

An Investigation of Mentor and Program Characteristics  
Associated with Mentor Perception of Relationship Quality

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School,  
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AN INVESTIGATION OF MENTOR AND PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS  
ASSOCIATED WITH MENTOR PERCEPTION OF RELATIONSHIP QUALITY

Presented by Cindy Ann Smith

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And hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated first to the memory of my grandmother, Louis Henrietta Anderson Goodin, one of my first role models of a patient and caring teacher, who believed that all children would learn. Grandma Goodin, a teacher and a student for most of her life, taught me by example, always to continue to learn, and use that knowledge to grow as well as make the world a better place. A second important lesson from her example was to build your goals with thoughtful prayer and integrity, do your best to do what needs to be done without wasting time complaining about what you think you cannot do.

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## ABSTRACT

Mentoring between adults and youth or children at risk is a widely used intervention. However, mentoring relationships often end prematurely and this may place a vulnerable mentee at even greater risk. Research suggests that mentors who are more satisfied with the relationship may be more likely to persist longer in the relationship. The purpose of this study was to identify specific characteristics within-mentors and mentoring programs that are associated with mentor perceived relationship quality with the mentoring experience. The study specifically investigated whether mentors' motivations for engaging in the mentoring program, mentoring style, and previous training and experience are associated with mentors' perception of relationship quality. Within-program characteristics such as program training and support provided to the mentor was also examined to determine how these factors may be related to the mentor's perception of relationship quality. Mentors were contacted through the administrator of their program and asked to complete an online survey which queried specific within-mentor and within-program characteristics. Five mentoring programs participated in the survey with a total  $n=72$  of mentors included in the study. Results from the study suggest that mentors' perception of relationship quality may be influenced by *mentoring style*, a within-mentor characteristic. This within-mentor characteristic explained 22% of the variance of mentor perception of relationship quality. Demographic information was also gathered on mentor characteristics such as education, age, and career of the mentor as well as possible risk factors of the mentees according to

the perception of the mentor. Limitations of the study and contributions to the field of mentoring and future research directions are discussed.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

There is growing concern about anti-social behavior within schools. Antisocial behavior includes behavior that violates social norms from disrespect, defiance, and rule infractions to more serious acts such as vandalism, violence, illegal drug use, and unsafe sexual practices (Lewis, Newcomer, Trussell, & Richter, 2006; Van Acker, 2007). This disruptive and disrespectful behavior within academic settings takes time and attention away from academic instruction and often results in student removal from the classroom (Conroy, Sutherland, Snyder, & Marsh, 2008). This is particularly unfortunate because these students are often the ones in greatest need of academic and social skill instruction (Christle, Jolivette, & Nelson, 2005; Lewis et al., 2006; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrill, 2008). Further, without effective interventions, grade school children who display minor antisocial behavior are at risk for progressing to more serious acts of aggression and violence as they mature into adolescence (Christle et al., 2005). This creates issues of safety for students and teachers and often leads to more serious consequences for students with antisocial behavior such as long term suspensions and/or dropping out of school (Lewis et al., 2006; Mathur, 2007; Reinke & Herman, 2002; Van Acker, 2007). It is critical that children and youth with antisocial behavior be provided with interventions and supports to decrease the likelihood that such negative outcomes will occur.

In order to create effective interventions for individuals displaying antisocial behavior, it is important to have an understanding of the protective factors that appear to buffer children from the risk factors in their lives. One potential buffer is the formation of

a positive attachment with another person (Barrera & Bonds, 2005; Rhodes, 2005). According to attachment theorists, a child's understanding of relationships is developed through their interactions with those who care for them when they are very young (Barrera & Bonds, 2005; Rhodes, 2005). Children who did not experience close, caring relationships with their parents or other caregivers when they were small children may have more difficulty forming healthy relationships and have less positive self-images when they are older (Fisher, Gunnar, Dozier, Bruce, & Pears, 2006). However, research suggests that an adolescent who can form a positive, accepting relationship with another person may be able to generalize this experience to the formation of other positive, healthy relationships and improve his/her self-image (Barrera & Bonds, 2005; Zimmerman, Bingenheimer, & Behrendt, 2005). According to Bergin and Bergin (2009), being able to develop a healthy attachment with at least one of their teachers may be an important protective factor for adolescents at high risk for social and school failure. The theory that a positive relationship with an adult may provide a buffer against risk factors has been an underlying reason for the use of mentoring with youth who are vulnerable to failure (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004; Klaw, Rhodes, & Fitzgerald, 2003; Spencer, 2007c).

Mentoring as an intervention for youth with problems is not new. In fact, the idea of a more proficient individual helping a less proficient individual is a familiar one and has been applied in many settings from business to higher education and to support different types of individuals including parents, new teachers, and youth (Baker & Maguire, 2005; Klaw et al., 2003; Rhodes, 2002). Community-based mentoring programs for youth at risk in the United States have been prolific throughout the

twentieth century (Baker & Maguire, 2005). Generally, community-based mentoring programs are administered by non-profit programs, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, with the mentor and mentee meeting in a community location (Herrera, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000). In addition to community-based mentoring programs there are school-based programs generally administered within a school building with the mentors and mentees meeting at school during non-academic times such as before or after school, or during lunch (Herrera et al., 2000). Over the past twenty years there has been an increase in school-based programs. School-based mentor/mentee matches just within the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program increased from 27,000 students in 1999 to 126,000 students in 2006 (Wheeler, Keller, & DuBois, 2010). Presently, school-based mentor programs comprise almost three fourths of all site-based programs (Portwood & Ayers, 2005). Other non-profit organizations sometimes administer mentoring programs. An example of site-based mentoring program that is not school-based would include a program administered by a faith-based organization with mentoring taking place at a church (Maton, Sto. Domingo, & King, 2005).

The primary reasons for the shift from community-based to school-based administration include logistical considerations related to operating mentoring programs and the perceived benefits for both students and schools (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Fedlman, et al., 2007). Logistically, the school environment provides easy access to students who are at high risk. Meeting at school may alleviate the problem of mentees missing a scheduled activity, an often noted source of frustration for mentors within community-based mentoring programs, as well as allowing more communication between school officials and mentoring administrators (Dappen & Isernhagen, 2005;

Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Feldman, et al., 2007). Additionally, with mentors and mentees meeting within the school building, the mentoring program administrators have an opportunity to provide a greater degree of program oversight and mentor support (Herrera et al., 2000). School districts are often amenable to supplying time and space for mentors and mentees to meet in return for an added intervention for students who are at risk for academic and social failure (Dappen & Isernhagen, 2005).

Another reason for the increased interest in school-based mentoring is due to the current emphasis on prevention-based systems for all students (Conroy et al., 2008; Mellard, McKnight, & Jordan, 2010). Specifically related to social behavior, many schools across the country are relying less on reactive and exclusionary practices, such as suspension, and placing more emphasis on research-based, proactive, tiered systems such as School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (Lewis et al., 2006; Mellard et al., 2010; Sailor, Stowe, H. Rutherford Turnbull, & Kleinhammer-Tramill, 2007). As more schools strive to develop positive, supportive plans for individual students at risk, school-based mentoring has received greater attention as a possible intervention and the use of programs for students at risk for failure has increased (Baker & Maguire, 2005; DuBois & Karcher, 2005; Keller, 2007).

However, this increase in mentoring programs, according to many mentoring researchers, has taken place too quickly. The result has been that well-intentioned enthusiasm has replaced a critical evaluation of empirical research to date regarding mentoring (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008; Spencer, 2006). One reason for this enthusiasm may be due to the perception, valid or not, that pairing a troubled youth with a caring volunteer is an easy,

inexpensive intervention (DuBois & Karcher, 2005; Eby et al., 2008; Keller, 2005). Perhaps this bias is due to the fact that many adults have had good natural mentoring experiences and often remember at least one person who has helped or inspired them sometime in their life.

But Rhodes (2002) suggests that these positive experiences and memories may create an oversimplified view of mentoring since natural mentoring relationships are actually very complex and not as easily replicated as would appear. Natural mentoring relationships generally occur within the familial or close community structure, which presents natural relationship-building opportunities, whereas relationships between intentionally paired strangers must be conscientiously nurtured if they are to be successful (DuBois et al., 2002; Klaw et al., 2003; Spencer, 2007c). These oversimplified views of mentoring are examples of a problem stated by Karcher et al. (2006) that the . . . “wholesale acceptance of mentoring as an effective intervention strategy may be an obstacle to systematic efforts to examine mentoring critically.” Cavell and Smith (2005) point out that solid research is needed to . . . “advance youth mentoring beyond political appeal and social faddisms.”

One of the first comprehensive efforts to gather information from across the field of mentoring was published in 2002. DuBois and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis of studies ranging from approximately 1970 through 1998. The purpose of this work was to analyze program impacts, considering variation of program design and implementation, methods of assessment, as well as characteristics of the mentors, mentees, and relationships between the dyads (DuBois et al., 2002). Across the 55 mentoring programs included, the overall positive effects for youth were quite small.

However, when program impact was examined among programs using best practices, such as mentor training and support and structured activities for the dyads, the impact was considerably higher.

Overall, according to Dubois et al. (2002), mentoring for youth can be expected to have a positive impact; however, to demonstrate an impact that is worthy of the enthusiasm that has been shown for this intervention, there must be greater amounts of research devoted to individual program factors followed by program implementation that is based on information from existing empirical research findings. This view has been corroborated by other researchers. In order to advance the use of mentoring as an evidence-based intervention, specific practices, activities, and mentoring styles must be identified that are likely to produce significant positive outcomes for specific populations of children and youth (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Feldman, et al., 2007; Keller, 2005; Spencer, 2007b). For example, positive outcomes such as a decrease in truancy, a greater connectedness to school, and a lower level of recidivism in juvenile offenders have been found in programs that are implemented with adherence to research-based practices (DuBois et al., 2002; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2007; Karcher, Davis, & Powell, 2002).

A standard for best practices has only recently been identified based on empirical research. The recently published, *“Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.”* (Mentor, 2009), provides a guide for mentor programs to measure the integrity of their implementation of best practices. This guide includes a set of six standards, which were developed by leading experts according to current available research on program factors that are associated with more positive outcomes for youth. Specific, measurable benchmarks are provided for each standard. The six areas covered by the standards

include recruitment, screening, training of mentors, the matching process of the mentor and mentees, effective monitoring and support, and closure of the relationship.

Although there is some available research on school-based mentoring, more research is needed on specific characteristics within-programs or mentors that may be associated with more positive outcomes (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, 2008; Spencer & Liang, 2009). One specific variable that has been examined in relation to positive mentee outcomes is the length of the mentoring relationship. For instance, research suggests matches of at least one year in duration have more positive mentee outcomes, while matches that are less than one year, especially those that end abruptly, can be less productive or even detrimental (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Fedlman, et al., 2007; Spencer, 2006). In an experimental design study of 959 youth who applied to be matched to mentors in Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs, Grossman & Rhodes (2002) determined that mentees who were in a mentoring program for more than one year reported improved outcomes in behavioral, academic, and psychosocial areas. However, when relationships lasted shorter amounts of time, the magnitude of the effect decreased; in relationships that terminated in less than three months, mentees' self-reported a statistically significant decrease in self-worth and academic success compared to their ratings at the beginning of the relationship. This finding is especially disturbing considering that nearly one half of mentoring relationships end before they have reached their six month anniversary, with the majority being ended by the mentor, not the mentee (Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, Liang, & Spencer, 2009).

A well designed mentor training program within a strong mentoring program should address important issues such as mentor strategies and understanding of youth

characteristics and challenges. This knowledge may promote the development of trust and sustainment of mentoring relationships within school-based programs. The *“Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.”* (Mentor, 2009), addresses mentor training as the third quality standard of a mentoring program with relationship development identified as a benchmark (foundational quality standard) of quality mentor training.

It is reasonable to assume that an adolescent, referred to a mentoring program because of her/his high risk for academic and social failure, is likely to have trouble forming or maintaining relationships and may resist the initial efforts of the mentor. If the mentor is not able to persevere in his/her efforts long enough to gain the trust of the mentee, the relationship may end prematurely and be perceived as yet another failed relationship for the mentee (Rhodes, 2002). This is particularly damaging since, according to Grossman & Rhodes (2002), the higher the risk level of the mentee (e.g., loss of a residential parent, sustained emotional or physical abuse) the more likely he or she is to attribute the failure of the mentoring relationship to a personal deficit, which may make issues such as low self-esteem even worse.

Grossman & Rhodes (2002) examined specific mentor characteristics such as age, background, or skill level for their possible association with the length of the mentoring relationship. Their evidence suggested that mentors between 25 and 30 years of age who were married were most prone to early termination. However, if mentors in this age group were able to form relationships with their mentees that they perceived as high quality, marital status was less likely to negatively influence the length of the match.

Some researchers have suggested that additional characteristics of mentors, such as their motivation to mentor, previous experience with mentoring, and mentoring style (i.e., what they value in terms of how they spend their time with their mentees), may influence their perception of relationship quality which would, in turn, increase the likelihood of their persistence in the mentoring relationship (Karcher & Lindwall, 2003; Spencer, 2007a). Program factors, such as those in the standards of practice, are important to consider since research suggests that mentoring programs with higher levels of support and training are more likely to produce longer term relationships and better outcomes for mentees (DuBois et al., 2002; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2007). Because of the vulnerable status of the population of adolescents generally referred to mentoring programs, it is imperative to identify the particular characteristics of mentors, as well as the types of training and support that mentoring programs provide, that will positively influence the mentors' perception of relationship quality (Keller, 2005).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify specific characteristics within-mentors and mentoring programs associated with mentor-reported perception of relationship quality with the mentoring experience. The study specifically investigated whether mentors' motivations for engaging in the mentoring program, mentoring style, and previous experience were associated with mentors' perception of relationship quality. Program training and the support provided to the mentor will also be examined to determine how these particular factors are related to the mentors' perception of relationship quality. The investigation of these characteristics is important because

higher levels of mentors' perception of relationship quality may increase the likelihood that a mentor will persist longer in the mentoring relationship, thereby increasing the possibility of more positive outcomes for the mentee.

### **Research Questions**

#### **Main:**

1. Are there specific within-mentor characteristics that are associated with mentor perception of relationship quality within present mentoring relationships?
  - 1a. Does the motivation to participate in a mentoring program influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?
  - 1b. Does the previous experience that a mentor possesses influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?
  - 1c. Does the mentoring style of a mentor influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?
2. Are there within-program characteristics that effect program quality, specifically the level of adherence to best practices by the program, associated with mentor perception of relationship quality within current mentor relationships?
3. If specific within-mentor and within-program characteristics are associated with mentor perception of relationship quality, which are significant unique predictors and what amount of variance do they explain in mentor perception of relationship quality?

#### **Supplementary:**

4. Do programs adhere to the quality indicators according to mentors and administrators?

5. What types of problems do mentors report that their mentees have in their homes, communities and schools?

### **Significance of the Study**

School-based mentoring is widely used as an intervention for students who display inappropriate behavior and who have not responded to universal supports. However, mentoring relationships often fail due to mentor frustration and disillusionment before the mentee has time to benefit from the experience (Rhodes, 2002). Because these failed relationships can be devastating for a vulnerable population of adolescents, it is imperative to identify mentors' perceptions of specific characteristics of mentoring programs, as well as characteristics of mentors themselves, that may support mentor perception of relationship quality (Keller, 2005). If policy makers and program administrators can better understand the variables predictive of mentors' perception of relationship quality, more effective decisions can be made in the areas of mentor recruitment, training, and support. If mentors are more satisfied they will be more likely to persist until a relationship can begin to form, and more positive lasting relationships between mentors and mentees have been documented to be associated with positive student outcomes (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Fedlman, et al., 2007).

### **Summary and Overview**

Without effective intervention, adolescents who are at risk for academic and social failure often face bleak futures. Mentoring is often used as an intervention for youth at risk for failure. However, large numbers of mentoring relationships end

prematurely because of mentor discouragement and dissatisfaction (Spencer, 2007b).

This study seeks to explore the specific variables that may influence the mentors' perception of relationship quality, which may contribute to their willingness to sustain their relationships.

## **Definitions of Terms**

For the purposes of this study the following terms were operationally defined as follows:

**Administrator of school-based mentor program.** Generally describes a paid employee of a mentoring program who is responsible for the day to day program management, mentor recruitment and training. The administrator provides support as needed to mentors (Herrera et al., 2000).

**Community-based mentoring program.** Traditional form of mentoring that is generally administered by a non-profit organization. The mentor and mentee may be at locations of their choice within the community such as a public park or library, and often participate in community events such as sporting events (Rhodes, 2002).

**Developmental mentoring.** Generally refers to the type of mentoring that focuses on the building of a relationship between the mentor and mentee in which each participant is a recipient of the intervention. Most commonly as a relationship between a high school student as mentor and grade school student as the mentee (Karcher, 2008a).

**Mentoring dyad (or dyad).** An older person, which may be an adult, or a high school student paired with a child or adolescent for the purpose of forming a mentoring relationship within the context of a mentoring program.

mentor style

**Group mentoring.** A type of mentoring program sometimes used to compensate for scarcity of mentor, also used in peer mentoring programs. Adult group mentors will generally work with 2-4 mentees, however, peer mentors generally employ a 1-1 ratio with adults at least 2 adults to each mentor/mentee match (Karcher, 2009).

**Honeymoon effect.** In a mentoring relationship, this is the phenomena sometimes seen in which the mentor and/or mentee may exhibit more pleasant affect, demeanor, or be more agreeable because of the newness of the relationship. This may cause the participants to have an unrealistic idea of the quality or sustainability of the relationship (Nakkula & Harris, 2005).

**Mentoring.** “. . . a relationship between an older, more experienced adult and an unrelated younger protégé- a relationship in which the adult provides ongoing guidance, instruction, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the protégé.” (Rhodes, 2002, p. p. 3).

**Mentor motivation.** The specific reasons that a mentor is likely to engage in a formal mentoring program as a volunteer. This study considers six specific areas of motivation originally identified by Clary et al. (1998) as: value, protective, career, social, understanding, and enhancement.

**Mentor style.** The manner in which a mentor engages with the mentee in conversations and activities including such things as who chooses the activity and the type of activity the mentor feels is important is often referred to by researchers as the relationship style of the mentor ( Karcher & Lindwall, 2003; Karcher et al., 2006; Keller, 2005). For instance, one mentor may feel it is important to structure the mentoring sessions carefully with preplanned academic or cultural activities, and another mentor may feel it is more important to follow the lead of the mentee and provide a protected time of play and relaxation or other activities of the mentee’s choosing.

**Peer mentoring.** In the context of youth mentoring, a group mentoring program matching junior high or high school age students with younger students (Karcher, 2009). This intervention is intended to benefit both groups of students. A high degree of structure and adult involvement is essential to this program to guard against peer contagion.

