian mentoring programs. Australia lacks in-depth longitudinal, multi-site studies of the benefits of mentoring. In the main, the lack of effective evaluation is due to a lack of resources – time and funding (note

budget allocated for research in Table 6.1). There is a need for stronger evaluation frameworks and more consistent data reporting. Under such a framework, support, guidance and tools should be developed for evaluation so that consistent and meaningful data can be aggregated across programs. Evaluation activities should build on emerging partnership models (e.g. between education departments, universities and other relevant programs) and follow emerging good practice.

### Where the money to support the Youth Mentoring Network will be spent over 5 years



**Recommendation 9:** That the Youth Mentoring Network be supported as a significant catalyst for developing and sustaining quality practice, drawing together mentoring groups across Australia. This should be funded directly by the Federal Government as per Recommendation 4.

The National Youth Mentoring Network (YMN)<sup>lxxxix</sup> commenced in 2005 as a partnership between key non-profit organisations involved in mentoring and the Federal Government. YMN works with a broad range of youth mentoring organisations and practitioners to foster the growth and development of the mentoring sector. It also supports a number of state and regional mentoring networks.<sup>xc</sup>

The Youth Mentoring Network supports high quality mentoring programs for young people in Australia through providing a national base of collaboration, support, guidance and expertise. YMN promotes adoption of high quality program standards, disseminates research and resources, and conducts training for program coordinators. Since its public launch on March 9, 2006 the YMN has achieved the following:

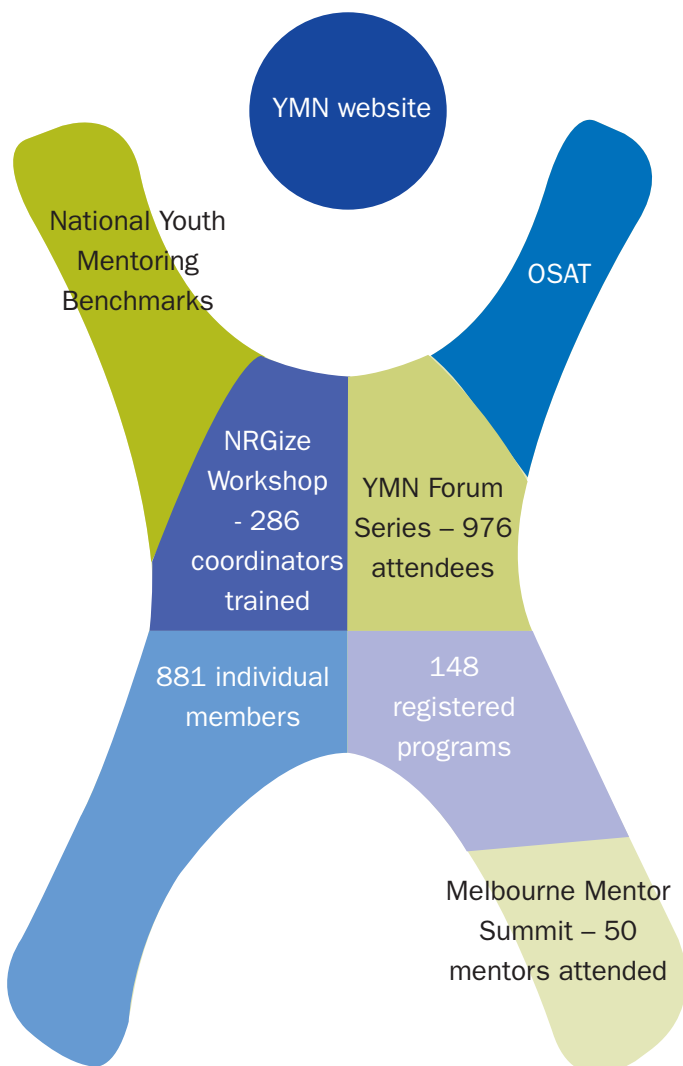
- Launch of the Youth Mentoring Network website

– An Australian hub for quality youth mentoring research, tools and resources.

