

# Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Pilot

---

*Year 1 Evaluation Summary Report*

October 2015

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction and Scope .....	3
Data Collection Methods.....	3
Summary of Findings .....	5
Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Matches .....	6
Evaluation Questions and Findings.....	7
Caregiver Engagement .....	15
Next Steps.....	17
Appendix A: Site Descriptions.....	18
Edmonton .....	19
Calgary .....	24
Red Deer .....	29
Appendix B: Children & Youth in Care and Mentoring Logic Model .....	33

## Introduction and Scope

Three established mentoring organizations in Calgary, Edmonton, and Red Deer (pilot sites) have come together to help to expand mentoring for children and youth in care, with funding from Alberta Human Services. The purpose of the pilot is to foster meaningful relationships between mentors & vulnerable youth.

The agencies participating in the pilot include two urban and one urban/rural agency. The participating sites are Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area, Red Deer Youth and Volunteer Centre Foundation, and Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters Edmonton and Area Society. Although the three sites share learnings across sites collectively, they deliver programming independent of each other. The pilot began in summer/fall 2014 and this report summarizes the evaluation findings from year 1.

The evaluation has the following objectives:

- To help us better understand ways to support successful mentoring opportunities for children and youth in care, the initial achievements and contributions of the pilot sites, and to strengthen this work, with the eventual aim of expanding to be provincial in nature; and
- To determine what aspects are working well and why, which are not and why, and offer a regular feedback loop with learning opportunities for pilot sites to make modifications when necessary, learn from each other, and help to guide implementation.

AndersonDraper Consulting (the Evaluator) is leading the evaluation. The evaluation is developmental in nature, with both implementation and summative questions. A developmental evaluation has at its core purpose to embed evaluative thinking and activities into organizational life with the objective of generating relevant information for decision making as opportunities arise.

### Structure of the report

This report offers findings from the first year of the implementation of the Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Pilot. The document begins with an overview of the primary data collection methods (structured discussions, site visits and Advisory Group survey), provides an overview of match numbers, followed by answers to evaluation questions contained in the evaluation plan. There is a section highlighting caregiver engagement by members of the Advisory Group. The document concludes with an overview of the next steps and offers remarks reflecting on program activities and outcomes. The appendices of the report provide insight into the program structure of each site. The final appendix contains the program logic model, developed collectively with the Advisory Group as part of year 1.

## Data Collection Methods

### Regular opportunities to come together

The Advisory Group comprised of representatives<sup>1</sup> of organizations and pilot sites, purposefully selected based on their knowledge and expertise in this area, come together quarterly to discuss

---

<sup>1</sup> Members of the Advisory Group include: the Alberta Association of Services for Children and Families (chair), the Alberta Mentoring Partnership, Government of Alberta, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Calgary and Area, Red Deer Youth and Volunteer Centre Foundation, Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters Edmonton and Area Society; Safe and Caring, Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, Alberta Foster Parent Association, Big

progress, offer solutions to issues and informed perspectives on mentoring children and youth in care. These meetings also serve as a forum to obtain ongoing feedback from agencies pertaining to challenges, successes, and opportunities. Over the course of the year, sites updated each other and the Advisory group, shared learnings and planned together. The three pilot agencies were active participants in the meetings and throughout the course of the evaluation.

### Site visits

The Evaluator met with representatives from each site, staff & managers, for half a day in January and February 2015. See Appendix A for a description of each pilot site. During that site visit, there was the opportunity after meeting with staff to interview some of the mentors, mentees and caseworkers (in person and over the phone).

### Advisory group survey

The Evaluator created an online survey to gather input from Advisory Group members. The survey explored the extent to which Advisory Group members felt the 'guiding principles of mentoring children and youth in care' were being implemented, their feelings of engagement in the pilot, successes, challenges and lessons learned to date. Seven members responded while the survey was open between the middle of June to early July 2015. Due to an extension of the pilot, this survey as well as the mentor, mentee, child intervention worker and caregiver survey was put on hold. Surveys will reopen again in fall 2015. Upon review, information from the preliminary survey results of the Advisory Group members was found by the Evaluator to be valuable to include at this phase and has been integrated in the report. Note, only a small number of responses were received in the other survey respondent categories and therefore those will be reported as part of the Spring 2016 evaluation report.

### Aligned with research

In 2014, the Child and Youth in Care and Mentoring Advisory Group (Advisory Group) commissioned a literature review regarding mentoring children and youth in care. The Alberta Centre for Child, Family, and Community Research summarized the literature and interviewed contacts with experience in mentoring children and youth in care in the Canadian context<sup>2</sup>. The findings from the year 1 evaluation report were cross-referenced with the literature review. Overall, there appears to be consistency in how the programs operate and what research recommends.

### Analysis

The Evaluator combined all data collected to provide a comprehensive picture of how the pilots are delivering mentoring supports. Data collected as part of the structured discussions, site visits, interviews, as well as the Advisory Group survey results to date were reviewed together, and common themes in responses were identified. Corresponding quotes were selected to illustrate the content.

---

*Brothers Big Sisters of Canada, Alberta Centre for Child, Family, and Community Research, mentors, mentees and Program Evaluator (AndersonDraپر Consulting).*

<sup>2</sup> Vandenberghe, C. (2014). *Mentoring Youth in Care*. Calgary, AB: Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research for the Child and Youth in Care and Mentoring Subcommittee of the Alberta Mentoring Partnership; taken from: <http://albertamentors.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Mentoring-Youth-in-Care.pdf>

## Summary of Findings

This pilot brings increased emphasis to the supports required for mentoring children and youth in care.

Over the past year, the focus was on understanding recruitment strategies, screening, matching and creating enhanced training that will help a mentor feel confident in their role and be able to support a child or youth in care. As part of this project, one hundred and nineteen children and youth in care have received access to mentors and been served by the agencies involved, with a waitlist at all three sites.

This evaluation considered staffing models through structured discussions during site visits and confirmed the need for staff with increased experience, skills, training and supports to do this work well. The ability to report directly to a manager with an understanding of this population helps to support staff.

In terms of activities, all sites engaged in recruiting, screening, selecting and training mentors. Sites have learned additional focus is necessary in all these activities, with a variety of ways to recruit, additional screening questions, carefully considering matching by spending extra time getting to know both the mentor and the mentee and covering additional training topics. Working closely with the referral sources (e.g. child intervention workers) will assist agencies to assess the readiness of children and youth for a mentoring relationship.

To create healthy matches, sites noted the importance of spending extra time getting to know the youth and the volunteer's personality. Some sites do this through one-on-one meetings and/or a group setting. All sites have implemented enhanced screening of mentors in addition to Big Brothers Big Sisters national standards. Mentors are asked supplementary questions such as why does the potential volunteer want to mentor; past experiences with children & youth in care; given scenarios to assess reactions/responses and expectations, all to consider their ability and to identify characteristics in the volunteer and past experiences that would be a good fit. This also offers volunteers an opportunity to find the best fit for them, sometimes in other programs. It is important to have flexibility when doing this work, to look at individual cases and needs.

