

SECTION 11:

Policies and procedures



LINKED
POLICY

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01 Recruitment: Eligibility and Criteria

A Mentor program outline should explain that:

- a) Mentors are mature people aged over 18 years who want to assist young people to develop their potential and mentees are young people who want to gain from the encouragement, experience and expertise of an older person.
- b) the program is open to all eligible persons regardless of sex, gender, faith, nationality, ethnicity, (unless the program is for a specific subset of youth) who agree to abide by the program rules.

The scope of the program identifies those who are eligible to join the program and to ensure the applicants understand the criteria, terms and conditions under which the program operates.

Scoping information includes:

- a) The profile of mentors and the criteria they are required to meet
- b) the profile of eligible youth: age range, gender, geographic locality and other relevant characteristics if required (family circumstances, socioeconomic status and ethnic background)
- c) style of mentoring: one-to-one, group, team, peer, e-mentoring, or mixed-delivery
- d) the program structure: a stand-alone mentoring program or a component of a larger youth program
- e) the nature and focus of the program, e.g. socialisation, recreation, career preparedness, academic support
- f) the setting or location for mentoring meetings
- g) the frequency and duration of meetings
- h) the length of the mentoring match or engagement
- i) and how potential mentors and mentees can apply to join the program.

Reference: Australian Youth Mentoring Benchmarks. Element 1 Planning and Design

02 Recruitment and Screening of Mentors

The appointment of trustworthy individuals as mentors is crucial. Mentors are adults who are sincerely interested in young people, responsible, empathic, confident, and thoughtful. They commit to make a meaningful contribution to the life of a young person by sharing a minimum of one hour a week/ fortnight with them for an agreed period of time.

Mentors are people that a young person can trust, have fun with, talk with and rely upon. The mentors involve young people in activities that enhance the friendship and enable the young person to develop confidence, knowledge, attributes and skills. Mentors understand they are not replacement parents, social workers or respite carers and that their relationship with the mentee is a power-free relationship based on mutual respect.

Mentors come from all walks of life and have differing levels of formal education and different life experiences. Collectively, they offer a wide range of interests and expertise.

Develop a mentor position description, including:

- An explanation of the program
- A description of the requirements of a mentor
- Desired mentor attributes, skills, experience, qualifications
- Description of the mentor's roles and responsibilities
- Clearly defined time-line and duration of commitment
- A form for the applicant to complete.

Mentors are recruited from local organisations and volunteer networks, including schools, TAFEs, universities, sporting clubs, churches, business groups, civic organisations such as Rotary, Lions, and the local corporate sector. Other relevant agencies include police, fire brigade, emergency workers.

To be accepted as an applicant for a mentorship, the applicant must satisfy the following screening criteria:

- a) be aged eighteen years or more
- b) complete a written application
- c) provide proof of identity

- d) provide proof of residence
- e) agree to personal vetting by police
- f) nominate three personal referees who have known the applicant for one year at least
- g) have a viable means of transport—public transport or motor car, unless involved in e-mentoring; if required, provide a current driver licence
- h) in case of e-mentoring, applicants require a reliable electronic communication method
- i) commit to a regular meeting with a young person (weekly/fortnightly) over an extended period.

Inability to meet any of the screening criteria will void an individual's application.

References: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/recruitment/recruiting-mentors/>

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

03 Recruiting for the Mentor Supervisor

Responsibilities and Skills of the Mentor Supervisor

Responsibilities:

- a) overseeing the development and implementation of the mentoring program
- b) ensuring program quality and performance
- c) communication with mentors, mentees, parents/carers, relevant organisations
- d) program reporting to reference / advisory committee or Board of Directors and funding bodies
- e) promoting and advertising the program
- f) managing relationships with partners, sponsors and funding bodies
- g) supervision of staff and non-mentor volunteers.

Knowledge and skills:

- a) knowledge of mentoring
- b) experience in program management and evaluation
- c) excellent communication skills and well-developed organisational skills
- d) well-developed networks and knowledge of the youth sector
- e) experience in coaching and supervision of staff
- f) submission and report writing
- g) skills and knowledge of evaluation and continuous improvement techniques
- h) commitment to stay for a period of time.

Reference: YACVIC Quality Practice Checklists What to look for in a Coordinator <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/getting-started/program-planning/>

04 Supervision of Mentors

The Youth Mentoring Network suggests the management of mentors is conducted professionally and efficiently if it implements eight principles of mentor management.

These principles are elaborated on other sections of this document.

1. Role clarity

- a) Description of the program
- b) Description of the mentor role
- c) Designated person to whom the mentor reports.

2. Recruitment, screening and selection

(i) Recruitment

- a) A targeted recruitment strategy
- b) Written applications
- c) Request for references.

(ii) Screening and selection of mentors

- a) Face to face interviews (where possible)
- b) Criminal history checks
- c) Compliance with relevant legislation
- d) References checked.

3. Orientation and Training

(i) Orientation

- a) Overview of the program
- b) Explanation of the roles of the mentor
- c) What is expected of the mentor and what they can expect.

(ii) Training

- a) Development of essential skills to perform the task
- b) Outline relevant policies and procedures (Do's and Don'ts)
- c) Included as part of the organisation's screening processes.

4. Support

- a) Regular communication with mentor
- b) Opportunity for debriefing
- c) Monitoring skill level
- d) Problem identification procedures
- e) Someone for the mentor to contact to discuss issues.

5. Ongoing Training

- a) Opportunities for ongoing training offered at regular intervals over the course of the match.

6. Recognition

- a) Formal recognition of the mentor's work (certificates, t-shirts, awards etc)
- b) Informal recognition (e.g. a morning tea 'thanks' ceremony etc.)

7. Exit Strategy

- a) Exit interviews at the completion of the mentor's experience
- b) Exit strategy for mentors that are asked to leave the program.

8. General Management Issues

- a) Information packs ready to be sent out
- b) Application information available on a website
- c) A system to ensure volunteers are placed on newsletter list, invited to events
- d) Dedicated volunteer policies
- e) Record Keeping
- f) OH&S policies.

References:

Youth Mentoring Network. Factsheet 8 Principles for Managing Mentors: A program checklist

05 Responding to Enquiries

Enquiries serve as a first-line screening tool for potential participants. Responding to enquiries should provide people enquiring with a clear overview of the program, as well as helping to determine if they are likely to meet the program requirements. Enquiries from potential mentors and young people should be handled as soon as possible and all people should be treated with courtesy, patience and respect.

The contact details of all people enquiring about the program should be recorded on a database to allow for follow up.

People seeking information should be given a verbal description of the program, including its objectives, the time and duration commitments for a mentoring relationship, and an overview of the application and screening process for mentors and for young people.

Program staff should try to identify whether the enquirer will be eligible to join the program. If it is clear that they are not eligible, the enquirer could possibly be directed to a more suitable alternative or a community resource that may help them find an alternative.

Prospective mentors wanting more information, or wanting to attend an information session, should receive the following in person, by mail or email:

- a) a program brochure
- b) a mentor position description
- c) a mentor application form
- d) the times and dates of relevant orientation sessions.

Young people wanting more information should receive the following information by mail or email:

- a) a program brochure
- b) a mentee position description
- c) a young person referral form

Reference YACVIC: <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/program-management/>

06 Mentor Selection

A variety of mentors is necessary unless the program is designed for a specific subset of young people. For most programs mentors will represent a range of ages, both sexes, culturally and linguistically diverse peoples, various occupations and recreational interests. If Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth are among the participants, the program must be culturally appropriate and safe.

Selection of mentors for the programme is based on the criteria outlined in the position description. Mentors are accepted into the programme only after passing through a comprehensive process that is designed to test their suitability. Formal procedures will be used to advertise for and interview potential mentors, for checking character references and arranging police vetting of applicants.