- Creation of the National Youth Mentoring Benchmarks where over 500 practitioners participated in the consultation process;
- Development of the Online Self Assessment Tool (OSAT) to assist youth mentoring organisations to achieve each of the benchmark indicators. This tool also provides access to a specific support resource for each of the 59 indicators;
- 286 program coordinators have been trained through its NRGize *Kick-starting and strengthening your mentoring program* workshops;

### Youth Mentoring Network's Achievements to date

Since its public launch on March 9, 2006 the YMN has achieved the following:



“Why does mentoring work? Because the nature of the relationship is unique. It’s not about authority or discipline, so kids are relating in a different kind of way. Schools have seen their most difficult kids respond in ways which are positive and engaged. They become more positive and helpful. This affects their schooling, their home and their social life. We have seen dramatic turnarounds in the students. The key issue is that they have had someone who listens and cares.”

Paul Stewart, Program Coordinator, **Mentor-One**, BoysTown, QLD

- 976 people have attended the YMN Forum Series across the country;
- 881 current individual members;
- 148 programs currently registered on the National Youth Mentoring database<sup>xcii</sup>;
- 50 mentors attended the inaugural annual Mentor Summit in Melbourne in 2008.

In addition, the YMN publishes a monthly newsletter and has a strong online presence with a listing on internet search engines such as Google and Yahoo.

**Recommendation 10:** That program funding be conditional on mentoring programs being aligned with the Youth Mentoring Network’s National Benchmarks developed in 2007.

This paper recommends that, in order to ensure mentoring programs are of a high standard and achieve the best possible outcomes for young people, all funding for mentoring programs be aligned with adoption of the Youth Mentoring Network’s National Benchmarks developed in 2007.<sup>xciii</sup> The benchmarks outline detailed guidelines around:

1. Program design and planning
2. Program evaluation
3. Organisational governance and management, and
4. Program operations.

YMN (and other agencies) also provide detailed resources to support practice underneath these headings. The benchmarks are voluntary however programs are encouraged to complete the Online Self Assessment Tool (OSAT) at regular intervals to gauge how well they are meeting each of the benchmark indicators.

The first set of Australian Benchmarks for *Effective and Responsible Mentoring Programs* were developed in June 2000 when mentoring was a reasonably new strategy in Australia. YMN revised the benchmarks in 2007 and was able to build on the earlier standards but also take into account the experience and research in Australia over the last seven years. They have been collaboratively refined and elaborated by a representative group of Australian practitioners and researchers and were part of a public consultation where over 500 practitioners contributed to the final standards.

**It is now time to expand support for school based mentoring in Australia.**



# Appendix A: The Smith Family's iTrack e-mentoring program

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The Smith Family's **iTrack** online mentoring program supports secondary high school students in Years 9, 10 and 11 with their transition from school into work or further education. Students are selected from identified schools in low socioeconomic status areas and are matched with a professional volunteer mentor who is able to discuss a range of personal and career-related decisions and topics during a weekly one hour iTrack online chat session.

The opportunity to build a trusting relationship with an adult other than a teacher or parent through iTrack does not only prompt students to start thinking early about their potential career pathways, subject selection and educational opportunities, it also boosts their self-esteem, improves their social skills and allows them to get an insight into life and workplaces outside of their communities. Communicating online with a mentor helps students to develop their computer literacy and Internet and online communication technology skills.

The iTrack online mentoring program runs in schools in low socioeconomic status areas across Australia in Terms 2 and 3 for a duration of 19 weeks. Mentors are recruited from among The Smith Family's corporate partners and are professionally screened and trained prior to commencing the role. For duty of care reasons all conversations between students and mentors are monitored by The Smith Family's mentoring team. In some locations mentors and students also meet face to face in supervised and facilitated group sessions three times during the program.

Since starting as a pilot program in 2003, feedback from participating schools, students, mentors and corporate partners about iTrack has been highly positive. Inspired by the impact iTrack has had among their Year 10 students, Chester Hill High School in Sydney's Western Suburbs has successfully attracted a second mentoring program targeted at their Year 9 students. Another participating school has recently nominated The Smith Family's iTrack online mentoring program for an award recognising outstanding youth mentoring programs.

## Participant comments from the 2008 program:

- It was great to have someone to look up to and help me make tough decisions and give advice about my career.
- It was great to hear other people's advice and have my mentor help me out; therefore I am one step closer to knowing what I want to do when I finish school! Through iTrack I learned how to be enthusiastic, optimistic, understanding, more confident, happy and know what my future career is going to be.

