



**Alberta
Mentoring
Partnership**
Your Mentoring Resource

albertamentors.ca

Alberta Mentoring Partnership 2017-2020 Strategic Plan

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Introduction

The Alberta Mentoring Partnership (AMP, the Partnership) envisions an Alberta where mentoring relationships help young people thrive. AMP is comprised of community agencies, government ministries, government-funded organizations and community members whose goal is to raise the profile of mentoring in Alberta for the purpose of improving the lives of young people.

AMP has been working to create more mentoring opportunities for young people in Alberta since 2008.

Since its creation in 2008, AMP has received support and funding from the Government of Alberta. Significant in-kind contributions have also been made by government and non-government members. The Partnership has been co-chaired by representatives of the Ministries of Education and Human Services and Boys & Girls Clubs, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area.

AMP has over 120 partners, including program providers and supporters, as follows:

School and Agency Partners are school and community-based organizations that run mentoring programs for young people, whether formally or informally. These partners support the vision and mission of AMP by delivering quality mentoring that supports learning and wellbeing, and meets the needs of young Albertans.

AMP has over 120 partners who support mentoring throughout Alberta.

Builder Partners advance the mentorship movement in Alberta by supporting the vision and mission of AMP through shared resources, networks and/or advocacy. Builder Partners include research organizations, volunteer centres and health networks, corporations and businesses, government departments, and individuals.

How Mentoring Helps Children and Youth Thrive

Research¹ shows that being involved in a mentoring relationship has a positive impact on a young person's school attendance and completion, social skills, attitude, and behaviour with friends and family. Mentoring is also shown to play a role in preventing or reducing child/youth involvement in alcohol, drugs, and crime. Children and youth with mentors experienced:

Mentoring contributes to healthy brain development, stronger communities, and a better Alberta.

- 46% less involvement in substance use.
- 33% reduction in violent behavior.

- 50% reduction in school truancy.
- Significant improvement in school performance and interactions with parents.

Additional research shows that:

- One of the most effective interventions for at-risk children is ensuring access to a caring and responsible adult role model.ⁱⁱ
- Youth in care with mentoring relationships had higher educational attainment, less suicidal risk, less physical aggression, improved general health, and lower risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Mentored youth report fewer depressive symptoms, greater acceptance by their peers, more positive beliefs about their ability to succeed in school, and better grades in school.^{iv}

Youth in care with mentoring relationships had higher educational attainment, less suicidal risk, less physical aggression, improved general health, and lower risk of contracting a sexually transmitted infection.

Why Invest in Mentoring?

Research^v shows that children in Canada with a Big Brother or Big Sister will, over their lifetime, earn \$315,000 more than children of similar family and economic backgrounds without a Big Brother or Big Sister.

The study determined the social return on investment of mentoring is \$18 for every dollar spent – in terms of additional tax revenue, additional volunteering, and increased charitable giving of adults who were mentored when they were children.

For the least economically advantaged group the social return on investment increased to \$23 for every dollar spent.

AMP: Making a Difference Together

As the leading mentoring resource in Alberta, AMP has been successful in supporting agencies and schools in enhancing the mentoring opportunities available to Alberta's young people. The role and priorities of AMP have evolved since its inception in 2008.

The early stages of AMP focused on increasing the profile of mentoring, and its many benefits and ensuring interested organizations had the necessary tools and resources to provide effective and safe programs for young people. From 2008-2011 efforts were focused on:

- Increasing public awareness of the importance of mentoring.
- Increasing the recruitment and retention of mentors.
- Encouraging active participation of schools in mentoring.

In its growth phase (2011-2017) AMP continued promotional efforts and worked with partners to develop the necessary tools, resources and training to enhance mentoring opportunities and improve access to mentoring research and best practices. In its growth phases specific efforts focused on:

- Continuing to increase awareness of the importance of mentoring.
- Continuing to increase the capacity of mentoring programs, agencies and schools throughout the province to provide effective mentoring.
- Championing and supporting pilot projects focused on addressing emerging needs in mentoring
- Establishing mentor / mentee training resources as well as a post-secondary course focused on mentoring.
- Ensuring sustainability of mentoring by collaborating among community agencies, schools, government and AMP and engaging new community partners.
- Establishing a repository of research and knowledge on mentoring.
- Developing and supporting a collective impact approach to ensure the ongoing relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of AMP.