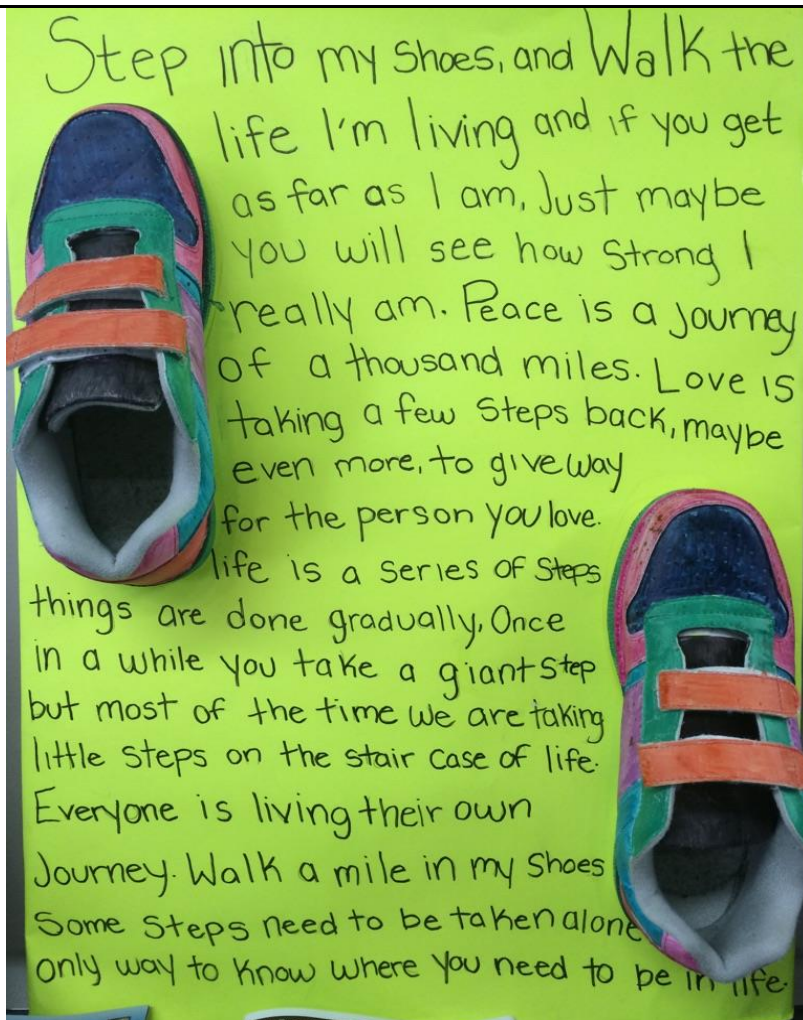
From the site visits and structured discussions with the Advisory Group, it is clear collaborating with professionals and natural supports is an important part in ensuring a successful match, but this also takes time and that must be accounted for in terms of what constitutes a 'caseload' for an agency staff supporting children and youth in care. Mentors have reported feeling supported in this process and mentees have identified positive experiences as a result of their participation.

Through the Advisory Group meetings there were several opportunities for agencies to learn from each other and to share learnings with others. The next part of the evaluation will consider on the role of mentors during transitions, as well as their role as advocates. An emphasis will also be placed on increasing knowledge mobilization activities.

## Children and Youth in Care and Mentoring Matches

The following table provides the number of children and youth served through the pilot since the start date of Human Services program grant funding to September 30, 2015.

# Children and Youth served/ 1-1 mentoring matches made
Edmonton: Matched 70 children and youth in care Calgary: Matched 28 children and youth in care Red Deer: Matched 21 youth in care A total of <b>119</b> children and youth in care connected in a mentoring match
# of Children or Youth currently on your Agency's wait list, having requested a mentor
Edmonton: n=187 youth on the waitlist for a mentor in the Youth in Care program Calgary: n= 37 youth on the waitlist for a mentor in the Youth in Care program Red Deer: n= 15 youth on the waitlist for a mentor in the Youth in Care program
Agency staff undertake the following activities to support children and youth on waitlist: Regular contact, activities, group mentoring, leadership camps, and summer camps etc.



A mentee completed this artwork while

staying in a Youth Shelter. This youth is receiving supports from a pilot site, currently living independently and finishing High School.



## Evaluation Questions and Findings

As part of the evaluation plan, several questions were identified in advance of the pilot implementation. The following section offers answers, after one year of the pilot, to those questions.

### A. What mentoring principles are being used to guide this work?

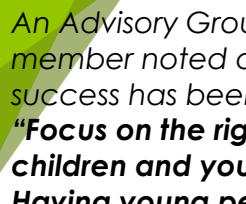
During the site visit, all pilots indicated using the established AMP/Children and Youth in Care Guiding Principles to guide this mentoring work as well as their own agency principles and National Standards, specifically considering safety. When asked about key elements to support youth in care and mentoring, a member of the Advisory Group noted, *“Flexibility. These matches will never meet guidelines or standards and we need to be able to adapt and get creative when it comes to supporting these matches.”*

Agencies look at individual cases and make decisions in the best interest of the child/youth. The focus is on creating long-term relationships and to build resilience, strength based mentoring, youth led, relationship focused, as natural as possible.

### B. What have been the successes?

Since the beginning of the pilot, sites noted several successes.

- Positive outcomes for mentees were noted by staff, mentors, caregivers and mentees themselves



An Advisory Group member noted a success has been the **“Focus on the rights of children and youth. Having young people involved in the process. Collaborative work and learning.”** Another stated, **“The coordination, this working group, the evaluation and opportunity to pilot as these discussions are going on.”**

Working collaboratively with the Advisory Group and creating foundational documents: principles & logic model to show the theory of change

- Skilled staff: professional, experienced, flexible and caring people in place to do this work, with a strong understanding of the needs of children and youth in care. Supportive managers with a good understanding of the issues.

Sites reported having professional, experienced and caring people in place to do this work, who have a strong understanding of children and youth in care. Agencies have knowledgeable staff who are aware of available resources and have made connections with other supports and services for ease of referrals. Staff report to supportive managers who also have a good understanding of the issues facing children and youth in care. All three agencies reported making good staffing decisions in terms of filling the staff positions. Staff have experience, understand the needs of children and youth in care, and are flexible (e.g. able work evenings as needed, can assess cases on an individual basis to make decisions in best interest of youth).

- Having program as part of an agency

Pilot sites explained a benefit was the youth in care program is under the same roof as other agency programs and has access to other opportunities (e.g. Rotary Youth Leadership Camp; Agency events, activities). Furthermore, sites reported seeing benefits to the Agency as a whole because of their participation in the pilot. For instance, all staff have access to the enhanced training and an observed increase of staff working more closely together across programs to meet the needs of children and youth.

- Extra promotion and recruitment

In conjunction with the pilots, there was also a #8000 advertising campaign and Mentoring Moments vignettes produced. According to one of the sites, the campaign seemed to have greater impact in the urban centres versus the rural one. However, it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess the advertising campaign.

Sites are concerned about sustainability of recruitment over the long term. Mentors and mentees are proving to be a positive referral source, encouraging friends and colleagues to become involved in program.

- Mentor training



Pilot sites created enhanced training to ensure mentors are confident in their role. Time is also spent ensuring mentee, mentor and parent/caregiver, if applicable, understand and agree to the roles and responsibilities.

- Group mentoring, group events and cohort training when possible

Pilots noted the benefits of having group mentoring for older youth, hosting events for mentor and mentees to attend, as well as offering training in cohorts so mentors could serve as a support system for each other.

#### **A Match Story:**

*At the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Henry Burris All-Star Weekend (May 2015), one of the youth-in-care matches, Chris (mentor) and Braydon (mentee), spoke to the audience about the impact mentoring has had on both their lives. After a bit of a rocky start, Braydon was able to open up to Chris about the addiction issues he's faced in his life, and Chris' own experiences helped him relate to his young mentee. Through ups and downs, Chris has helped Braydon face the struggles of his newfound independence as he continues to transition out of government care, and they have now built a strong connection based on the adversity they have overcome together.*



#### **C. What have been the challenges?**

The following challenges were identified as part of the implementation of the youth in care and mentoring supports.



- Volunteer recruitment to meet the needs of children and youth in care:

There is a shortage of male mentors.