*In October 2007 The Smith Family compiled a comprehensive evaluation report about iTrack entitled "Connecting for Careers", which is available on The Smith Family's website at [http://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/webdata/resources/files/iTrack\\_Yourh\\_Mentoring\\_Program\\_Oct07.pdf](http://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/webdata/resources/files/iTrack_Yourh_Mentoring_Program_Oct07.pdf)*

# Appendix B: Snapshot of Australian school based mentoring programs

Program	Program Location	Form	Student Age	Purpose	Location of Sessions	Duration of Mentoring
Plan It Youth Programs (mostly NSW)	Various locations	One-to-one	13-18 years old	Transition to work, Career	School grounds	3-12 months
Sunshine Coast Mentoring Program	Maroochydore QLD	One-to-one	13-15 years old	Friendship & support	School grounds	6-12 months
iTrack	Parramatta NSW	e-Mentoring	13-15 years old	Transition to work	Online/Virtual	3-6 months
The School Volunteer Program	Various WA	One-to-one	5-17 years old	Education, life skills	School grounds	12-18 months
Kids Hope AUS	Burwood East VIC	One-to-one	Less than 12 years old	Social, emotional and academic development	School grounds	18-24 months
GR8Mates	Penrith NSW	One-to-one	14-16 years old	Education, Life transitions, Transition to work, Career	School grounds	6-12 months
Standing Tall school-based mentoring program	Hamilton VIC	One-to-one	8-18 years old	At risk of leaving school early, not reaching their potential	School grounds	12-18 months
Mentor-one	Capalaba QLD	One-to-one	13-18 years old	Education, Life transitions, Transition to work, (other) Personal support	Program location, School grounds, Community centre	12 months
Youth Mentor Assisted Pathways (YMAP)	Kensington VIC	One-to-one	13-18 years old	Life Transitions, Transition to work, Career	School grounds	Less than 3 months
Fraser Coast Youth Mentoring Program	Hervey Bay QLD	One-to-one, group	5-18 years old	Education, Life transitions	School grounds, program location, community organisations	6-12 months
The Smith Family Learning for Life Mentor Program	Dubbo NSW	One-to-one	13-15 years old	Education	School grounds	3-6 months
DECS Student Mentoring Program	Various SA locations	One-to-one	15-20 years old	Education, Life transitions, Transition to work, Career	School grounds	6-12 months
Oakbank Community Mentoring Program	Oakbank SA	One-to-one	12-14 years old	Education, School retention	School grounds	12-18 months
Cairns Youth Mentoring Network	Cairns	One to one	12-21 years old	Friendship & support	School grounds, Community locations	6 months

# Appendix C: General findings from the research and evaluation literature on the benefits school based mentoring

Benefit	Measure	References
Social and emotional wellbeing	Improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem	King et al 2002, DuBois et al 2002, Karcher and Herrera 2008, Karcher 2008, Crul 2002 MacCallum and Beltman 1999
	Less depressed	King et al 2002
Peer relationships and social skills	Improvement in peer relations and feelings of connectedness to peers	Curtis and Hansen-Schwoebel 1999, King et al 2002, Herrera 2004, Karcher and Herrera 2008
	Behave better with peers at school	MacCallum and Beltman 1999 Herrera et al 2007
	Social support from friends	Karcher and Herrera 2008
Behaviour	Less likely to fight with peers	Herrera 2004 <sup>1</sup> , Herrera et al 2007, Portwood et al 2005, King et al 2002
	Less bullying	King et al 2002
School attendance	Miss fewer days and fewer classes, less likely to skip school	Herrera et al 2007
School 'connectedness'	Positive feelings and attitudes towards school	Herrera 2004, King et al 2002, Hamilton et al 2006, Portwood et al 2005
	Feel more competent academically	Herrera et al 2007
School completion		Lamb and Rice 2008 <sup>1</sup> Sinclair et al 2005 <sup>1</sup>
Academic performance	Academic performance generally. Performance in science, written and oral language. Quality of class work. Number of assignments turned in	Portwood et al 2005, Herrera et al 2007
	More impact on students with low scores to begin with	Portwood et al 2005
	Increased motivation to study	Herrera et al 2007 Karcher and Herrera 2008
	Improved classroom behaviour Reduction in serious infractions	Herrera 2004, Dappern and Isernhagen 2004 Herrera et al 2007
Resilience	Opportunities for development of relationships with caring adults, networks with peers and others, and individual competencies	Beltman and MacCallum 2006 <sup>1</sup>
Improvements for indigenous students	Sustaining student attendance	MacCallum, Beltman, Palmer, Ross, Tero 2004 (from an evaluation of mentoring projects across 53 school sites were involved in mentoring programs delivered by 11 different service providers)
	Strengthening participation in school activities	
	Building self confidence	
	Opening access between schools and indigenous families Building connections between schools and the broader community	
Destinations and school retention	School retention and successful destinations	Carbines et al ( 2007 (Erebus evaluation of Plan-It Youth Programs in NSW)
	More informed decisions about education/work pathways	MacCallum and Beltman 1999 Lamb and Rice, 2008
Goal setting		Portwood et al 2005

<sup>1</sup>The Youth Mentoring Network supports funding of programs for a minimum of three years.