AMP has completed comprehensive evaluations every three years, which provide detailed accounts of AMP's activities and impact. The following table highlights some of AMP's major accomplishments over the last 9 years.

AMP CONTRIBUTIONS TO MENTORING IN ALBERTA

Accomplishment

Supporting Evidence

Increased mentoring relationships

- There has been a 93% increase in the number of young Albertans receiving mentoring services through Big Brothers Big Sisters organizations in Alberta since AMP started in 2008.
- 7654 young Albertans received mentoring services through Big Brothers Big Sisters organizations in Alberta in 2015.

Increased the number of AMP partners

- AMP has over 120 partners who support mentoring throughout Alberta. This is a 20 percent increase since 2013.

Increased mentoring relationships among children and youth in government care

- 170 children and youth in government care have benefited from a mentoring opportunity between July 2014 and March 2016.
- Children and youth in government care have been a focus of mentoring programming. Pilot sites in Edmonton, Red Deer, and Calgary are entering their third year of providing mentoring opportunities for children and youth in care through customized and specialized programming.
- An additional 253 children and youth are on the pilot program waitlist and are supported with regular contact, group mentoring activities, leadership camps, and summer camps as they wait to be matched.

Increased trained mentors:

- A total of 10,125 adult, student, youth and post-secondary student mentors have trained using AMP's online mentor training resources.

Students/ Youth:

- Over 5,000 youth have been trained as peer mentors

AMP CONTRIBUTIONS TO MENTORING IN ALBERTA

Accomplishment

Supporting Evidence

using AMP's online resources since 2011.

- 23,328 mentoring course credits have been completed by high school students between the 2011 and 2014-2015 school year.
- AMP developed five one-credit Career and Technology Studies mentoring courses, which provide high school students an opportunity to learn about mentoring and to become mentors in their community.

Post-Secondary Students:

- AMP and the University of Alberta have partnered to develop an open studies course on mentoring. EDPY 465: Mentoring Children & Adolescents is a 3 credit course offered by the University of Alberta that teaches mentoring skills through classroom study and real world experience.
- 305 post-secondary students have taken EDPY 465 and have mentored youth through Big Brothers and Big Sisters since 2010.

Actively connecting partners and mobilizing knowledge

- AMP co-hosted the first National Mentoring Symposium in November 2013 and brought together mentoring leaders in program delivery and research from across Canada. This also initiated the formation of a strategic partnership with Ontario Mentoring Coalition resulting in collaboration on resource development.
- AMP co-hosted the National Mentoring Symposium in November 2016. Over 250 mentoring leaders came together to learn, share information and continue to build a network of service providers and researchers to support the further development of mentoring

AMP CONTRIBUTIONS TO MENTORING IN ALBERTA

Accomplishment

Supporting Evidence

across Canada.

- There were 20 youth from Alberta who attended a Youth Forum at the 2013 National Mentoring Symposium.
- There were 35 from across Canada who attended the Youth Forum at the 2016 National Mentoring Symposium.

Recognition of AMP as a leading mentoring resource in Alberta

- In the last two years AMP's website has had over 18,000 unique visitors every year this is up from an average of over 8,000 in previous years.
- Over 800 individuals have used AMP social media (Facebook and Twitter).
- Nearly 1,100 individuals subscribe to and receive the online AMP newsletter.

Key mentoring resources and toolkits developed

- In collaboration with the Canadian Women's Foundation, in 2016 AMP launched a Girls Group Mentoring Toolkit focusing on developing mentoring programs for young women.
- In collaboration with Safe and Caring Schools and Communities AMP has developed a Teen Mentoring Toolkit to encourage peer mentoring relationships in schools.
- AMP offers a Corporate Mentor Recruitment Toolkit to help businesses give their employees opportunities to make a difference and grow their skills through mentoring. It also assists in providing community agencies with strategies and knowledge to help build corporate and business relationships in order to aid in recruitment of volunteer mentors.

AMP CONTRIBUTIONS TO MENTORING IN ALBERTA

Accomplishment

Supporting Evidence

Championed and supported pilot mentoring programs targeted towards specific populations

AMP initiated work in support of:

- Aboriginal communities
- Somalian community
- Girls mentoring
- School-based Teen Mentoring
- Children and Youth in Care

Increased accessibility to research

- Over 4,000 resources have been downloaded from the website since 2014.
- In 2016 a research portal was developed on the AMP website to increase ease of access to mentoring research and evaluations.