**Perceived relationship quality.** The understanding of the relationship between the mentor and mentee by the participant themselves (either the mentor or the mentee). This study generally is concerned with relationship quality as perceived by the mentor. Attributes that may contribute to a higher or lesser level of mentor perception of relationship quality may include such factors as the willingness of the mentee to be open emotionally to the mentor and engage in conversations and activities with the mentor (Karcher, Nakkula, Harris, 2005).

**Program quality.** The level of adherence to recognized best practice standards of the field. In the area of formal mentoring, the standards generally used are the *“Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.”* (2009), which identify six specific areas of quality: recruitment, screening, training, matching, monitoring and support, closure.

**School-based mentoring program.** The most common site-based mentoring program (Karcher, Kuperminc, Portwood, Sipe, & Taylor, 2006). Generally, mentoring activities take place on school grounds, with over-site and support of program administrators.

**Site-based mentoring.** Mentoring program in which activities and administration of the mentoring program primarily takes place at a particular site.

Examples of sites include, schools, youth development centers, churches, hospitals or community centers. The program often has a particular focus, such as academic, character building, or vocational support (Karcher et al., 2006).

**Within-mentor characteristics.** Attributes or attitudes of the mentor which may influence the ability or willingness of the mentor to engage in the mentor-mentee relationship such as the mentor's reason for mentoring, their personality, or their former experiences with children or youth.

**Within-program characteristics.** Features of the mentoring program which may impact the mentor/mentee relationship in positive or negative manner, such as the amount of training and support provided to the mentor, and/or the mentee.

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this chapter is to review the research literature that is relevant to the area of school-based mentoring. The organizational structure of the chapter will be in the following manner: First an overview of mentoring will be provided, beginning with a brief discussion of antisocial behavior in students because these students are often targeted for this intervention. This is followed by the theoretical foundations of mentoring, and the transition within the field of community-based mentoring to school-based mentoring. Next, a description and rationale of the research that has influenced the best practices standards for this intervention will be discussed. The final section will include a review of the relevant research identifying the specific within-mentor and within-program characteristics that have been identified as important to consider for mentor perception of relationship quality, which is related to the likelihood of mentors to persist in mentoring.

### **Antisocial Behavior in Youth**

Antisocial behavior and violence at school as well as within community settings increased during the 1990's ("Crime in the United States," 2006). When a nationally representative sample of 9-12 grade youth were questioned about their personal experience with violence, more than one in ten reported being involved in a fight on school grounds in the previous year, and more than a third of the youth reported being in a fight either on or off school grounds within the previous year (Center for Disease

Control and Prevention, CDC, 2007). Disruptive and disrespectful behavior within a classroom prevents the student exhibiting the behavior as well as the students around him or her from receiving full benefit from instruction. Classroom antisocial behavior often results in the students most in need of academic and social skill instruction being removed from the educational setting (Christle et al., 2005; Conroy et al., 2008; Lewis et al., 2006; Reinke et al., 2008). Children with persistent behavior issues in grade school are at increased risk for escalation to violence as well as more significantly aggressive behavior as children become older if appropriate interventions are not instituted. This is serious because possible consequences may include longer term school suspensions and juvenile justice system involvement for students with antisocial behavior as well as an unsafe environment for all students and staff involved (Lewis et al., 2006; Mathur, 2007; Reinke & Herman, 2002; Van Acker, 2007).

**School response to antisocial behavior.** In response to increasing antisocial behavior, many school districts enacted zero tolerance policies during the 1990's with heavy reliance on punitive methods such as school suspension and expulsion to control behavior (Yell, Rogers, & Lodge Rodgers, 1998). Zero tolerance policies in schools were originally patterned after federal drug laws and intended to represent intolerance to drugs and violence in schools (Vavrus & Cole, 2002). School authorities have a responsibility to maintain a safe learning environment and few would disagree with the removal of a student because of patently unsafe actions such as possession of weapons, or severe physical violence (Yell, 2006). However, some researchers assert that teachers and school administrators too often resort to suspension for minor violations that could be resolved within the classroom (Garibaldi, Blanchard, & Brooks, 1996; Vavrus & Cole,

2002). Further, simply excluding students from school does not reduce antisocial behavior among students (Christle et al., 2005; Lewis et al., 2006; Sailor et al., 2007). In fact some evidence indicates that suspensions actually increase the problem by creating more feelings of anger towards teachers and administrators as well as feelings of disconnectedness when the students return to school (Christle et al., 2005; Lewis et al., 2006; Mayer, 2002).

The concept of school connectedness has been identified by some researchers as an important variable that may influence truancy rates, and feeling disconnected to the school environment may be a precursor to school dropout (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Fedlman, et al., 2007; Karcher, 2008a; Sandra & Helen, 2004). School dropout is an important predictor of future problems. According to the National Association of School Psychologists (2003), adults without at least a high school education and adequate social skills are more likely to receive public assistance, have a greater chance of being unemployed or incarcerated, and are more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as substance abuse or unsafe sex. Furthermore, according to the CDC (2007), adolescents who are not in school often are at higher risk for other unsafe behaviors such as alcohol and drug abuse as well as early, unprotected sexual activity.

As an alternative to reactive and punitive strategies such as school suspension, many school districts are opting to implement positive methods that teach appropriate behavior as a way to support students rather than simply excluding them from the learning environment. These positive system-wide methods include School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (Lewis et al., 2006; Reinke et al., 2008; Todd, Campbell, Meyer, & Horner, 2008), Check and Connect (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, & Lehr,

2004), and the SMILE program (Karcher, 2007). These system-wide approaches include practices designed to teach and model socially appropriate behaviors to students, as well as to build positive school climate and increase positive expectations, interactions, and relationships among teachers and students. When students have opportunities to be involved and feel valued, research is clear that students will be more able to function effectively within the school environment ([Karcher, 2008b](#); [Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2006](#)). One more specific practice used in some system-wide approaches for supporting student development of appropriate social behavior is mentoring (Stormont, Lewis, Beckner, & Johnson, 2008; Stormont, Reinke, Herman, & Lembke, 2012). There are large numbers of adolescents at high risk for social and academic failure who are involved in school-based mentoring programs (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005; Spencer, 2006). The following section will discuss individual aspects of mentoring.

## **Mentoring**

**Theoretical foundations.** Mentoring has been defined as the pairing of a student at risk for academic or social failure with a caring adult for the purpose of providing guidance through the development of a caring relationship between the adult and youth (Karcher & Nakkula, 2010; Rhodes, 2005). Depending on the type of program, the activities, setting, or focus may vary, but generally, the mentor and mentee meet one to four hours per week, with the mentor having the role of a supportive, older, more experienced friend (Eby, Rhodes, & Allen, 2007; Rhodes, 2002). The mentor may be someone for the mentee to talk over problems with and get advice from, and serve as a positive role model (Taylor, LoSciuto, & Porcellini, 2005).

According to attachment theory, an important developmental process for children is the ability to develop mutually satisfactory relationships with familial caregivers in order to have their needs met (Ainsworth, 1989). Adolescents at high risk may have developed a negative self-concept and a diminished capacity to develop positive relationships with those around them, including family, peers, and teachers, because of early negative experiences (Patterson, DeBaryshe, & Ramsey, 1989). However, research suggests that interventions focusing on the purposeful building of positive relationships, such as mentoring, can potentially improve an adolescent's self-concept and therefore increase the adolescent's ability to form positive relationships with peers and teachers (Darling, 2005; DuBois & Karcher, 2005; Keller, 2007).

Additionally, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory considers the individual as an interactive participant in his environment, drawing upon the information and models that he or she is exposed to and has opportunities to interact with (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Bronfenbrenner asserted that an essential component of healthy child development includes interacting with a caring adult (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The child and this adult represent a dyad in this theory. The child's development is enhanced by cooperative and positive interactions within the dyad (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The populations of youth often referred to mentoring programs are especially vulnerable for not having positive interactions with an adult given commonly seen risk factors such as incarceration of a parent, history of abuse, single parent household or poverty (Rhodes et al., 2009). These risk factors and others often influence the ability of youth to develop meaningful relationships as a normal part of their development. Bronfenbrenner's theory supports the idea that a caring, supporting adult, can potentially

be a positive addition to the environment of a child at risk and potentially supporting healthy development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) .

**Community-based mentor programs.** Mentoring is often praised as an effective, positive intervention for a wide spectrum of children and youth who are at risk for failure (Rhodes & DuBois, 2008). Currently, there are an estimated three million youth in the United States paired with a mentor (DuBois, Portillo, Rhodes, Silverthorn, & Valentine, 2011), with more than 5000 mentoring programs registered on the National Mentor (2009) database (Baker & Maguire, 2005).

Community-based mentoring programs in the United States have been prolific throughout the twentieth century, with their roots traced back to the changes in society, particularly in urban areas with the advent of industrialization, child labor laws, and the juvenile court system (Herrera et al., 2000). In the last quarter of the twentieth century, community-based mentoring programs became more formal and organized, generally meeting in a community location and administered by a non-profit program, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters (DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005). There were also many smaller, localized mentoring programs, with all of the programs run according to a wide spectrum of standards, objectives and budgets with few accepted standards of practice (Keating, Tomishima, Foster, & Alessandri, 2002; Rhodes & Lowe, 2008). This diversity made it difficult for researchers to collect data in order to compare results across programs to determine their effectiveness (Broussard, Mosley-Howard, & Roychoudbury, 2006). In some cases, programs would have vague goals of helping but no clear guidelines and focused efforts. For example, one community-based program, the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, ran from 1987 to 1993, but did not collect data on outcomes for mentees

such as a decrease in truancy, increase in grades, or other positive outcomes and was subsequently discontinued for lack of continued funding (Eby et al., 2007).

Additionally, many programs focused on matching a mentor and mentee, with little training or support for the mentor, and minimal attention to meetings or activities of the mentor/mentee pairs (Royse, 1998). For example, the Brothers Project (Royse, 1998), a mentoring program for 14 to 16 year old African American adolescent boys in Lexington, Kentucky, matched adolescents with community volunteers. The adolescents were referred to the program if they met the criteria of functioning below grade level in core academic subjects and were living in a female-headed, poverty level household. Using an experimental design, the adolescents were randomly assigned to a treatment (mentored youth) or control (wait-listed youth) group. However, the mentors were provided minimal training and little oversight of how much the pairs met, or what type of activities they engaged in. After six months, the results indicated no statistically significant increases in academic functioning nor decreases in truancy (Royse, 1998).

Larger scale programs, in particular Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BBBS) mentoring programs, generally have been reputed to have more structure, especially in the area of mentor training (Keating et al., 2002). Evaluations of these programs have underscored the importance of additional factors that influence positive outcomes. For instance, in a Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, youth ( $n=959$ ) were randomly assigned to either a mentoring group or a control group with those in the control group being placed on a waiting list (Keating et al., 2002). Pre and post interviews were conducted with an 18 month time span in the interim to gather data in several broad areas including attitudes, behaviors, relationships, and academic performance. It was concluded that the youth

who had mentoring relationships for a minimum of 18 months and also had met with their mentors at least three times per month demonstrated significant improvements in the areas of problem behaviors at school and delinquency (Keating et al., 2002). However, the students who were in the program but did not meet as often with their mentor did not show significant improvement.

Although the students in the control group were actually on a waiting list for mentoring, the authors reported that some of these students were in other mentoring programs, but it was not known what percentage of the control group were actually engaging in mentoring or the quality of the mentoring programs. Many of the adolescents in the treatment group were also receiving different types of intervention services such as counseling, tutoring, etc. which made it difficult to say definitively how much of the change could be attributed to mentoring. The authors also noted the possibility of cultural differences which could have affected the reliability of the instruments used. For instance, the African American mothers in the study scored their sons to be at lower risk in the pre-test assessment of attitudes and engagement in risky behavior. However, these findings did not correspond with teacher reports. Keating et al. (2002) postulated that the norms for this particular cultural group were different, or that the mothers were not comfortable reporting negative activities of their sons.

Overall community-based mentoring programs continued to grow during the last decade of the twentieth century, with much public support, even though they were often operated without foundational support of evidence based practices, or rigorous, effective evaluations showing significant mentee gains (Portwood & Ayers, 2005). In addition there has been an increase in school-based programs.

**School-based mentoring.** Recently, there has been a shift from community-based mentoring programs to school-based mentoring programs. School-based programs are a specific type of site-based mentoring program that are generally operated on school grounds, with the mentor/mentee meeting at school, outside of instructional time, such as before or after school, or during lunch. Presently, school-based mentoring programs comprise almost three fourths of all site-based programs (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Feldman, et al., 2007). The primary reasons this shift has occurred include perceived benefits to both the school and mentoring programs (Dappen & Isernhagen, 2005; Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Feldman, et al., 2007). First, the school environment supplies easy access to students who are at high risk. Often, students referred to mentoring programs have unstable home environments creating logistical issues such as transportation or scheduling (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Feldman, et al., 2007). Issues such as these may negatively impact the number of times a match meets. A common reported frustration for new mentors sometimes effecting the mentors' willingness to continue is mentees who do not show up for appointments with their mentors (Spencer, 2007b). Allowing mentors to meet with their mentees at school may alleviate these types of issues while allowing the school to utilize the mentoring program as a positive, individualized method of support for students at highest risk of social and academic failure (Rhodes, 2005).

However, utilizing mentoring as a school-based intervention also places it within the oversight of schools, which are required to employ research based methods and interventions to their students (NCLB, 2004). Therefore, it is imperative to make sure that mentoring programs, especially school-based mentoring programs, are

foundationally developed and implemented upon the best available research based methodology.

**Mentoring research.** Mentoring research has often examined broad ranges of outcomes, or grouped different types of mentoring programs together such as school-based and community-based (Bernstein, Dun Rappaport, Olsho, Hunt, & Levin, 2009; Wheeler, Keller, & DuBois, 2010). Other research has compared programs with different emphasis such as academic improvement or truancy reduction, as well as comparing programs with different levels of oversight and varying degrees of attention to implementation quality (Rhodes & DuBois, 2006). The goal of much of this research, generally conducted as evaluations after implementation of mentoring, was to examine outcomes and focus on the broad question of “does it work?” (Baker & Maguire, 2005; DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005; Rhodes, 2005; Weinberger, 2005). This is a problem because although outcomes are crucial, measuring directly from the initial match to distal outcomes does not provide information about the processes within the match, which may be influencing outcomes (Karcher & Nakkula, 2010).

Bernstein and colleagues (2009) evaluated site- based mentoring programs funded through Department of Education (DOE). The majority of the DOE funded programs were school-based; however, this was not a requirement of the grant. A total of \$204 million had been awarded to the organizations administering the mentoring programs. The evaluators (Bernstein et al., 2009) concluded that “mentoring does not work” and as a result, funding was eliminated for many of the programs.

One problem with the evaluation was that the sample of mentoring programs used included mentors with different characteristics and had programs with different

characteristics, which likely impacted outcomes (Bernstein et al., 2009). For example, age and experience of mentors varied widely with almost one fourth consisting of high school age mentors. Further, 17% of mentors surveyed reported never meeting with their assigned mentee, not even one time. Research that is meaningful to guide effective programming and implementation, according to Rhodes & DuBois (2002), must consider individual variables that are likely to positively influence the mentee. In the meta-analysis conducted by DuBois, programs which implemented the complete set of practices identified by Dubois as theoretically or empirically based, demonstrated, as a group, a higher level of impact.

Therefore, Rhodes and Dubois (2008) believe it is more accurate to say that mentoring programs which utilize empirically and theoretically based practices and are implemented with integrity are more likely to produce positive outcomes for specifically targeted populations. Rather than expecting school-based mentoring to be all things to all youth, it is critical to carefully consider empirical research needed to investigate specific, individual elements of mentor programming with the purpose of discovering what may have the highest level of positive outcomes for adolescents at high risk of social and academic failure (DuBois et al., 2002; Walker, 2005). Toward this goal, researchers in the area of mentoring guided both by available mentoring research and research in other areas including education and psychology have worked to develop a framework of best practices to guide school-based mentoring programs. These will be reviewed next.

**Best practices for mentoring programs.** One of the concerns that many researchers have had in the area of mentoring quality is a lack of an accepted standard of practices based on valid empirical research (Rhodes, 2005). Because of the wide spread

enthusiasm for mentoring, as well as the large numbers of mentoring programs, school-based mentoring programs are run according to a wide span of standards, policies and procedures, with programming, funding, and evaluation decisions based more on opinions of local administrators and practitioners than research based standards (Karcher, 2009; Weinberger, 2005). In an attempt to provide mentoring practitioners with practical and implementable guidelines based on the best available research, a large collaborative effort of researchers and mentoring practitioners was convened to provide these guidelines. This collaboration, convened and funded by the United Way and Mentor/National Mentoring Partnership (Mentor, 2009), resulted in the 1990 publication of the *“Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 1<sup>st</sup> ed.”* The document was revised in 2003 and published as the *“Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.”* However, the first two editions contained very broad guidelines for administrators of mentoring programs without focusing on the specifics of building relationships between mentors and mentees.

The present form of the *“Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.”* (2009) is a set of six standards with practical and specific benchmarks for each standard. Additionally, clear rationales are given for each standard based on relevant empirical research. The six areas covered by the standards are: (a) recruitment, (b) screening, (c) training, (d) matching, (e) monitoring and support, and (f) closure. In the next section, each of these areas will be addressed. First, each specific standard will be discussed; next Table 1 will show the research sources that serve as the basis for the rationale for each standard.

***Standard 1-Recruitment.*** As with any type of program that provides services for education, training, or support, it is not reasonable to expect a mentoring program to be all things to all people. It is important that the program has a clear framework for the type of child or youth that is intended to be served, as well as what needs are to be addressed (Karcher, et al., 2006). For instance, a different focus and level of support would be needed for adolescents with diagnosed mental health issues than for children who do not yet have issues but have environmental risk factors (Spencer, 2007b).

Equally important is the need for clarity of understanding and expectations for the volunteers who agree to be mentors (Spencer, 2007b). The mentor, to be effective, must have a clear understanding of the level of time and emotional commitment expected, as well as the level of support that can be expected and ways to access that support. This information, according to Spencer (2005), is essential for the mentor to have as they are making the commitment, rather than after the fact. A prospective mentor cannot be expected to make an informed decision without this type of relevant information. Additionally, according to Karcher, Nakkula and Harris (2005), one of the factors that may lead a mentor to terminate a mentoring relationship is to begin with unrealistic expectations of the mentoring experience.

***Standard 2-Screening.*** The purpose of implementing screening procedures as a part of an effective mentoring program is to help assure that mentors who are recruited have the qualities that will make them a good match for their mentees (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Fedlman et al., 2007). It is also vitally important to make sure procedures are in place to help provide a physically and emotionally safe mentoring experience for both mentor and mentee. Specifically, these

procedures must include completion of a written application, a comprehensive criminal background check (including a check of the national database of child abuse and sex offender registries), a check of personal and/or professional references, and a minimum of one face to face interview with a program employee. Within this interview the prospective mentor should be given enough information about the program and the prospective mentees that he/she has a realistic understanding of the likely requirements and rewards that he/she may expect (Spencer, 2007b).

