# Learning Cohort

## Launching a Mentoring Program
## For Youth in Foster Care

Session 3, May 17, 2024
Facilitator: Victoria Murray

# About Today's Session

❖ This webinar is being recorded.
  ➢ The full recording may be shared with those who are late registrants.
  ➢ An edited recording may be shared on SLM's Resources webpage at a later date.
❖ The slides from today's recording will be emailed to you after the session.
❖ Attendees are asked to use mute when not speaking.
  ➢ There is interactive discussion and Q&A time in between each content section.
❖ At any point in the webinar, feel free to type questions and comments in the Chat box or use reactions.

# Today's Facilitation

**Victoria Murray, LCSW**
(she/her/hers)
Technical Assistant Consultant
Webinar Instructor and Facilitator

**Liz Barker**
(she/her/hers)
Program Coordinator
Webinar Administrative Support

# Welcome and Introductions

❖ Please unmute and introduce yourself
  ➢ Name and pronouns
  ➢ From where are you joining us?
  ➢ Where are you on your journey to launching a mentoring program?
  ➢ What is one thing you hope to gain from this learning cohort?

# Agenda

| | |
|---|---|
| **12:00 - 12:10PM** | Welcome and Introductions |
| **12:10 - 12:15PM** | Overview of Trauma and Trauma Informed Practices |
| **12:15 - 12:25PM** | Standard 1: Matching and Initiating |
| **12:25 - 12:35PM** | Interactive Time: Activity #1 |
| **12:35 - 12:50PM** | Standard 2: Monitoring and Support |
| **12:50 - 1:00PM** | Interactive Time: Activity #2 |
| **1:00 - 1:10PM** | Standard 3: Closure |
| **1:10 - 1:20PM** | Interactive Time: Activity #3 |
| **1:20 - 1:30PM** | Closing |

# Learning Objectives

Strengthen familiarity, understanding, and engagement with the following Elements of Effective Mentoring Practice:

❏ Overview of Trauma and Trauma Informed Approaches

❏ Matching and initiating practices that support mentees and mentors

❏ Monitoring and support opportunities and practices that can increase communication and positive relationship building

❏ Closure considerations for when matches close expectedly and unexpectedly

# Understanding Trauma

**What is Trauma?**

*"Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being."*

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) (2015). Focal Point: Youth, Young Adults, & Mental Health. Trauma-Informed Care, v. 29.

1. <u>Event</u> - What happened

1. <u>Experience</u> - How one experiences an event

1. <u>Effects</u> - Can occur immediately or later on

# Trauma Informed Approaches

**Applying a Trauma-Informed Approach to Matching**

**1. Realization** - Basic understanding of trauma and its impacts

**2. Recognize** - Identify signs of trauma

**3. Responds** - Utilizing language and behavior that is supportive of possible trauma

**4. Resists Re-Traumatizing** - Trying to find pathways that do not recreate or trigger trauma

Resources:
- [A Trauma-Informed Guide for Working with Youth Involved in Multiple Systems](#)
- [Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach for Youth across Service Sectors](#)
- [Youth-Driven Conversation: Avoiding Some Common Mistakes](#)

# Standard 4: Matching and Initiating

Having established matching policies that support the unique experiences of youth impacted by foster care can:

- Decrease unmet expectations
- Establish clear boundaries for the mentee, mentor, and guardians
- Promote youth voice and choice
- Decrease the early termination of the match
- Promote collaboration

*"A trauma-informed approach involves a supportive collaborative response that is respectful of the youth and a family's race, culture, identity, and personal Preferences."*
https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/resource-guide/a-trauma-informed-guide-for-working-with-youth-involved-in-multiple-systems.pdf

# Matching Youth Impacted by Foster Care

| 1. Confirm with Mentor | 2. Confirm with Guardian | 3. Confirm with Youth |
| --- | --- | --- |

**1. Confirm with Mentor**

1. Is the mentor able to commit to the match at this time (consider travel to where mentee is located)?

1. What information do you share and not share about the mentee?

1. Are there any possible concerns/foreseeable disruptions that the mentor should make the program aware of before committing?

**2. Confirm with Guardian**

1. What information is shared about the mentor?

1. Does the guardian have questions/concerns about the potential match?

1. Does the guardian consent?

1. Discuss the best way to approach the mentee about the mentor.

**3. Confirm with Youth**

1. Connect with the mentee (and guardian if appropriate) to share information about the potential mentor.

1. What questions does the mentee have?

1. Be prepared for contingency planning if the mentee is unsure.

1. Be clear about the rights and opportunity for youth voice in this process.

![Silver Lining Mentoring logo]

# Scenario: Match Meeting

Mentee Daniela is a 10 y/o girl who has been living in a foster home for 6 months. Over the last year, she has moved across 4 different placements. Daniela likes drawing, painting her nails, and wants to be a singer when she grows up.

Mentor Jessica is 29 years old and was matched with Daniela as her mentor. Jessica loves cooking, listening to music, and craft activities. During their first meeting, Jessica was excited to meet Daniela, but Daniela appeared shy, quiet, and didn't say much during their meeting. Jessica worries that Daniela doesn't like her and that she might not be the best fit for the young person. She tells the program that she wonders if there is a mentor who would be a better fit for Daniela.

Question: How would you handle this situation, especially knowing that Daniela has experienced a lot of transition in the past year?