## Appendix D: Aggregated Destinations Data for 2006 Students Participating in Plan-It Youth

Destination	Illawarra	Sydney	South Western Sydney	New England	Riverina	Western	North Coast	Hunter/Central Coast	Total (No.)	Total (%)
Still in school Year 9	0	5	3	0	0	0	22	2	32	5.3
Still in school Year 10	32	0	16	16	8	4	34	148	252	42.1
Still in school Year 11	25	13	27	37	29	19	3	16	169	28.2
Still in school Year 12	0	0	7	3	0	0	2	0	12	2.0
P/T TAFE	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	0.5
F/T TAFE	3	0	4	3	6	1	0	1	18	3.0
Further study-private provider	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	5	0.8
Employment-Traineeship	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0.3
Employment-Apprenticeship	4	0	11	4	1	1	0	5	25	4.2
Employment-F/T no study	6	0	4	1	1	0	0	7	19	3.2
Combination P/T employment and TAFE	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
Employment – F/T casual	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.2
Employment – P/T or casual	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	9	1.5
Unemployed/job seeking	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	6	1.0
Left area/ Interstate	1	2	2	0	2	0	0	2	9	1.5
Lost contact or still trying to contact	0	2	1	2	3	0	21	7	36	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Plan-It Youth Regional Coordinator Annual Reports. Data gathered in March 2007

# Appendix E: National Youth Mentoring Benchmarks

## Benchmarks

### 1. Program design and planning

Good planning leads to informed decision making. Taking adequate time to consult, design and plan is essential for an effective and achievable program. To maximise the likelihood of success a time frame between 3 months and 12 months is common for the planning phase.

Key elements of design and planning:

- a. Clear program parameters (e.g. target groups, program structure, stakeholders).
- b. Consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- c. Program management guidelines that include governance structures, policies and procedures and financial commitment.
- d. Recruitment of a skilled paid coordinator.
- e. Detailed action plan for program implementation which includes recruitment, selection and screening, training and development, matching, monitoring and support and closure.
- f. A systematic plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the program and ongoing refinement.

### 2. Program evaluation

Evaluation allows judgement of whether the program is meeting its stated objectives and provides opportunities for program improvement. An evaluation process must be designed before the program commences and should be reviewed and assessed as the program develops.

Key elements of program evaluation:

- a. A commitment to ongoing evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the program.
- b. A dedicated budget for evaluation (e.g. for consultant or tools).
- c. An evaluation team that has accountability and transparency, representative of all relevant

stakeholders, to oversee the evaluation process.

- d. Clearly defined outcomes which reflect the mission & objectives of the program.
- e. A clear plan to assess program outcomes.
- f. A clear plan to assess program processes (e.g. policy, training, selection, support).
- g. Evaluation tools (e.g. surveys, focus groups, program documents) that collect both qualitative and quantitative data.
- h. A clear system to collate, analyse and interpret data.
- i. Findings that are reported to all relevant stakeholders.
- j. A plan to incorporate the evaluation findings.

### 3. Organisational governance and management

A well managed mentoring program requires a management infrastructure underpinned by well developed and targeted organisational policies and practices.

Key elements of organisational governance and management:

- a. Clear mission and vision statements.
- b. A clear statement of purpose for effective mentoring incorporating values and principles underpinning the program.
- c. A strategic alignment with the organisation's mission and vision.
- d. Policies and procedures which address:
  - legal responsibilities
  - insurance (including volunteer insurance)
  - privacy and confidentiality
  - O.H.S (including harassment)
  - risk management and duty of care
  - child safety policy and practice standards
  - values and ethics



