



Alberta
**Mentoring
Partnership**

Your Mentoring Resource

albertamentors.ca

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Children & Youth in Care and Mentoring

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Banff Mentoring Conference



Getting to know each other

- Who are you?
- Where are you from?
- Hoping to learn?
- Initial Questions?





Overview

- Evolution of initiative
- Benefits of mentoring
- Literature review
- Youth engagement - feedback from other groups
- Role of the Advisory Committee; Guiding principles (co-created)
- Developmental evaluation



Guiding Principles

- **Child and Youth-Focused**
- **Collaborative Relationships**
- **Responsive and Adaptive Journey**
- **Leading Practices**
- **Culturally Responsive**
- **Inclusive and Anti-Oppressive**
- **Strength-Based, Trauma-Informed, and Solution-Focused**



Foundations of Caregiver Support

- Child/Brain Development – The Core Story
- Trauma
- Grief and Loss
- Cultural connectedness





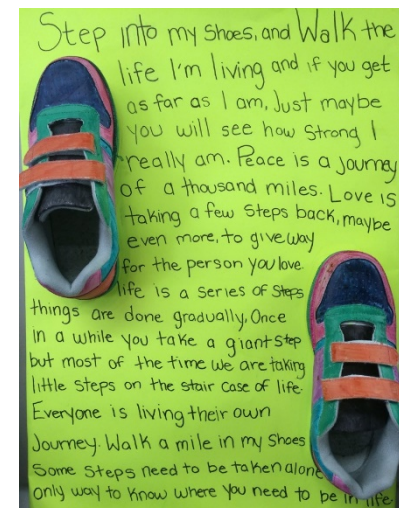
Site Perspectives

- Currently have 3 sites:
 - Calgary,
 - Edmonton
 - Red Deer

- # of matches



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Mentoring Practice

- Recruitment
- Screening
- Training
- Matching
- Monitoring & Support
- Match Closures/Graduation
- Guardian/Caregiver Involvement
- Connections with CFS





Mentors...In Their Own Words

“Some people might see youth in care and feel that is scary and that they may have to deal with nightmare situations. They are still just kids which makes it more rewarding. To look at her, the life she’s had, it blows my mind. She may be a brat sometimes, and tries to get kicked out of school for attention, but she still just wants love. I love being a mentor so far. I appreciate the resources they have given me and promptness in answering my question.”

“Our match is going well. My mentee is going through a really rough time and the training I received has been extremely helpful. I also know that I can call staff whenever needed. Most importantly, I know that I AM making a difference for my mentee and that makes all of my efforts so worthwhile!”



Mentees...In Their Own Words

“She doesn’t know my history, she didn’t get my file. I didn’t get her history. We are taking this journey together, learning and sharing. There is no business or agenda to take care of, my mentor is always there for me.” (Matched 8 months)

“My mentor is a support, someone who cares about me, we spoil each other. She is someone I can spend time with. With staff there are always boundaries, with my mentor I can be more open, have more fun, talk about things I can’t with others, it is a loving relationship, one that I know also has boundaries.” (Matched 4 months)



Lessons learned and outcome

- Youth resilience
- #
- Need advocates
- Strength based relationships
- Trust – impacts
- Knowledge of community resources





Advocacy

- Staff and Mentors
- Support from the Alberta Child and Youth Advocates
- Build problem solving & self advocacy skills
- Help to remove barriers to youth's goals



Transiency

- Changes frequent – Mentor consistent
- Communication as a challenge
- Mentors work to connect to safe places
- Family re-integration dynamics





Volunteer recruitment/ mentor background

Qualities of Effective Mentors

- Comfort with complexity
- Know “it’s not about them”
- Are flexible and non-judgemental
- Recognize that youth have challenging lives
- Have the ability to relate or have faced similar circumstances, and
- Know when to ask for assistance

Youth Identified Mentors

- Additional screening and support requirements
- Navigating roles and Boundaries



Group exercise

- Review the profiles of each mentor and identify the strengths and potential risks/challenges of each mentor.
- Review the profiles of each youth; identify their needs and which mentor you feel would be a good fit. Explain why and discuss potential areas of concern and support for each match.