An additional purpose of this interview is to obtain a commitment of a minimum of one year (a school year or calendar year, depending on the program), as well as a commitment of a minimum of one hour per week (Parra, et al., 2002). It is important for this preliminary screening to take place before potential mentors and mentees meet. If this is not a commitment the mentor is prepared to make, dealing with this issue before the match may prevent disappointment for the mentee and will also prevent the mentor from being placed in an unfair situation by not knowing the expectations in advance (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Feldman, et al., 2007; Miller, 2007; Parra, et al., 2002). Screening can also be followed up with training to further support clear expectations.

***Standard 3-Training.*** Mentor training has been found by research to be an important component of high quality mentoring programs (Madia & Lutz, 2004; Spencer, 2006). Mentor pre-match training of at least two hours has been found to be influential in clarifying mentors expectations of the match (Ahrens, DuBois, Richardson, Fan, & Lozano, 2008; Keller, 2005; Spencer, 2007b). In the evaluation of community-based and school-based Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentoring programs, Madia & Lutz (2004) found that mentors who attended less than two hours of pre-match training spent less time with

their mentees overall, and were less likely to express an intention to remain in the relationship for a second year. Additionally, pre-match training is a natural time to clarify mentor expectations and can be considered a continuation of the screening process. Research suggests that mentors who enter the relationship with unrealistic expectations, especially in populations of adolescents with significant risk factors, such as adolescents who have an incarcerated parent or who are in the foster system or juvenile justice system, are less likely to persist in the relationship and are especially vulnerable to early termination of the relationship (Rhodes, Reddy, Grossman, & Lee, 2002).

***Standard 4- Matching.*** Mentoring programs in the past have typically recommended matching potential mentors and mentees on similar characteristics such as race and ethnicity, age, gender, and shared interests. However, there is little empirical research available to guide matching practices in school-based mentoring programs. There is some evidence that whether mentors/mentees are from shared racial and ethnic backgrounds is less important than previously assumed (Spencer, 2007b). Rather, it may be more important that the mentor is open and accepting of the mentee, no matter what similarities or differences they have (Spencer, 2006).

***Standard 5- Monitoring and Support.*** Available research suggests that mentees in programs that provide ongoing monitoring and support for the matches are more likely to experience positive outcomes (DuBois et al., 2002; Herrera et al., 2000; Rhodes, 2005; Rhodes, 2006). Recommended examples of program support include providing mentors with varied resources for guidance in establishing and building close, caring relationships with their mentees (Nakkula & Harris, 2005), as well as periodic assessments of both the

mentors' and mentees' perceptions of the quality of their relationship (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002).

***Standard 6- Closure.*** Because research suggests that premature termination of mentoring relationships can be particularly detrimental to vulnerable youth, it is important that mentoring programs have guidelines for both anticipated and unanticipated termination of relationships (Rhodes, 2008). Anticipated endings may include reasons such as the end of a school year or a move by either the mentor or mentee. Unanticipated endings may occur because of difficulties within the match or, often, discouragement of the mentor because of unrealized expectations or feeling overwhelmed or unsupported (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Feldman, et al., 2007). Specific practices are recommended to support closure. Providing procedures such as ending celebrations or other planned activities allow both the mentor and mentee to reflect on the good times shared and the growth that each experienced as a result of the relationship, encouraging positive feelings for both the mentee and mentor (Miller, 2007). Another recommended practice is an exit interview for both the mentor and mentee (2009). This type of formal communication allows the program staff to explore possibilities of needed supports that may allow the match to continue, as well as providing a method of feedback for the mentoring program to self-monitor and assure they are following best practices (Miller, 2007).

Each of the six standards of the “*Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3rd ed.*” (2009) addresses an important aspect of the relationship between a mentor and mentee and provides benchmarks for high quality mentoring programs. These six standards help to bring into focus the responsibilities of those administering the program as well as the responsibilities of mentors according to quality research-based methods and

guidelines, and ethics. Also identified within the “*Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3rd ed.*” (2009) are subcategories of enhancements. Enhancements are identified as further practices identified by successful programs as beneficial to the success of mentoring programs. Table 1 outlines the six standards of the “*Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3rd ed.*” (2009) along with the corresponding enhancements and relevant research upon which each is based.

Table 1  
*Elements of Effective Practice*

Standard	Benchmarks & Enhancements	Research Base
<i>Standard 1: Recruiting</i>	<i>Benchmarks-Standard 1</i>	<i>Standard 1</i>
Recruit appropriate mentors and mentees by realistically describing the program’s aims and expected outcomes.	<p>1.1 Mentor Recruitment: Program engages in recruitment strategies that realistically portray the benefits, practices and challenges of mentoring in the program.</p> <p>1.2 Mentee Recruitment: Program recruits youth whose needs best match the services offered by the program and helps them understand what mentoring is and what they can expect from a mentoring relationship.</p> <p><i>Enhancements-Standard 1</i></p> <p>1.1 Mentor Recruitment: Program has a written statement outlining eligibility requirements for mentors in its program.</p> <p>1.2 Mentee Recruitment: Program has a written statement outlining eligibility requirements for mentees in its program.</p>	1.1 Spencer, R. (2007). “It’s not what I expected”: A qualitative study of youth mentoring relationship failures. <i>Journal of Adolescent Research</i> , 22, 331-354.

Standard	Benchmarks & Enhancements	Research Base
<p><i>Standard 2: Screening</i></p> <p>Screen prospective mentors to determine whether they have the time, commitment and personal qualities to be an effective mentor.</p>	<p><i>Benchmarks-Standard 2</i></p> <p>Mentor Screening:</p> <p>2.1 Mentor completes an application.</p> <p>2.2 Mentor agrees to a one (calendar or school) year minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship.</p> <p>2.3 Mentor agrees to participate in face-to-face meetings with his or her mentee that average one time per week and one hour per meeting over the course of a calendar or school year.</p> <p>2.4 Program conducts at least one face –to – face interview with mentor.</p> <p>2.5 Program conducts a reference check (personal and /or professional) on mentor.</p> <p>2.6 Program conducts a comprehensive criminal background check on adult mentor, including searching a national criminal database along with sex offender and child abuse registries. Mentee screening</p> <p>2.7 Parent(s)/guardian(s) complete an application and provide informed consent for their child to participate.</p> <p>2.8 Parent(s)/guardian(s) and mentee agree to a one (calendar or school) year minimum commitment for the mentoring relationship.</p> <p>2.9 Parents (s)/guardians(s) and mentee agree that the mentee will participate in face to face meetings with his or her mentee a minimum of one time per week, on average, for a minimum of one hour per meeting, on average.</p> <p><i>Enhancements-Standard 2</i></p> <p>2.1 Program utilizes national, fingerprint – based FBI criminal background checks (e.g., the Safety NET system operating under the auspices of the Child Protection Improvements Act, in cooperation with the National Center for Missing &amp; Exploited Children).</p> <p>2.2 School-based programs assess mentor’s interest in maintaining contact with maintaining contact.</p>	<p><i>Research base-Standard 2</i></p> <p>2.1 The National Mentoring Working group. (1991). Mentoring: Elements of effective practice. Washington, DC: National Mentoring Partnership.</p> <p>2.2 Miller, A. (2007). Best practices for formal youth mentoring. In T.D. Allen &amp; L.T. Eby (Eds.), The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach (pp. 307-324). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.</p> <p>2.3 MENTOR (2009). Analysis of funding drawn from the PROTECT Act child safety pilot. Alexandria, VA.</p> <p>2.4 Grossman, J. B., &amp; Rhodes, J. (2002)., The test of time: Predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships. American Journal of Community Psychology, 30(2), 199-219.</p> <p>2.5 Frecknall, P., &amp; Luks, A. (1992). An evaluation of parental assessment of Big Brothers Big Sisters of New York City. Adolescence, 27, 715-718.</p> <p>2.6 Grossman, J.B., &amp; Johnson, A. (1998). Assessing the effectiveness of mentoring programs. In J. B. Grossman (Ed.), Contemporary issues in mentoring (pp. 10-23). Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.</p> <p>2.7 Herrera, C., Grossman, J. B., Kauh, T. J., Fedlman, A. F., McMaken, J., &amp; Jucovy, L. (2007). Making a difference in schools-the big brothers/big sisters school-based mentoring impact study. Pennsylvania.</p> <p>2.8 Rhodes, J., Reddy, R., Roffman, j., &amp; Grossman, J. B. (2005).The protective influence of mentoring on adolescents’ substance use: Direct and indirect pathways. Applied Developmental Science, 9, 31-47.</p> <p>2.9 Karcher, M. J. (2005). The effects of developmental mentoring and high school mentors’ attendance on their younger mentees’ self-esteem, behavior and connectedness. Psychology in the Schools, 42, 65-77.</p> <p>2.10 Larose, S., Tarabulsy, G., &amp; Cyrenne, D. (2005). Perceived autonomy and relatedness as moderating the impact of teacher-student mentoring relationship on student academic adjustment, The Journal of Primary Prevention, 26, 111-128.</p> <p>2.11 DuBois, D.L., &amp; Neville, H.A. (1997). Youth mentoring: Investigation of relationships characteristics and perceived benefits. Journal of Community Psychology, 25, 227-234.</p> <p>2.12 Parra, G., R. , DuBois, D. L., Neville, H. A., &amp; Pugh-Lilly, A. O. (2002). Mentoring relationships for youth: Investigation of a process-oriented model. . Journal of Community Psychology, 30(4), 367-388.</p>

Standard	Benchmarks & Enhancements	Research Base
<p><i>Standard 3: Training</i></p> <p>Train prospective mentors in the basic knowledge and skills needed to build an effective mentoring relationship.</p>	<p><i>Benchmarks-Standard 3</i></p> <p><b>3.1</b> Program provides a minimum of two hours of pre-match, in-person training.</p> <p><b>3.2</b> Mentor training includes the following topics, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Program rules;</li> <li>b. Mentors' goals and expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship;</li> <li>c. Mentors' obligations and appropriate roles;</li> <li>d. Relationship development and maintenance;</li> <li>e. Ethical issues that may arise related to the mentoring relationship;</li> <li>f. Effective closure of the mentoring relationship; and</li> <li>g. Sources of assistance available to support mentors.</li> </ul> <p><i>Enhancements-Standard 3</i></p> <p>3.1 Program uses evidence-based training materials.</p> <p>3.2 Program provides additional pre-match training opportunities beyond the two-hour, in-person minimum.</p> <p>3.3 Program addresses the following developmental topics in the training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Youth development process;</li> <li>b. Cultural, gender and economic issues; and</li> <li>c. Opportunities and challenges associated with mentoring specific populations of children (e.g., children of prisoners, youth involved in the juvenile justice system, youth in foster care, high school dropouts), if relevant.</li> </ul> <p>3.4 Program uses training to continue to screen mentors for suitability and develops techniques for early trouble-shooting should problems be identified.</p>	<p><i>Research base-Standard 3</i></p> <p>Morrow, K.V., &amp; Styles, M.B. (1995). <i>Building relationships with youth in program settings: A study of Big Brothers Big Sisters</i>. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures</p> <p><b>3.2</b> Rhodes, J., Reddy, R., Grossman, J. B., &amp; Lee, J. M. (2002). Volunteer mentoring relationships with minority youth: An analysis of same-cross-race matches. <i>Journal of Applied Social Psychology</i>, 32(10), 2114.</p> <p><b>3.3</b> Jucovy, L. (2002). <i>Same-race and cross – race matching</i>. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private ventures.</p> <p>Spencer, R. (2006). Understanding the mentoring process between adolescents and adults. <i>Youth and Society</i>, 37, 287-315.</p> <p><b>3.4</b> Miller, A. (2007). Best practices for formal youth mentoring. In T.D. Allen &amp; L.T. Eby (Eds.), <i>The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach</i> (pp. 307-324). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.</p>

Standard	Benchmarks & Enhancements	Research Base
<p><i>Standard 4: Matching</i></p> <p>Match mentors and mentees along dimensions likely to increase the odds that mentoring relationships will endure.</p>	<p><i>Benchmarks-Standard 4</i></p> <p>4.1 Program considers its aims, as well as the characteristics of the mentor and mentee (e.g., interests, proximity, availability, age, gender, race, ethnicity, personality and expressed preferences of mentor and mentee) when making matches.</p> <p>4.2 Program arranges and documents an initial meeting between the mentor and mentee.</p> <p><i>Enhancements- Standard 4</i></p> <p>4.1 Program staff member should be on site and/or present during the initial meeting of the mentor and mentee.</p>	<p><i>Research base-Standard 4</i></p> <p>4.1 Morrow, K.V., &amp; Styles, M.B. (1995). <i>Building relationships with youth in program settings: A study of Big Brothers Big Sisters</i>. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures</p> <p>4.2 Rhodes, J., Reddy, R., Grossman, J. B., &amp; Lee, J. M. (2002). Volunteer mentoring relationships with minority youth: An analysis of same-cross-race matches. <i>Journal of Applied Social Psychology</i>, 32(10), 2114.</p> <p>4.3 Jucovy, L. (2002). <i>Same-race and cross – race matching</i>. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private ventures.</p> <p>Spencer, R. (2006). Understanding the mentoring process between adolescents and adults. <i>Youth and Society</i>, 37, 287-315.</p> <p>4.4 Miller, A. (2007). Best practices for formal youth mentoring. In T.D. Allen &amp; L.T. Eby (Eds.), <i>The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach</i> (pp. 307-324). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.</p>

Standard	Benchmarks & Enhancements	Research Base
<p><i>Standard 5-Monitoring and Support</i></p> <p>Monitor mentoring relationship milestones and support mentors with ongoing advice, problem solving support and training opportunities for the duration of the relationship.</p>	<p><i>Benchmarks-Standard 5</i></p> <p>5.1 Program contacts the mentor and mentee at a minimum frequency of twice per month for the first month of the match and monthly thereafter.</p> <p>5.2 Program documents information about each mentor-mentee contact, including, at minimum, date, length and nature of contact.</p> <p>5.3 Program provides mentors with access to at least two types of resources (e.g., expert advice from program staff or others; publications; Web-based resources; experienced mentors; available social service referrals) to help mentors negotiate challenges in the mentoring relationships as they arise.</p> <p>5.4 Program follows evidenced-based protocol to elicit more in-depth assessment from the mentor and mentee about the relationship and uses scientifically-tested relationship assessment tools.</p> <p>5.5 Program provides one or more opportunities per year for post-match mentor training.</p> <p><i>Enhancements-Standard 5</i></p> <p>5.1 Program has quarterly contact with a key person in the mentee’s life (e.g., parent, guardian or teacher) for the duration of the match.</p> <p>5.2 Program hosts one or more group activities for mentors and their mentees, and/or offers information about activities that mentors and mentees might wish to participate in together.</p> <p>5.3 Program thanks mentors and recognizes their contributions at some point during each year of the relationship, prior to match closure.</p>	<p><i>Research base-Standard 5</i></p> <p>5.1* DuBois, D., Holloway, B., Valentine, J., &amp; Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analytic review. <i>American Journal of Community Psychology, 30</i>, 157-197.</p> <p>5.2 Herrera, C., Sipe, C. L., &amp; McClanahan, W. S. (2000). <i>Mentoring school-age children: Relationship development in community-based and school based programs</i>. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.</p> <p>5.3 Rhodes, J.E., Reddy, R., &amp; Grossman, J. (2005). Promoting successful youth mentoring relationships: A preliminary screening questionnaire. <i>Journal of Primary Prevention, 26</i>, 147-168.</p> <p>5.4 Rhodes, J. E., &amp; DuBois, D. L. (2006). Understanding and facilitating the youth mentoring movement. <i>Social Policy Report: Society for Research in Child Development, 20</i>(3), 3-19.</p> <p>5.5 Sale, E., Bellamy, N., Springer, J. F., &amp; Wang, M. Q. (2008). Quality of provider-participant relationships and enhancement of adolescent social skills. <i>Journal of Primary Prevention, 29</i>, 263-278.</p> <p>5.6 Miller, A. (2007). Best practices for formal youth mentoring. In T. D. Allen &amp; L. T. Eby (Eds.), <i>The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach</i> (pp. 307-324). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.</p> <p>5.7 Nakkula, M., &amp; Harris, J. (2005). Assessment of mentoring relationships. In D. L. DuBois &amp; M. Karcher (Eds.), <i>Handbook of youth mentoring</i> (pp. 100-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p> <p>5.8 Deutsch, N. L., &amp; Spencer, R. (2009). Capturing the magic: Assessing the quality of youth mentoring relationships. <i>New Directions in Youth Development, 121</i>, 47-70.</p> <p>5.9 Spencer, R. (2006). Understanding the mentoring process between adolescents and adults. <i>Youth and Society, 37</i>, 287-315.</p>

Standard	Benchmarks & Enhancements	Research Base
<p><i>Standard 6: Closure</i></p> <p>Facilitate bringing the match to closure in a way that affirms the contributions of both the mentor and the mentee and offers both individuals the opportunity to assess the experience.</p>	<p><i>Benchmarks-Standard 6</i></p> <p><b>6.1</b> Program has procedure to manage anticipated closures, including a system for a mentor or mentee rematch.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Program has procedure to manage unanticipated match closures, including a system for a mentor or mentee rematch.</p> <p><b>6.3</b> Program conducts and documents an exit interview with mentor and mentee.</p> <p><i>Enhancements-Standard 6</i></p> <p><b>6.1</b> Program explores opportunity to continue the mentor/mentee match for a second (or subsequent) year.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Program has a written statement outlining terms of match closure and policies for mentor/mentee contact after a match ends.</p> <p><b>6.3</b> Program hosts a final celebration meeting or event with the mentor and mentee to mark progress and transition.</p>	<p><i>Research base-Standard 6</i></p> <p><b>6.1*</b> Grossman, J., &amp; Rhodes, J. (2002). The test of time: Predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships. <i>American Journal of Community Psychology, 30</i>, 199-219.</p> <p><b>6.2</b> Miller, A. (2007). Best practices for formal youth mentoring. In T. D. Allen &amp; L. T. Eby (Eds.), <i>The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach</i> (pp. 307-324). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.</p> <p><b>6.3*</b> Skinner, A., &amp; Fleming, J. (1999). <i>Quality framework for mentoring with socially excluded people</i>. Salford, England: National Mentoring Network.</p> <p><b>6.4*</b> Jucovy, L. (2001). <i>Supporting mentors</i>. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.</p> <p><b>5*</b> Tarling, R., Burrows, J., &amp; Clarke, A. (2001). <i>Dalston Youth Project Part II (11 – 14) An Evaluation</i>. London, England: Home Office Research Study 232.</p>

**Ethical standards for mentoring programs and mentors.** Another important work for enhancing the quality of mentoring programs and specifically focusing on ethical standards for mentor programs and mentors, was completed by Rhodes, Liang, and Spencer (2009). Rhodes and colleagues wanted to provide ethical guidelines to mentors and program administrators to guide their interactions with mentees and their families. Adapted from the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (American Psychological Association, 2002), the “Ethical Principles for Youth Mentoring Relationships” (Rhodes, et al., 2009) consists of five guidelines tailored specifically to mentoring experiences. The guidelines deal with fairly transparent issues such as safety, confidentiality, and trustworthiness; however, they also address deeper issues that may not be readily apparent to new mentors, especially if they are from

different backgrounds or cultures than their mentees (Spencer, 2007b). For instance, to a mentor who is a busy professional, being five or ten minutes late for a meeting may not seem important, but to a vulnerable adolescent with a history of adults who do not keep promises, even minor instances of tardiness may produce anxiety (Spencer, 2007b).

