

Mentoring Refugee, Immigrant & Newcomer Children and Youth

10 Mentoring Best Practices



Getting Started

USE AMP DEFINITION OF MENTORING

Mentoring is the act of an adult or older youth spending time one-one-one, or in a small group, with a child. Mentoring for newcomer and refugee youth helps them succeed in school, and adjust to their new home.

Consider these best practices, success, and challenges as you get started, or as you rework your current program. Mentoring refugee and newcomer youth is an enriching experience, for both the mentor and participant. Everyone involved will learn something and grow.

Start by Building Trust and a Relationship

Trust is the foundation, and must be built before the program starts. The mentee and their family must feel comfortable, and see the value in mentoring. It is also critical for buy-in from cultural and faith communities, who can encourage and facilitate mentoring opportunities.

Start with the End User In Mind

A program must be built around the participant, and what they need. Successful programs begin and remain participant-focused throughout all stages.

Be Flexible

Understand participant's interests and needs may shift on a day-to-day basis. Being responsive to feedback encourages a successful program.

Schools Are Critical

Teachers, principals, and counselors are key allies in implementing programs and identifying participants. They

are safe spaces for families and students, and convenient spaces for mentoring to occur.

Be Culturally Relevant and Sensitive

Knowledge of a participant's culture is essential to a successful experience. This will help a participant feel welcome and encourage success.

Be Participant Driven in Matching with a Mentor

Some participants may want a mentor who shares a first language or cultural background, while some may want an intercultural match. A program should be ready and able to offer both.

Pay Attention to Costs. Keep them Low to Free

Participants and their families often have limited resources; even small costs to them can be a barrier to participation.

Bridge Participants to Other Services

Program closure is a natural part of the program cycle (Please see [AMP Resources on Closure](#)). For the family, having referrals to additional programs or services will assist in your mentee and their family in transitioning to another program or service.

Start Mentoring

Consult the [AMP Community Based Mentoring Program toolkit](#) to learn more about what kinds of programs have proven to be successful, and for help getting started.





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