# Standard 5: Monitoring & Support

*"Monitor mentoring relationship milestones and child safety; and support matches through providing ongoing advice, problem-solving, training, and access to resources for the duration of each relationship."*

https://www.mentoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Final_Elements_Publication_Fourth-2.pdf

Considerations can include:

- What is the frequency of required contact between mentor and program, mentee and program, and guardian/caregivers and program
- What information are you gathering and how are you documenting info?
- What resources are available to the match?

# Monitoring & Support

- ❖ Building a relationship takes time
  - ➢ Resource: Overcoming Relationship Pitfalls
  - ➢ Resource: Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors
- ❖ Maintaining the relationship
  - ➢ Resource: Monitoring Risk After the Relationship is Made
  - ➢ Resource: Avoiding Early Match Termination
- ❖ Ongoing opportunities for support, training, and community building
  - ➢ Clear expectations on how and when mentors and the mentoring program are in communication
  - ➢ Programs can also provide periodic mentor training and support opportunities (peer support with other mentors, new articles, and videos that can support mentors in their role)
  - ➢ Community events for matches to engage with other matches in the community

# Monitoring & Support

**Common monitoring and support experiences:**

1. Lack of contact from a mentor

2. Lack of contact from a mentee

3. Difficulty scheduling

4. Mentors wondering if they are "good enough"

5. Mentee appears quiet

6. Clarifying policies/expectations

7. Obtaining permission from guardians for out of state travel, water activities, any activity that requires a waiver

# Interactive Time

Scenario:

Tyrone is a mentor (42 y/o) and has been a mentor to Sam (13 y/o) for 4 months. Tyrone has been a consistent, thoughtful, and communicative mentor. Tyrone sends your program an email to let you know how their last visit went and mentions that he and Sam had a great time going to Six Flags in another state. They went on one roller coaster 5 times! Now they are planning on going to a water park in the summer. Tyrone shares that has started to talk more on their visits together and is a great kid. He's so happy he chose to become a mentor.

- What strengths do you hear?
- What concerns/if any do you have? How might they be addressed?
- How might you respond to Tyrone's email to support the match moving forward?

# Standard 6: Closure

*Formal mentoring relationships do have an end, whether it is planned in the case of a time-limited program, or due to changing circumstances of either the mentor or mentee. Creating a process for match closure can turn the ending of the relationship into an opportunity for a "positive, if painful, learning experience" (Keller, 2005, p. 95). It can also help celebrate accomplishments of the mentee over the course of the program, and set the stage for any future informal friendship the pair might want to maintain.*

https://www.youthcollaboratory.org/resource/critical-elements-mentoring-0

# Standard 6: Closure

Why do matches close?

- Time limited mentoring (the mentoring relationship is for a set period of time)
- Lack of contact
- Life event (illness, moving, etc.)
- Unmet expectations
- Loss of interest

# Standard 6: Closure

When mentoring programs have identified closure practices and procedures, mentees and mentors can experience closure with greater support:

- Be **clear** about communication expectations
- Provide mentees with opportunities for **agency** and **choice**
- Have prepared **closure documentation** that is sent to all parties at time of closure. [Example document and letter  (p. 128-135)]

- Write a letter or card
- Hold a graduation or closure meeting with the program
- Provide supported opportunities to reflect, share, and talk
- Record a video or audio message
- Create a photo album or memory box

# Recommended Match Closures

Program has a procedure to manage **anticipated closures**, when members of the match are willing and able to engage in the closure process.

Program has a procedure to manage **unanticipated closures**, when members of the match are willing and able to engage in the closure process.

Program has a procedure to manage closure when one member of the match is unable or unwilling to engage in the closure process.

Program conducts **exit interview** with mentors and mentees, and when relevant, with parents or guardians.

Program has a written policy and procedure, when relevant, for managing **rematching**.

Program documents that closure procedures were followed.

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# Interactive Time

**Instructions:** 📝

- Click on the link in the chat to find the "Jamboard" page.
- On a "sticky note" please answer the following questions (you can add as many sticky notes as you would like)
- Please be prepared to discuss one of your contributions:

1. Why is a supportive and planned match closure important for youth impacted by foster care?
2. How can we provide mentees with supportive and planned match closures?

# Additional Resources

- ❖ **Silver Lining Institute: Resources for Mentoring Programs**
  - ➢ Fostering Progress Webinar: Match Closure
- ❖ **Matching and Initiating**
  - ➢ **Generic Mentoring Program Policy & Procedures Manual - Matching Procedure (p. 32-34)**
- ❖ **Monitoring and Support**
  - ➢ **Match Support Check-In Questions** (Scroll down to #4 to access the Word Doc)
- ❖ **Closure**
  - ➢ **When is it the right time to close a struggling match?**
  - ➢ **"They always come, and they never say goodbye": Healthy Closure in Mentoring** (Webinar and Slides)
  - ➢ **Generic Mentoring Program Policy and Procedure Manual (p. 128-136)**
  - ➢ **Closure Tools Provided by BBBS Massachusetts Bay**
- ❖ **General**
  - ➢ **Critical Mentoring by Torie Weiston-Serdan**

# Closing

**Next Session and Focus Group Reminders:**

Session 4: Evaluation, Resources and Sustainability with Christina Haines on **Friday, May 24, 2024, 12:00 -1:30PM EDT** via Zoom

*Zoom link will be emailed by Christina several days prior to the session*
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Focus Group is planned for **Friday, May 31, 2024, 12:00 - 1:00PM EDT** via Zoom