Agency staff ask volunteers at time of screening about how they would deal with certain situations, with complexity and their expectations for the match. Some volunteers who apply to the program would be better suited to a traditional/community based match, with less complexity. Some volunteers apply not knowing exactly where they want to be and then identify this as a good fit.

One site spoke about the importance of not further labelling children and youth and how some potential volunteers may be 'scared off' by a stereotype of what is a youth in care. Mentors confirmed this as a possible concern.

- Mental health issues

Sites reported seeing an increase in mental health issues, diagnosed and undiagnosed, in this program but also in other ones.

- Working within a complex system

There appears to be a lack of awareness of this program among staff across the system. Sometimes it can be a challenge to connect with workers; getting sign-off on forms, knowing who to talk to as there are many players. There is turnover in group-home staff. An agency staff experienced a group home withholding access to a mentor. Communication about the role of the mentor and that having a mentor is important and "not a privilege that should be taken away" is a focus of agency staff. Although listed as a challenge, it is important to note relationships are being built as a result of the pilot and working collaboratively is important to all stakeholders.

One site commented that mentors are sometimes mistaken for paid staff in the role of youth worker, as such increased awareness of the role of a mentor is recommended for those supporting children and youth in care.

A member of the Advisory Group offered the following when asked about gaps: *"I believe there are opportunities to help mentors learn about youth in care and higher risk youth and help develop better skills while building in more support. The gap has been that children and youth with more complex issues miss out on mentors as their behaviours are challenging and they are not well understood."* Another noted, *"access to the children and youth, privacy of information, funding, working on specific needs of Aboriginal children and youth as there will be differences in ensuring cultural needs are being met in a mentoring relationship."*

A mentor, matched for 6 months with a youth in care commented the following, ***"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."***

- A mentor commented **“Our match is going well, overall. There are difficult areas to work around sometimes, her life is difficult. I’m seeing positive changes and see us staying connected for the long term. All the resources I have access to make me feel confident.”**

year old. Glad she brings it up and talks to me. Right after we had the big talk I checked with my contacts, talked to the group home. I was encouraged to answer her truthfully. I also talked to the Family Wellness worker and was told to be honest with my mentee and tell her anything she is asking for. They are arranging for a nurse to talk to her about safe sex.”

Sites noted that working within systems, both external and internal are challenging at times. There are instances that internal agency structures and processes can be challenged and evolve to better meet the needs of these matches.

#### **Mentor comments, when asked about possible challenges:**

- “Remaining emotionless when she tells me something that I don’t like, for instance that she is hanging out with certain people. I would like to say to her that they aren’t good for you, but instead I ask questions, like how did that go...”

- “The language of our conversation of and where it went, sex, and drugs, coming from a 13


#### **D. What aspects of offering mentoring do sites report are done differently than usual in terms of supporting mentoring children and youth in care?**

##### ● Staffing

All pilot sites have staffed the necessary roles with skilled, experienced and competent professionals. Each site is also able to draw on other agency staff and supports (e.g. enrolment coordinator, admin staff, and outreach coordinator).

Edmonton hired two staff with an understanding of children and youth in care, Calgary and Red Deer redirected staff with this experience to fill the role. All three pilot sites have sufficiently staffed the necessary roles with skilled and competent professionals. Each site is also able to draw on other agency staff and supports (e.g. enrolment coordinator, admin staff, and outreach coordinator).

Pilots have established a staffing model specific to their site. For instance, Calgary has established the program by age grouping (6-11, 12-15, 16-24) and has a staff person responsible for supporting each one, working together to ensure coordination across age groups. Red Deer has a program coordinator who supports the matches, mainly older youth at this time, and facilitates the



A mentee, matched for 8 months commented about recruitment, **“I told others about it, my best friend and recommended that a teacher of mine become a mentor.”**

mentoring group on Monday evenings. In Edmonton, there were two youth in care facilitators hired on to assist with recruiting, screening, oversee the matching process and supporting matches.



A mentor matched for 6 months with a youth in care commented, ***“I’m new to this program and being a mentor, less than a year. I am flexible, I told them to put me wherever the biggest need was. During my initial interview, I was asked, “would you be comfortable in this situation? I was asked if I could handle it.”***

Supervision: All staff report to a manager, who has a good understanding of the issues. Managers are able to provide extra problem solving, supports, case management.

- Recruitment/Screening/Training of Mentors

Intentional and thorough recruitment, screening and training is critical to launching safe, meaningful mentoring relationships for youth in care. Most of these young people come from backgrounds and experiences where relationships have a history of trauma, lack of attachment and disappointment.

For the most part, recruitment takes place through the regular stream, through presentations and media/advertising as well as from mentor & mentee referrals. Over the past year, there has been an emphasis on connecting with corporate partners as a mentor referral source.

In terms of an average caseload, pilot sites recognize this work requires a smaller caseload than community based mentoring. An ideal number depends on what other tasks the staff is responsible for (e.g. group, recruitment etc.) and other supports available (e.g. administrative).


A part of mentor screening, agency staff ask additional questions to those interested in mentoring children or youth in care. The questions have to do with similar experiences as mentees, reactions to scenarios, and expectations.

### ***Aligned with research***

***As children in care are an especially vulnerable group, it is important that programs enhance their screening procedures for mentors who are interested in working with this group. Staff should hold a face – to – face interview with the potential mentor to get a sense of the personality and whether they would be a good fit for the program (Vandenberghe, 2014, p.13).***

- Training

Each pilot site has created enhanced training to ensure mentors are confident in their role. Topics include: program goals, roles and responsibilities, general description of characteristics of children and youth in care and strategies for supporting



One site noted enhanced training was created ***“not to scare but to prepare.”*** Another noted, ***“In training we offer scenarios of possibilities but avoid generalizing that all children and youth in care are the same.”*** An Advisory Group member stated, ***“The mentors have to have a skill base or be willing to take extra training. They have to be really committed as the relationship can be quite challenging.”***

them, trauma and brain development, types of abuse, attachment, sexual orientation, LGBTQ (acceptance and oppression), cultural awareness, boundaries, fostering a strength based relationship, strategies supporting youth, mental health impacts, transitions and times of stress, boundaries and self-care, and community resources. As well, staff spend time ensuring the mentee, mentor and parent/caregiver, if applicable, understand and agree to the roles and responsibilities. Mentors are also referred to additional training as identified. Sites have opened up the training to agency staff, mentors with already existing matches and those interested in learning more about what mentoring entails prior to committing to a match.

Delivery modes vary from site to site and include face-to-face, group/cohort, or one-on-one model.

#### Training Considerations:

- Ages and stages of mentee
- Size of program and location
- Deliver from a strength based philosophy
- Ensure there is an Aboriginal perspective
- Refer to Alberta Mentoring Partnership (AMP) – Children and Youth in Care Working Group Guiding Principles

#### Training Timelines:

- Pre-Match and early days: existing AMP and BBBS mentor training plus core topics
- 6-9 months into match: Crisis management and difficult conversations; available resources; additional training as identified (e.g. suicide prevention)
- 1 year plus: to be developed


#### *Aligned with research:*

*Training for mentors working with children in care should be more comprehensive than traditional mentoring programs. This should include an initial orientation to the program, dedicated pre-match training sessions, as well as ongoing training (Vandenberghe, 2014, p. 15).*

#### ● Matching, Monitoring and Support

Pilot sites commented on the importance of really getting to know both the youth and volunteers. Agencies match based on similar interests, they consider the youth's goals, each person's personality, life experience, and ultimately what both are looking for in the relationship. One site emphasized they let youth make the choice and confirm with both the mentee and the mentor individually after first meeting.

Pilots noted the benefits of having group mentoring for older youth, hosting events for mentor and mentees to attend, as well as offering training in cohorts so mentors could serve as a support system for each other.