The formal Selection Process takes place after the applicant has successfully navigated the screening process which establishes whether the applicant meets basic program standards. The selection process investigates whether the applicant possesses the necessary personal attributes required to be a mentor to young people.

Mentors are required to:

- a) have a trustworthy and responsible character
- b) show respect for all people
- c) have a sincere desire to be involved in the life of a young person
- d) actively listen, suspend judgement, ask thoughtful questions
- e) empathise with young people
- f) see solutions and opportunities.

The formal selection process includes:

- a) At least one face-to-face interview
- b) Checking of at least two non-familial character references submitted by the applicant
- c) A Working with Children police check
- d) A National Criminal Record check.

Interview questions and issues may include:

- a) Motivation for being a mentor
- b) Previous volunteering background
- c) Previous roles with young people
- d) What the applicant offers a young person
- e) Capacity to commit to meeting a young person regularly for the lengthy periods of time
- f) Capacity to commit to all program requirements (i.e. initial and ongoing training, reporting systems, feedback sessions).

Unsuitable applicants: criteria for screening out unsuitable applicant mentors can include:

- a) a relevant criminal record, history of child abuse etc
- b) questionable motives including to increase status, gain reward, resolve own problems
- c) lack of appropriate skills or knowledge
- d) lack of availability.

Note: Program management may deem that a criminal record would not necessarily prevent a potential mentor from participating, depending on the nature of the offence, the number of offences, the date and the demeanour of the offender since the offence occurred.

A process for informing inappropriate volunteers that they will not be selected for the program is essential. This could include offering other volunteer opportunities within the organisation and explaining “We have no suitable mentee match for you at this time.”

References:

Department of Planning and Community Development. A Guide to Supporting Effective Programs for Mentoring Young People. State of Victoria, 2007, 40.

YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/mentoring-checklists/>

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

07 Mentee Selection

It is preferable for young people to volunteer or self-select for the programme. Potential mentees may not understand the value of having a mentor and may need to have the benefits explained to them and to be encouraged to participate.

Young people who apply to be a mentee should be informed prior that there is no guarantee that an appropriate mentor will be available, and that they may have to wait until a suitable mentor is found, and that in those cases the situation does not reflect adversely on them.

Guidelines for the selection process:

A written application and/or a personal interview can help to gauge a young person's suitability for the program. However, the program needs to be aware that some young people might prefer to record a verbal application in lieu of a written one. Mentee applicants could be asked to provide written approval of their parent or equivalent and references from a family friend, teacher, employer, sports coach or community leader.

The application and interview could focus on the young person's view of:

- a) the benefit of their having a mentor
- b) the activities they hope to do with the mentor
- c) their current activities, hobbies and interests
- d) their progress at school or work
- e) their strengths and weaknesses
- f) their future hopes and plans.

The applicant will also have to commit to:

- a) meeting their mentor regularly (weekly/fortnightly) for the duration of the mentor/mentee match
- b) meeting the program guidelines including initial and ongoing training, reporting and feedback sessions.

The decision, and the grounds on which it is made should be documented clearly and conveyed appropriately to the applicant.

References:

YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/recruitment/recruiting-young-people/>

Department of Planning and Community Development. A Guide to Supporting Effective Programs for Mentoring Young People. State of Victoria, 2007, 42.

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

08 Orientation and Training

Preparing for participation through an orientation process and training is crucial for both mentors and mentees.

Orientation:

- a) may occur separately or jointly for mentees and mentors
- b) should occur prior to the matching process
- c) should involve all staff in the program
- d) should include ex-mentors and ex-mentees to present their experience of the program
- e) should include, where relevant, parents/ carers to encourage their support with communication, feedback and celebration.

Key Points

- a) Mentors must have submitted their mentor application documents and attended orientation before embarking on mentor training
- b) Mentors should complete their training before being matched with a mentee
- c) Assessment of participation and contribution during the mentor training program should be used as part of mentor screening process.

Training of mentors should include:

- (i) non-negotiable program knowledge
 - a) The responsibilities and duty of care of the mentor
 - b) Program rules, policies and procedures

- c) Do's and Don'ts of relationship management
 - d) Working with Children and other relevant legislative obligations
 - e) Confidentiality and liability
 - f) Ethical issues that may arise related to the mentoring relationship.
- (ii) relevant knowledge and skill development:
- a) the developmental stages of youth
 - b) communication and limit setting skills
 - c) relationship building
 - d) positive ways of interacting
 - e) cultural awareness
 - f) understanding of people with disabilities
 - g) risk management and protective behaviours.

The Youth Mentoring Benchmarks advise training time should not be less than 6 hours, though some programs have longer training. Many programs have mentors attend regular professional development training for two hours every two months.

References: MENTOR. The National Mentoring Partnership. Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, USA, 2015 <https://www.mentoring.org/resource/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/>

YACVIC Orientation and Initial Training <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/selection-and-training/>

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

09 Matching

Having appropriate matches is crucial for mentors and mentees and the success of the program. The needs and interests of the young person are paramount in the matching process.

The match is guided by the preferences and goals of the young person, mentor and their parent or guardian (where appropriate), the mentor's experience, skills and expertise, and other interests shared between the mentor and young person. Other considerations include gender or ethnicity, if these are important to either party, similarity in personalities and temperaments, geographic closeness and compatibility of meeting times, as well as any special needs.

Research indicates the best predictor of a successful match is the mentor and mentee having shared interests.

Some programs allow prospective mentors and mentees to contribute to the matching decision: one option is to provide a social occasion where prospective mentors and mentees can get to know each other in a relaxed atmosphere before a match is considered. Other programs offer potential mentors and mentees profiles of prospective partners and invite them to indicate a preference. Some also consult with family members and school staff who know the mentee.

The matching decision and first meeting

A process is required to govern the matching decision: who makes the decision; the criteria used, how the decision is made, how it is announced, how the parties are formally introduced.

The first meeting is usually conducted by program staff with the mentor, the mentee and the mentee's parent or guardian. It gives the mentor and mentee a chance to take part in an activity to build rapport, talk about their hopes and aims for the relationship, and agree on the time and place for the next meeting. At this meeting it is good idea to complete outstanding paperwork, including signing consent forms and the match agreement (see below).

Match Agreement

The Match Agreement sets out the basic requirements of the program including the duration of the match, frequency of meetings, the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the participants, the boundaries of the relationship and confidentiality. Preferably it should be signed by four parties—the mentor, mentee, program coordinator and parent or guardian. The match agreement gives transparency to the arrangement and helps the parties to commit to the task.

References:

Australian Youth Mentoring Benchmarks. Element 8 Making the Match

YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/mentoring-checklists/>

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

10 Closing the Match

All mentor relationships come to an end and mentor programmes require set procedures to enable both parties to end their relationship in a positive manner. Mentoring programs are usually for set periods of time although matches may close for other reasons—the mentor or mentee may leave the program; circumstances change so that the relationship is unable to continue; the mentee reaches a point where mentoring is no longer needed.

A clear process for ending the match helps to ensure the relationship ends positively and all parties—mentor, mentee (and all other stakeholders)—are prepared for the end.

Some programs hold a graduation ceremony to provide a more formal recognition of the value of the mentoring relationship.

When closing the relationship:

- a) the feelings of both mentors and mentees need to be acknowledged and supported
- b) enable the mentor and mentee to focus on accomplishments of the relationship
- c) the mentor and mentee should consider the ongoing pursuit of their personal goals
- d) the mentor and mentee should consider whether they will have future contact
- e) the process should provide information for evaluation of the program
- f) invite the mentee's parent/guardian opinion of the relationship.

Private and confidential exit interviews to debrief the mentoring relationship between:

- a) mentee and programme staff
- b) mentor and programme staff
- c) mentor and mentee with programme staff.