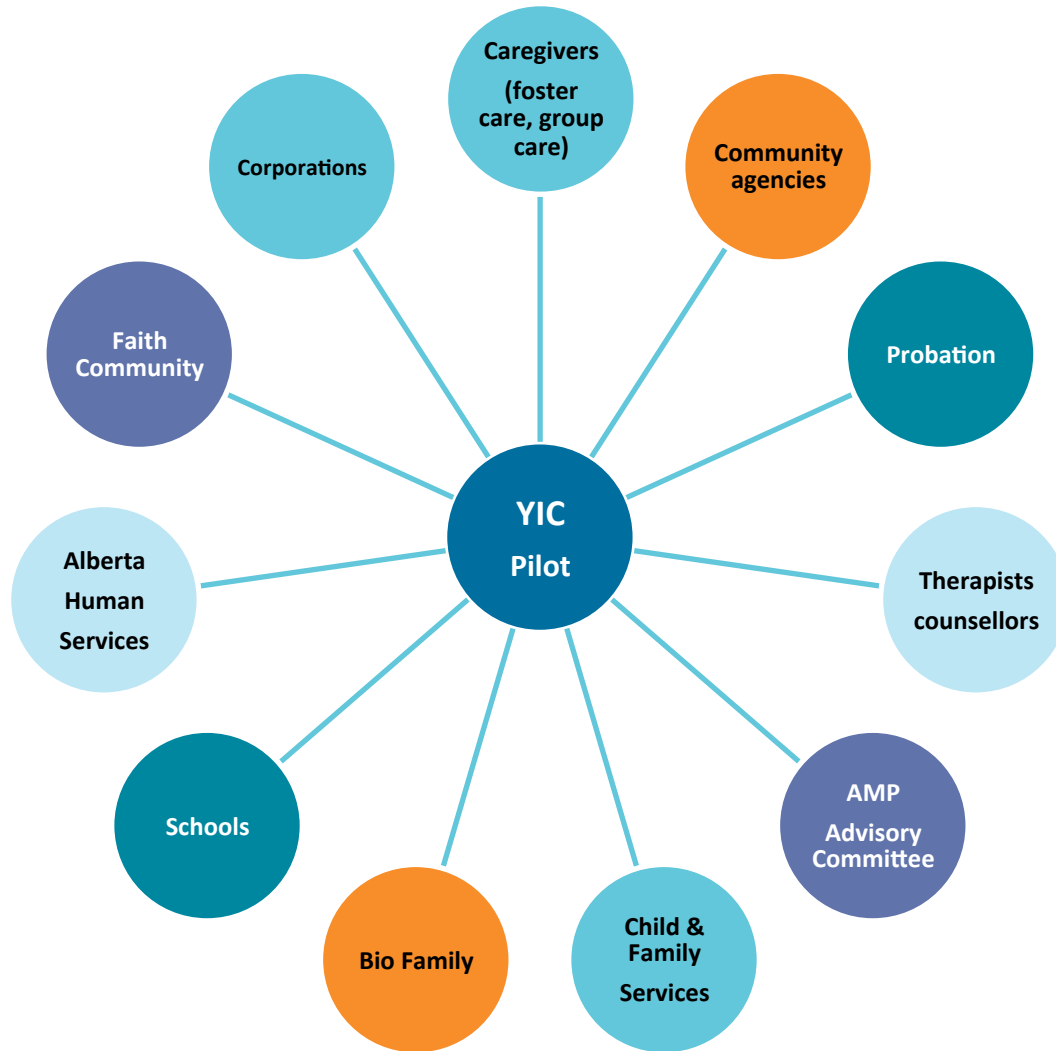
Partnership/Collaboration

Building partnerships is all about people.

Successful partnerships are based on mutual respect and trust, open and honest communications, and require attentiveness, listening, and intuition.

Partners must nurture their relationships and understand and support their partner's needs and challenges equally as their own. But most people don't have the training and knowledge to enable partnership success.

Project Partnerships/Collaboration Eco-Map





Lessons we've learned

- Is hard work
- Requires patience
- Dynamic
- Situational
- Requires flexibility
- Must be good communicators





Considerations

- PSECA concerns, internet safety
- Drug/alcohol use
- Mental health (anxiety, depression, borderline)
- Cognitive delays (FASD, autism spectrum)
- Truancy
- AWOLing
- Gang involvement/drug dealing
- Youth identified mentors
- Mentors who have experienced trauma; level of readiness
- Ethical consideration



Action

- Find out more about mentoring: albertamentors.ca
- Refer a child or youth
- Become a mentor
- Toolkit – youth in care
- Podcast
- Toolkit & webinar for working with corporations



SHARE THE MESSAGE



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