- grievance
  - operational management
  - rights and responsibilities
  - employment and industrial issues.
- e. A suitable governance structure (e.g. board of directors, management committee or steering committee) that is responsible for the accountability of the program.
- f. An advisory group that has a focus on implementing and reviewing ongoing development of the mentoring program.
- g. A comprehensive information management system inline with the organisation's policies that includes:
- financial records
  - personnel records
  - program activity
  - evaluation data.
- h. A strategy to support program sustainability that includes:
- collaborative alliances/arrangements (e. g. training and sharing of resources)
  - long term and diverse funding and support
  - high public profile members from the local community.
- i. A staff development and support plan
- j. An established public relations/communications plan that:
- includes a marketing plan
  - gathers feedback from all stakeholders
  - develops partnerships and collaborations with other organisations
  - recognises mentors, mentees, other program participants, funding bodies and organisations that sponsor mentoring programs
  - includes a promotions and marketing kit (e.g. pamphlets, DVDs, website etc).

1. Recruitment
2. Selection and screening
3. Training and development
4. Creating the match
5. Monitoring and supporting the match
6. Closing the match

**N.B. These principals apply to all forms of mentoring including e-mentoring.**

#### 4.1 Recruitment

A recruitment strategy needs to consider both mentors and mentees.

High quality mentors are a vital element of a successful program. A planned and targeted recruitment strategy is essential for attracting and retaining appropriate mentors who meet the needs of the program.

Mentoring may not be appropriate for all young people. A planned and targeted recruitment strategy is required for selecting mentees in accordance with the program objectives.

Key elements of recruitment of mentors and mentees:

- a. A targeted recruitment strategy that includes:
  - identification of target markets
  - a marketing plan
  - ongoing marketing and public relations in accordance with the identified purposes and participants of the program.
- b. Provision of program information that includes:
  - role expectations
  - time commitment
  - duration of the relationship
  - selection and screening processes
  - training and development requirements
  - matching processes
  - monitoring and support offered by the program
  - closure procedures.

#### 4. Program operations

There are six core practice areas for mentoring programs that require defined operating principles:

## 4.2 Selection and screening

To ensure the safety and security of mentors and mentees a responsible mentoring program must have a documented and comprehensive selection and screening process.

Key elements of selection and screening:

- a. A formal application and assessment process.
- b. Face to face interview of mentors.
- c. A minimum of two referee checks.
- d. Adherence to all relevant Federal, State and Territory legislation.
- e. Relevant State and Territory child protection/ safety checks for all prospective mentors of young people.
- f. A national criminal history check for prospective mentors.
- g. A willingness of prospective mentors to participate in training and development.

## 4.3 Training and development

Training and development provides an opportunity for mentors to develop appropriate skills and knowledge to adequately prepare them to commence their role. Opportunities for additional training and development are important to support the ongoing needs of the mentor, the mentee and the relationship.

Key elements of training and development:

- a. An information session for mentors and 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 (e.g. time, energy, flexibility)
  - confidentiality and liability information
  - do's and don'ts of relationship management
  - boundaries and limitations for the contact between mentors and mentees
  - identification of the benefits and recognition available to mentors from involvement in the program

- a written summary of program policies, procedures and guidelines.
- b. An effective training program for mentors that includes:
  - skilled and experienced trainers
  - mentor training materials that are adapted to address the issues most relevant to the program, the mentees who participate and the mentors, including:
    - definitions
    - roles, responsibilities and expectations
    - ethics and values
    - cultural and social sensitivity, including acceptance of individual differences
    - youth development and related issues
    - development of the mentoring relationship
    - suggestions for mentoring activities
    - setting of personal boundaries and parameters
    - crisis management and problem solving
    - conflict resolution
    - communication and interpersonal skills
    - explanation of confidentiality, duty of care and legislated child protection responsibilities
    - resources and referral points for other support services.
  - ongoing skill development as appropriate.

## 4.4 Creating the match

A well-planned matching process confirms the roles, responsibilities and expectations of both parties and increases the likelihood of a successful relationship.

Key elements of matching:

- a. Well defined criteria for matching, linking program's statement of purpose and eligibility.
- b. Personal profiles of both mentors and mentees to inform the match.
- c. Clearly articulated and defined matching processes.
- d. An understanding and agreement by all stakeholders (mentors, mentees, parents/

caregivers) of the terms and conditions of program participation.

#### 4.5 Monitoring and supporting the match

Monitoring and supporting the match assists to motivate and guide the relationship. It provides opportunities for constructive feedback and assists risk management and quality assurance procedures.