Collect information on:

- a) What did they most value in the relationship?
- b) What goals did they set and achieve? What enabled this?
- c) What goals were set but were not achieved? Why?
- d) What was learnt that was unexpected?
- e) What would/should they not do again?
- f) What should the program not do again?
- g) How would they improve the program?

Future contact

- The mentor and mentee might arrange for future contact. However, the mentor program cannot be responsible or take responsibility for post-match contact between the former mentor and former mentee.

References: MENTOR. The National Mentoring Partnership. Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, USA, 2015 <https://www.mentoring.org/resource/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/>

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/mentoring-checklists/>

11 Monitoring and Support

Being involved in a mentoring relationship is both rewarding and challenging for the mentor and the mentee. Providing supervision and support for both parties, particularly early in the match, will help develop and sustain the relationship. Supervision also enables program staff to monitor and deal with any safety issues, provide feedback about the progress of the relationship, and enables the management of conflict. Mentor programs that provide regular supervision and support to mentors and mentees before and after they are matched are more likely to be successful.

The level of supervision differs among programs but at a minimum mentors and mentees should be required to each keep a record of each session and program staff should monitor the relationship to ensure that the pair are continuing to fulfil the program conditions by meeting regularly.

Ongoing monitoring and support for both mentor and mentee improves the experience for both parties and aims to identify and address quickly any problems or issues that may arise. For an initial period this contact can follow each engagement and later possibly be a regular though less frequent event.

A tool for debriefing, and monitoring overall progress, is found in the Debriefing section.

Monitoring and support is aided by:

- a) guidelines to govern the mentor/ mentee relationship: e.g. frequency, place and method of meetings
- b) the mentor and young person to keep a record of each meeting to aid assessment and evaluation
- c) the mentor and young person to agree to communicate regularly with the Mentor Coordinator
- d) mentor group meetings to enable mentors to share experiences and strategies; (a similar process for mentees could be useful)
- e) a process for managing grievances and to avoid premature match closures
- f) structured group meetings of mentors and mentees to build social cohesion and networks for all participants.

The Mentor Coordinator will monitor the match to:

- a) ensure the mentor and young person are meeting regularly
- b) assess the quality of the relationship and assess whether it is making progress toward its goals
- c) identify and help address any problem that might arise between the pair
- d) gain feedback regarding how program staff can better support the match.

The Mentor Coordinator will provide support and guidance if the match does not progress satisfactorily or when the mentor or young person expresses dissatisfaction with some aspect of the relationship, if one party is breaking program rules or the Code of Conduct.

Mentors and young people will be encouraged to contact the Mentor Coordinator between scheduled meetings with any immediate concerns. The Mentor Coordinator must treat any concern from either party seriously and act upon them immediately.

Other support for mentors could involve:

- a) Provide mentors with an after-hours phone number, usually that of the Mentor Coordinator should they be confronted with an emergency concerning the young person.
- b) Organise one on one catchups with mentors over coffee
- c) Offer monthly group mentor meetings so mentors can debrief with one another
- d) Distribute a regular newsletter that gives tips on successful mentoring relationships
- e) Provide certificates to celebrate successful matches
- f) Acknowledge mentor contributions during National Volunteer Week or Youth Mentoring Week
- g) Provide opportunities for mentors to speak about their experience at external events
- h) Invite experienced mentors to assist with mentor training as a way of recognising their skills and experience.

References:

YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/match-support/supervision-ongoing-training/>

Department of Planning and Community Development. A Guide to Supporting Effective Programs for Mentoring Young People. State of Victoria, 2007.

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

Australian Youth Mentoring Benchmarks. Element 9 Monitoring and Support

12 Resolution of Match Issues (or other issues)

Mentor programs need a procedure to enable a timely response to a mentor and mentee who experience a difficulty or early sign of conflict.

Mentors and mentees should inform the program coordinator when they meet with a problem or difficulty in their relationship that prevents them working effectively.

The Mentor Coordinator can enlist strategies that might be useful in helping the mentoring pair to solve the problem;

- a) Provide coaching for the mentor and mentee separately
- b) Bring them together for a mediated discussion
- c) Ask a support group of mentors, and a support group of mentees, for perspectives and ideas.

If the pair cannot resolve the problem or conflict after trying hard, it may be best to terminate the match gracefully. There is no shame in deciding that a different match would be more appropriate.

Note: The section on Early Termination gives advice on procedures to follow when a mentor pairing ends prematurely.

Reference: MENTOR. The National Mentoring Partnership. Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, USA, 2015 <https://www.mentoring.org/resource/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/>

13 Match Ending

See No. 10

14 Early Termination

A match between a mentor and mentee may not continue for several reasons. The cause may be 'objective' and result from changed circumstances, including illness, relocation, lack of time due to changed work or domestic arrangements. Or the cause may be 'subjective' in which the two parties are unable to form a productive relationship, or experience irresolvable conflict, or one party fails to observe important program rules rendering the relationship unworkable.

When the match ends prematurely a danger is the young person may perceive a fault in themselves or feel abandoned. The aim must be to achieve a positive ending and so the young person should be encouraged to positive meanings from the experience regardless of the reason for the termination. In many cases the young person will be able to be matched with another mentor.

When the decision has been made to end the formal mentoring relationship the mentor and mentee should agree on a specific date for the last meeting. The program coordinator should facilitate an opportunity for the mentor and mentee to talk honestly and constructively to each other about:

- a) The reason for the termination of the relationship
- b) how they feel about the relationship ending.
- c) the positive and negative aspects of the relationship
- d) what they have learned from the engagement
- e) future contact between the two.

References: MENTOR. The National Mentoring Partnership. Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, USA, 2015 <https://www.mentoring.org/resource/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/>

New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

15 Privacy and Confidentiality

The program is committed to protecting the privacy of any personal information it holds about individuals in accordance with Australian Privacy Principles. The Privacy and Confidentiality policy and procedure provides a framework within which it ensures confidentiality, privacy and secure record keeping.

Privacy

Re the Collection of Information, the program will:

- a) collect only information that is necessary for the performance and primary function of operating a youth mentoring program
- b) take all reasonable steps to ensure the information we collect is accurate, complete, up-to-date and relevant to the functions we perform
- c) tell program participants why we collect the information and how it is administered
- d) store personal information securely and protect it from unauthorised access, misuse and loss
- e) inform program participants that they have access to information about them and the right to correct it.

Personal Information about an individual is collected only for: (i) the purpose of recruiting and screening mentors (ii) matching young people with an appropriate mentor (iii) providing adequate match supervision and support during the program and (iv) for program evaluation.

The programme will give program participants the option of not identifying themselves when completing evaluation forms or opinion surveys.

Disclosures:

- a) The program will (i) use or disclose information only for the primary purpose for which it is collected, or a directly related secondary purpose and (ii) obtain consent from the affected person for other uses.
- b) The program will release personal information about a person only with that person's express permission and will release information to third parties if it is requested by the person concerned.

Confidentiality

The program will keep confidential information that is collected during the recruiting and screening phases, in personal interviews and in the mentoring relationship.

All talk and discussions between young people, mentors and program staff is private and remains in confidence, other than where the young person discloses information about potential or actual self-harm or harm to others, or discloses information about an intended or actual illegal act.

The program will:

- f) inform all mentors and young people about the confidentiality policy
- g) require each matched mentor and mentee to discuss the boundaries of their relationship—what they are not willing to talk about— and to review that boundary as needed
- h) inform all program participants about the limits of confidentiality; specifically they are a disclosure about potential or actual self-harm or harm to others; a disclosure that a young person is suffering physical, sexual or emotional abuse by another person or a disclosure about intended or actual illegal acts
- i) require mentors to make sure that they remind any young person about the limits of confidentiality if they have reason to believe the young person is about to disclose information that exceeds those limits.

Record Keeping

The program will document each step of the application and match process by creating a case file for each potential mentor and mentee.