AMP 2017-2020 Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan (2017-2020) evolved from discussions with our partners about our past activities and impacts, the current environments (institutions, programs, resources, etc.) that support the mentoring of young people and the type of outcomes we want to effect through our work. The following plan includes:

- AMP's vision and mission;
- The core functions of AMP;
- Overview of the outcomes AMP is striving to achieve; and
- The strategic pillars and associated strategic goals that will guide the work of AMP.

Vision

Young people thrive through mentoring relationships.

Mission

Working together to strengthen Alberta's capacity to support and enhance mentoring.

Core Functions of AMP

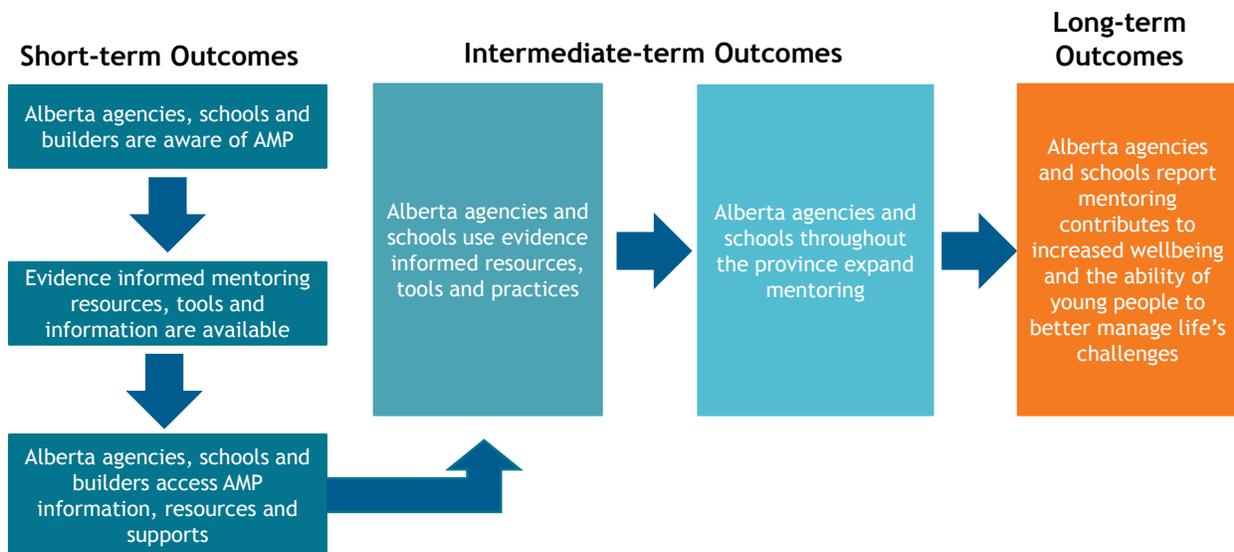
AMP accomplishes its work through:

1. **Leadership** – We lead by building relationships, connecting partners and facilitating discussions to address emerging needs provincially and nationally. We advocate for mentoring in collaboration with our partners and enable ongoing discussions related to increasing the reach, quality and sustainability of evidence-informed mentoring practices, processes and outcomes. Through our leadership we engage with and support our partners to build capacity to enhance mentoring opportunities throughout the province.
2. **Mentoring promotion** – We actively work to promote the benefits and value of mentoring among agencies, schools, builders, decision-makers, and the public. Through this work we assist our partners to recruit and train mentors and mentees and connect them with local mentoring opportunities available across the province.
3. **Knowledge generation** - We work with our partners to research, compile, synthesize and examine evidence-informed practices to generate mentoring resources that address key challenges and emerging trends.

4. **Knowledge mobilization** – We facilitate the reciprocal and complementary flow and uptake of knowledge and resources among our partners. We use these actions to advance/improve the mentoring research agenda, theory and/or methods and mentoring in general.

Outcomes of AMP

We believe that focusing our core work in these areas we will achieve the outcomes noted below.