Key elements of monitoring and supporting the match:

- a. Appropriate and safe locations for the mentor and mentee to meet.
- b. A process to review relationship expectations.
- c. Opportunities for regular scheduled feedback, debriefing, troubleshooting and support.
- d. Contact made by the program, at least monthly, to monitor the frequency of meetings.
- e. Contact made by the program, at least quarterly, to review the quality of the relationship.
- f. Training and development which meets the identified needs of the mentors (such as guest speakers, networking and peer support).
- g. Recognition of the mentor's contribution.
- h. Recognition of the mentee's participation and achievements.
- i. Assistance for mentors and mentees who are experiencing difficulties within the relationship.
- j. Written records of all contact between program personnel and mentor/mentee.
- k. A process for managing grievances, recognition, re-matching, interpersonal problem solving and premature termination of the mentoring relationship.
- l. Record/monitor transcripts from e-mentoring sessions.
- m. Appropriate support resources and materials for the professional development of the mentor (e.g. fact sheets).

#### 4.6 Closing the match

To signal an appropriate end to the formal relationship and for safety, legal and professional reasons, all stakeholders must clearly understand when the relationship ends.

Key elements of closing the match:

- a. Recognition of participation (e.g. celebration event, certificates).
- b. A formal closure policy with clear procedures for exiting the program and future contact (e.g. formal letter, exit interviews or debriefing).
- c. Notification to all relevant stakeholders of the closure of the match (e.g. parents/guardians, teachers, principals etc).
- d. An exit process for those who wish to terminate the relationship prematurely.
- e. A transition policy to assist mentees to define the next steps to continue achieving personal goals.

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# Endnotes

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- i. Walker 2007
- ii. Lamb 2004, Curtis McMillan 2008, Australian Industry Group and Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2007, Australian Scholarships Group 2007, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2008
- iii. Eldridge 2001 p87
- iv. Herrera et al 2007 p68
- v. The National Youth Mentoring Network commenced in 2005 as a partnership between four non-profit organisations involved with mentoring – The Smith Family, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, Big Brothers Big Sisters Australia and Job Futures, and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. <http://www.youthmentoring.com.au>.
- vi. Australian Industry Group and Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2007 p20
- vii. The \$74,000 figure is from a 1999 study, and would be much higher now (Dusseldorp Skills Forum and National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling 1999)
- viii. Applied Economics
- ix. Tobin 2004
- x. The Learning Assistance Program commenced in Adelaide in 1976
- xi. In the United States, school based mentoring is the fastest growing form of mentoring when compared to community based mentoring or work based mentoring. In 1999 there were 27,000 school based mentoring relationships in the United States, and by 2007 the number had increased to 126,000 (Herrera et al 2007, Karcher 2008).
- xii. It should be noted that some State Governments have supported structured mentoring programs. For example, the NSW Department of Education and Training has supported the development of Plan-It Youth since 2001.
- xiii. Australian Industry Group and Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2007 pp16-17
- xiv. Lamb and Rice 2008 argue that early intervention works best. They undertook an intensive study of 25 Victorian schools, finding that “The most effective schools in the study were proactive in their approach to students, identifying problems at an early stage in their secondary school careers and working to address them before students had become disengaged”. p37
- xv. It should be noted that some mentoring programs have demonstrated positive outcomes over a shorter period of time.
- xvi. Herrera et al 2007 p9
- xvii. Australian Industry Group and Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2007 p20
- xviii. In May 2004, Big Brothers Big Sisters, The Smith Family and Dusseldorp Skills Forum published “Young People and Mentoring: Towards a National Strategy”. Some of their recommendations have been incorporated into this business case.
- xix. See funding estimates Table 6.1.
- xx. It should be noted that some mentoring programs have demonstrated success over a shorter period of time. But evidence does indicate that longer term matches and closer relationships are associated with stronger impacts. (Herrera et al 2007 p9)
- xxi. Available at <http://www.youthmentoring.com.au/benchmarks.php>
- xxii. 82% of students in one program specifically rated “Having an adult to talk to who is not a parent or a teacher” as a benefit (The Smith Family 2007 p38)
- xxiii. See definitions of mentoring available at <http://www.youthmentoring.com.au/mentors.php#factsheets>
- xxiv. Hartley 2004 at <http://www.thesmithfamily.com.au/index.cfm?pageid=2608&pid=2535/>
- xxv. Available at <http://www.deewr.gov.au>
- xxvi. Mentoring was recognised on a significant scale with the ALP 2004 election policy that promised to invest \$33.1 million over four years into mentoring programs, the Buddy Up program and initiatives to get more men in schools and give more boys more contact with strong male role models. Latham 2004