Program staff will keep stringent records of all program activities, utilising approved forms. All files should be regularly maintained and updated within an electronic database and/or hard copy filing system.

All records will be confidential. Archival records or those records of past applicants and participants will be maintained for a period of seven years after their participation in the program ends. After seven years, the records will be destroyed by approved individuals.

Reference: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/program-management/>

16 Crisis and After-Hours Support? and/or 'How To Refer to Support Services.

Situations can arise which call for understanding or expertise that is beyond the mentor's responsibility or capacity. The situation may constitute an acute crisis, or the mentor may become aware of a continuing or chronic problem.

Some situations require mandatory reporting, including suspicion or knowledge of child abuse or neglect. A separate policy and process may be needed to govern referral in the case of mandatory reporting.

Mentors must receive instruction during training in how to identify problems or a crisis that requires referral to professionals and support services.

The Mentor Program must have a clear policy and process to guide mentor program staff when they call on or refer the mentee to other services.

Mentors must have access to crisis and emergency services including:

- Ambulance (000)
- Police (000)
- Lifeline (13 11 14)
- Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800)
- Suicide Call Back Service (1300 659 467)

Where appropriate the mentor or the program coordinator should ensure the mentee and their family are aware of local support agencies they can draw on and the limitations of the role of the mentor in some circumstances.

See also Nos. 31, 32.

References: Foundations of Successful Youth Mentoring: A Guidebook for Program Development, 43.

The Lookout <https://www.thelookout.org.au/other-professionals/responding-family-violence/referring-clients-other-services>

17 OHS Including Risk Assessment

The program has a legal and moral duty to protect all participants from harm. All participants are required to regard working safely and preventing accidents and injury as an individual and collective responsibility.

The program will ensure that all participants understand the OHS policy.

The mentor program is in a different situation to the usual workplace since the meetings of mentor and mentee are likely to take place in a range of different settings, including buildings of various types and various external locations. Activities may include outdoor actions and events and physical activities, including sports. The mentor is ultimately responsible for the health and safety of both parties during program activities.

The mentor and mentee must

- a) take care for their own health and safety and for the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omission
- b) not engage in any conduct, activity or behaviour which could unreasonably endanger their own or any other persons' health
- c) identify potential hazards, assess risks and implement measures to reduce and control any risks
- d) gain consent from the mentee's parent/guardian to the location of program meetings and activities that may involve risk of injury or harm
- e) inform the program coordinator on any matter that that could affect their health and safety
- f) immediately report any safety incident or known or observed hazard to the program coordinator
- g) ensure they are not affected by alcohol or any other drug while engaged in a program activity
- h) observe all road and traffic laws and laws and regulations governing other forms of transport should the mentor and mentee travel for program purposes
- i) seek immediate care and attention for any injury sustained in a program activity and alert the parent/guardian of the mentee and the program coordinator as soon as possible.

Reference: YACVIC Occupational Health and Safety <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

18 Managing Complaints

See No. 23

19 Child Safety and Duty of Care, Police Checks

The safety of the young people in the program is the primary responsibility of the program. A Working with Children (WWC) Check and National Criminal Record (NCR) Check is compulsory for adults wishing to be involved in the program and will be undertaken prior to a person's selection as a mentor. The process helps to protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, violence or drug offences and findings from disciplinary bodies. A WWC check and NCR check requires the written consent of the individual involved and a refusal will prevent a person's involvement in the Mentor Program.

Purpose

The mentor program commits to protect young people from any form of harm or abuse.

This policy provides a framework to ensure that the Mentor Program educates program staff about child safety, to select and train appropriate mentors and to protect the young people who take part in our program.

Our policy applies to all young people up to 18 years that participate in the program and to all program staff, mentors, parents and any partner organisations.

The Mentor program will:

- a) promote child safety in our policy, procedures and practices
- b) comply with child protection legislation that provides for any person to contact child protection authorities if they have reasonable grounds to believe a child has been harmed, or is likely to be harmed, or is in need of protection
- c) require all program staff and mentors to have a Working with Children Check and a National Police Check
- d) designate a Mentor Program staff member as the person to receive and report any complaint or allegation about child safety made by program staff, mentors, young people, parents, visitors or others involved in the program
- e) provide a clear, transparent and fair reporting process that creates a sense of trust and confidence in the process, and encourages any person concerned to use the process if they have a worry for a young person's safety or well-being.

Procedures

The Mentor Program will undertake the following process to protect young people in the program:

1. Recruit, screen and select staff and mentors to ensure they are safe and suitable to work with young people, taking into account how interviews are conducted, and the importance of reference checks and Working With Children and National Criminal Record checks
2. Ensure that expiration dates for Working With Children checks held by staff, volunteers and program participants are documented and reviewed regularly
3. Educate all staff and mentors about this policy, our reporting process and the program's Code of Conduct
4. Provide ongoing support and supervision that gives staff and mentors the confidence to report any safety concerns about young people they associate with
5. Provide ongoing training in the areas of child abuse and child protection for staff and mentors
6. Consult with young people in the program regularly as part of creating a safe environment and use their feedback to review this policy
7. Specify how often this policy is reviewed and the ongoing monitoring process, ensuring any changes in relevant state child protection legislation be reflected in this policy.

Duty of Care

All parties participating in the Mentor Program have the responsibility to exercise Duty of Care. They must take reasonable care to avoid an act (or avoid failing to act) which might reasonably be foreseen to result in injury to others.

Legal liability arises where, in the eyes of the court, an organisation or individual has been negligent. In short, the Mentor Program is liable for the actions of both staff and mentors.

Mentors are expected to take steps to avoid reasonably foreseeable risks of injury. The aim should always be to minimise the risk of injury and the avoidance of legal liability.

The Mentor Program is committed to good risk management practices, appropriate insurance, parental consent and common sense. Mentors must adhere to program guidelines and its Code of Conduct, and be clear about the nature of the mentoring role.

If a young person discloses physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect to you:

- a) Listen, ask questions for clarity, but do not investigate
- b) Do not promise that the information will be kept confidential and explain to the young person who you will be telling and why
- c) Immediately report the matter to the Mentor Coordinator
- d) The Mentor Coordinator will determine what action needs to be taken, including whether a referral is required to Child Protection and/or police. Key considerations are the nature of the disclosure, when the alleged events happened, and whether the young person is currently at risk.

References: YACVIC Policy and Procedure - Child Safety and Duty of Care- <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/quality-assurance-support-materials/>

20 Code of Conduct

The Youth Mentoring Hub provides a Code of Conduct that sets out general principles for the conduct expected of mentors. A code that applies to mentees is found at No. 37.

A mentor must:

- a) be a positive role model to a young person
- b) be honest, reliable, punctual and true to their word
- c) be positive in attitude, expression and dealings with young people
- d) know, understand and protect the rights of young people
- e) take notice of a young person's reactions to them and adapt their approach if necessary
- f) consider their own and the young person's safety and security
- g) immediately advise program staff of any concerns or crisis regarding the young person
- h) respect the privacy of other mentors and young people, and the confidentiality of information acquired during mentoring activities
- i) respect the rights and responsibilities of the young person's family or carers, their teachers, school and any professional person working with them
- j) encourage the young person without a hint of coercion
- k) continue to build their mentoring skills by attending relevant training and support sessions
- l) abide by the law, and comply with any and all applicable policies and procedures of the Mentor Program.

Note: A 'crisis' is any event that is, or may lead to, an unstable and dangerous situation.

A 'high risk activity' is an activity that exposes participants to a high level of danger (e.g. riding a motorbike, horse riding, some water activities, extreme sports and adventure activities).