A mentee, matched for 8 months commented, ***"It is a good program. Your mentor is there to be a friend. No expectations, if you do not get along you can always get another. I feel like I have known her for a long time."***

Monitoring and supports involve a minimum of a monthly face to face as well as regular contact using phone calls, texting and e-mail messages. Pilot sites noted the importance of being available as a resource and having access to the caseworker. Sites noted relationships between mentors and mentees constantly evolve. The agency needs to be adaptable to how the relationship changes over time.

- Match Closures, Transition to Match Independence and Graduation

Agencies talk about dealing with match closures with both mentors and mentee as well as discuss it in the training. The aim is to foster long-term relationships; however, staff never force a match. Sites noted that closure does not necessarily signify a negative issue. If the mentoring relationship was a positive one, the mentor or the mentee may sign up again after the initial match closure. In some instances, it is naturally time to transition away from the agency due to age however, the connection may continue.



A mentee matched with a mentor for 8 months commented the following, ***“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.”***

#### **E. What are the characteristics of the mentors who are supporting children and youth in care?**

When discussing the question of characteristics with mentors, mentees and pilot sites, the following comments were mentioned most often.

- Comfortable with complexity
- No expectations, “knows it’s not about them”
- Seems to attract those with a background in teaching, coaching, social work, but not always
- Ability to be flexible, non-judgemental
- Recognition that youth have challenging lives; the ability to relate or having faced similar circumstances; and knowing when to ask for assistance

#### ***Aligned with research***

***Mentoring Youth in Care mentor characteristics identified by As Berger, Collins and Spencer (2011) •committed, stable lifestyle, self-awareness, flexible, can manage expectations, not attempting to fulfill an unmet need, youth centered, able to weather rejection/challenge, patient, resilient, approachable, openness to feedback, verbal and nonverbal communication skills (Vandenbergh, 2014, p.12)***

### E. What are outcomes reported by agency staff & mentors?

Short-term outcomes observed in youth as reported by staff and mentors include: Youth are more confident, demonstrate improved communication skills, and report increased school engagement (better attendance, on track to graduate, looking at or attending postsecondary). Throughout the site visits and interviews, there were reports of seeing growth in relationships, reciprocity, youth reaching out more, and stating they 'feel less alone'; as well as learning about healthy relationships, speaking up more with peers and teachers.

### F. What are outcomes reported by youth (mentees) themselves?

Youth talked about the positive impacts their mentors had in their lives and mentioned an increased sense of feeling supported and less alone, the value of having someone to go to for help, to ask questions, go to for advice and see as a role model. Several also mentioned the opportunity that having a mentor provided to do new things, for example try new recipes while cooking together.

### G. How have corporate partners been engaged?

The Alberta Mentoring Partnership has created a strategy and is finalizing a toolkit including key messages for corporations to promote to their staff. Five "Mentoring Moments" vignettes have been created and promoted to be used in tandem with agency volunteer recruitment. There has been print advertising in all three pilot site cities, with transit advertising in Edmonton and radio in Red Deer, as well as connections made through presentations to businesses. There is an emphasis on encouraging movement from corporate sponsor to mentor.



There has been successes to date, for instance in Red Deer Canadian Western Bank has agreed to have up to 20% of their staff mentor through the programs with paid leave for one hour a week.

### H. What are emerging trends?

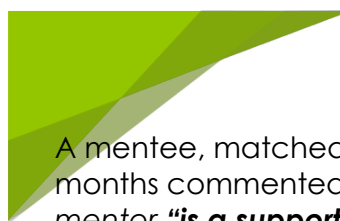
Sites noted there seem to be more boys than girls in care wanting a mentor and as such more boys to match. Unfortunately, there are less male volunteers. Agencies are considering gender cross matches or couple matches to help fill the gap.

Sites commented increased mental health concerns in children and youth in care in the program as well as in community based programming.

#### **A Match Story:**

*A Big Sisters mentoring relationship began in November of 2014. Christmas day this mentoring match spent the time together skating and celebrating the holiday season. The mentee was particularly fond of this occasion as she lived in a group home and had no contact with her family.*

*The mentor and mentee spent some of their outing time focused on the mentees future. They researched post-secondary schools and visited a school of the youth's choice. This mentee has some struggles with her mental health. Within the first six months of their mentoring relationship, the youth was admitted to the hospital for mental health concerns. When asked who her emergency contact was the youth put down her Big Sister. As*



*A mentee, matched with a mentor for 4 months commented the following, 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."***



the youth received supports within the hospital one of the questions she was asked 'who was a health positive relationship in her life?' the youth stated her mentor.

When speaking with the youth's caseworker she stated she was impressed the youth chose to speak about this relationship so early on in the match and that it was out of character for this youth.

## Caregiver Engagement

The Advisory Group recognizes the important role caregivers (e.g. parents, foster parents, group home workers etc.) play in supporting the mentoring relationship.

As part of the efforts to engage caregivers, several members of the Advisory Group presented at the Alberta Foster Parent Association's Training Conference on November 7, 2014.

The following summarizes the feedback collected as part of the conference.

**Course:** The Importance of Mentors in the Lives of Youth in Care - 107

**Presenters:** Rhonda Barraclough, David Rust, Peter Smyth, Eric Storey, and Stephen Kaiswatum

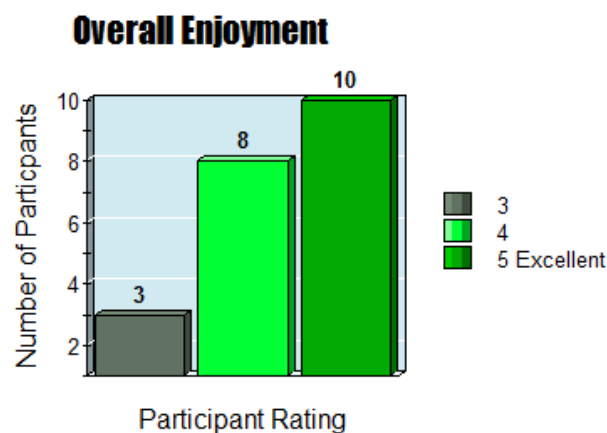
*"I am encouraged to go home and continue working with the youth in my home trying to meet them at their level focusing on building relationship." Workshop participant*

There were 21 feedback forms received, of which 17 identified themselves as foster parents and the remaining participants were a Human Services staff, recruiter and social worker. The majority had 10 years + of service (n=14), followed by 2-5 years (n = 4), then 6-10 years (n=2) and one was not stated.

On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being excellent, all participants rated the content of the presentation as useful (excellent n=6, rated as 4 n=13, rated as 3 n=2). All rated the trainers highly (n=12 rated as excellent, with n=9 rating presenters as 4 out of 5).

The majority of participants (n=10) rated their overall enjoyment of the presentation as 5 out of 5, excellent, with n=8 rating 4 and n=3 rating 3 out of 5.

Participants had the following comments to share about the presentation:



**The thing I liked most about this workshop (or that helped me the most) was:**

- Stephen's participation, very inspirational "real". Eric's real world experience & down to earth approach (4x)
- First hand sharing of a young person's relationship with his mentors and how it benefited him, "Awesome!" (2x)
- Enjoyed the variety of experience of group
- Harm reduction, kids are trying to survive, having an actual mentee present – stats
- To focus on building a relationship
- Discussion, invitation, for input from caregivers re: mentorship program having a young adult's perspective/experience
- I am a mentor. Just didn't realize what we are doing is mentoring and has a label.
- Focus on resiliency information – change the way we look at resilience/interdependence.
- Very important to do your best
- Encouraged to find someone suitable for .... Reinforced that some "stuff" people we have involved was good choice.
- A better understanding of mentorship with abused children.