Spencer et al. (2009) provides specific information under each principle for situations that may be unique to mentor/mentee dyads. The guidelines with each corresponding APA ethical principle are included in Table 2.

Table 2  
Ethical Principles for Youth Mentoring Relationships

Ethical Principles for Youth Mentoring Relationships (Rhodes et al., 2009)	Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2002)
Promote the Welfare and Safety of the Young Person	Beneficence and Non-maleficence
Be Trustworthy and Responsible	Fidelity and Responsibility
Fidelity and Responsibility	Integrity
Promote Justice for Young People	Justice
Respect the Young Person’s Rights and Dignity	Respect for People’s Rights and Dignity

Both of these reviewed works have the purpose of helping mentoring programs maintain high standards. The “*Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring 3rd ed.*” (2009) is designed to help programs provide support to mentor/mentee dyads through methods based on the best available empirical research. The “Ethical Principles for Youth Mentoring Relationships (Rhodes, et al., 2009)” is designed to maintain high

ethical standards within the mentoring relationship and is based upon the “Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct” (APA 2002). Together these works can provide direction for mentoring administrators in establishing guidelines, structures, and mentor training for mentoring programs (Mentor, 2009a; Rhodes et al., 2009).

The next section will explore research that has identified specific characteristics of mentors and mentoring programs that may positively influence mentees success. This is important given that mentoring is widely used today as an important intervention for students who are at risk for social and academic failure; however, close to half of all formal mentoring relationships end long before the six month anniversary of the match is reached (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005; Rhodes, 2002). Even worse, the majority are ended by the mentors due to their frustration and disillusionment (Rhodes, 2002). Research suggests that if mentor expectations more closely match their experience especially in the beginning stages of the relationship, they will be more satisfied and more likely to persist (DuBois et al., 2002; Karcher & Nakkula, 2010; Madia & Lutz, 2004).

**Mentor perception of relationship quality.** Mentor perception of relationship quality is an important component to consider for mentors to persist in a mentoring relationship for a sufficient length of time that a positive relationship between the mentor and mentee can begin to develop (Karcher & Nakkula, 2010). Although the hope is that the positive interactions between the mentor and mentee would be the motivating force to continue the relationship, in the early stages the mentor may not receive sufficient positive feedback from the mentee to allow the relationship to be self-sustaining (Spencer, 2006). The mentor who does not initially perceive the relationship as a

worthwhile experience, absent of other supports, may be less likely to persist (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Karcher, 2009).

Seventeen studies of mentoring programs were located and reviewed that investigated specific characteristics related to mentor perception of relationship quality which may increase the likelihood of a mentor to persist in the relationship. The specific characteristics that were associated with mentors' perception of quality relationships fall into two specific categories: (a) characteristics of the mentor and (b) characteristics of the mentor program (DuBois & Neville, 1997; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, 2005). The next section will discuss each of these within-mentor characteristics and within-program characteristics as they are discussed in the reviewed literature. Table 3 outlines the 17 articles according to the specific characteristics discussed in each article.

Table 3  
*Outline of Literature Sources for Within-Mentor and Within-Program Characteristics*

Literature Source	Within-Mentor Characteristics			Within-Program Characteristics	
	Motivation	Mentoring Style	Experience	Program Training	Program Support
Bogat et al., 2008				X	X
Cavell et al., 2002	X	X			
Cavell et al., 2009			X	X	X
DeSocio et al., 2007	X		X	X	X

Literature Source	Within-Mentor Characteristics			Within-Program Characteristics	
	Motivation	Mentoring Style	Experience	Program Training	Program Support
DuBois & Neville, 1997					X
Flores & Obasi, 2005	X		X		
Holsinger & Ayers, 2004			X	X	X
Karcher, Davis, Powell, 2002		X			
Karcher et al., 2005	X				
Madia & Lutz, 2004		X		X	X
Penner, 2002		X		X	X
Royse, 1998				X	X
Sanchez, Esparza, & Colon, 2008		X	X		
Spencer, 2006	X	X			
Spencer & Liang, 2009	X				
Van Ryzin, 2010			X		

	Within-Mentor Characteristics			Within-Program Characteristics	
Literature Source	Motivation	Mentoring Style	Experience	Program Training	Program Support
White et al., 2007			X		

### Within-Mentor Characteristics

**Mentor motivation.** Much of the reviewed literature underscored the importance of considering mentors’ motivation to engage in mentoring relationships as a factor contributing to positive perceptions of the mentors about the relationships developed with their mentees (DeSocio et al., 2007; Karcher et al., 2005; Madia & Lutz, 2004; Spencer & Liang, 2009). This is consistent with Penner (2002) whose research in volunteerism suggests that persons who act as volunteers are likely to exhibit a “prosocial personality” and may naturally exhibit outgoing traits. However, mentors, as other volunteers, are often motivated by multiple reasons. Some reasons may be more extrinsic, such as wanting the professional contacts or experience a program may offer, or intrinsic, such as wanting to give back to their community (Clary et al., 1998). The multiple, and often complicated motivations of a beginning mentor may interact with the background and training a mentor brings to a program as well as the training and support provided by the organization (Rhodes, Reddy, roffman, & Grossman, 2005).

Research has also documented that this initial motivation must be nurtured and sustained by the administrators of the program through training and support needed to

affect positive outcomes for the particular population of mentees and the specific goals of the program. For instance, one program with the goal of preventing high school students from dropping out of high school (DeSocio et al., 2007) acquired mentors with high levels of motivation and the background and skills necessary to form relationships with students. Interested teachers within the school competed for mentoring positions by writing essays outlining their interests and backgrounds. The teachers with the most enthusiastic responses were chosen for the program. Perhaps this motivation was partially maintained by ongoing support from program administration as well as stipends which compensated for the extra time spent with and advocating for their mentee (DeSocio et al., 2007). Details of the research will be discussed later, however, it is noted that less of the intervention group had dropped out of school by the end of the program ( $n=2$ ) as compared to the control group ( $n=11$ ).

Research on natural mentoring relationships may be able to bring a unique perspective to the motivation of mentors, since natural mentors are not recruited nor are they a part of a structured organization, rather they freely choose to mentor a child within their community or extended family (Spencer, 2007c). Two studies of informal mentoring relationships examined natural mentoring relationships within the Latino American culture (Flores & Obasi, 2005; Sanchez, Esparza, & Colon, 2008). Sanchez and colleagues (2008) surveyed high school students ( $n=140$ ) in a high school with 95% Latino student population and a 53% graduation rate. More than half of the students surveyed (54%) indicated they had a mentor, either a family, school, or community member. The results indicated that although GPA did not statistically differ among

students who reported a mentor and those who did not, the mentored group had fewer school absences and had higher academic aspirations.

Of the Latino high school students ( $n=714$ ) surveyed by Flores & Obasi (2005), more than 75% of the students reported a parent, most often their mother, was a mentor for them, and 11% reported a teacher was a mentor. The study also indicated educational role modeling as an important factor in the reported success of the mentees, in that the higher the educational level of the mentor, the more likely the mentee was to aspire to higher educational levels. Important findings for motivation were noted by both authors of this research on informal mentoring. Specifically, the extended family tradition in this culture was a motivating factor; generally most Latino adults feel responsible for looking out for (e.g., mentoring) all of the children in their community. This feeling of responsibility perhaps influenced the longevity of the relationships. It was common for these relationships to last several years, with the dyads meeting at least once per week.

Another study, conducted by Spencer (2006), investigated 24 mentor/mentee dyads, 12 female, and 12 male from a Big Brothers/Big Sisters mentoring organization. The criteria for inclusion was that the dyads had been in a relationship for at least one year and, according to the case manager, the relationship had been “significantly beneficial” to the mentee. The majority of the mentors reported being motivated by their desire to “give something back” to the community, and saw the relationship, in the beginning, as one who had more (mentors) giving to those who had less (mentees) (Spencer, 2006). However, during interviews, mentors often mentioned the change that occurred after the relationship matured. These comments suggested that although some mentors were motivated to mentor out of a desire to help, or a civic duty, later in the

relationship that motivation of duty evolved into a genuine enjoyment of the interactions with their mentee. As one mentor expressed, "...I guess I did at first [see mentoring as my volunteer work], but...it's like...she's just become part of my life..." (Spencer, 2006).

**Mentor style.** Research has also underscored the importance of how mentors structure their time with their mentees and what they value doing together, which is also referred to as their mentoring style (Karcher, Herrera, & Hanson, 2010). The importance of what mentors and mentees value in terms of how they spend their time together was described in a qualitative study which questioned 12 female mentor/mentee dyads who had been in a successful relationship for at least one year (Spencer & Liang, 2009). The goal of this research was to understand specifically what happened within the relationships, and the ways it developed. Both mentors and mentees stressed a two-way, multidimensional component to the relationship. A strong theme identified throughout the mentors' conversations was what they felt they had received from the relationship, in terms of fun, fulfillment and friendship (Spencer & Liang, 2009).

An example of a relationship without this feeling of closeness was highlighted within Spencer's (2006) study. Although the dyad had been meeting for four years, they appeared to not have obtained a closeness in their relationship. In this study, when asked about the possible longevity of their relationship, many mentor/mentee pairs assumed their relationship would continue long term, for instance, one mentor stated, "... I couldn't ever see him as not being a part of my life. . .". However, the mentor who seemed not to have made that close connection even though they had met together for four years answered, "... I don't know, I'll probably have him [as a mentee] until he is

16 or 17. . .” which is the minimal time commitment required by his program guidelines. Both the mentor and mentee reported less closeness, and more difficulty connecting within this relationship. Spencer (2009) asserts that it is important to provide specific types of ongoing support such as information about handling issues or problems as they arise to help mentors make this important connection with their mentees so that the relationship will be more likely to provide the type of support that is likely to affect lasting positive change within the mentee (Spencer, 2009).

Developmental mentoring studies have specifically studied the interactions between the mentor and the mentee, focusing on the benefit to both. A one year longitudinal study in which high school students mentored grade school students provided activities for the pairs to engage in within an environment with large amounts of adult oversight (Karcher et al., 2002). Activities were very structured and focused on building relationships, academic tutoring, and having fun. The study found evidence of increased school connectedness and positive future outlook for both parts of the dyad.

**Experience.** Mentor programs use mentors with different types of experience and educational backgrounds. Seven of the seventeen research articles reviewed, either recruited a particular population of mentors, such as teachers, counselors, or college students, or discussed the amount of expertise, education or experience of the mentors as being important contributors to the outcomes of the mentee. For example, DuBois et al., (2002) determined that mentors with professional experience within a “helping” profession, such as teaching or nursing, tended to be associated with higher effect sizes within-mentoring studies. The interpretation of this trend is that it is likely to be the mindset of the individuals who choose “helping” professions as defined by DuBois et al.,

(2002), rather than the specific training or education received within their preparation programs. Mentoring programs utilizing college students as mentors, especially those providing mentoring as a field experience related to the students field of study such as students of criminal justice programs mentoring adjudicated adolescents (Holsinger & Ayers, 2004) or pre-service teachers mentoring children or youth (Elledge, Cavell, Ogle, & Newgent, 2010) have a natural avenue of support and oversight through class attendance and required assignments. The results of these programs and others suggests that this higher level of structured training and support may positively influence the outcomes of the mentees, as well as affect the expectations and perceptions of the mentor (Karcher, 2008; Taylor, LoSciuto, & Porcellini, 2005). For instance, college students who are receiving class or field experience credit for the mentoring experience, may place a higher priority on regular, systematic meetings with their mentee, as well as have regular attendance for the training and support, since it is administered in classroom settings and is grade dependent. This ongoing support may allow mentors to receive feedback and help with initial relationship issues that may arise(Holsinger & Ayers, 2004).

### **Within-Program Support and Training**

Volunteer mentors who were professional social workers were paired with teenage mothers with little family or social support (Bogat, Liang, & Rigol-Dahn, 2008). The volunteer mentors in this study persisted for a period of one month to eleven months with most reporting initial resistance from the young girls. Some of the teenage mothers refused to participate and several of the mentors became discouraged and quit. Those who persisted, however, reported that the first three months were the most difficult. The

mentors who were able to persist for at least three months, generally were able to build a more satisfactory relationship (Bogat et al., 2008).

Pre-service physical education teachers served as mentors to secondary students in the Virtual Education Program (White et al., 2007). Participation in the program was a required field experience for the mentors and the mentees were involved in an alternative individualized home-bound education program because of their inability to be successful in traditional classes due to behavioral or psychological health issues (White et al., 2007). The online curriculum was tied to state standards and the students received academic credit for completion. The mentors' role in this program consisted of providing academic support as well as social role models. The Virtual Education Program continued for one year with 2 hours contact per week and structured activities (White et al., 2007). All of the enrolled mentees completed the program with more than one third of the students showing enough improvement, socially and academically, to be able to return to the traditional classroom.

A mentoring program designed as an interactive experience for students in a criminal justice program, mentored adolescents who were in a juvenile justice facility (Holsinger & Ayers, 2004). The elective class consisted of a combination of classroom sessions and mentoring sessions with the adolescents. Although the class included both men and women, the published article reported on only the experiences with female mentor/mentee dyads. The criminal justice students received a high level of support through weekly classroom sessions and additional support as needed from their professor. Data collection was difficult due to the transient nature of the incarcerated girls. The adolescent girls were in the facility ranging less than one week to several months (M=3

months). Because of this transiency, efforts to conduct pre and post surveys of the girls was not successful. However, surveys, reflecting information of one point in time were collected from the girls ( $n=15$ ). Comments received from the surveys concerning what it was like to have a mentor in this program were positive, for example, one young woman wrote, "... my mentor actually cares and we are good friends and she is easy to talk to...." The mentors (criminal justice college students) reported the class to be a satisfying and valuable learning experience. Some mentors attended court dates at the request of their mentees. One mentor felt the experience should be required for every student. Although the plan of faculty was to offer the class only once, it was so successful that the decision was made to offer the class each summer (Holsinger & Ayers, 2004).

An example of a program utilizing undergraduate college students as mentors, was the Lunch Buddy program (Elledge et al., 2010). The undergraduate mentors received graded class credit for their involvement and met weekly with grade school children ( $n=12$ ) during lunchtime. The mentors ate lunch with their mentees in the school cafeteria. The students had been referred to the program because they were identified as targets of bullying. Unexpectedly, the mentees demonstrated positive outcomes in increased self-esteem, decreased bullying activity (Elledge et al., 2010). The authors hypothesized that the peers of the mentees saw them in a more positive light because the mentors treated the mentees as though they were important. The positive outcomes were unexpected in the Lunch Buddy program since it was originally designed as a type of control group for another mentoring program, the Prime Time program (Cavell, Elledge, Malcolm, Faith, & Hughes, 2009). The Prime Time Mentors received

more extensive training than the Lunch Buddy mentors however, both groups of college students, received graded class credit which provided a level of oversight to both programs. The participants for the Prime Time program were children with a high level of aggression. However, the mentor and mentee perceptions of relationship quality were similar for both programs. The authors emphasize that an important lesson from this comparison of methods is the importance of structuring a program for the specific needs of a population of students (Cavell et al., 2009).

In other research teachers, counselors, and administrators were paired as mentors for at risk students (Van Ryzin, 2010). The mentor/mentee pairs met for at least a few minutes each day and sometimes several hours a day. This program, which targeted high school students, is described by Van Ryzin (2010), as a type of “high dose mentoring”. In a post assessment, the students named their advisors as “secondary attachment figures” about 45-50% of the time, and students with greater levels of attachment to their mentors showed higher levels of academic achievement (Van Ryzin, 2010).

A truancy intervention pilot program situated in a large northeastern U.S. school (DeSocio et al., 2007) is another example of utilizing teachers within the school system. The pilot was evaluated for effectiveness in preventing drop out and increasing academic performance with a group of 103 students who were less than 16 years old and had been absent more than 15 days during the school year (DeSocio et al., 2007). The students were divided into an intervention group ( $n=29$ ), control group ( $n=37$ ) and an unable to enroll group ( $n=37$ ) defined as students whose parents did not return phone calls or failed to consent to the intervention. The students in the intervention group were assigned to teachers who had been chosen to be mentors; the control group received the same school

services that they had previously received. All teachers in the school were given the opportunity to apply, and were asked to write an essay detailing why they felt they could be helpful to students at risk for school dropout. The teachers with the most enthusiastic responses were chosen to be involved, and received an orientation training detailing the procedure and philosophy of the intervention. Three hours additional compensation per week was paid to the teachers. The coordinator met weekly with the teachers as a form of ongoing support in dealing with students with difficult issues. The teachers functioned as mentor, tutor, and advocate for the students. Some of the students had so eroded their relationships with their classroom teachers that the teachers made statements such as “why are you still coming to class, when you are not going to pass?” (DeSocio et al., 2007). The mentor teachers helped to encourage the students, and mediate/repair these relationships.

Although the study did not show an increase in academic achievement, possibly due to the fact that the program was only 1 semester in duration, less of the intervention group dropped out of school ( $n=2$ ) as compared to the control group ( $n=11$ ). This program is an example of the utilization of highly motivated mentors (as previously highlighted), who have a degree of experience and expertise as teachers, and who were also provided ongoing administrative support. Even with caring professionals, added support can be an important variable.

The final study in this review utilized volunteer mentors with a wide range of experience (DuBois & Neville, 1997). This study evaluated mentor/mentee dyads within a Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BB/BS) mentoring group and undergraduate college students who mentored as a requirement of a service-learning course in a large university within

the same Midwestern city. The BB/BS mentors ( $n=27$ ) ranged in age from 19 to 42 and many had mentored for several years. The mentors from the service-learning group ( $n=40$ ) were 18 to 34 years of age and had been paired with their mentee at the beginning of the semester, with the exception of a few of the students who had also taken the course the previous semester and had been paired since that time.