A mentor must not:

- a) impose their opinions on a young person
- b) give or loan money to a young person
- c) engage in intrusive conversations with a young person's family or carers, their teachers, school or any professional person working with them
- d) engage in mentoring or program activities while affected by drugs or alcohol, or smoke around young people
- e) wear inappropriate clothes while engaged in mentoring activities, including clothes displaying slogans or images of sex, violence, drugs, discrimination or advertising alcohol
- f) transport a person who is not a Mentor Program participant in any vehicle, for any reason (e.g. a young person's friend or family)
- g) take a young person on a high-risk activity, or engage in a high-risk activity with a young person unless appropriate parental permission and organisation insurance have been approved prior to the activity
- h) attempt to deal personally with a crisis involving the young person
- i) enter into a sexual or other inappropriate relationship with a young person or their family/guardian or friends
- j) administer any form of punishment (e.g. confiscating personal items, physical or corporal punishment or verbal reprimand) on a young person.

References: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

21 Staff Support and Development

All paid and unpaid staff engaged on the program which involves the task of mentoring young people deserve effective and enduring support from the program. This includes ensuring that the people recruited to the program have the appropriate attributes to contribute effectively.

Non-negotiable support includes:

- A written job description that includes minimum qualifications for knowledge, skills, and experience
- A thorough screening and recruitment process to ensure applicants are appropriately qualified for the task of mentoring
- A thorough orientation and training program to prepare mentors for the task of mentoring young people
- A systematic set of policies and procedures which inform and guide the mentor through the necessary tasks
- Opportunities for continuing education, training and skill development throughout their career as a mentor
- Opportunities for reflection on the nature of mentoring and on their progress in company with other mentors on the program.

Reference: Foundations of Successful Youth Mentoring: A Guidebook for Program Development, 73.

22 Managing Risky Behaviours

The program prevents and manages risk behaviours by educating and training mentors and mentees about the distinction between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and by developing and implementing a suite of policies, procedures and guidelines which mitigate risky behaviours. These include codes of conduct and policies and procedures on information and data management, privacy and confidentiality, equal opportunity, sexual harassment and the management of critical incidents.

23 Grievance Resolution Procedure

A grievance resolution procedure ensures mentors, mentees and program staff have a transparent process for addressing any problem or complaint that they encounter. All participants must understand the grievance procedure, know how to make a complaint, and understand the process that will be followed. It is vital that a complaint is taken seriously and acted upon fairly, as soon as possible, according to due process.

The Grievance Resolution Procedure policy is based on the following principles:

- All grievances will be handled in a fair and reasonable manner, seeking to ensure natural justice is achieved. All persons involved in a grievance deserve procedural fairness.
- To the extent possible, the programme will aim to preserve the wellbeing of all parties concerned and to achieve fair outcomes.
- Any person who lodges a grievance will not be unlawfully discriminated against or mistreated for raising a grievance. Any alleged discrimination, mistreatment or other inappropriate conduct may be investigated further, including in accordance with the additional disciplinary procedure below.
- All parties to a grievance should participate constructively in the process and aim to seek a resolution which is as fair as possible to all parties.

The Grievance Resolution Procedure provides mentor and mentees, and any other staff, with a clear process that facilitates fair and equitable treatment of complaints and their resolution in a conciliatory and effective manner without undue delay.

1. The complainant should first discuss the matter directly with the person concerned to try to resolve the matter.
2. If the complaint cannot be resolved directly with the concerned person, the complainant should notify the Mentor Coordinator of the grievance and seek their assistance to facilitate a resolution. Note: If the complaint is made against the Mentor Coordinator, the complainant (or the Mentor Coordinator) should contact the Program Manager who will be responsible for overseeing the grievance process.
 - a) A grievance can be made verbally or in writing.
 - b) The person against whom the complaint is made will be provided with details of the complaint and the Mentor Coordinator will provide them with the opportunity to respond to the complaint before formal resolution is attempted.
 - c) If the matter remains unresolved the Mentor Coordinator will arrange mediation between the complainant and the person concerned.
3. Mediation: So far as it is reasonably practicable, at the mediation:
 - a. the parties will be informed of any information relevant to the complaint
 - b. each party will be invited to provide comments in relation to the complaint
 - c. the Mentor Coordinator will seek to facilitate a resolution of the grievance that is mutually acceptable to both parties
 - d. the Mentor Coordinator will provide all parties with clear responses and feedback and clarification of the next steps which can be taken, if any.
4. If the complaint remains unresolved, the issue will be referred to the Program Manager for resolution.
5. If the complaint remains unresolved, a Grievance Panel will be established by the Program Manager aimed at resolving the grievance within 10 working days. The Grievance Panel will provide written reasons for its decision to all involved parties and to the Program Manager.
6. If the complaint is not resolved by the Grievance Panel, the Program Manager may call upon an external mediator to seek a resolution.
7. If a complaint between a mentor and a young person cannot be satisfactorily resolved, their match will be closed and (where appropriate) they will be re-matched with someone else.
8. So far as it is reasonably practicable:
 - a. The Mentor Coordinator or Program Manager will permit both the aggrieved party and the person against whom the complaint is raised to have a support person present at any discussions or meetings regarding the complaint.
 - b. The Mentor Coordinator may call upon any person who has or may have knowledge about or witnessed the cause of the complaint to provide their knowledge or perspective.
 - c. The Mentor Coordinator will seek to document the steps and proceedings undertaken to resolve the grievance.
 - d. The Mentor Coordinator will endeavour to ensure that the complaint and all steps taken with a view to resolving the complaint are treated confidentially.

9. Possible Outcomes

- a) The complaint may be resolved satisfactorily and the two parties able to resume or continue their engagement.
- b) A satisfactory resolution might include one or more of (i) the protagonist making an apology, (ii) undertaking that the behaviour will not be repeated, (iii) receiving counselling or training.
- c) If a complaint between a mentor and a mentee cannot be satisfactorily resolved, their match will be closed and, if possible, they may be re-matched with another party.
- d) If the complaint is substantiated and the Mentor Coordinator considers the behaviour was a sufficiently serious breach of ethics or responsibility, the person responsible may be required to leave the program.

10. Alleged Criminal Conduct

- a) If the behaviour complained about might constitute a criminal offence, (e.g. sexual assault, rape, stalking, indecent exposure, molestation, obscene phone calls), the Mentor Coordinator might be required to report to police.
- b) If the complainant is a young person, mandatory reporting to police and other external bodies may be required.

11. False Complaints/Victimisation

- a) Disciplinary action may follow if a person makes a deliberately false and/or malicious complaint.
- b) Disciplinary action may follow if a person mistreats, victimises or discriminates against another person because that person has made, or intends to make a complaint.

Reference: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

24 Equal Opportunity

Organisations have a responsibility to create safe, inclusive and respectful settings that do not allow any form of unlawful discrimination. To discriminate unlawfully means to treat someone unfavourably or unfairly. It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds

- a) Nationality, race, colour or ethnic origin
- b) Religion
- c) Sex or gender
- d) Disability
- e) Age (except for program conditions)
- f) Physical features
- g) Sexual orientation
- h) Marital relationship status
- i) Parental or carer status
- j) Pregnancy and breastfeeding
- k) Political opinion, belief or activity.

No eligible young person can be rejected as a mentee, and no eligible adult can be rejected as a mentor, on any of those grounds. Similarly, no mentor or mentee can be denied participation in any aspect of the program on any of those grounds.

All mentors and mentees must understand that unlawful discrimination is not permitted, that any instance should be reported immediately, and that all complaints will be investigated according to due process.

A breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible exclusion from involvement in the Program. To penalise or threaten a person because that person has made, or intends to make, a complaint of discrimination is a breach of this policy.

If a person believes they have been treated unfairly or unfavourably they should follow the steps laid out in the program's Grievance Resolution Procedure

References: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

25 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including an unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other sexually related conduct which results in a person feeling offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where a reasonable person would anticipate that reaction in the circumstances.