**One thing that could be done to improve this workshop is:**

Participants suggested increasing the interaction, sharing presentation handouts, using a microphone and including more time for questions.

**Additional Comments**

Several participants (n=7) indicated they "Really enjoyed the entertaining and informative presentation" and thanked the presenters. One noted the "casual style and inviting conversation was good" and another appreciated seeing "a young person that has been help by his mentor." One noted "hope it's easier than I think to find mentor when not in urban centre, whereas another stated "Values and Principals seem extensive when looking for mentors. Are you eliminating possible candidates with this list?" One participant stated, "I'm more aware of dealing with a child who has behaviours and consequences should be understanding and different supports." From the comments, many appreciated the involvement of a youth in care and a mentor.

## Next Steps

As part of the second phase of evaluation, an updated plan will reflect the additional pilot time. A final report will be prepared encompassing learnings up to March 2016. Online surveys will gather feedback from mentors, mentees, child intervention workers, parent/caregivers and Advisory Group members. Questions align to measuring outcomes as stated in the program logic model (see Appendix B).

The evaluation will continue to explore the degree to which program sites align with research.

*DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, and Cooper's (2002) in their systematic review of the mentoring literature identified a set of features, or leading practices, of mentoring programs that were the strongest predictors of positive program effects. The benefits of mentoring were greater in programs that followed a greater number of these best practices. They also found that programs that followed fewer of these practices had negative effects on youth. They recommend that mentoring programs follow those features that have empirically demonstrated their effectiveness. These include ongoing training for mentors, structured activities for pairs, clear expectations around the frequency of mentoring meetings, program support mechanisms, and caregiver involvement in the program (Vandenberghe, 2014, p. 17).*

A future focus of this work includes:

- Continue to advocate for sustainable funding to ensure successful growth. Special recruitment strategies, enhanced mentor training, match monitoring and support, as well as staff supervision/support is needed to ensure successful mentoring matches for children and youth in care.
- Add, maintain and/or enhance group activities; build out the existing group activities, expand reach (include youth in care and open to others).
- Increase number of volunteers recruited and matched.
- Explore the role of mentors in advocacy and supporting mentees during times of transitions.
- Continue to enhance training, create additional training for post-match.
- Develop an online toolkit that reflect learnings and support program development across the province.
- Enhance knowledge Mobilization activities: Several ways to share learnings are identified:
  - Regular meetings (face to face and conference calls)
  - Reports, Briefing notes
  - Fact sheets, including "one pagers" on evaluation findings and mental health issues for mentors.
  - Presentations: conference, professional organizations, posters
  - Publications: peer reviewed journals, association journals, newsletters
  - Postings on websites and using social Media

## **Appendix A: Site Descriptions**

## Edmonton

### 1. Background:

- Agency Name: Boys & Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton & Area
- Start date of project: September 2, 2014
- Names of people participating in conversation at site visit: Kerry, Tannis, Krista
- Geographical boundaries of the service delivery: Greater Edmonton and area (not satellite offices)

#### Matches and Future Focus

- From September 2014 - August 2015 - served a total of 70 children and youth in care
- As of August 15, 2015 - currently have 47 active matches that will continue to monitor and support throughout the next year
- Planning to match an additional 50 youth in care children and youth in one to one matches and 15 youth in a group mentoring program

### 2. Programming:

Questions	Edmonton: Comments and Observations
<b>Describe your agency's children and youth in care mentoring program?</b>	We hired 2 new staff for the pilot, who report to a manager, rather than supervisor, to foster the developmental nature of this work. The manager also supervises volunteer services, enrollment, and intake. The beginning part of the pilot was focused on updating waiting list, orientation of new staff, Had over 190 children/youth in care on waiting list. Staff updated list by contacting and conducting reassessments.
<b>What principles guide the mentoring program?</b>	AMP/Children and Youth in Care Mentoring Working Group/Community of Practice Guiding Principles. National Standards considering safety. Agency has the flexibility to look at individual cases and make decisions in the best interest of the child/youth.
<b>What seems to be working well?</b>	<p>Staff were strong hires. More experience and hired above the normal pay grade, have more experience, they are flexible, work evenings as needed</p> <p>Volunteer recruitment: with the different promotions (e.g. #8000), volunteer recruitment has been going well. However, we are concerned about sustainability. Initiatives like 'Mentoring Moments' assist with recruitment.</p> <p>#8000 campaign and internal recruitment strategies resulted in volunteer mentors who are working through the application process. Agency staffs also identify volunteers who apply directly agency and who express interest mentoring a child or youth in care. Sometimes, volunteers who come through our mainstream big brother big sister programs are identified by the interviewers as having a particular skill level and experience, which could make them a good fit for a youth in care. We have seen success in asking these volunteers if they are interested in becoming matched in this program.</p>

Questions	Edmonton: Comments and Observations
	<p>Matching process: really getting to know the youth and mentors through the interviewing process and at training.</p>
<p><b>What challenges have been encountered to date?</b></p>	<p>Making connections with CFSA system: many of the youth are in group homes, sometimes it has been a challenge to connect with Child Intervention (CI) workers; it has been difficult at times getting sign off on forms, knowing who to talk to as there are many players. There is turnover in group home staff. Agency staff have experienced group homes withholding access to mentor. There is an unwillingness of some workers to divulge information pertinent to ensuring the success of a match.</p> <p>Sustainability of match: It is hard to predict how the interaction will go as they are dynamic over time.</p> <p>Being able to count on funding to continue: as the pilot is unfolding it has become clear this type of work requires additional resources. It is ramping up and the concern is will it be sustainable.</p> <p>Lack of Communication : Connecting with youth can present a challenge due to the transiency of youth in care between placements and the lack of personal communication devices which could allow them to independently connect with their volunteers or with the agency staff.</p>
<p><b>How have the challenges been addressed (or not)?</b></p>	<p>As some CI workers may not be aware of the program, this pilot site has presented to the NE Division of social works, approximately 60 staff, with good response. Both are working at building relationships. Agency staff are checking in on a regular bases with CI staff, add CI staff as contact on a monthly basis, may replace parental contact (or not).</p>
<p>Staffing:</p> <p><b>How many staff support this program? What are their roles? Was new staff hired for this project? What was/is staffs understanding of children and youth in care?</b></p>	<p>Two staff directly working on pilot "Youth In Care Facilitators" who report to a manager (which is different from other staff in this type of role who report to a supervisor. This was deliberate in pilot stage for extra support and connection as manager oversees other functional areas). Staff also get agency support: enrollment function plus access to agency staff.</p> <p>Staff had previous complementary experience (e.g. Distress line supervisor, advocating for youth).</p> <p>Staff training: Staff received orientation to the Agency and training about child intervention practice, shadowed other caseworkers, and attended the FASD conference, participating in webinars on mental health and cultural awareness, brought in speakers to share (e.g. Child Welfare landscape, mentoring a youth in care). Training is ongoing.</p>
<p>Caseload:</p> <p><b>What does a caseload</b></p>	<p>Average caseload for agency staff is 70-75, however it was felt that for this work it would be a maximum of 40 -45 and less of other work (e.g. presentations, recruitment).</p>