A positive relationship was found within both groups of mentors with their perception of relationship quality and their perception of mentee benefits. A large majority of the BB/BS mentors (82.6%) felt their mentees had received a “great” or “moderate” benefit from the relationship. More than half, although a smaller amount (65.2%), of the service-learning group of mentors felt their mentees had received “great” or “moderate” benefits. The researchers found a negative relationship with the mentors perceived benefit to the mentees, and the number of times they met with program administrators. The mentors who had longer term relationships with their mentees, generally the BB/BS mentors, generally reported a greater perception of relationship quality, and met less often with administrators. However, these mentors reported seeing their mentees less often, which also raises the question, according to DuBois & Neville (1997) if the mentors with longer term relationships, (i.e., more experience within the relationship), are not taking advantage of that extra experience. The researchers hypothesized that although greater program support such as scheduled group activities might be a way to support longer term mentors, it could also be possible that some mentors with greater expertise and training, did not require as much program support. One important point brought out by the researchers, is the importance of program support and training being very focused to the needs of the particular mentors within the specific

program. Although this program focused on the differing amounts of mentor experience within their current mentoring relationship (i.e., the length of the current relationship), the study did not analyze if different experiences of the mentor (past training, work with children) were associated with mentors' perception of relationship quality (DuBois & Neville, 1997).

### **Summary**

Central to this study is the research on mentor perception of relationship quality, which is predictive of mentor persistence in mentoring students (DuBois et al., 2002; Rhodes & DuBois, 2008). Specifically, previous research has shown that longer lasting mentoring relationships have a greater possibility of impacting adolescents in a positive manner (Eby et al., 2008; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, 2005). Additionally, there is empirical evidence suggesting matches with mentors who demonstrate a higher degree of perceived relationship quality tend to have longer lasting relationships (DuBois et al., 2002; Wheeler et al., 2010). It is also evident that mentoring programs providing a greater amount of mentor training and program support with overall attention to best practices tend to have longer lasting matches (Karcher et al., 2005; Spencer, 2006).

There are some within-mentor characteristics that have been identified as associated with the likelihood of a mentor to persist in the mentoring relationship and thereby increase the length of the relationship. Specifically, there were three broad areas that pertain to mentor characteristics, the motivation of the mentor to enter into the mentoring relationship, the mentoring style of the mentor and previous background or training that a mentor may possess before becoming a mentor.

Overall, as illustrated in the reviewed articles, mentoring has been studied in different ways. Mentors may be motivated by different factors, and programs have very different structures and participants. The interaction of these various factors also adds to the complexity of mentoring. However, central to all of the programs is the premise that mentoring programs that last longer generally can be expected to have greater outcomes, and mentors that are more satisfied, may persist longer. Therefore, it is important to understand the manner in which these factors contribute to mentors' perception of relationship quality so as to provide mentors with the type of support and training they need to have the most beneficial relationship possible with their particular mentee. From the review of the literature, specific mentor characteristics and program characteristics were targeted for inclusion in this study. Chapter 3 will outline the specific methodology for this study.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHOD**

### **Overview**

The main purpose of this study was to explore whether specific characteristics of mentors and/or mentoring programs are associated with high quality relationships, according to the mentors. Mentor perception of relationship quality has been associated with their persistence in mentor programs (Karcher, Nakkula, & Harris, 2005). Therefore, identifying specific characteristics of mentors and/or programs that influence persistence is important, considering that research suggests that longer matches are associated with more positive student outcomes (Rhodes, Liang, & Spencer, 2009). The purpose of this chapter is present a review the research questions which guided the study, followed by a discussion of the research design and a description of the participants, procedures and instrumentation.

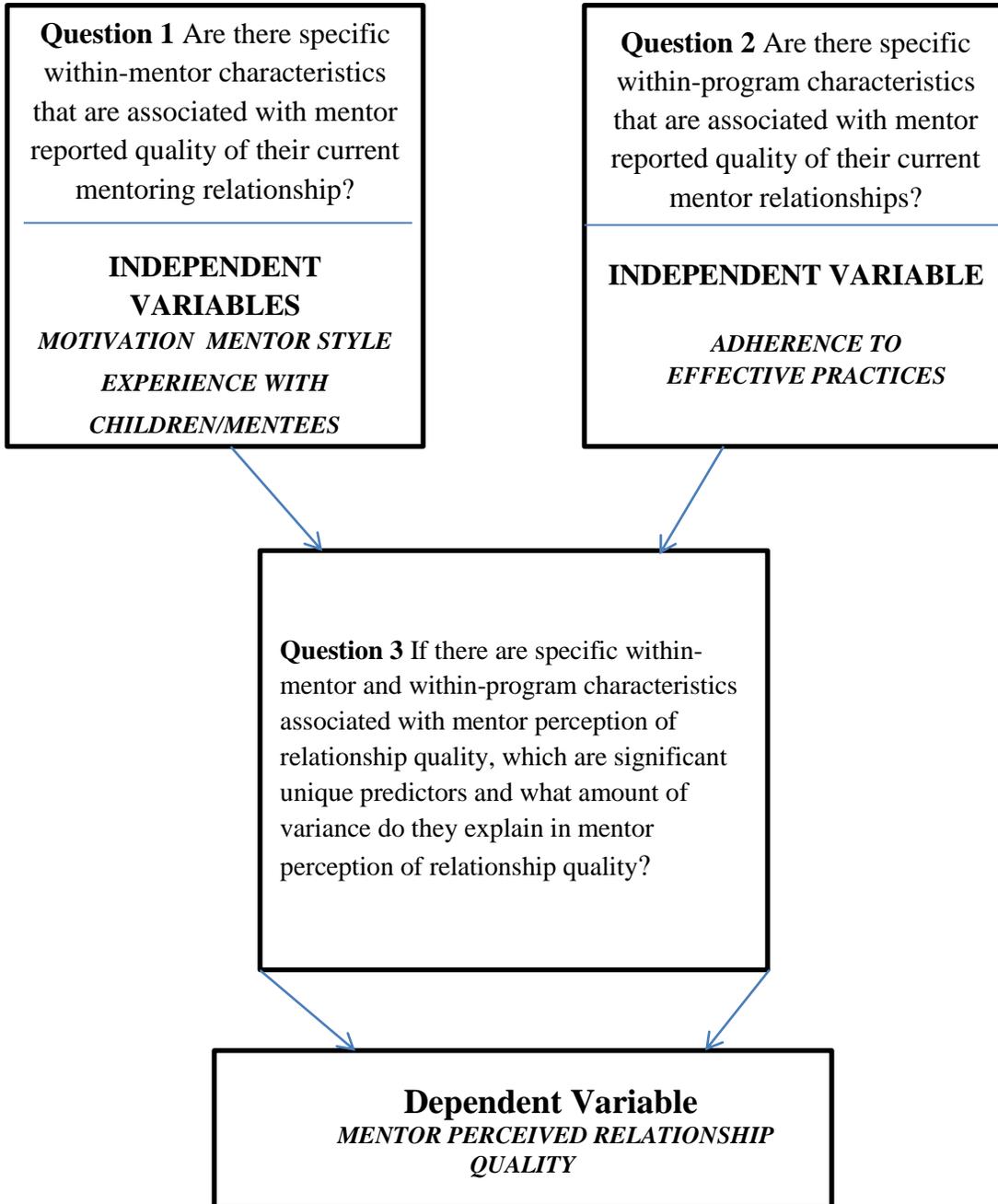
### **Research Questions**

Main:

1. Are there specific within-mentor characteristics that are associated with mentor perception of relationship quality within present mentoring relationships?
  - 1a. Does the motivation to participate in a mentoring program influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?
  - 1b. Does the previous training or experience that a mentor possesses influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?

- 1c. Does the mentoring style of a mentor influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?
2. Are there within- program characteristics that effect program quality, specifically the level of adherence to best practices by the program, associated with mentor perception of relationship quality within current mentor relationships?
3. If specific within-mentor and within-program characteristics are associated with mentor perception of relationship quality, which are significant unique predictors and what amount of variance do they explain in mentor perception of relationship quality?  
Supplementary:
4. Do programs adhere to the quality indicators according to mentors and administrators?
5. What types of problems do mentors report that their mentees have in their homes, communities and schools?

Figure 1  
*Conceptual Model of Study*



As outlined within the conceptual model, this study examined the following independent and dependent variables. The independent variables consisted of within-mentor characteristics and within-program characteristics. The dependent variable was mentors' perceived relationship quality. The following section will operationally define each of the variables and identify the method of measurement utilized for the individual variables. The measures used to assess each variable will be described later within the survey development section.

### **Independent Variables**

**Within-mentor characteristics.** Three within-mentor characteristics were investigated in this study. The first characteristic was the motivation or specific reasons mentors may choose to work with a youth who is at risk. The second characteristic was the specific type of experience that mentors bring with them to the mentoring relationship. The third characteristic was the mentoring style of the mentors.

**Motivation.** With a few exceptions, school-based youth mentoring programs operate with mentors who give their time on a voluntary basis (Rhodes, 2002; Spencer & Liang, 2009). In the context of this study, the reasons that an adult would agree to work with a youth on a regular, continual, and voluntary basis directly affect the motivation level of these mentors. Because of the instances of broken trust experienced by many of the youth referred to mentoring programs, the initial motivation of the mentor often must be strong enough to be sustained even when the youth presents resistance to engaging in a relationship with this unfamiliar adult (Karcher & Nakkula, 2010; Rhodes & DuBois, 2008). For this study, the instrument used to measure the construct of motivation, as it

applies to mentors of youth in formal school-based programs, was the Mentor Volunteering Outcomes Survey (Clary et al., 1998; Karcher et al., 2005).

***Experience.*** This within-mentor characteristic was operationally defined within the context of this study as the previous experience of working with children that mentors may bring with them to their mentoring experience. For example, a teacher who has experience working with students with environmental risk factors may have skills to assist him or her in developing a relationship with a troubled youth (Van Ryzin, 2010). The experience of the mentor was measured by a specific question in the questionnaire inquiring of their past experience working with children and/or youth. The mentor was free to choose among four categories: work, other volunteer experiences, family, or little or no experience. More than one category could be chosen. Questions were also included querying demographic information such as level of education, type of work experience and age range of the mentor. The questions for this area are presented as Appendix A.

***Mentoring Style.*** Mentoring styles have historically been categorized as developmental (focused on relationship building) or instrumental (focused on skill building) (Karcher et al., 2010). However, Karcher and Nakkula (2010) theorize that these relationship styles are actually complementary; a mentor does not necessarily have to adhere to a developmental or instrumental style of interaction with their mentee. Rather, it is important that the activities, whether focused on the relationship ( i.e, talking about problems in the mentee's life) or on particular skills (i.e, academics), the most important part is that the engagement and decisions about activities are a joint decision between the dyad.

The mentor's style and the value they place on specific activities with their mentee was measured by the second section of the Match Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ) (Harris & Nakkula, 2008). This portion of the questionnaire is available as Appendix B .

**Within-program characteristics.** Elements of the mentoring program structure, such as the amount and quality of pre-match training, ongoing support, and training of mentors during the match, have been suggested through research to impact the longevity of the match (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, & McMaken, 2010; Rhodes, 2008). However, it also seems to be difficult to precisely separate activities that mentors may perceive as support as opposed to training, especially in terms of ongoing support and training after the match is established (Herrera, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000; Spencer, 2006). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the within-program characteristics (i.e. mentor support, training, recruitment and match activities) were considered in their entirety as one independent variable, the adherence to best practices. The currently accepted standard of best practice for mentoring is "*The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.*" (EEP) (Mentor, 2009). Questions were developed based on the EEP to assess the mentors' perceptions of the programs' adherence to the EEP. These questions can be reviewed within Table 11.

### **Dependent Variable: Mentor Perceived Relationship Quality**

Relationship quality, in the context of a mentor and mentee relationship, represents the formation of the crucial emotional bond between the mentor and mentee (Rhodes, 2002). Mentoring professionals are in agreement that without this bond, there

can be little chance of relationship sustainment between the mentor and mentee (Eby, Rhodes, & Allen, 2007; Rhodes & DuBois, 2008; Spencer, 2007b). As previously addressed, mentors agree to enter into a mentoring relationship with youth for many different reasons. However, research suggests that unless the mentor perceives the interactions between himself or herself and the mentee to be such that this bond is beginning to form, it may be difficult for the mentor to sustain the effort to develop a relationship (Spencer, 2006).

It is important to note that the dependent variable in this study is not simply relationship quality, but *mentor perception* of relationship quality. If the relationship is likely to be sustained through its early stages, it is important for the mentor to have a feeling that he or she is able to have a positive impact upon the mentee (Spencer, 2006, 2007a). The first section of the Match Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ) (Harris & Nakkula, 2008) was used to assess the mentors' perceptions of the quality of mentor/mentee relationships by measuring the mentors' positive and negative perspectives of the internal quality of the relationships (Nakkula & Harris, 2005). This set of questions is available for review as Appendix C. The questionnaire will be discussed in greater detail in the instrument development section.

### **Supplementary Variables**

Variables for the additional, more exploratory purposes include items administrators completed on program adherence to best practices. The same sections of the "*The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.* (Mentor, 2009), described above were used for this purpose with items worded to match an administrator's perspective. This

section of questions is available for review within Table 11. These variables were assessed to determine if administrators reported that their programs adhere to best practices, as well as whether or not the mentors and administrators were in agreement about the presence of specific practices. Additional descriptive variables include items to assess mentors' perspectives of their mentees' problems at home, communities and in their school. This section of questions is available for review as Appendix D.

### **Research Design**

This study used a correlational design and employed a multivariate analysis of the characteristics of mentors and of mentoring programs and their relationship to mentors' perceptions of relationship quality. Although causal relationships cannot be drawn, this is an appropriate design for understanding relationships among variables (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). In the following sections, the specific components of the study will be discussed, including the participants, procedures, and instrument development.

### **Participants**

Survey research can be used to estimate the percentage of a larger population (all mentors in school-based mentoring programs) who possess a particular attribute from a smaller sample of that population (Dillman, 2007). The sample from the current study was drawn from administrators and mentors involved in one-to-one school-based mentoring programs across the United States. Mentors were invited to participate by their program administrators. Including participants from school-based mentoring programs across different geographical regions allowed for greater generalizability of results from this study.

Program administrators of school-based mentoring programs with adult mentors (18 years of age and over) in one-to-one mentoring relationships with children or adolescents were invited to participate. Mentors in these programs were then invited. In order to be included, the mentors must have been matched with a mentee for a period of at least 2 months because mentors need at least this amount of time with their mentee to be able to form an opinion of their relationship. Nakkula & Harris (2005) even caution against assessing the quality of a mentoring relationship sooner than three months, due to the possibility of a honeymoon affect that may occur with a new relationship. However, according to Rhodes (2002), many mentors end the relationship even before three months. Therefore, assessment of mentors' perceptions of the quality of their relationships at a two month point may capture important information about possible issues or mentors' perceptions as the relationship is beginning. Mentoring relationships, as all relationships, are constantly changing and evolving (Keller, 2005). The inclusion of mentors who have been involved with their mentees for different periods of time may capture some changing attitudes and perceptions and allow a greater understanding of the mentors' perception of relationship quality at different stages of the relationship.

The participants of this study ( $n=72$ ) consisted of five groups of mentors with their respective administrators ( $n=5$ ). The mentoring groups were from various parts of the United States, within primarily urban settings. The total number of mentors in each group varied from 18 to 42 according to program administrator reports. Respondent groups ranged from 38 to 72%, with an overall average of 52%. This information is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4  
*Participant Groups with Response Rates*

Group	Region	Mentors Participating	Total Mentors	Percentage of Participation
Group 1-L	Southeast	15	42	38%
Group 2-FY	Northeast	11	23	48%
Group 3-PS	West	10	17	72%
Group 4-PC	Midwest	20	28	72%
Group 5-PS	Northwest	16	31	53%
Total		72	141	52%

*Note.* Letter denotes code for source contact for mentoring program. See below:

L= U of I Listserve

FY= Friends for Youth Newsletter

PS= Portland State Event

PC= Professional Contact

All of the mentors described their education level of at least “some college” with 72% of the mentors reporting some type of degree with 43% of the mentors reporting an advanced degree. The majority of the mentors reported experience with children in more than one venue such as “through my work” and also “in my family such as children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews.” This information is reported in Table 5.

Table 5  
*Characteristics of Participants*

Characteristics	Frequency (%)
<b>Experience with Children</b>	
Family	67
Work	52
Other volunteer experience	71
Little or no experience	4
<b>Education</b>	
Non-degreed	28
Bachelor's or above	72
<b>Type of Job</b>	
College Student	15
Retail/Service	8
Management/Medical	18
Educator	19
Retiree/Other	40

*Note:* Experience with Children sums to more than 100% because participants were free to choose from multiple categories.

### **Procedures**

**Overview.** After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board, a pilot study of the online survey was conducted utilizing a small group of mentors from a local school-based mentoring organization ( $n=10$ ). Then mentor program administrators were invited to participate in the study. Information about the study was sent via multiple

venues appropriate to reach administrators of school-based mentoring organizations with an invitation to participate in the research. As administrators were identified who were willing for their program to be involved, appropriate information was sent to allow the administrators to invite their mentors. Incentives were offered to the program administrators as well as the mentor participants in the form of information and a tangible incentive in the form of a lottery. After a period of approximately six weeks of data collection, the available programs and participants seemed to plateau, even after multiple reminders. After consultation with the dissertation committee, it was decided to widen the pool of possible mentor participants as well as offering an individual tangible incentive rather than a chance lottery. After securing Institutional Review Board approval for these changes, the second period of data collection ensued for approximately six additional weeks. At this point, data collection was closed and analysis of the available data commenced.

**Pilot study.** A pilot study was conducted to avoid any possible problems as to understanding of the survey questions, technical issues, or other issues that could present barriers to participation or valid responses. The participants in the pilot study were mentors from a local mentoring program and the survey results were not included in the research data. The pilot participants ( $n=10$ ) had characteristics similar to the target population for the study. The respondents were primarily either professionals with a college degree or advanced degree and 40 years of age or older or were college students in the 25 or less age bracket with all reporting some previous experience with children and adolescents. The participants were involved in a school-based mentoring program for varying amounts of time, with the minimum period of involvement being two months.

The participants from the pilot program were male and female. After completing the survey, the pilot participants were asked to email the investigator to notify her of their completion. The participants were then asked the following questions:

1. Were there any questions that seemed unclear or difficult to answer? Please explain.
2. The two sections of the questionnaire used Likert scales; however one used a 6 point scale and the other a 7 point scale.
  - a. Did each of the scales provide sufficient choices to adequately answer the questions?
  - b. Did you experience any confusion because of the different point values?

Feedback was received from the pilot participants resulting in minor technical adjustments to the survey. For example, in the questions concerning risk factors of the mentees, although the instructions asked the participant to choose as many different factors as appropriate, the computer based survey only allowed one factor to be chosen. These adjustments were made and tested by the investigator. Feedback concerning the content of the questions and ease of understanding was generally positive, confirming the face validity of the instrument.