Examples of sexually harassing behaviour include:

- unwelcome touching
- staring or leering
- suggestive comments or jokes
- sexually explicit pictures or posters
- unwanted invitations to go out on dates
- requests for sex
- intrusive questions about a person's private life or body
- unnecessary familiarity, such as deliberately brushing up against a person
- insults or taunts based on sex
- sexually explicit physical contact; and
- sexually explicit emails or SMS text messages.

All mentors and mentees must understand that sexual harassment is not permitted, that any instance of sexual harassment should be reported immediately, and that all complaints will be investigated according to due process. A breach of this policy will result in disciplinary action which may include the instigator being excluded from the program.

A person who believes they have been sexually harassed should follow the steps laid out in the Grievance Resolution Procedure.

Reference: Australian Human Rights Commission <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sexual-harassment-workplace-legal-definition-sexual-harassment>

26 Legal Obligations and Liability

Legal liability arises when an organisation or individual fails to conform to the law or regulations or is negligent. The mentor program meets its legal obligations and liabilities via the suite of policies, procedures and guidelines which address key issues that include but are not limited to parental and guardian consent, recruitment and supervision, codes of conduct, information and data management, privacy and confidentiality, equal opportunity, sexual harassment, critical incidents, and insurance.

27 Insurance (Including Volunteer)

Taking out insurance is not a substitute for good risk management processes. However no suite of policies and practices can cover every contingency, so insurance is the necessary last resort.

The intention of this policy is to protect all program participants and any third parties involved in or affected by any program activity who might suffer harm or injury.

In considering insurance needs take care to provide adequate cover for all foreseeable contingencies while tailoring a package devoid of any cover not relevant to Mentoring

The program should consider these policies:

- a) public liability (covering all third parties)
- b) personal accident (covering volunteer mentors)
- c) workers compensation (covering program staff)
- d) directors and officers liability (covering management committee members)
- e) property, equipment and building cover.

The program should consider these factors when deciding about appropriate insurance cover:

- a) the extent of cover
- b) the amount and extent of any excess
- c) any geographical limits
- d) any limits on the nature of activities
- e) relevant exclusions.

The program will ensure volunteers understand their responsibility to follow all stipulated program guidelines and abide by relevant State and Federal laws whilst involved in mentoring activities.

It is recommended that organisations package insurance policies in order to generate the most cost-efficient cover and consider partnering with like-minded or similar organisations or programs to generate savings on insurance.

In the event of any incident or accident involving harm or injury to any program participants or third party involved in or affected by a program activity the incident will be reported. The following reporting guidelines will be observed:

- a) The incident report will be written as soon as possible.
- b) The incident report should:
 - i. deal only in facts
 - ii. offer no opinions or comments
 - iii. offer no discussion about liability or blame
 - iv. be made known to everyone involved in the incident and the reporting process.

The insurer should be notified as soon as possible about any actual or potential claim against the program or any program participant(s).

A volunteer mentor who transports a young person in their own vehicle must have full comprehensive insurance for their vehicle. In the case of an accident, the volunteer will claim damage to their vehicle through their insurance provider.

Reference: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/program-management/>

28 Media Policy

Strong, positive media coverage is important because it helps to build a team/organisation's public profile, promotes key messages, policies, programs and events, increases public awareness of alcohol and other drug-related issues, influences decision makers and impresses funders or potential funders.

Appointing a spokesperson

It can be useful to appoint a spokesperson to be the lead contact for any media-related enquiries. Having one or more spokespeople ensures that there are individuals selected who are conversant with all your key messages and prepared to address media if the need occurs. A spokesperson will need to communicate the positions and key messages of the organisation.

Reactive media

All media interview or information requests must be referred to the spokesperson in a timely manner. If a journalist attends an event or calls unexpectedly requesting information or an interview on the spot, staff/volunteers must inform the journalist that all media requests need to go through the organisation's spokesperson before they can make any comments or share information.

The below guide includes an info sheet on Tips for responding to the media.

Proactive media

Your organisation can reach out to, and engage, local media to promote your work. The below guide provides lots of information on identifying local media, building relationships and writing media releases.

Guide: <https://community.adf.org.au/projects/engaging-media/>

Photograph requests

Program participants may not want to be named – always check with them before you identify them in the media and obtain a photo consent form if they agree to you using an identifiable photo of them.

Photo release forms should be filed in the same place as you keep the photographs.

All photograph requests for anyone under 18 years of age must be referred to the spokesperson and have parent/guardian permission. Photo release forms must be signed by the parent/guardian.

An example photo release form has been provided for your use.

Media issues management

Thinking about potential negative issues that may occur ahead of time can ensure that if anything happens, your organisation can have an effective response to, and recovery from, an emergency or critical incident.

A crisis is defined as an event that has an impact on your organisation's internal and external stakeholders, operations or reputation.

A media crisis could look like:

- Negative media reporting around your organisation's activities
- Staff, volunteer or participant saying negative things about your organisation
- Stigmatising discussion of alcohol and other drug-related issues related to your organisation
- Material shared on social media which causes harm to staff, volunteer, participants or your organisation's reputation
- A specific incident related to program delivery such as injury, legal proceedings, accidents, loss of physical infrastructure.

If a media crisis occurs, do not respond publicly right away. All crisis management questions relating to the implementation of either the mentoring, peer support or parenting program modules or the Local Drug Action Team program should be referred to the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's Media Manager at media@adf.org.au or 0430 948 380.

29 Social Media Use

Social media can be a useful tool in connecting people and promoting your work. To ensure this is a safe and accommodating place for all, these guidelines should be followed.

Appointing a social media manager

It is helpful to choose an authorised person or small group of people to represent your team/organisation through your owned social media channels.

The social media manager/s will need to communicate the positions and key messages of the organisation.

While using social media on behalf of the organisation, staff/volunteers must adhere to the behaviour guidelines below.

Behaviour online

- Keep it civil: Be courteous and respectful at all times. Use respectful language and understand that others may have an opinion or belief that is different from yours.
- Protect your privacy: Don't post personal information that you would not be comfortable sharing with a stranger, or confidential information about the organisation or its work.
- Don't post any unnecessary information about yourself or anyone else, such as addresses, email addresses, or phone numbers. Program participants may not want to be named – always check with them before you identify them online and obtain a photo consent form if they agree to you using an identifiable photo of them.
- Never post images – or name – of under-age program participants without the written authorisation of a parent or guardian.

- Don't be offensive or 'troll': Ensure you do not post remarks that could be considered as racist, sexist, rude, defamatory, obscene, offensive, discriminatory or as attacking others.
- Keep it legal: Do not post anything that is illegal in any way.
- Protect copyright: Do not post material to the page that infringes the intellectual property rights of others.
- No spamming: Do not spam your own or others social media channels, or post or upload promotional material to other social media pages (not owned by the organisation) without permission.
- Be a positive representative: Don't share anything negative about colleagues/team members, program participants or your organisation on your personal social media.

Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and Twitter have rules too. Don't post anything which breaches community standards, found here:

- > Facebook: www.facebook.com/legal/terms
- > Instagram: help.instagram.com/581066165581870/
- > LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/legal/l/service-terms
- > Twitter: twitter.com/en/tos
- > YouTube: www.youtube.com/t/terms

Photography

Do not share anyone's image on social media without their knowledge and consent.

When sharing images of anyone under 18 years of age on the organisation's social media sites, relevant photo release forms (permission forms) must be completed and retained for your records as long as the image is in use.

An example permission form has been provided for your use.

Leveraging social media

This guide from the ADF's Community Hub provides tips and resources on using social media to promote your work. <https://community.adf.org.au/projects/leveraging-social-media/>

30 Dealing with Unacceptable Mentor Behaviour

A mentor program Code of Conduct is required that outlines appropriate behaviour of mentors and young people that participate in the program.