Questions	Edmonton: Comments and Observations
<b>look like? What is the role of the caseworker?</b>	
Staff supervision: <b>What, if anything, do staff need in terms of extra supports? What is the role of the manager?</b>	Staff are in same building as manager so able to connect on a regular basis to problem solve and discuss issues. Staff participate in monthly supervisions with their manager as well as contribute to regular team meetings.
Mentoring supports: <b>What, if any, aspects of offering mentoring are done differently than usual in terms of supporting mentoring children and youth in care?</b>	Connect with matches more frequently, sometimes weekly rather than monthly, enhanced supports, follow up is more in depth and geared to specific issues, issues are complex, youth are not always in a stable environment, check in/discuss boundaries.
<b>Specifically considering:</b> <b>Recruitment,</b>	Presenting at the Teacher's Convention, Edmonton Police Service info nights. Need to stay on it to maintain momentum. Staff presented at the Volunteer Edmonton Support Network (Oct 2014) to attract highly skilled volunteers Intentional identification of potential mentors who have the skills; looking for volunteers who are comfortable in complexity
<b>Screening,</b>	Additional questions are asked to identify possible mentors for this program. Looking for ability to relate or have had some similar experiences.
<b>Training,</b>	Mentor Training: Developing training: YIC staff accessed several different sources for training including webinars, conferences, recent research and the YIC Advisory Group (e.g. Peter and David for one consultation session) to supplement their pre-existing knowledge of training material. Mentors want more training to feel confident, asked current matches for input into training materials. Training was implemented in February 2015 and to date 82 volunteers have completed Enhanced YIC Training. Sessions run twice a month and includes current and in-process volunteers from traditional Community Based 1:1 matches as well as dedicated YIC volunteers.  Schedule: (2 hours) All volunteers complete core training which entails the AMP online training, and in person Strong from the Start training as per National Standards. (3 hours) Volunteers who would like additional training or who are matched to a Youth In Care attend

Questions	Edmonton: Comments and Observations
	<p>Enhanced YIC Training.  Topics include: goals of the program, youth in care and mentoring (who are the youth), strength based philosophy, brain development, attachment and history of trauma, Aboriginal/cultural awareness, working with child intervention system/advocacy, suicide, self-harm, addictions, eating disorders, boundaries and self-care, harm reduction, and supporting youth during periods of transition.  Training mode: conference style  Mentee training: happens in a group or one on one setting</p>
<b>Matching</b>	<p>Get to know the children and youth prior to matching for better insight  Intentional, facilitate conversation, present volunteer to child.  In community matches the worker speaks to the parent, in the youth in care they talk to the youth</p> <p>Dosage: Expectation is that match will meet weekly or option for bi weekly depending on time and activities; some mentors have to travel some distance to see their mentee so therefore text or phone too.</p> <p>Will be adding a group mentoring component; asked past participants for their input into what continued participation/being an alumni may look like.</p>
<b>Monitoring and Supporting matches (intensity and frequency of support from the organization)</b>	<p>Staff person needs to be accessible; case dependent (can be high at times depending on situation).  Agency staff provides support to family prior to match, while maintaining wait list. For instance, one mother will call or text to ask about accessing community resources.</p> <p>There is a continuum of levels of intervention, support is needed throughout and can change depending on circumstances. For instance, one youth has involvement with Edmonton Police Service, has been charged with an offence, parent concern there is gang involvement. There is an increase in monitoring and support for match.</p>
<b>Match Closures,</b>	<p>Ensure closure is thought about up front, talk about this as early as possible.</p>
<b>Collaboration with professional supports and caregivers</b>	<p>Connecting with Health Options for information on sexual health  Doing interviews with foster parents; follow up with group homes  Connecting with CHIMO, Family Centre, BOSCO homes for referrals</p>
<b>What is the role of the Child Intervention Worker?</b>	<p>Part of the match; filling a role as guardian or side by side with parent; can be acting in place of parent</p>

### Outcomes and Trends:

a) What short-term outcomes are you starting to see achieved?

Staff reported that youth who are involved in a match report feeling supported by their mentor and mentors report feeling like they are positive influence in the lives of their mentee. Parent and/or guardian also reported positive changes in their child. Staff are noticing an increased level of trust with youth; that they are opening up to both their mentees and agency staff. A parent shared that the youth is

swearing less, hugging more frequently and more engaged in conversation. The youth is better able to identify coping strategies and feeling more confident.

b) What emerging youth trends or issues have you identified since the start?

More boys in care than girls; no girls on wait list now; more boys to match; less male volunteers; considering gender cross matches or couple matches

## Calgary

### 1. Background:

- Agency Name: BBBS Calgary
  - Start date of project: September 2014
  - Date of visit: February 4, 2015
  - Names of people participating in conversation at site visit: Tracy, Wanda, Janice, Gina, Tina and Kim
  - Geographical boundaries of the service delivery: Calgary
  - As of August 2015, BBBS has 20 active one to one matches

#### Matches and Future Focus

- As of August 2015, BBBS served 28 YIC one to one matches and of those matches, 20 remain open. For the period of July 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016, the Agency shall endeavour to serve an additional 30 children and youth. Volunteer recruitment, training and extensive match support as well as referrals from outside agencies and partners will continue to be a focus of growth. This includes solidifying the partnership with Child and Family Services as well as exploring alternate opportunities with business and community partners such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club and Youth Justice.

### 2. Programming:

Questions	Calgary: Comments and Observations
<p><b>Describe your agency's children and youth in care mentoring program?</b></p>	<p>Program designed by age group:                      6 – 11: pulling from wait list; working well under umbrella of traditional BBBS program, parent involvement key for this age group; meet with families about what to expect; social worker is involved. One-on-one training was provided                      12-15: lot of grey with this age group; youth referred from community, application asked role of person referring (e.g. foster parent). Matches will stay with same worker past age group for consistency. Important to really know mentor and mentee, get information from youth worker, working with caseworkers; using the model for the 16-24 expanded our reach to this age demographic. The partnership with CFSA focused on this age group.                      16-24: focused on transitioning from care, youth have specific needs, relationships look different, initial model was developed through funding from the United Way, additional youth served through the Human Services grant are direct referrals from CFSA and not those partner agencies that we continue to work with via our United Way funding, on financial support, have a social worker, very honest with mentors to think of this as a lifelong relationship; agency doesn't put on a lot of parameters of what relationship looks like; mentors are staying involved, youth have someone that is "just for me"</p> <p>Plan to have staff in CFSA office for ½ day per week. Staff is the liaison, keep mentors and professionals separate,</p>

Questions	Calgary: Comments and Observations
<b>What principles guide the mentoring program?</b>	mentors are natural support. AMP/Children and Youth in Care Mentoring Guiding Principles, BBBS National Standards; Youth Engaging Support (YES) Guiding Values; Strength based mentoring; Youth led, relationship focused as natural as possible, authenticity and respect, ongoing learning.
<b>What seems to be working well?</b>	<p>Training: "not to scare, to prepare"; prepare for what may come; inclusion of adolescent brain development, trauma and attachment and advanced relationship building skills</p> <p>Mentor Support: cohort model of training allowed for connection between mentors and a natural network of support over and above support provided by program staff; nimbleness of staff and ability to be responsive to individual match needs</p> <p>Volunteer recruitment: from multiple avenues; increased referrals through existing mentors;</p>
<b>What challenges have been encountered to date?</b>	Recruitment: how not to further label, some may be 'scared off' by stereotype of what is a youth in care. Lack of male mentors; developing with CFSA that impacted child and youth referrals as well.
<p>Staffing:</p> <p><b>How many staff support this program? What are their roles? Was new staff hired for this project? What was/is staffs understanding of children and youth in care?</b></p>	Redirected 3 existing staff with specialized skills in mentoring, vulnerable youth and youth in care population; lots of experience (1 per age grouping) with direct access to manager for guidance and support. Staff are taking training and webinars on variety of issues, i.e. mental health first aid, trauma, substance use, suicide intervention.
<p>Caseload:</p> <p><b>What does a caseload look like? What is the role of the caseworker?</b></p>	Traditionally a mentoring coordinator would carry an active caseload of around 60, with this maximum would be depending on age grouping: 50 max for 6-11; 30-40 tops for older youth; also depends on level of involvement with recruitment, screening, training, (intake process). Caseload size is also impacted by the additional time staff spend liaising with multiple professionals involved in the young person's life.
<p>Staff supervision:</p> <p><b>What, if anything, do staff need in terms of</b></p>	Manager important in managing caseloads, watching for staff burn out and navigating through staff issues and case conferences.