**Incentives.** As an incentive to participate in the survey, the program administrators received aggregated information from the survey related to their specific mentoring program. The information may help administrators make positive adjustments to their programs. Each mentor program administrator also received a professional package including useful research-based information for providing support for specific populations of mentees, a compilation of relevant research on different types of school-based mentoring programs with promising results, as well as other items of possible assistance to the mentor administrators. Each mentor received a “Mentoring to Go

Package” including ideas for engaging activities to be completed with their mentee and strategies for managing behavior issues of children and adolescents. Additionally, each participant was entered into a lottery to win a Barnes and Noble Color Nook. The drawing for the Nook took place in late December and was delivered to the participant whose name was drawn. The second phase of data collection included changes to incentives, which are further explained in the following section.

**Recruitment of mentoring programs.** Multiple venues were used to contact as many administrators of school-based mentoring programs as possible and invite their participation in this study. Specifically, there were three formal venues as well as professional contacts from the investigator. The first formal venue included an invitation posted through the University of Illinois at Chicago Mentoring Listserv, an online mentoring listserve with 506 members administered by Dr. David DuBois, a researcher considered an expert in the field of mentoring. Second, an invitation was posted through the online newsletter of “Friends for Youth”, a mentoring organization administered by Sarah Kremer with the purpose of providing support and information for individual mentoring organizations. The distribution of the “Friends for Youth” Newsletter is approximately 2200 recipients with the majority of recipients consisting of mentoring program administrators, according to Kremer. Third, email invitations were sent to the 28 mentor administrators who the investigator met as fellow attendees of the 2008 Mentoring Institute sponsored by Portland State University. Additionally, the decision was made to include the mentors from a local mentoring program as participants. Originally, this group had been included only as participants of the pilot group; however, only 10 mentors formed the pilot group. Therefore, this group was included inviting only

the remaining mentors to participate. Data from the pilot group were not included in the study.

**Data collection: phase one.** The previously mentioned venues were utilized to invite mentor program administrators to participate in this study. The administrators who expressed interest in participation in the study were informed regarding their rights as participants of the study, the benefits to their programs, and the desired characteristics of participants, as well as the procedures to be followed to protect confidentiality of all information. Specifically, the mentors' survey responses would be coded to link them with their particular programs for research purposes; however, individual surveys were not identified by name or any demographic information that could potentially identify the mentor. Information was only disclosed in aggregate form to protect the confidentiality of individual mentors. The administrator was emailed appropriate information and instructions for completing his/her portion of the survey. Additionally, the mentors' program administrators' were emailed a letter of invitation for the mentors, also outlining the rationale for the survey, the mentors' rights as research participants, and appropriate contact names and numbers should they have questions or concerns. The mentors were also provided with directions to access and complete the online survey. A copy of this letter is included as Appendix E. The responses of the mentors and the respective mentor administrators were coded and matched for research purposes. The investigator followed up with emails to thank the administrators, answer any questions that may have arisen, and encourage additional participation from mentors.

Data collection continued for approximately six weeks, during which time seven groups, including the local mentoring group who was not involved in the pilot group,

agreed to be involved. After the initial information was sent via the mentor administrators there were a minimum of two follow up reminders sent at least one week apart. Each reminder stimulated more responses. After the third reminder, the participation rate of the groups ranged from 5 to 40% with 44 responses in total. Because this number of responses was insufficient for statistical analysis, the dissertation committee was consulted as to acceptable changes or additions to the study to increase participation while protecting the validity of the study.

**Data collection: phase two.** In an effort to increase the number mentors participating in each group, the decision was made after the award of the Barnes and Noble Color Nook to extend the time of the survey. The incentive was changed in this phase of data collection from a lottery to an individual incentive. Each mentor participant from that point forward received a \$3 Amazon Gift Card.

The rationale for making this change was to attempt to increase the number of mentors participating in each program. It was hoped that a smaller, more immediate and definite incentive may more effectively stimulate participation than did the lottery of a larger incentive. The necessary information and documentation was submitted to the Institutional Review Board and approval obtained. This second phase of data collection continued for approximately six weeks, resulting in 28 additional participants. At this point, data collection closed, and data analysis began.

### **Measurement and Instrumentation**

The data for this research project were collected with an online questionnaire. Specific areas of inquiry were based on a review of relevant research in the area of

mentor perception of relationship quality. Mentor perception of the relationship quality may be an important component of the ability of mentors to persist in a mentoring relationship for a sufficient length of time so that a positive relationship between the mentor and mentee can begin to develop (Bogat, Liang, & Rigol-Dahn, 2008).

### **Instrument Development**

As previously discussed, five specific variables were measured in this study, four independent variables and one dependent variable. The independent variables include within-mentor variables (the mentors' motivation, expertise, relationship style) and the mentoring program's adherence to best practice. The dependent variable is the mentors' perception of the quality of the relationship. The independent and dependent variables were measured by two surveys with established psychometric principles, the Match Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ) (Harris & Nakkula, 2008), and Mentor Volunteering Outcomes (Clary et al., 1998), two groups of specifically designed questions, one group which addressed the relevant demographic characteristics of the mentor, and another addressing the level of adherence to the "*The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.*" (EEP) (Mentor, 2009) from the perspective of the mentor. In addition, mentor administrators completed a much shorter survey on their adherence to the EEP and the specific demographic characteristics of the mentors and mentees in their programs. Mentors also completed additional questions on the demographic characteristics of their mentees. In the following sections, the reliability and validity of the three established instruments will be discussed, as well as the specific rationale regarding the appropriateness of the instruments.

## Specific Variables and Corresponding Instruments and Questions

The variables investigated in this study were identified and described previously. Below, Table 6 aligns each variable with the appropriate corresponding measure. The following section will describe each specific instrument, including their psychometric properties, where available.

Table 6  
*Variables and Measures*

Variable	Measure
Program Quality (IV)	Specifically designed questions querying mentor's perception of program adherence to: " <i>The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.</i> "
Mentor Experience (IV)	Specifically designed questions to gather specific information concerning the mentor's experience with children and related demographic information.
Mentor Motivation (IV)	Mentoring Volunteer Outcomes
Mentor Style (IV)	MCQ Section 2
Perceived Relationship Quality (DV)	MCQ, Section 1

**Independent variable: program quality.** The industry accepted standard of best practice for mentoring is, "*The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.*" As discussed in depth in Chapter 2, there are six identified standards that are grounded in empirical research recommended for inclusion within-mentoring programs in order for them to be considered high quality programs. These six standards include practices and procedures concerning: (a) Recruiting, (b) Screening, (c) Training, (d) Matching, (e)

Monitoring and Support, (f) Closure. Research suggests that support for the mentor/mentee relationship from pre-match through match closure, as provided through adherence to the aforementioned standards, is associated with better mentee outcomes, such as improved social skills and more positive academic behaviors (DuBois et al., 2002; Karcher et al., 2005; Wheeler, Keller, & DuBois, 2010). The mentor participants answered a set of questions specifically developed for this study to query adherence of best practices of their programs according to their knowledge and perceptions. Mentor administrators also completed a short questionnaire concerning best practices; each set of questions were in the appropriate format to reflect the differing perspectives of the administrator and the mentor.

**Content validity.** To assure content validity, the proposed questions for this section were reviewed by two members of the working group that helped to develop the *“The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.”* (Mentor, 2009). The two experts confirmed that they believed the items for this section related appropriately to mentor program practices to measure the program’s adherence to *“The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.”* (Mentor, 2009). The experts provided recommendations as to minor changes in wording, sentence structure and content that would allow further clarity and specific information as to the standards. Because there are no known previously published instruments measuring adherence to *“The Elements of Effective Practices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.”* (Mentor, 2009), there were no published information concerning statistical measures of discriminant validity or reliability.

**Independent variable: mentor experience.** The second part of the first research question concerned the particular experience working with children the mentors

possessed. The gathering of this type of information provides an understanding of the possible impact experience has on the mentors' perceptions of relationship quality. Related demographic information such as age and level of education is also queried within this section. This specific set of questions can be reviewed in Appendix F.

**Independent variable: motivation to mentor.** The instrument used to assess the motivation of the mentor was the Mentoring Volunteer Outcomes survey (Clary et al., 1998; Karcher et al., 2005). The six different functions that may underlie a person's decision to volunteer were identified according to functionalist theory as applied by Clary et al. (1998). The six functions identified are: (a) Values, (b) Understanding, (c) Social, (d) Career, (e) Protective, (f) Enhancement. The six subscales were tested through a factor analysis study of 30 questions presented to 467 volunteers associated with five separate organizations providing assorted human services to populations that often have need of volunteer services, such as cancer patients, victims of disaster, individuals with physical handicaps, etc. After exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, Clary et al., (1998) determined the 30 questions clearly loaded on the six individual factors. The average inter-scale correlation of the six subscales was .34. This correlation further confirmed that the subscales were in fact measuring six separate functions of volunteering. Clary and colleagues (1998) also computed Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each of the six sections ranging from .80 to .89 demonstrating good internal consistency (Pedhazur, 1997). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for each individual score as reported by Clary et al., (1998) is given in the sections describing the individual sections of the instrument below.

The questions on this instrument were designed to explore which of the six functions (values, understanding, social, career, protective, enhancement) are most associated with mentors' decisions to mentor. The participants responded according to a seven point Likert scale with a 1 response indicating, "not at all important/accurate for me" and a 7 response indicating, "extremely important/accurate for me." This section grouped the questions according to the targeted function. See Appendix G for the Mentoring Volunteer Outcomes measure in its entirety. Each of the functions as well as the available psychometric data are described next.

**Value.** One of the functions that may be fulfilled through mentoring is values, defined here as altruistic and humanitarian feelings of responsibility towards others. The questions in this section target to what degree the mentors' sense of values may influence their decision to mentor. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this section of questions is 0.80. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.

**Protective.** The second function identified as a possible motivation to mentor youth is protective (Clary et al., 1998). This relates to one's protection of oneself from a negative self-view. People who feel guilty about having advantages or resources may mentor as a way to alleviate or prevent that guilt. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this section of questions is 0.81. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: No matter how bad I've been feeling, being a mentor could help me to forget about it.

**Career.** Some mentors may feel that mentoring could help them to garner career related benefits (Clary et al., 1998). For instance, a mentor may feel working with youth

may give them an opportunity to gain experience that could appear attractive to an employer. Another possible benefit could be derived by a person employed by a company that encourages volunteer or community service activities. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this section of questions is 0.89. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: Mentoring may help me get my foot in the door at a place where I'd like to work.

***Social.*** Persons who enjoy social interactions may choose to mentor for the social interactions it provides (Clary et al., 1998). It is also possible that an activity such as mentoring may help a person meet more people, for instance, someone who has recently relocated and doesn't know many people. Another social aspect is to engage in an activity that will be viewed favorably by other people who are important to the mentor. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this section of questions is 0.83. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: My friends are mentors.

***Understanding.*** According to Clary et al. (1998), some mentors may choose this activity because they want to learn more about working with youth. This relates to the premise of education or broadening one's viewpoint. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this section of questions is 0.81. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: I will learn more about the kinds of kids I will be mentoring.

***Enhancement.*** According to Clary et al. (1998), some people see helping others as a way to maintain or build a positive outlook on life. Although this function may seem related to the protective function, enhancement goes farther. Individuals who wish to "enhance" their outlook have a fairly positive outlook, but they may want to

mentor as a way to maintain or build this positive manner. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this section of questions is 0.84. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: Mentoring could make me feel important.

**Independent variable: mentoring style.** The third part of the first research question concerned the mentoring style of the mentor. This awareness of the mentor to the mentee can be important in developing a strong relationship between the mentor and the mentee. The instrument used to gather this information is the second section of the Match Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ) (Harris & Nakkula, 2008). The instrument in its entirety is available in Appendix B. The MCQ was developed by Dr. Michael Nakkula and Dr. John Harris in consultation with Applied Research Consulting (Harris & Nakkula, 2008). The instrument development was informed by relevant mentoring literature and factor analysis of original items, as well as items included in subsequent revisions. In a research study designed to investigate mentors' efficacy and perceived relationship quality as indicators of mentor persistence, the 1.1 version of the MCQ was used (Karcher et al., 2005). This scale was developed from 65 piloted items. After factor analysis of the items, 29 questions were retained. The Mentoring Quality scale was used to establish concurrent validity (Harris & Nakkula, 2008). The MCQ was found to demonstrate good concurrent validity with this second measure of mentor perception of relationship quality.

Development of the original instrument continued with further research and refinement utilizing relevant research literature, continued factor analysis of questions to establish higher levels of reliability, and qualitative interviews with mentors and mentees after administration of the instrument to assess face validity and practical utility of the

instrument. The authors report in the administration guide for the MCQ (2010) that more than 1000 groups have been surveyed using this instrument, the largest group consisting of the evaluations of the Yavapai Big Brothers Big Sisters in Arizona. Each section of the MCQ utilizes a Likert rating scale of 6 points (Nakkula & Harris, 2005). The answer options range from 1 (Never) to 6 (Always). Each section also contains reverse-scored questions.

For assessment of mentoring style, section two of the MCQ was used and includes 20 items concerning the importance a mentor places on engaging in different types of activities with different purposes, such as building the relationship or working together on a structured project. According to Karcher and Nakkula (2010), the six purposes represented in this section are equally valuable in developing an emotional bond between the mentor/mentee. The particular activity is less important than the process and the sharing of decision making. These items are explained below according to the specific purpose of the activity. The Cronbach alpha reliability estimate reported by Nakkula & Harris (2005) ranges from 0.68 to 0.81 representing good reliability (Pedhazur, 1997). The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for each of the individual subscales is presented and a sample question is provided.

***Fun purpose.*** This section includes questions about the value the mentor feels should be placed on activities that are simply about the mentor and mentee having fun in low stress activities, such as playing games or hanging out together. These types of activities are classified as developmental (Karcher, Davis, & Powell, 2002), with the actual purpose being helping the youth develop the ability to relate appropriately to peers and adults. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.79. There are

four questions in this section. A sample question is: How important do you consider the focus: Having times when you do nothing but fun things with your mentee?

***Sharing purpose.*** The four questions in this section address the value the mentor places on activities that allow the mentor and mentee to engage in discussions that build a rapport between the dyad. The questions focus on a two way process of sharing, with both parties having an opportunity to talk and listen. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.68. There are four questions in this section. A sample question is: How important do you consider the focus: Sharing your life experiences with your mentee?

***Character development purpose.*** The questions in this section focus on the value the mentor places on more instructional activities designed to help the mentee develop and practice socially appropriate behaviors and thought patterns. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.81. There are two questions in this section. A sample question is: How important do you consider the focus: Getting your mentee to develop his/her character (be honest, responsible, etc.)?

***Outlook purpose.*** These questions are concerned with the value the mentor places on getting the mentee to think about the future, going beyond the day to day issues. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.77. There are four questions in this section. A sample question is: How important do you consider the focus: Encouraging your mentee to push beyond what is comfortable or easy (to make more of him/herself)?

***Academic purpose.*** The questions in this section inquire about the value the mentor places on academic related activities. This includes working directly on learning

activities, but also on attempting to positively direct the mentee's attitude towards school. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.79. There are four questions in this section. A sample question is: How important do you consider the focus: Doing or saying things to improve your mentee's attitude towards school (or keep it positive if it is already good)?

**Dependent variable: mentor perceived relationship quality.** Relationship quality, within the context of a mentor and mentee relationship, describes the formation of the crucial emotional bond between the mentor and mentee (Rhodes, 2002).

Mentoring professionals are in agreement that without this bond, there can be little chance of relationship sustainment between the mentor and mentee (Eby et al., 2007; Rhodes & DuBois, 2008; Spencer, 2007b). Section 1 of the MCQ was used to measure the mentor's perception of relationship quality, including the mentor's belief that the relationship is worthwhile and helpful to the mentee, which is the beginning of this crucial bond (Harris & Nakkula, 2008). The MCQ was previously discussed as it was also used to assess mentor style (Section 2). Section 1 consists of seven subsections, which will be described next. In this study, the seven subscales were combined for the dependent variable overall relationship quality. The internal consistency for the combined subscales was calculated in this study. The Cronbach alpha was 0.92.

**Compatibility.** This subsection deals with the mentor's perception of how comfortable the pair is together. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.78. There are six questions in this section. A sample question is: My mentee is open with me (shares thoughts and feelings).

***Handles issues.*** This subsection considers the mentor's perceptions of dealing with the issues that come up when the mentor and mentee are spending time together. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.61. There are three questions in this section, which may have contributed to the lower alphas (Pedhazur, 1997). A sample question is: It is hard for me to deal with my mentee's behavior.

***Closeness.*** The questions in this subsection address the mentor's perception of relationship closeness between her/himself and the mentee, such as, do they feel comfortable talking together and do they have a feeling of connectedness. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.82. There are six questions in this section. A sample question is: I feel like my mentee and I have a strong bond (are close or deeply connected).

***Not distant.*** In this subsection, the questions address the mentor's perception of how much the mentee needs from them and if they push them away. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.78. There are six questions in this section. A sample question is: My mentee needs more from me than I can give.

***Perceived relationship quality.*** The purpose of the questions in this subsection is to understand the level of fulfillment the mentor's perceive he or she has with the relationship. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.85. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: I feel like I am making a difference in my mentee's life.

***Non-academic support seeking.*** This subsection queries the mentor's perception of how much the mentee seeks out the mentor's help in areas other than help with school.

The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.86. There are five questions in this section. A sample question is: My mentee talks to me about it when he/she has problems with friends or peers.

*Academic support seeking.* The questions in this subsection provide information about the mentor's perception of the likelihood that the mentee will ask the mentor for help in matters relating to school, such as homework. The Cronbach's alpha reliability estimate for this section is 0.87. There are two questions in this section. A sample question is: My mentee seems to want my help with his/her academics.

### **Expert Review of Survey**

Two recognized expert researchers in the area of youth mentoring, Dr. Renée Spencer and Dr. Andrea Taylor reviewed the two sets of questions that were specifically designed for this study, the demographic section and the section concerning program quality, and provided their opinions regarding the validity of the content. Dr. Renée Spencer, an Associate Professor at the Boston University School of Social Work, has conducted research and published extensively on elements of mentoring relationships. Dr. Andrea Taylor, a Clinical Assistant Professor at Temple University, is the developer and principal investigator of *Across Ages*, an evidenced-based model project involving intergenerational mentoring funded by the Center of Substance Abuse Prevention.

Drs. Taylor and Spencer provided feedback concerning the order of the questions, recommended minor changes in wording of some of the questions, and suggested wording changes in two questions that allowed for more specific information to be gathered. For example, in the demographic section, after the question, "Did you

receive at least two hours of in-person training before your match?” if the participant answered “Yes” it was suggested to provide an additional question to with choices designed to discover more specifically the amount of training received. These recommended adjustments, along with appropriate technical adjustments from information gathered as a result of the pilot group, were made before the instrument was released to participants.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study including the appropriate treatments and statistical tests of the data to answer the three main and two supplemental research questions. Correlational and hierarchical regression analyses were conducted on within-mentor, program, and mentee characteristics. Descriptive and demographic data were also gathered from the mentor administrators of each program.