AMP Strategic Directions

We are passionate about mentoring and the benefits that can be realized through these relationships. In an effort to ensure that AMP is still relevant to Agencies, Schools and Builders and that investments are made to address unmet needs and mentoring gaps, we have engaged our partners in the development of this strategic plan. We have undergone a process of reviewing and reflecting on our progress, outcomes and the impact of our work. Our partners tell us that AMP has been instrumental in ensuring young people who need a mentor have access to one. We continue to build our brand and our reach by ensuring our resources and tools are relevant and by actively engaging and supporting community agencies in their mentoring efforts. We are recognized as leaders who bring mentoring partners together to raise awareness of mentoring and we work with Agencies, Schools and Builders to expand evidence-informed mentoring.

The scope of our work continues to expand. As we consider the next three years we know that we will need to begin to bring new approaches to tackle some of the mentoring gaps in the province and continue to mobilize evidence-informed resources. We know that targeted populations, such as indigenous young people, must be a continued focus of our work. We will work with our partners to continue to strengthen the network of individuals, schools and agencies that work to enhance mentoring relationships. We are seen as a leader among pan-Canadian partners and this reputation will assist us in initiating conversations with mentoring partners in other parts of Canada to leverage additional resources. Lastly our work will continue to expand our ability to report on the benefits being realized through mentoring in Alberta. The following section outlines the three strategic pillars and the strategic goals that will guide our work in the next three years (2017-2020).

Strategic Pillar 1: Strengthen Alberta's Mentoring Network

AMP is a connector that links agencies, schools and builders and assists them in working together to advance mentoring.

Strategic Goals

- 1.1. AMP partner engagement is enhanced and increased.
- 1.2. AMP contributes to a pan-Canadian strategy to leverage and mobilize evidence-informed resources, tools and supports for Alberta.
- 1.3. AMP is well governed and managed.

Strategic Pillar 2: Expand and Enhance Mentoring

Working in collaboration with agencies, schools and builders, AMP will generate and mobilize evidence-informed resources and tools, build capacity and support partners to expand the delivery of quality mentoring across the province.

Strategic Goals

- 2.1. Evidence-informed resources and tools are mobilized among agencies, schools, builders and Albertans.
- 2.2. Agencies and schools have access to evidence-informed resources and tools to advance mentoring in targeted populations/communities and address emerging needs (e.g., boys, families and caregivers, children and youth in care, newcomer/ refugees and other emerging populations).
- 2.3. Agencies and schools receive ongoing supports to improve, enhance, expand and/or sustain mentoring.
- 2.4. Expand and enhance indigenous mentoring initiatives across Alberta.