Questions	Calgary: Comments and Observations
<p><b>extra supports? What is the role of the manager? (debriefs, risk management?)</b></p>	
<p>Mentoring supports:  <b>What, if any, aspects of offering mentoring are done differently than usual in terms of supporting mentoring children and youth in care?</b></p>	<p>There can be more travel to meet family and supports, reintroductions needed if situation changes, staff work evening hours, develop a good understanding of who the volunteers are; Increased match support is needed. Little difference in 6-11 age group; 12-24 increased awareness and preparation of mentors of how youth will vary compared to mainstream and discuss attachment and high-risk behaviour</p>
<p><b>Specifically considering:</b>   <b>Recruitment,</b></p>	<p>Staff are part of youth sector networks and fan out information to promote the program and recruit mentors referrals from CFS, agency collaborations, and general public  Mentoring program streams based on developmental age of young people, and status.  #8000 can help people think about mentoring, often rerouted to other programs</p>
<p><b>Screening,</b></p>	<p>Follow National Standards; asking additional probing questions about experiences with kids in care; a heightened awareness looking for fit; working as a team; mentors as referrals; can also consider policy around certain volunteers to take into account similar life experiences to the youth by putting in extra checks and balances. As part of the screening process, specialized mentor orientation occurs before acceptance and formal training.</p>
<p><b>Training,</b></p>	<p>Based on training developed for YES program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 hours training</li> <li>• Information provided includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program goal and relationship outcomes</li> <li>- Who are the youth</li> <li>- Elements of effective mentoring relationships</li> <li>- Positive youth development</li> <li>- Typical adolescent development (brain development)</li> <li>- Developmental trauma and Attachment – causes and impacts</li> <li>- Strengths based relationship development</li> <li>- Active listening and effective communication skills</li> <li>- Conflict and crisis management</li> <li>- Scenario discussions and skills practice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Questions	Calgary: Comments and Observations
	<p>Training was done one on one for mentors matched with children 6-12. Training of mentors for 12-15 and 16-24 age group were done together.</p> <p>Looking to have post-match training on a variety of topics going forward. Mentor Support Groups have occurred for the mentors with 16-24 mentees.</p>
<b>Matching,</b>	<p>Match expectation is a 2 year minimum;</p> <p>Initial match meeting can happen at home, or at agency, or on neutral ground, depending on context. Meeting is about connections; mentor acts as a bridge with community; youth can also connect with each other at events.</p> <p>Really get to know mentor and mentee, match on similar interests, youth's goals; personality; mentor's life experience, what both are looking for.</p>
<b>Monitoring and Supporting matches (intensity and frequency of support from the organization)</b>	<p>Support meeting 1x per month; ongoing meetings with mentors to help build relationships with agency staff and other mentors. Some like to meet in person; 4x in person first year, mentee and mentor separately.</p> <p>Dosage depends on matches, some weekly, some bi-weekly; text messages or phone calls in between</p>
<b>Match Closures</b>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> time if match is not the right fit, then fix it – don't force it, be honest; message is life long, make the most of one year, remind year to year. On-going support and training is key.</p> <p>We will be looking at natural match transitions where the relationship will continue outside of continued involvement of the agency.</p>
<b>Collaboration with professional supports and caregivers</b>	<p>Working closely with youth serving agencies that the youth are involved with, i.e. Foster care worker, youth worker, probation officer, etc.</p> <p>Staff are involved and represented in a variety of youth sector networks</p>
<b>What is the role of the Child Intervention Worker?</b>	<p>Will evolve over time; we work together to identify children and youth ages 6-24 who could benefit from mentoring supports. CFSA to be engaged in the introduction of the mentoring program (referral), work together for ongoing supports, resources and updates. Mentors as natural supports. If youth asks, then mentor will act as advocate, can attend meetings and case conferences; yet youth do not need another professional in their lives; let youth decide.</p>

Questions	Calgary: Comments and Observations
	<p>Formalizing collaboration and working relationships with Calgary and Area Child and Family Services office (CFS).</p> <p>Meetings, phone calls, developing relationships, navigating system.</p>
Corporate and other partners	Mentoring Moments, #8000
Other comments:	<p>Mentors do not have access to the youth's file; they are alerted to significant mental health concerns. The story is the youths to tell. The mentor is somebody that comes in with a fresh set of eyes, can start fresh. The BBBS staff sits in the middle, liaises with the professionals.</p> <p>Demographically have less First Nations children but do have a greater population of ethno-cultural youth in care.</p>

### 3. Outcomes and Trends:

a) What short-term outcomes are you starting to see achieved?

- Growth in relationships, reciprocity, youth are reaching out more, they are stating they 'feel less alone'; learning about healthy relationships, speaking up more with peers and teachers

b) What emerging youth trends or issues have you identified since the start?

- Mental health issues, diagnosed and undiagnosed, unstable housing, substance use, sexual exploitation, sexual orientation and gender identity

## Red Deer

### 1. Background:

- Agency Name: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Red Deer and District (RDYVC)
- Start date of project: July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014
- Date of visit: February 5, 2015
- Names of people participating in conversation at site visit: Dawn & Brianna
- Geographical boundaries of the service delivery: Red Deer and area
- As of August 2015, RDYVC has 34 one to one and group matches

#### Matches and Future Focus

- For the period of July 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016, the Agency will commit to maintaining 34 one to one and group matches. They are committed to maintain this number and if any matches close during this time period, then they will recruit new volunteers and children/youth to maintain these numbers. Recruitment efforts will continue to be made through current corporate campaign partners (Canadian Western Bank and Deer Park Alliance). Plans include strengthening relationships with Child and Family Services and work on expanding corporate partnerships.

### 2. Programming:

Questions	Red Deer: Comments and Observations
<b>Describe your agency's children and youth in care mentoring program?</b>	Serve youth from ages 5 – 19, mainly 17 & 18 year olds. Hold group mentoring on Mondays, focus on leadership, teamwork, healthy choices, service to community and learning for life. Have 7 youth who attend group and 2 matches
<b>What principles guide the mentoring program?</b>	Agency principles, focus on creating long term relationships that last a lifetime, not just a one year match; long term gives best value for youth, helps to build resilience
<b>What seems to be working well?</b>	Group mentoring: youth love it Working with agency's outreach worker, helps locate youth, access to shelter Matches doing well Created a strong working relationship with Child Intervention/case worker, who sees the benefits It is a benefit was that the youth in care program is under the same roof as other agency programs and has access to other opportunities (e.g. Rotary Youth Leadership Camp; shelter, activities).
<b>What challenges have been encountered to date?</b>	Mentors who do not fit; have big hearts but can tell that they would not be comfortable mentoring youth on wait list; refer them to community program.  There is issues with rural and distance. Some youth are too far and can't attend group.