**Data screening.** Data screening is a process to examine the data in order to assure appropriate assumptions are met (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). In this case, the data were examined for normality of distribution and homoscedasticity (similar variability of scores of continuous variables). These assumptions were tested by visual examination of histograms. Although the data were determined to have a slight positive skew, it was not extreme, and the decision was made to continue with the variables unchanged.

Concerning the variable *experience with children*, many participants chose multiple areas of experience with children. Because of the significant overlap in types of experience, this multiple dichotomous variable will be described descriptively. The internal consistency for each measure was determined by examining Cronbach alphas. No alpha was less than .66 for any subscale and therefore none were excluded from further analyses. All statistical procedures for this study were conducted by use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences v. 20 (SPSS, 2011).

To address the main research questions, correlations were conducted (Table 9) to determine relationships among mentor characteristics, program characteristics, and

reported perceived relationship quality. Then, using significant variables from the correlation analyses, hierarchical regressions were conducted to examine whether specific characteristics predicted mentor reported perceived relationship quality. For the variable experience correlations were not appropriate given the restricted range of these variables. The next section will provide a summary with statistical analysis of each research question. Descriptive data were also analyzed in each section to provide additional information.

### **Research Question 1**

1. Are there specific within-mentor characteristics that are associated with mentor perception of relationship quality within present mentoring relationships?

1a. Does the motivation to participate in a mentoring program influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?

1b. Does the previous training or experience that a mentor possesses influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?

1c. Does the mentoring style of a mentor influence the perception of relationship quality within the present mentoring relationship?

The correlational data yielded 5 significant relationships between independent variables and the dependent variable. Data are presented in Table 9. Three *mentor style* subscales, *share*, *fun*, and *outlook* respectively had the highest correlation coefficients mentor perception of relationship quality (.48-.41). Two additional *mentor style* subscales, character development and academic had small but significant correlations with mentor perception of relationship quality (PRQ) (.27-.28). A hierarchical

regression analysis was conducted to examine whether the five variables were each significant predictors of mentor perception of relationship quality. The model was statistically significant  $F_{1, 64} = 19.55, p < .000$  but only one of the independent variables, mentor share, was a significant predictor  $b = 2.371, R^2 = .234, R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .222$  explaining 22% of the variance of perceived relationship quality. Mentor fun was approaching significance in the model  $T = 1.692, p < .096$  but did not explain any unique variance in perceived relationship quality. This analysis is illustrated in Table 7 below:

**Table 7**  
*Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining Predictors of Perceived Relationship Quality*

Predictor Variables	$\beta$	$t$	<i>Sig.</i>	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$R^2$ Change	$F$
1 Share	.48	4.42	.000	.23	.22	.234	.000
2 Fun	.25	1.70	.096			-----	
3 Outlook	.05	0.27	.786			-----	
4 Academic	.10	0.80	.428			-----	
5 Character Development	.012	0.09	.930			-----	

Given the restricted range of *experience* this categorical variable was not included in correlation analyses with the other within-mentor characteristics. The participants were allowed to choose up to four areas describing their experience with children, including experience with children/youth within their family experiences, other volunteer experiences, through their work, or stating that they had little or no experience. Because the question is asking each time if the participant had experience with children and the the questions covered three different areas of possible experience as well as the

choice “*no experience*”, this variable is a multiple dichotomous variable. The descriptive information for this variable is provided in Table 8. There were a total of 141 responses among the 72 participants, or an average of 1.96 responses per participant. The largest area of experience identified was experience through other volunteer experiences with almost three fourths of the participants and more than a third of the total responses identifying this area. The smallest area identified was “little or no experience” ( $n=3$ ).

**Table 8**  
*Sources of Mentor Experiences*

Source of Experience	Responses		Percent of Participants
	N	Percent	
Experience with children through other volunteer experiences.	52	36.6%	71.2%
Experience with children through my family	48	34.5%	67.1%
Experience with children through my work.	38	26.8%	52.1%
Little or no experience with children.	3	2.1%	4.1%

Total responses=141  
Total participants=72

Table 9  
*Intercorrelations Among Variables*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1 Mentor PRQ	1	.477*	.452*	.272*	.283*	.408*	.045	-.127	.185	-.170	-.101	.087	-.215	.105
2 Share	.477**	1	.656**	.571**	.478**	.825**	.101	.146	.180	.294*	.341**	.399**	-.172	-.012
3 Fun	.452**	.656**	1	.300*	.291*	.623**	.084	.242*	.219	.256*	.293*	.388**	-.160	.118
4 Char-Develop	.272*	.571**	.300*	1	.759**	.658**	.234*	.146	.117	.256*	.296*	.300*	-.125	-.110
5 Academic	.283*	.478**	.291*	.759**	1	.592**	.195	.109	.209	.232*	.301*	.231	-.067	-.097
6 Outlook	.408**	.825**	.623**	.658**	.592**	1	.070	.191	.306**	.352**	.348**	.395**	-.212	-.109
7 Mot-career	.045	.101	.084	.234*	.195	.070	1	.413**	-.095	.444**	.539**	.496**	.235*	.031
8 Mot-social	-.127	.146	.242	.146	.109	.191	.413**	1	.075	.634**	.609**	.508**	.288*	.056
9 Mot-value	.185	.180	.219	.117	.209	.306**	-.095	.075	1	.065	-.018	.266*	-.030	.277*
10 Mot-enhance	-.170	.294*	.256*	.256*	.232*	.352**	.444**	.634**	.065	1	.794**	.686**	.236*	-.062
11 Mot-protect	-.101	.341**	.293*	.296*	.301*	.348**	.539**	.609**	-.018	.794**	1	.541**	.399**	-.085
12 Mot-understand	.087	.399**	.388**	.300*	.231	.395**	.496**	.508**	.266*	.686**	.541**	1	.073	.014
13 Prog-quality	-.215	-.172	-.160	-.125	-.067	-.212	.235*	.288*	-.030	.236*	.399**	.073	1	-.071

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed).

n=72

**Descriptive summary.** Table 10 includes means, standard deviations and range for the subscales for mentor motivation and mentor style. In the area of mentor motivation, the means for the subgroups ranged from 11.00 to 29.31 with the lowest means in the subgroups *Career*, *Protect*, and *Social*. The largest means occurred in the subgroups *Understanding*, *Values*, and *Enhancement*. The two highest mean scores occurred in *Understanding and Values* (29.31 and 24.80), with the next category, *Enhancement* demonstrating a mean score of over ten points less (14.33). The range of mean scores was large for these subscales overall with a range of 18.31 points.

The lowest means in the subcategories of Mentoring Style occurred in *Fun*, and *Share*. The highest means were for *Outlook*, *Character Development* and *Academics*. However, in this variable, the means of each subcategory varied little. The means ranged from the smallest to largest 14.42 to 16.74, a difference of only 2.32 points. Because *Mentor Style Share* was a significant predictor, Table 11 was developed to present the mentors' responses to each of the 4 items on this scale. The means for each item in *Share* were at 2.75 or above, which placed 3 items in the "pretty important" range, with the remaining item, "telling your mentee about your job" still close to this range. The item, "spending time just talking with your mentee", was answered in the "very important" or above range by 77% of the participants. Two of the items, "Sharing your life experiences with your mentee" and "Focusing on feelings and emotional things with your mentee" were each answered as "very important" or above by more than 50% of the participants. The item with the lowest scores in the "very important" or above range, "Telling your mentee about your job", still had almost a fourth of the participants answering in the "very important" or above range.

Table 10  
*Descriptive Statistics for Motivation and Mentoring Style (IV)*  
*By Subscale*

Subscale	N	Mean	SD	Range	Cronbach Alpha
M-Career	72	11.00	7.05	1-7	.87
M-Protect	72	11.27	6.10	1-7	.80
M-Social	72	13.70	6.71	1-7	.81
M-Enhance	72	14.33	7.41	2-7	.85
M-Values	72	24.80	3.62	1-7	.85
M-Understand	72	29.31	7.69	1-7	.85
MS-Share	72	14.42	3.24	1-6	.69
MS-Fun	72	15.58	3.74	1-6	.81
MS-Academics	72	15.96	3.52	1-6	.78
MS-Character Development	72	16.21	3.87	1-6	.77
MS-Outlook	72	16.74	3.22	2-6	.66

*M=Motivation*

*MS= Mentoring Style*

Table 11  
*Descriptive Statistics for Mentor Style Share*

Question	Not Important	A little Important	Pretty Important	Very Important	Extremely Important	Most Important	N	M	SD
<i>How important is this focus to you?</i>									
1. Sharing your life experiences with your mentee?	1%	14%	33%	28%	16%	4%	72	3.56	1.10
2. Focusing on feelings and emotional things with your mentee?	1%	12%	28%	29%	20%	7%	72	3.77	1.16
3. Telling your mentee about your job?	12%	35%	25%	13%	9%	1%	72	2.75	1.21
4. Spending time just talking with your mentee?	0	4%	14%	35%	29%	13%	72	4.34	1.03

**Perceived relationship quality.** There were 22 questions designed to query the mentor's perception of relationship quality. A sample question for this group of questions is: "I can trust what my mentee tells me". These questions were answered with a six point Likert Scale with one representing *never* and six representing *always*. Five of the questions in this sections were reverse coded; a response of *never* would be positive, and a response of *always* would be negative. An example of a reverse coded question would be "I feel distant from my mentee". These questions were recoded before analysis; therefore the reported mean scores are all the same directionality.

The mean score for this group of questions ranged from 1.66 to 4.41. There were six questions in which the mean responses fell within the 4.01 or greater range, and only 3 questions had mean responses of less than 2.0. Sixteen of the questions (73%) ranged from 2.75 to 4.41 generally indicating a positive perceived relationship attribute. Also, there were six questions that had zero responses in the *never* category, another indication of positive perceived relationships. This information is illustrated in Table 12.

Table 12  
*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Relationship Quality*

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Pretty Often	Very Often	Always	N	Mean	SD
1. My mentee is open with me (shares thoughts and feelings).	0	4%	30%	38%	17%	9%	72	3.97	1.01
2. I feel like the match is getting stronger.	1%	7%	17%	30%	28%	17%	72	4.27	1.20
3. My mentee is very private about his/her life at home (does not talk to me about it).*	4%	35%	35%	20%	5%	0	72	2.86	0.95
4. My mentee asks for my opinion or advice.	8%	16%	45%	20%	9%	1%	72	3.11	1.09
5. My mentee makes me aware of his/her problems or concerns.	3%	14%	37%	25%	16%	4%	72	3.53	1.16
6. I feel distant from my mentee .*	18%	44%	30%	3%	3%	1%	72	2.30	0.98
7. I feel like my mentee and I are good friends (buddies, pals).	0	4%	24%	22%	28%	21%	72	4.39	1.18
8. I feel unsure that my mentee is getting enough out of our match.*	10%	41%	29%	14%	4%	1%	72	2.64	1.07

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Pretty Often	Very Often	Always	N	Mean	SD
9. My mentee asks me for help when he/she has difficult schoolwork or a major project to do.	14%	41%	9%	18%	12%	4%	72	2.84	1.42
10. My mentee avoids talking with me about problems or issues at home. *	9%	34%	35%	9%	5%	5%	72	2.83	1.22
11. My mentee is open with me about his/her friends.	3%	9%	22%	38%	20%	7%	72	3.84	1.14
12. I feel awkward or uncomfortable when I'm with my mentee. *	41%	39%	17%	0	0	0	72	1.76	0.74
13. I feel frustrated or disappointed about how the match is going. *	37%	37%	18%	4%	1%	0	72	1.93	0.93
14. My mentee is willing to learn from me.	0	5%	21%	38%	21%	12%	72	4.14	1.06
15. My mentee does things to push me away. *	53%	29%	13%	1%	1%	0	72	1.66	0.86
16. I feel like I'm making a difference in my mentee's life.	0	3%	32%	29%	25%	10%	72	4.09	1.05
17. My mentee seems to want my help with his/her academics.	13%	38%	24%	10%	10%	3%	72	2.75	1.28
18. My mentee talks to me about it when he/she has problems with friends or peers.	10%	10%	39%	26%	9%	3%	72	3.21	1.78

Question	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Pretty Often	Very Often	Always	N	Mean	SD
19. I can trust what my mentee tells me.	0	3%	18%	32%	28%	18%	72	4.41	1.08
20. My mentee shows me how much he/she cares about me (says things, smiles, does things, hugs me, etc.).	1%	13%	22%	22%	25%	14%	72	4.01	1.32
21. I feel my mentee and I have a strong bond (are close or deeply connected).	0	10%	33%	21%	18%	16%	72	3.96	1.27
22. My mentee seems uncomfortable (or resistant) when I try to help with problems he/she may be having.*	28%	45%	19%	4%	3%	1%	72	2.12	1.04

*Note.* Percentages of some rows do not add to 100 due to rounding. \*Indicates reverse coded question.

## Research Question 2

2. Are there within- program characteristics that effect program quality, specifically the level of adherence to best practices by the program, associated with mentor perception of relationship quality within current mentor relationships?

Given the exploratory nature of this study, even though program quality was only approaching significance ( $p = .08$ ), another regression analysis was conducted with program quality entered as the independent variable. The model approached statistical significance  $F_{1, 65} = 3.16, p < .08$  with program quality explaining 3% of the variance in mentor perception of relationship quality  $b = -.474, p < .08, R^2 = .046 R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .032$ .

## Research Question 3

3. If specific within-mentor and within-program characteristics are associated with mentor perception of relationship quality, which are significant unique predictors and what amount of variance do they explain in mentor perception of relationship quality?

Again, given the exploratory nature of this study, even though program quality was only approaching significance in the regression analysis ( $p = .08$ ), another regression analysis was conducted with program quality entered as an independent variable with *mentor share*. The model was statistically significant  $F_{1, 65} = 19.233, p < .000$  but only *mentor share* uniquely explained variance in the dependent variable mentor perceived relationship quality  $b = 2.433, R^2 = .0228 R^2_{\text{adjusted}} = .216$ . *Mentor share* predicted 22% of the variance of mentor perception of relationship quality in this model.

#### **Research Question 4**

4. Do programs adhere to the quality indicators according to mentors and administrators?

The purpose of this supplemental research question was to query the administrators of the mentoring programs and the mentors as to the adherence to practices that have been identified as indicators of quality according to the “*The Elements of Effective Practices*, 3rd ed.” (Mentor, 2009) of their respective programs. Analysis of descriptive data was appropriate to understand program level of adherence to quality indicators according to reports of program administrators and mentors. Table 13 illustrates the reported adherence to quality indicators according to program administrators and mentors respectively. The mentors section of questions querying program quality consisted of 12 items. Eleven of the questions were based on a six point Likert Scale with choices ranging from “very much agree”(1), to “strongly disagree” (6) with three categories for degrees of agreement, and three categories for degrees of disagreement. The twelfth question asked the mentor to identify the number of hours of training received before beginning their mentoring experience with the choices ranging from two hours, to more than six hours.

For the eleven questions with Likert scale responses, 90% of seven of the questions responses fell into one of the agreement categories. The remaining four questions provided agreement responses from 68% to 89%. The twelfth question was about pre-match training (minimum amount of 2 hours). Eighty nine percent of the responses indicated a level of agreement with “When I first decided to become a mentor, I received at least 2 hours of in person training.” In response to the specific hours of pre

match training received, 88% of the mentors indicated they had received a minimum of at least two hours of pre-match training, and 25% of the mentors indicated they had received more than 2 hours of pre match training, some as much or more than 6 hours of pre match training. Of the three remaining questions that received less than 90% agreement responses, one inquired about evaluation procedures, another concerned the handling of unanticipated match endings and the third asked about ongoing training received. This information is included in Table 13.

**Mentor administrators.** The mentor administrators were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of 25 questions. A six point Likert scale was used with answer choices ranging from “very much agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (6) was used for 22 of the questions. The remaining three questions were not appropriate for a Likert scale format because they asked the administrators to choose from set choices describing their program formats. In the questions that referenced quality indicators, all mentors answered with affirmative answers, from “very much agree” (1) to “somewhat agree” (3), except for the question which queried post-match training. For this question, four administrators chose agreement indicators and one administrator chose “strongly disagree.” This will be discussed further in regards to research question five; however, this information is consistent with the mentors responses, many mentors reported little or no training after being matched with their mentee.

A comparison of the means of the mentor administrators and the mentors may have limited value because of the disparity of numbers between the two groups (mentor administrators  $n=5$ , mentors,  $n=72$ ). However these data are reported for exploratory purposes. The mean of the responses of the mentor administrators ranged from 1 to 3.20

and the mean of the responses of the mentors ranged from 1.19 to 2.92. There were two sections that included mentor administration questions without corresponding mentor questions. The *Matching* section had no corresponding questions for the mentor and the *Closure* section had only one question within the mentor section but two questions within the mentor administrator section. According to a comparison of the response means of the mentors and mentor administrators overall, both groups of participants had generally positive answers; however, there were some areas of variance.

The items with .50 differences between the means of the mentors and mentor administrators answers were included in the areas *Training* and *Monitoring and Support*. In the area of *Training*, question four asks the respective participants to report on whether at least two hours of pre-match training was received by the mentor. The mean of the mentor administrator's answers was 1.50 and the mean of the mentor answers was 2.08 with a .58 difference. Question five, also in *Training*, which queried the provision of post-match training for mentors, had a 1.42 range between the mentor administrators mean score of 1.50 and the mean of the mentors answers of 2.92. Question six, the third question in this section queried the availability of training which provided information to the mentor to deal with difficult issues such as behavior, mentee problems or cultural differences. The mean of the mentor administrator's responses was 1.33 and the mean of the mentor responses was 2.14, a range of .81.

Question 13 in the area of *Monitoring and Support* asked about awareness of formal evaluations within the mentoring program. The mean response of the mentor administrators was 1.67 while the mean response of the mentors was 2.47, with a range of .80.