This policy supports the management of unacceptable behaviours to minimise risks to participant and to protect the integrity of the Mentoring Program. Unacceptable behaviour may result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension or termination from the program or from specific program activities.

Policy

The Mentoring Program cannot allow unacceptable behaviours by mentors and/or young people as participants in the program.

Unacceptable behaviours include but are not limited to:

- a) being consistently late for or missing agreed mentoring times or meetings
- b) using inappropriate language (e.g. loud, provocative, sexually suggestive, swearing, discriminatory)
- c) uttering verbal abuse and threats of violence
- d) employing physical violence
- e) engaging in disruptive behaviour
- f) engaging in bullying and other discriminatory behaviour
- g) attending a program event while under the influence of a drug or substance
- h) illegal behaviour

Procedures

Determine the nature of the behaviour and steps required to address the situation. Some unacceptable behaviour may be dealt with through disciplinary action while other behaviours (such as breaking the law or endangering the health and safety of others) may require immediate termination from the Program.

For behaviours that may be resolved through disciplinary action, a Disciplinary Procedure is described below. Young people and mentors should continue to meet during this procedure. For more serious breaches that requires termination of involvement in the program a separate Termination Procedure is outlined.

Disciplinary Procedure for Mentors

- a) Meet face-to-face with the mentor to outline and discuss the unacceptable behaviour.
- b) Allow the Mentor to respond to the concern.
- c) Review the Code of Conduct and outline expectations for future behaviour.
- d) Summarise the meeting in an email or letter to the mentor, requesting that the mentor responds if they disagree with the content. The communication should identify the breach of the Code of Conduct, outline future actions and confirm a review of the issue at a later time.
- e) The issue could be monitored during the regular supervision meeting or an additional supervision meeting might be held to check that the problematic behaviour has been corrected.
- f) Set a date to review the mentor's behaviour (e.g. two months after the initial discussion) to gauge change to behaviour and to determine future suitability.
- g) Some additional training maybe required to improve the mentor's skills, knowledge and capacity.

Mentor Termination Procedure

Where the Mentor Coordinator believes the mentor's behaviour constitutes grounds for (i) termination of the mentor's role in the program or (ii) referral to police or other authorities, the Mentor Coordinator should inform the Program Manager, LDAT and/or Advisory Board immediately. In such cases the Mentor Coordinator should act with the express support of the Program Manager or LDAT and/or Advisory Board.

- a) The Mentor Coordinator/Program Manager should advise the mentor in writing of the decision, citing the behaviour that breached the Code of Conduct and advise that the nature of the breach renders him/her ineligible to continue in the program. The letter should explain that this decision conforms with the program's obligations to participants, funding bodies, the wider community, and if appropriate, legal requirements.
- b) If appropriate and possible, the mentor and mentee might undertake the match closure process.
- c) If the match closure is not possible care should be taken to protect the mentee from feeling any responsibility for the outcome. If possible, the mentee should be matched with another mentor.
- d) Record the procedure and outcomes in the mentor's case file.

Reference: YACVIC Dealing with Difficult Behaviours <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

31 After-hours support

The mentor program will provide all participants—mentors and young people— with a phone number should advice or support be required outside of normal working hours.

Mentors must have access to crisis and emergency services including Ambulance / Police / Lifeline / Kids Helpline / Suicide Call Back Service

The mentor should advise the program coordinator if they are required to respond to a request by the mentee out of normal hours.

See also Nos. 16, 32.

Reference: YACVIC-Dealing with Difficult Behaviours <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

32 Critical Incidents

Crises and critical incidents are uncommon but when such events occur appropriate emergency responses are essential.

The intention of this policy is to facilitate the management of a crisis or critical incident, to minimise the risks to people and property, to protect the reputation of the Program and to set recovery procedures in motion.

Definition: A critical incident is a traumatic event or threat that causes extreme stress, fear or injury. Critical incidents may include, but are not limited to a young person, mentor or staff member experiencing:

- a) serious injury, illness or death
- b) suicide or attempted suicide
- c) being lost or injured during program activities
- d) severe verbal or psychological aggression
- e) physical assault
- f) a serious accident or incidence of violence
- g) natural disaster, e.g. earthquake, flood, fire, windstorm or hailstorm
- h) extreme temperatures
- i) fire, bomb-threat, explosion, gas or chemical hazard
- j) serious behavioural issues, e.g. sexual assault, drug use or alcohol abuse.

Should a mentor and mentee be involved in a critical incident during a mentoring session or engagement the mentor must take all reasonable action to protect the mentee from injury and harm.

The mentor is responsible for contacting the program coordinator and the mentee's parent or guardian to alert them to the situation as soon as possible.

In the case of potential physical or mental trauma following a critical incident the mentor and program coordinator have a duty to ensure the mentee receives appropriate care and attention.

See also Nos. 16, 31.

Reference: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/quality-assurance-support-materials/>

33 Responding to Young People's Issues and Behaviours

Tips for Dealing with Challenging Behaviours

- a) Stay calm and use an even tone of voice.
- b) Make a calm, assertive statement about better ways to deal with the situation.
- c) Do not take the behaviour personally (even if it is personal and directed at you)
- d) Give 'I-messages' using low-key language.
- e) Focus on the issue at hand and do not become side-tracked.
- f) Don't argue or debate.
- g) Be aware of body language and ensure consistency between verbal and body language.
- h) Employ strength-based conversation and solution-focused results.

Disciplinary Procedure for Young People

- a) Arrange a face-to-face conversation with the young person to outline and discuss the unacceptable behaviour.
- b) Allow the young person to respond.
- c) Review the Code of Conduct and outline expectations for future behaviour.
- d) If required, provide additional face-to-face support for the young person on a regular basis and ascertain whether additional support may improve the young person's effective participation in the program.
- e) Set a date to review the young person's behaviour (e.g. two months after the initial discussion) to gauge change to behaviour and to determine future suitability.

Young Person Termination Procedure

- a) Discuss the nature of the behaviour with the direct line manager/supervisor and request their assistance in suspending the young person from the program.
- b) Seek legal advice if deemed necessary.
- c) Arrange a face-to-face meeting with the young person and direct line manager/supervisor (if required) to outline and discuss the unacceptable behaviour.
- d) Provide an opportunity for the young person to respond.
- e) Review the Young Person Code of Conduct with the young person and identify their behaviour that breached the code.
- f) Advise the young person that the nature of the breach makes them ineligible to continue participating in Mentoring Program and that a match closure process will follow. Explain that this is due to the program's obligations to participants, funding bodies, the school and wider community along with legal requirements and benchmarks in youth mentoring.
- g) Outline the expectation of the young person throughout the match closure process.
- h) Ensure the young person feels supported throughout the match closure process and make referrals to other support agencies if deemed necessary to ensure longer-term support for the young person.
- i) Undertake the match closure process.
- j) Record the procedure and outcomes in the young person's case file.

Reference: YACVIC- <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

34 Rights and Responsibilities of Young People

The Youth Mentoring Hub provides a Code of Conduct for young people that requires a young person to:

- be honest, reliable, punctual and true to their word
- respond to a mentor's messages or attempt to make contact as soon as possible
- respect the rights and responsibilities of the mentor
- respect the privacy of personal information about mentors, other young people and program participants
- consider the safety and security of themselves, other young people, mentors, program participants and program staff
- let their parents or carers or program staff know if they have a worry about the program or their mentor
- abide by the law and comply with all applicable policies and procedures of the program.

A young person must not:

- engage in unreasonably risky or aggressive behaviour
- dress in inappropriate or overly exposing clothing
- be under the influence of drugs or alcohol or smoke during mentoring or other program activities
- ask a mentor to loan or give them money or expect them to always pay for food, drinks or activities
- try to deal alone with a problem or crisis – program staff must be informed immediately about any problem or crisis
- ask a mentor to take another person to a destination.