Questions	Red Deer: Comments and Observations
	<p>Difficult to follow Community of Practice meetings when participating by phone; miss some of the conversation, can't always tell who is speaking</p> <p>Not seeing the benefit of #8000, seems like a big investment; will link to Mentoring Moments on Facebook and work with Radio station for free promotion.</p> <p>Term "Bigs and Littles": teens felt mentoring was for babies, but after they start group they see the benefits.</p>
<p>Staffing:</p> <p><b>How many staff support this program? What are their roles? Was new staff hired for this project? What was/is staffs understanding of children and youth in care?</b></p>	<p>One Program Coordinator who reports to a Manager, and access to Enrollment Coordinator and other agency staff who support this work.</p> <p>Program Coordinator has strong understanding of youth in care, and completed In Roads training (6 months, 1 day per week) through Alberta Health Services. Completed Aboriginal awareness, addictions training and mental health first aid.</p>
<p>Caseload:</p> <p><b>What does a caseload look like? What is the role of the caseworker?</b></p>	<p>Optimal would be a maximum of 20 matches plus group mentoring (with no more than 12 youth).</p>
<p>Staff supervision:</p> <p><b>What, if anything, do staff need in terms of extra supports? What is the role of the manager? (debriefs, risk management?)</b></p>	<p>Have a highly skilled staff person in this role; is helpful to have a manager who also understands the issues to talk through scenarios and problem solve.</p>
<p>Mentoring supports:</p> <p><b>What, if any, aspects of offering mentoring are done differently than usual in terms of supporting mentoring children and youth in care?</b></p>	<p>Being patient, having open lines of communication; more conversations...with schools, group homes, caseworker etc.;</p> <p>Connecting with teens (e.g. cell number changes, move group homes). It's a different dynamic dealing directly with teens and group homes.</p>
<p><b>Specifically considering:</b></p> <p><b>Recruitment,</b></p>	<p>Have mainly people with social workers and teaching background applying.</p> <p>Use advertisement radio, brochure, presentations</p> <p>Recruitment of mentees: referrals from CFS and agency applications</p>

Questions	Red Deer: Comments and Observations
<b>Screening,</b>	Need people who are non-judgmental, who don't have any expectations, who are open minded.
<b>Training,</b>	One on one, do not have the ability to do this in a group due to numbers. Total 5 hours of training. Topics include program goals, roles and responsibilities, trauma and brain development, types of abuse, attachment, sexual orientation, cultural awareness, boundaries, fostering a strength based relationship, strategies supporting youth, mental health impacts, and community resources. As well, time is spent ensuring that that mentee, mentor and parent/caregiver, if applicable, understand and agree to the roles and responsibilities.
<b>Matching,</b>	Youth attend group, have a connection, know them personally  Group on Monday nights; youth take ownership, plan, develop leadership skills.
<b>Monitoring and Supporting matches (intensity and frequency of support from the organization)</b>	1X per month in person (mentor/mentee separate) Youth text program coordinator, mentors communication in addition to meeting as needed by e-mail, phone or text Youth attend group 1x per week  Mentor and matches set goals Connect with mentors once per month one on one, have regular group meetings, and meetings with caseworker, joint case management.
<b>Match Closures,</b>	Talk about it beginning, middle and end  After age 19 youth is no longer in program
<b>Collaboration with professional supports and caregivers</b>	Group homes, landlords, outreach worker, foster parents, friends, siblings Native Friendship Centre, Central Alberta Refugee Network as needed
<b>What is the role of the Child Intervention Worker?</b>	Involved in role of parent, up front, and has developed a good relationship with agency
<b>Corporate and other partners: To what extent have relationships with corporate partners to support programs and recruit volunteers been</b>	Including information about program in presentations (e.g. Servus Credit union)  Not seen a lot from Corporate partners to date, but working on recruitment with community organizations, churches etc.

Questions

Red Deer: Comments and Observations

**developed and fostered?****3. Outcomes and Trends:**

a) What short-term outcomes are you starting to see achieved?

Youth are more confident (i.e. youth part of check presentation)

Youth are taking more of a role in planning activities for group, planning things with their mentors, contacting their mentors

Youth are happier, on track to graduate, looking at post-secondary

Housing support

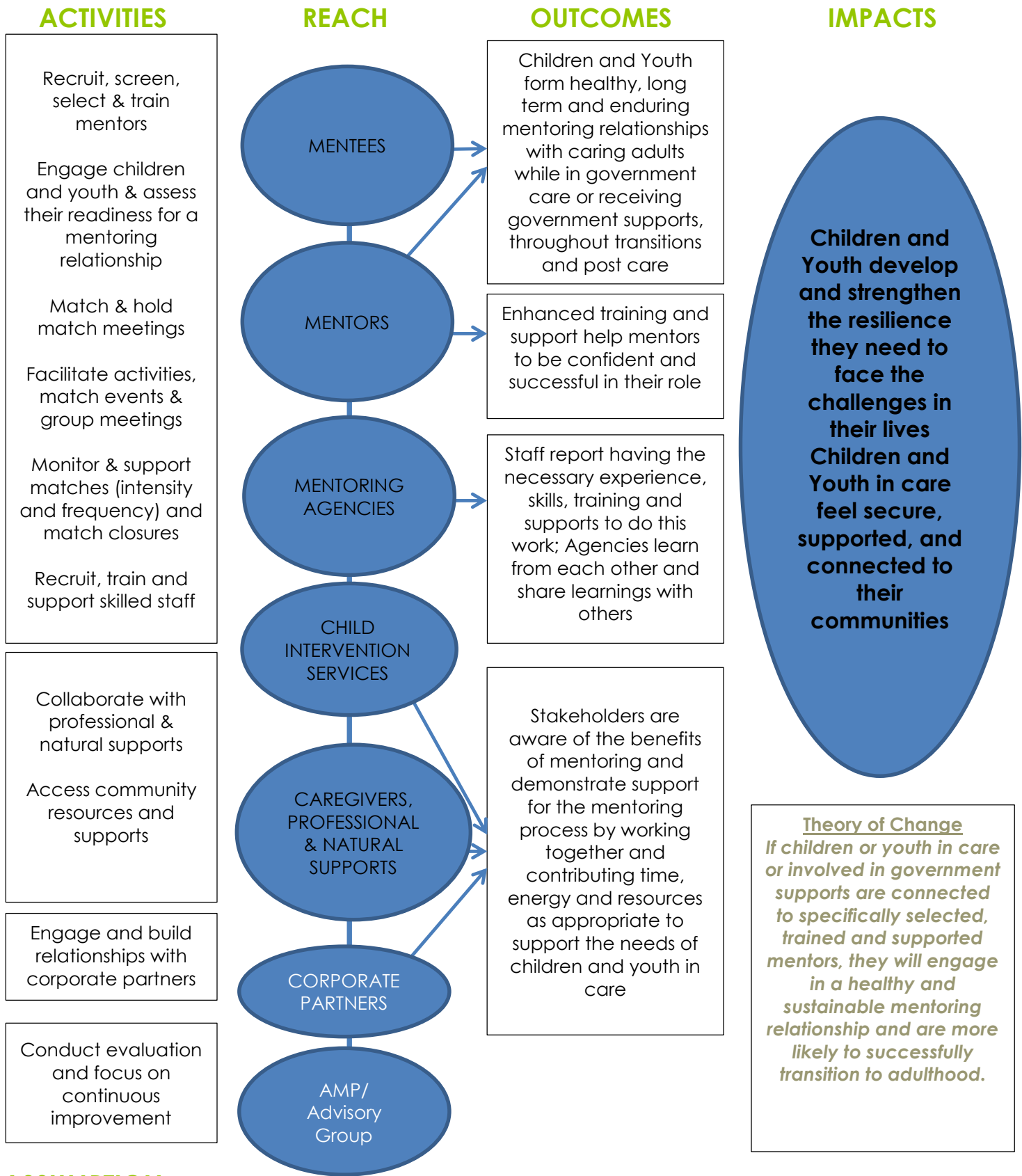
More comfortable trying new things

b) What emerging youth trends or issues have you identified since the start?

Mental health concerns; seeing greater mental health issues in children and youth in care program as well as in community based programming.



## Appendix B: Children & Youth in Care and Mentoring Logic Model



### ASSUMPTION

The needs and rights of children and youth in care drive all decisions and actions