- xxvii. Australian Labor Party : ALP National Platform and Constitution 2007 Chapter 4, Policy 22
- xxviii. Australian Labor Party : ALP National Platform and Constitution 2007, Chapter 4 Policy 38
- xxix. Australian Labor Party : ALP National Platform and Constitution 2007 Chapter 4, Policies 44 and 45
- xxx. Council of Australian Governments' Meeting 29 November 2008 – Attachment B – Productivity Agenda. Available at [http://www.coag.gov.au/coag\\_meeting\\_outcomes/2008-11-29/attachments.cfm#attachmentb](http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2008-11-29/attachments.cfm#attachmentb)
- xxxi. Broadbent et al 2008
- xxxii. LEAPS (Law firms Encouraging and Assisting Promising Students) is a mentoring program that has been run in partnership between the NSW Department of Education and various legal firms since 2002. Under this program, Year Nine school students spend two mornings 'shadowing' their mentor in their offices, followed by a team-building excursion with their mentors and then fortnightly trips to visit their mentors in the city for lunch and interactive group mentoring sessions for the remainder of the school year. These interactive sessions take place during lunchtime every fortnight during the school term. The sessions are held at the office of the legal firms. Carbines et al (Erebus Report) 2007 p70, and advice from Trish Kochany, NSW Department of Education and Training.
- xxxiii. Available at [http://www.premier.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/mediareleases/2009/January/090128\\_Raising\\_the\\_school\\_leaving\\_age.pdf](http://www.premier.nsw.gov.au/pdfs/mediareleases/2009/January/090128_Raising_the_school_leaving_age.pdf)
- xxxiv. Available at <http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/news/announcements/yr2009/jan/schoolage.php>
- xxxv. A pilot volunteer mentoring program to give recently retired professionals and tradespeople the chance to pass on their knowledge and skills to secondary students in Australian schools
- xxxvi. Available at <http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/docs/qcminformationpackages.pdf>
- xxxvii. LEAPS stands for 'Law firms Encouraging and Assisting Promising Students'
- xxxviii. This program was initiated by the Department of Family and Community Services in response to the "Footprints to the Future" report which found that all young people need "at least one adult to turn to who will reliably respond, provide support, and be a mentor." Eldridge 2001 p87
- xxxix. Relationships Forum Australia 2007
- xl. Australian Social Trends 4102.0 July 2008 Table 1 Family and Community National Summary, 1997-2007. The 2008 ARACY report on the Wellbeing of Australian Young People noted that Australian children were 12 times as likely to live in a jobless household as those in Japan p45
- xli. ARACY 2008 noted this unusual measure on sense of belonging (and compared Australia's lower rate to 89.41% in Hungary)
- xlii. Walker 2007 p8
- xliii. Blaber and Glazebrook 2007 p14. Note also the "Vulnerable Youth Framework Discussion" paper prepared by the Victorian Department of Human Services, 2008
- xliv. Blaber and Glazebrook 2007 p15
- xlv. Beltman and MacCallum 2006
- xlvi. Beltman and MacCallum 2006
- xlvii. Australian Industry Group and Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2007 p16
- xlviii. Access Economics 2005
- xlix. Professor Barry McGraw, former Director of Education at the OECD, in Council for the Australian Federation, The Future of Schooling in Australia, Federalist Paper No 2 2007
- I. Professor Barry McGraw, former Director of Education at the OECD, in Council for the Australian Federation, The Future of Schooling in Australia, Federalist Paper No 2 2007
- li. Access Economics 2005
- lii. Lamb 2004 p9-11, Lamb and Rice 2008 p4, p37
- liii. Rhodes 2001 p54
- liv. Tobin 2004
- lv. Australian Scholarships Group 2007
- lvi. ARACY 2008a p9
- lvii. Butler et al 2005 p5
- lviii. Compared to, for instance, community based mentoring, or work based mentoring. Herrera et al 2007, Karcher 2008
- lix. Herrera et al 2007 p3
- lx. Evaluation report and interview with World Vision's Coordinator