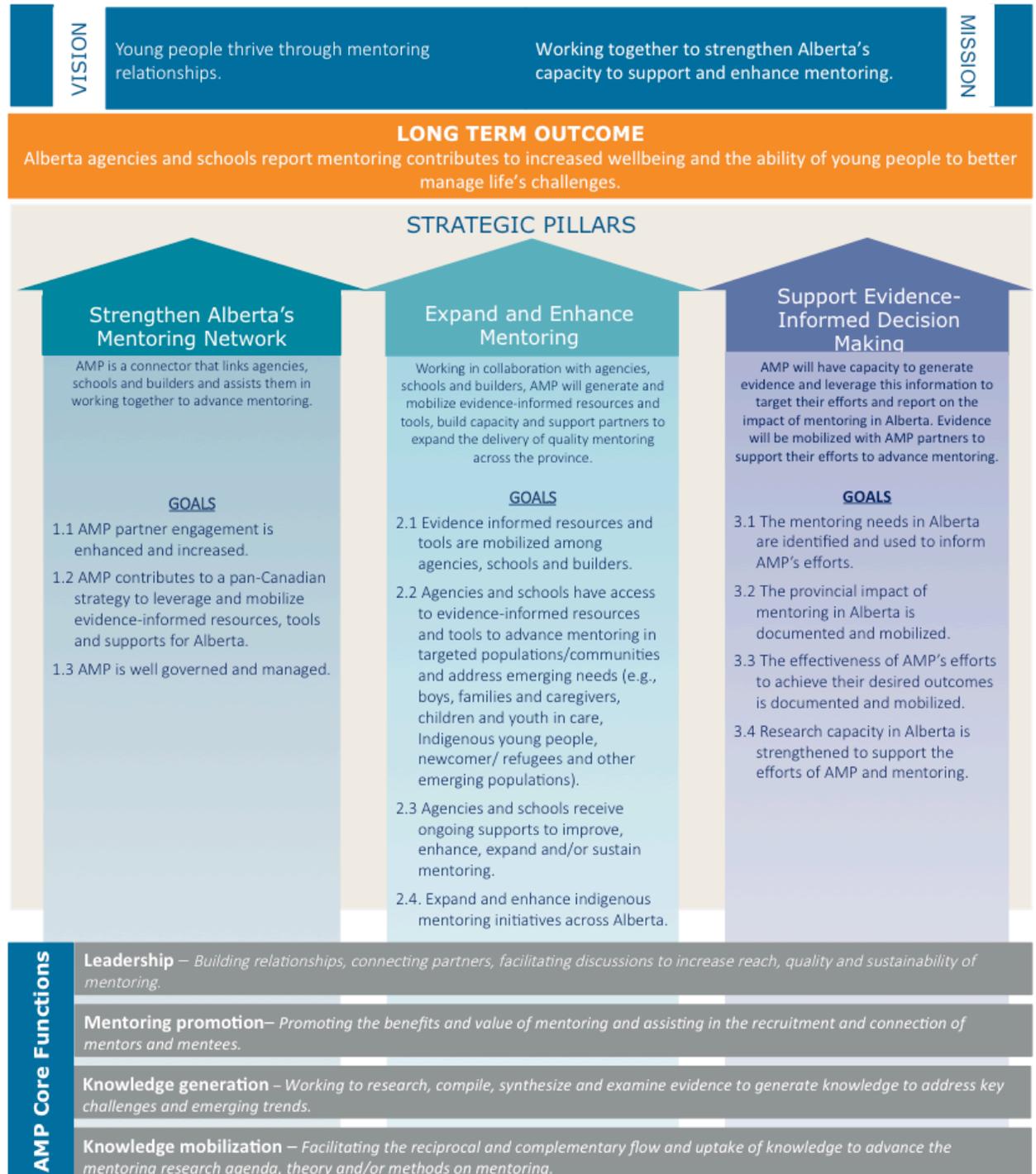
Strategic Pillar 3: Support Evidence-Informed Decision Making

AMP will have capacity to generate evidence and leverage this information to target their efforts and report on the impact of mentoring in Alberta. Evidence will be mobilized with AMP partners to support their efforts to advance mentoring.

Strategic Goals

- 3.1. The mentoring needs in Alberta are identified and used to inform AMP's efforts.
- 3.2. The provincial impact of mentoring is documented and mobilized.
- 3.3. The effectiveness of AMP efforts to achieve their desired outcomes is documented and mobilized.
- 3.4. Research capacity in Alberta is strengthened to support the efforts of AMP and mentoring.

AMP 2017-2020 Strategic Plan Diagram



The Alberta Mentoring Partnership Glossary of Terms - 2017

- **PCT:** The PCT refers to the “Provincial Coordination Team” of the Alberta Mentoring Partnership, which consist of AMP Operational Staff and Government members from Alberta Children Services and Alberta Education.
- **Quality Mentoring:** When referring to Quality, the Alberta Mentoring Partnership refers to MENTOR USA’s Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, which “provides a roadmap for organizations to establish and operate successful mentoring programs that follow research-based practices for recruitment, screening, training, matching, monitoring and supporting, and closure as well as general program management, operations and evaluation.” (MENTOR USA).
 - www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring

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ⁱⁱ Government of Alberta (2006). Mentoring Literature Review. Author: Karla Satchwell.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ahrens, K.R., DuBois, L., Richardson, L.P., Fan, M., and Lozano, P. (2008). Youth in foster care with adult mentors during adolescence have improved adult outcomes. Pediatrics. Available online at <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/121/2/e246.full.html>

^{iv} Herrera, Carla, David, L., DuBois, and Jean Grossman (2013). The Role of Risk: Mentoring Experiences and Outcomes for Youth with Varying Risk Profiles. New York, NY: A Public/Private Ventures project distributed by MDRC.

^v Boston Consulting Group (2013). Big Brothers Big Sisters Social Return on Investment Study. Accessed at <http://albertamentors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/JamesTuckerBBSSROI2013PresentationKeynotepptx.pptx>