Reference: YACVIC. Code of Conduct -Policy <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/policies-procedures/young-people-mentors-staff/>

35 Debriefing

In many mentoring programs the programme coordinator or supervisor debrief mentors and mentees after each session to provide support to both parties and to assist in monitoring progress. In some cases, debriefing takes place weekly or fortnightly for an introductory period, then less often, or it may occur permanently after each session. Debriefing may be conducted in person or via the telephone or the internet.

The Mentor Coordinator can monitor individual sessions and overall progress with the following prompts:

General

- a) How is your match progressing? Are you happy with how things are going?
- b) What do you enjoy most about having a mentor/young person in your life?
- c) What do you enjoy least?
- d) Is there anything you would like to change about the time you spend together?

Activities

- When was your last meeting? What did you do together?
- What kinds of activities do you do when you are together?
- How do you decide what activities to do together?
- Do you have trouble deciding what to do?

Frequency

- How often do you see each other?
- How much time do you spend together at each meeting?
- Do you talk to each other using social media or by phone? How often?

Support

- Does your young person/mentor keep appointments with you? Are they on time?
- How would you describe the young person/mentor's behaviour?
- Is there any behaviour that you don't understand?
- Is there anything you would like me to talk to your mentor/young person about?
- Do you need help with anything? Is there anything interfering with your match?
- Is there any further support we can provide you?

References: YACVIC <http://youthmentoringhub.org.au/mentoring-checklists/>

36 Substance or Drug Use Policy

The programme's policy on substance or drug use is informed by duty of care and the need to maintain young people's safety and wellbeing.

The term 'drug' refers to all legal and illegal substances, including performance and image enhancing drugs (PIEDs), tobacco, alcohol, pharmaceutical substances, and illicit drugs and 'new psychoactive substances' or 'synthetic' drugs.

No mentor or mentee should attend or participate in the program activities while under the influence of a psychoactive drug or substance or consume a psychoactive drug or substance during program activities.

This includes alcohol: a mentor cannot attend a program activity intoxicated by alcohol and the mentor and mentee cannot drink alcohol during an activity.

To be under the influence of a drug or to consume alcohol or other substance during program activities will constitute an infraction of the Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action, including a potential ending of the individual's participation in the program.

Mentors must not condone, promote or encourage the use of a drug to a mentee. Mentors should request that mentees do not smoke during program meetings or activities.

Should a topic of drug use come up during discussions or activities with a mentee, mentors should ensure that their attitude, demeanour and comments are consistent with best practice drug education.

Should a mentee appear to be affected by a drug during a program meeting or activity the mentor should transport the mentee home and into the care of a parent or guardian or otherwise endeavour to keep the mentee safe until they can transfer the mentee to a parent or guardian.

If a mentor or mentee is required for medical reasons to take a pharmaceutical drug which may affect their performance, they should inform the Program Coordinator as soon as possible.

37 Parental/ Guardian Consent

Mentoring relationships benefit from the commitment and active support of parents and guardians. Parents and guardians will need to provide their formal written consent for their young person to engage in the programme before the mentor relationship begins. They must be fully informed about the programme, are satisfied it is suitable for their child and understand the possible effect on themselves and other family members. They must agree with the terms of the relationship including the duration, frequency, and length of meetings and the character of the mentor.

Parents and guardians need to understand

- a) Their role in the mentoring relationship.
- b) Their relationship with the mentor.
- c) Their goals for the mentoring of their young person.

Parents/guardians should agree to the location of mentor meetings and other matters that requires parent/guardian consent. Written material covering expectations of the relationship and matters of disclosure and confidentiality should be part of consent forms.

References: New Zealand Youth Mentoring Network. Guide to effective and safe practice in youth mentoring, NZ, 2016. <https://www.youthmentoring.org.nz/>

38 Transportation

If a mentor and mentee travel for the purpose of engaging in the mentor relationship the mentor is responsible for ensuring safe transport. Should the mentor transport the mentee by motorcar, the mentor must hold a valid driver licence, the vehicle must be legally registered and protected by third party insurance and the mentor must observe the road traffic laws.

39 Managing Risk and Reputation

The program attends to risk and reputation by identifying potential risks to the program and in developing and implementing a suite of policies, procedures and guidelines which mitigate risk and reputational issues. These include policies and guidelines on parental and guardian consent, recruitment and supervision, codes of conduct, information and data management, privacy and confidentiality, equal opportunity, sexual harassment, critical incidents, and insurance.

42 Establishing A Budget

Even though it draws upon a volunteer staff in the form of mentors, a mentor program is not inexpensive. A minimal staffing level probably requires a program manager and a coordinator and a budget that provides for:

- a) rent and utilities
- b) training (trainers, venue catering)
- c) marketing and promotional materials
- d) postage phone internet
- e) stationery and office supplies
- f) criminal and police check fees
- g) acknowledgment gifts
- h) insurance
- i) transport
- j) evaluation
- k) contingencies
- l) depending on program rules, funds might be required for mentors including petrol, movie tickets, catering

Reference: Department of Planning and Community Development. A Guide to Supporting Effective Programs for Mentoring Young People. State of Victoria, 2007.

43 Ethical Guidelines

MENTOR has published ethical guidelines for mentoring programs. This guideline is consistent with the mentor code of conduct set out in No 20.

1. Promote the welfare and safety of the young person

The best interests of the mentee always take precedence over the interests or priorities of the mentor or the program.

2. Be trustworthy and responsible

The mentor must take their obligations to the mentee seriously and do their utmost to fulfil their promises. The program has a responsibility to assist the mentor to do their best.

3. Act with integrity

Mentors must communicate honestly and respectfully always, honour their commitments, observe the rules of the program, and be conscious of their role as a literal model for young people.

4. Promote justice for young people

While the mentor's major task is to assist the mentee, they can do more for young people, especially the disadvantaged, by advocating for positive social change.

5. Respect the young person's rights and dignity

Mentors offer the mentee direction without directing, with the aim of empowering the young person to make their own best decisions. The mentor maintains confidentiality always, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

6. Honour youth and family voice in designing and delivering services

Treating the young person and their family as equal partners in the program not only respects the program's clients, but it is more likely to generate commitment from the client and the family and result in better outcomes.

7. Strive for equity, cultural responsiveness, and positive social change

Mentoring programs should be responsive to cultural differences, staff and mentors should be aware of their own cultural biases and how that might influence the program, demonstrate cultural competence, and strive to treat all people equally, regardless of cultural differences.

Reference: MENTOR. The National Mentoring Partnership. Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, USA, 2015 <https://www.mentoring.org/resource/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/>

44 Romantic relationships

The development of romantic feelings between a mentor and a mentee is an ever-present risk in mentoring practice. Romantic feelings of either party pose a serious threat to the integrity of the mentor relationship, the health and wellbeing of both parties and the program.

The safety and wellbeing of the mentee is paramount. The responsibility for avoiding a romantic attachment always lies with the mentor.

Mentors must not enter into a romantic relationship with a mentee during the time they are in a mentoring relationship.

Sexual acts and sexual relationships between mentors and mentees are never acceptable. Sexual acts and sexual relationships between mentors and mentees constitute grounds for immediate exclusion from the program and for mandatory reporting to legal and judicial authorities.

Mentors must be aware of compromising thoughts or situations and ensure they put strategies in place to help them deal safely with these situations. This should include informing the Program Coordinator of the potential conflict of interest. It might also mean deciding to end the mentor relationship and seeking a rematch for the mentee.

Once the mentoring relationship has finished, mentors will not begin a romantic and/or sexual relationship with a mentee until and unless the power relationship between the pair has diminished so that it does not influence the decision making of the mentee. This determination should be made in consultation with the parent/guardian of the mentee and the Program Coordinator.

Reference: Ara Taiohi. Code of Ethics. <https://arataiohi.org.nz/career/code-of-ethics/>