- lxi. Carbines et al (Erebus Report) 2007, p6
- lxii. Such as the Victorian 'Standing Tall' Program
- lxiii. The programs may be run through a range of hosting agencies: local youth welfare and community agencies; larger youth or welfare associations (e.g. YWCA, The Smith Family); industry education partnerships (especially in Victoria); schools; employer agencies; universities; and faith-based organisations.
- lxiv. A team of Victorian evaluators noted that "The case studies ...display a richness of informative qualitative information not able to be gleaned from more quantitative formats." Broadbent et al p16
- lxv. Carbines et al (Erebus Report) 2007 p8
- lxvi. Youth Mentor Assisted Pathways 2007 (unpublished)
- lxvii. MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership [http://www.mentoring.org/take\\_action/other/no\\_child\\_left\\_behind.php](http://www.mentoring.org/take_action/other/no_child_left_behind.php)
- lxviii. Email communication October 2008 from Megan Price, Strategy and Research, BoysTown.
- lxvix. See table in Carbines et al (Erebus Report) 2007 p41
- lxx. Data gathered from Plan-It Youth regional coordinators and reported in the Carbines et al (Erebus Report) 2007 p41
- lxxi. Carbines et al (Erebus Report) 2007 p13
- lxxii. Connecting for Careers, Report on the iTrack Mentoring Program, The Smith Family 2007 p38
- lxxiii. SCISCO Career pathways Site Coordinator Mentoring Review June 2008
- lxxiv. The evaluators collected data on participating children's engagement in the program and the impact on academic achievement and behaviour over the school year. The survey was distributed to 181 teachers at the conclusion of the school year and rated teacher perceptions of the child's progress, socially and academically. The evaluators tested for statistically significant changes for pre and post intervention scores (derived from teacher perception responses).
- lxxv. Data from the YMN's 2007 "Mentoring Matters" survey of registered school based mentoring programs.
- lxxvi. The Learning Assistance Program commenced in Adelaide in 1976.
- lxxvii. In the United States, school based mentoring is the fastest growing form of mentoring compared to, for instance, community based mentoring, or work based mentoring. In 1999 there were 27,000 school based mentoring relationships in the United States, and by 2007 the number had increased to 126,000 (Karcher and Herrera 2008).
- lxxviii. It should be noted that some State Governments have supported structured mentoring programs. For example, the NSW Department of Education and Training has supported the development of Plan-It Youth since 2001.
- lxxix. Australian Industry Group and Dusseldorp Skills Forum 2007 pp16-17
- lxxx. Dusseldorp Skills Forum and National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling 1999
- lxxxi. Access Economics 2005
- lxxxii. Various Dusseldorp Skills Forum analyses.
- lxxxiii. The Youth Pathways Program assists the 'most at-risk young people' to make a successful transition through to completion of Year 12 (or its equivalent) and ultimately, to further education, training or employment and active participation in the community. It supports young people aged 13 to 19 years old by providing intensive individualised assistance and support to help young people to make a successful transition.
- lxxxiv. Lamb and Rice 2008 argue that early intervention works best. They undertook an intensive study of 25 Victorian schools, finding that "The most effective schools in the study were proactive in their approach to students, identifying problems at an early stage in their secondary school careers and working to address them before students had become disengaged". p37
- lxxxv. Tobin 2004
- lxxxvi. In May 2004, Big Brothers Big Sisters, The Smith Family and Dusseldorp Skills Forum published "Young People and Mentoring: Towards a National Strategy". Some of their suggestions have been incorporated into this business case.
- lxxxvii. It should be noted that some mentoring programs have demonstrated positive outcomes over a shorter period of time.
- lxxxviii. Herrera et al 2007 p9

lxxxix. The National Youth Mentoring Partnership includes four not-for-profit organisations involved in mentoring – The Smith Family, Dusseldorp Skills Forum, Big Brothers Big Sisters Australia and Job Futures, and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. See <http://www.youthmentoring.com.au/>

xc. Including the Victorian Youth Mentoring Alliance (incorporated); Hunter Youth Mentoring Collaborative (incorporated); Macarthur Youth Mentoring Network; Youth Peer Education Mentoring Network (Western Sydney); South Australian Mentoring Network; and the Western Australian Mentoring Network.

xc. There were 168 programs registered on the database however 20 programs have closed due to termination of funding.

xcii. Available at <http://www.youthmentoring.com.au/benchmarks.php>



YOUTH MENTORING NETWORK

**Youth Mentoring Network**

Level 9

117 Clarence Street

Sydney

New South Wales

Australia

For further information on youth mentoring in Australia visit the Youth Mentoring Network website [youthmentoring.org.au](http://youthmentoring.org.au)