Table 13  
*Mentor Administrators and Mentor Responses to Program Quality*

<i>Standard Question</i>	Very much agree 1	Mostly agree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Somewhat disagree 4	Mostly disagree 5	Strongly disagree 6	N	Mean
<b><i>Recruiting</i></b>								
1.As a part of mentor recruiting and/or training activities, my program provides information on the benefits that mentors can expect to receive as a result of their participation in the program, such as personal satisfaction, experience working with youth. (A)	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.67
1. When I first decided to become a mentor, my program administrators did a good job of letting me know the ways I would likely benefit such as receiving personal satisfaction and valuable experience from working with adolescents. (M)	26.39%	47.22%	16.67%	5.56%	4.17%	0.00%	72	2.14
<b><i>Screening</i></b>								
2.Our program requires mentors to complete a written application (with background check). (A)	100.0%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.00

<i>Standard</i> Question	Very much agree 1	Mostly agree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Somewhat disagree 4	Mostly disagree 5	Strongly disagree 6	N	Mean
2. When I first decided to become a mentor, I was required to complete a written application and submit to a background check. (M)	88.89%	6.94%	2.78%	0.00%	0.00%	1.39%	72	1.19
3. As a part of mentor recruiting and/or training activities in our program, mentors are provided clear expectations as to time commitment both short term (expectations for mentor/mentee interaction per week) and long term (length of program). (A)	83.33%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.17
3. When I first decided to become a mentor, I was provided with clear information as to amount of time I would be expected to commit. (M)	75.00%	18.06%	2.78%	2.78%	1.39%	0.00%	72	1.38
<b>Training</b>								
4. Our program provides at least two hours pre-match, in person training with each mentor. (A)	66.67%	16.67%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.50
4. When I first decided to become a mentor, I was provided with at least a minimum of two hours of pre-match, in person training. (M)	43.06%	30.56%	13.89%	4.17%	4.17%	4.17%	72	2.08

<i>Standard</i> Question	Very much agree 1	Mostly agree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Somewhat disagree 4	Mostly disagree 5	Strongly disagree 6	N	Mean
5.Our program provides post-match training for each mentor. (A)	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.50
5.I received additional training after my match began. (M)	19.18%	28.77%	20.55%	10.96%	13.70%	6.85%	72	2.92
6.As a part of mentor recruiting and/or training activities, my program provides information on handling challenges such as difficult behaviors, problems in scheduling, possible cultural differences, or other issues that may arise when working with their mentee. (A)	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.33

<i>Standard</i> Question	Very much agree 1	Mostly agree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Somewhat disagree 4	Mostly disagree 5	Strongly disagree 6	N	Mean
6. When I first decided to become a mentor, the training I received adequately prepared me for challenges I might possibly encounter such as difficult behaviors, problems in scheduling, possible cultural differences, or other potential issues that I might encounter when working with my mentee. (M)	26.39%	47.22%	16.67%	5.56%	4.17%	0.00%	72	2.14
7. As a part of mentor recruiting and/or training activities, my program provides information to mentors concerning program expectations such as type of activities engaged in, policies of interaction with mentees and their families outside of school environment. (A)	33.33%	66.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.67

<i>Standard</i> Question	Very much agree 1	Mostly agree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Somewhat disagree 4	Mostly disagree 5	Strongly disagree 6	N	Mean
7. When I first decided to become a mentor, I was provided with information to help me understand the program and my role as a mentor such as the type of activities my mentee and I would likely engage in, and the program's policies relating to interaction with mentees and their families outside of the school environment. (M)	55.56%	36.11%	4.17%	0.00%	4.17%	0.00%	72	1.61
<b><i>Matching</i></b>								
8. Our program attempts to match all students referred to us, regardless of the students risk factors/and or characteristics. (A)	33.33%	16.67%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	16.67%	5	2.67
No corresponding question								
9. Our program targets a specific population of students to serve in our program (for example, children with an incarcerated parent). (A)	40.00%	20.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.00%	5	3.20

<i>Standard</i> Question	Very much agree 1	Mostly agree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Somewhat disagree 4	Mostly disagree 5	Strongly disagree 6	N	Mean
No corresponding question								
10. Although there may be many considerations when matching mentor/mentees we feel the consideration of mentor/mentee characteristics such as personality types, cultural similarities or differences to be important. (A)	66.67%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.33
No corresponding question								
11. Our program arranges an initial in-person meeting between the mentor and mentee. (A)	83.33%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	1.17
11. The mentoring program personnel arranged the initial in-person meeting between me and my prospective mentee. (M)	81.94%	11.00%	4.17%	0.00%	1.39%	1.39%	5	1.32



<b>Standard Question</b>	Very much agree 1	Mostly agree 2	Somewhat agree 3	Somewhat disagree 4	Mostly disagree 5	Strongly disagree 6	N	Mean
14. Our program has clear guidelines on how to handle an anticipated or unanticipated match closure. (A)	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	2.00
14. I am aware of procedures and supports available in the event of an anticipated or unanticipated match closure. (M)	49.32%	23.29%	12.33%	8.22%	6.85%	0.00%	72	2.00
15. Our program has specific procedures or ceremonies to help the mentor and mentee say goodbye. (A)	16.67%	66.67%	16.67%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5	2.00
No corresponding question.								

*Note.* Standards are shown in boldface. M=Mentor question A=Administrator question

## Research Question 5

5. What types of problems do mentors report that their mentees have in their homes, communities and schools?

**Risk factors.** Descriptive data were collected in the area of mentee risk.

Information concerning the mentor's perception of mentee risk factors was divided into three environmental areas: home, community and school, with a total of 16 risk factors.

The participants were free to check more than one area of risk in each category, for instance, a child may live in a single parent household, have a parent who is incarcerated, as well as being a victim of past or present abuse. Almost four risk factors per mentee were identified across the three areas of risk. The data for all areas of risk are described in Table 14 below. Data for individual risk areas of home, community and school are described in Tables 15, 16, 17 respectively.

Table 14  
*Risk Factors All Areas as Reported by Mentors.*

Environmental Area of Risk	Number of Risk Factors	Responses	Average Risk Factors per Mentor
Home	6	121	1.68
School	5	94	1.31
Community	5	59	.82
Total	16	274	3.80

**Mentee home risk factors.** The 72 mentor participants reported 121 risk factors within the mentees' home environments, approximately 1.68 home risk factors per mentee. The largest home risk factor reported was living in a single parent household.

According to mentor reports, approximately one of every two mentees in this group live with only one parent. The next three largest areas of risk within the home environment included alcohol or drug use by a parent, heavy responsibility for care of siblings, and incarceration of a parent, with a range of 24 to 31%. Interestingly, the lowest areas of identified risk factors were harsh parenting at 19% and past or present abuse at 14%.

Table 15  
*Mentee Home Risk Factors as Reported by Mentors.*

Mentee Risk Factor	Responses	Percentage of Mentees at Risk
Past or present abuse	10	14%
Harsh parenting	14	19%
Incarceration of a parent	17	24%
Heavy responsibility of care of siblings	19	26%
Alcohol or drug use by a parent	22	31%
Single parent household	39	54%

**Mentee community risk factors.** The mentors reported significantly fewer community risk factors than home risk factors. Seventy two mentors reported only 59 community risk factors, less than one community risk factor per mentee. The three highest areas of risk could possibly be interrelated, unsafe neighborhoods, deviant peer groups, and large amounts of unsupervised time within the community. Reported risk factors of gang involvement and drug and alcohol use were extremely low with only 4 responses of these factors among the 72 mentors.

Table 16  
*Mentee Community Risk Factors as Reported by Mentors.*

Mentee Risk Factor	Responses	Percentage of Mentees at Risk
Gang involvement	1	< 1%
Drug or alcohol use	3	< 1%
Spends much time in community unsupervised	11	15%
Deviant peer groups	16	22%
Unsafe neighborhood	28	39%

**Mentee school risk factors.** Poor academic performance was the highest category of school risk factors reported by the mentors with close to one half of the mentees reportedly having difficulty in this area. Thirty one percent or nearly one third of the mentors felt their mentees had behavior difficulties within the school environment, with nineteen percent reporting relationship difficulties between the mentee and their teachers. In addition, within the area of peer relationships, nineteen percent of the mentors felt their mentees were subject to bullying by other students, while fifteen percent of mentors reported their mentee was likely guilty of bullying other students.

Table 17  
*Mentee School Risk Factors as Reported by Mentors.*

Mentee Risk Factor	Responses	Percentage of Mentees at Risk
Exhibits bullying behavior to other students	11	15%
Subject of bullying behavior from other students	14	19%
Poor relationships between mentee and teachers	14	19%
Poor behavior performance at school	22	31%
Poor academic performance	33	46%

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

### **Overview**

Research has clearly documented that mentees who experience longer term and higher quality relationships with their mentors are more likely to benefit from mentoring relationships (DuBois et al., 2011; Flores & Obasi, 2005; Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, Fedlman, et al., 2007; Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, & McMaken, 2010; Karcher, 2008a; Rhodes, 2005; Spencer, 2006). The purpose of this study was to identify specific characteristics within-mentor and mentoring programs associated with longer term and higher quality relationships where mentors' perception of relationship quality with their mentees is high. Specifically considered was whether mentors' styles, motivations for engaging in mentoring programs, and/or previous experience were associated with mentors' perception of relationship quality.

In addition, program training and support provided to the mentor was examined to determine how this related to mentor perceived relationship quality. The exploration of mentors' perception of relationship quality is important because research has shown that close to one half of mentoring relationships end before the sixth month anniversary of the relationship, and often these are ended by the mentor (Rhodes, 2008). Because of the possibility of emotional harm to already vulnerable youth, it is imperative to understand more about the mentoring relationship from the perspective of the mentor. This information can then be used by mentoring program administrators to effectively train and support mentors.

To this end a survey was developed to assess key variables identified in the research literature that may influence mentors' perception of relationship quality with their mentees. This chapter will discuss the results of the study, organized by the variables investigated in the main research questions, as well as supplementary research questions. The limitations of this study are also discussed as well as implications for program practice within the field of mentoring and directions for further research.

### **Discussion of Results**

**Mentoring style.** A main finding of this study was that Mentor *style-share* accounted for 23% of the variance in mentor perception of relationship quality. The subscale *Mentor style-share* consists of four items with content related to if the mentors share on a fairly personal level with the mentee, such as sharing their personal experiences, telling their mentee about their job, spending time talking about feelings, or just talking. The mean scores of the mentor responses for these four items were between 2.75 (3=*pretty important*) and 4.34 (4=*very important*). The two items that the mentors rated of highest importance are somewhat more open ended (focusing on feelings, emotions M= 3.77, and just talking M= 4.34) while the two remaining questions (telling your mentee about your job M=2.75 and sharing life experiences with your mentee M=3.56), while still falling into the *pretty important* range, focus more on sharing ideas and thoughts.

Overall, the connection between sharing and mentor perception of relationship quality may be because the mentor senses the development of trust in the relationship if the mentee is willing to actively engage in substantive and introspective conversations on

topics such as these. Thus, the mentor's perception of the quality of the relationship is likely to be influenced, according to this study, by the perceived quality of the interactions overall. According to Karcher and Nakkula (2010), interactions are discreet events that happen each time the mentor and mentee meet, and the relationship is built not on a few discreet events, but rather the cumulating effect of these events over time. The mentors' overall perception of relationship quality is likely to be shaped by their interpretation of this process (Spencer, 2006).

The subscale *Mentor style-fun* was also moderately correlated with the mentors' perception of relationship quality, but did not contribute to the variance more than *Mentor style-share*. Questions here related to the importance mentors placed on activities that were just for fun such as being light-hearted, laughing, and having a good time.

**Motivation.** There was no evidence found in this study indicating that any of the six areas of possible motivation (*career, social, values, enhancement, protective, understanding*) identified in the instrument Mentor Volunteering Outcomes (Clary et al., 1998), significantly predicted the mentors' perception of the quality of the mentoring relationship. Although motivation subscales were not associated with mentors' perception of relationship quality, there were interesting patterns. The motivation subcategories *Values* and *Understanding* had the largest mean scores and *Career and Social* received the lowest mean scores. Both *Values* and *Understanding* represent a more outwardly focused motivation, such as doing the right thing and gaining understanding of others. This is in contrast to lower mean scores of *Career* and *Enhancement*, both of which have a more inward focus, such as gaining something, or bettering one's self, rather than more fully focusing on other people.

Some interesting examples of responses to questions within the *Motivation* category highlight the importance the participants placed on these particular areas. For example, in the *Values* subcategory, “By mentoring, I can do something for a cause that is important to me,” 94% of mentors answered that this was important, very important, or extremely important. This is in contrast to a question within the subcategory *career*, “Mentoring will allow me to succeed in my chosen profession,” which was answered by 48% of the mentors as being either unimportant, or somewhat unimportant. In the category of *protective*, representing the idea of self-protection, or being more inwardly focused, the question, “No matter how bad I’ve been feeling, being a mentor could help me to forget about it,” was answered with some degree of importance by 38% ( $n=28$ ) of the participants. However, another question in this same subcategory, “Mentoring will help me work through my own personal problems,” was answered as unimportant by almost 80% of the mentors. Although it is possible that this is a valid response, it is also possible that the participants felt that admitting to this type of motivation, such as mentoring a child or adolescent because they felt it would help themselves rather than the child, would be a socially unacceptable response.

The findings in this study concerning motivation both confirm and contradict past research to some degree. As previously discussed in Chapter 3, Clary et al, (1998) found the overall level of motivation to be highly predictive of the likelihood that a mentor would find the experience satisfying and be more likely to continue, but this finding was not evident in the present study. However, within the subcategories, both groups of respondents, those reported in Clary et al., (1998) as well as the current study, placed significant importance to items within the subcategory *values* and *understanding*, and

somewhat less importance to items within *career* and *social*, suggesting similar relative importance of more outwardly focused motivations as opposed to motivations that may be more inwardly focused. In this study specific types of motivation were investigated, however, an overall level of motivation was not included in analyses.

As another connection to other research on mentor motivation, foundational mentoring research conducted by Styles and Morrow (1992) reported a greater perception of relationship quality in developmental relationships, defined by the researchers as relationships where the mentor was guided by the mentee's needs, for instance, letting the youth know they were free to talk openly about fears, activities, or family issues without judgment or reproach by the mentor. This more outwardly focused mentor attitude also appears consistent with the present study in which mentors were more likely to be motivated by an outward focus such as wanting to do something for others, rather than an inward focus, as in career advancement.

**Previous experience.** Because of the wide overlap among participants within the variable *experience*, this multiple dichotomous variable was not subjected to statistical analysis. However, examination of the descriptive data did suggest interesting trends. Overall, the participants indicated a fairly high level of experience. There was an average of approximately two (1.96) areas of experience identified by each participant. Only three participants chose the option "I have little or no experience with children", and even those three also chose another area of experience, indicating at least a minimal level of previous experience. Each of the three areas of experience, *other volunteer experiences*, *work*, or *family* was chosen by at least one half of the participants and more than two thirds of the participants choosing the area *other volunteer experiences*.

It is important to bear in mind that participants were asked to name the area of their experience with children and youth but information was not captured concerning the amount, quality or intensity of the experience. For example, it is not possible within this study to differentiate between a participant with 20 years of career experience working with children and a beginning teacher who has less than one year experience. Both participants would likely respond positively to the category of “*experience through my work*”. However, the indication of experience across multiple venues is interesting and could be helpful information when deciding effective venues for recruiting mentors as well as areas of effective programming. This will be further discussed in later sections.

### **Mentee Risk**

Mentee risk is important to consider because of the importance of understanding different needs and vulnerabilities of the mentee. For instance, a mentee who has heavy responsibility for their home and siblings may in some ways have a more adult perspective than other adolescents of the same age, and would need a mentor to relate to him or her in a much different manner than a child who is the victim of abuse, and has lived in a very controlling environment. Because of the problems inherent within many of the risk factors reported by the mentors in this study, such as deviant peer groups, harsh parenting, or drug or alcohol abuse by a parent, social norms and expectations are likely to vary widely between the mentor and mentee (Spencer, 2007, 2011). These differences may include daily routines and expectations such as the importance of regular school attendance, as well as future expectations such as the likelihood of pursuing higher education or even completing high school. As noted in the Sanchez and colleagues study of natural mentors, a student who attends a high school with a 53% graduation rate, and

has no family members with college experience, is less likely to have role models to encourage high behavioral or academic goals (Sanchez, Esparza, & Colon, 2008). Thus, it is important to continue to investigate the risk factors present in mentees' lives.

***Home environment.*** As identified by the mentors, the largest area of mentee risk in the home environment was living in a single parent household (54% of mentees identified). Although this is a large percentage, it is not surprising, since a requirement of many mentoring programs is a single parent household ([Herrera et al., 2010](#)). However, referrals from a parent or teacher for involvement in a mentoring program are more likely to occur because of behavioral and/or academic concerns regardless of different risk factors (Herrera, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000).

This information on home risk factors supports the need to include parents more fully in mentoring programs. In a recent study, Spencer (2011) interviews parents of mentees and notes that little information is available about the parents' desires and/or abilities to be an active participant in the mentoring process of their child. Previous research, Spencer notes, has often assumed that parents of children and adolescents at risk are either absent or uncaring. However, more common themes in the parent interviews were frustration, and/or lack of information as to how to provide buffers for their child from environmental risk factors. This is supported by some of the risk information from this study. As previously noted, the lowest percentages of home risks factors were in the areas of abuse and harsh parenting. Factors of home risk were more likely to be areas of indirect neglect or poor choices made by the parents which impact the child, such as parental alcohol or drug abuse. However, it is also important to note that approximately 1 in 4 mentors reported that their mentees experienced the risk factor

of parental incarceration. Still, overall, programs that promote parental education and communication with their children may be worthwhile.

***Community environment.*** The largest reported community risk factor, according to the mentors' perceptions, was an unsafe neighborhood, reported by 39% of the mentors. The next two most reported risk factors were consistent with an unsafe neighborhood: deviant peer groups (22%) and too much unsupervised time in community (15%). Surprisingly, drug and alcohol abuse as well as gang involvement was reported by less than one percent of the mentors. It is possible that the first three factors are over reported, since most mentors originate from white, middle class neighborhoods (Herrera et al., 2010) and their perception of the neighborhoods of the mentees' community may be skewed. In the same manner, since mentors meet only within the school environment, they may not have the opportunity to witness drug or alcohol use, and the mentees may not want their mentors to know if they are using drugs or alcohol, or have gang involvement, especially in the early stages of their relationship.

***School environment.*** In the area of risk within the school environment, the largest reported area was poor academic performance where 46% of the mentors reported poor academic performance of their mentees. The next largest area was poor behavior at school in which 31% of the mentors reported poor behavior within the academic environment. Interestingly, however, only 19% of the mentors reported that their mentees had poor teacher relationships as an area of risk. According to previous literature (Karcher, 2009), these two areas would have been expected to be closer together. Perhaps mentees discussed their relationships with their teachers less or family risk seemed to surface more during mentor/mentee interactions. The last two areas, in

which mentors were asked if their mentees were subjected to bullying behavior by other students and also if their mentees exhibited bullying behavior to other students, were somewhat close with reports of 19 % and 15% respectively.

**Adherence to quality indicators.** The findings for this research question were very surprising. It would seem to be a logical assumption that adherence to best practices would influence the integrity of the intervention and, therefore, the mentor's perception of relationship quality as well. In fact, this is well-addressed in professional literature addressing the "research to practice gap" (Klingner, Ahwee, Pilonieta, & Menendez, 2003; MENTOR, 2006; Miller, 2007). Integrity of a program would seem to always increase program effects. Although there was a statistically significant effect evidenced in this study for reported adherence to best practices and mentors' perception of relationship quality, it only explained 3% of the variance and did not explain unique variance when entered into a regression with *mentor share*. It may be that the programs included in this study represented a small group of programs with high integrity of implementation and, thus, little variability was present in which to yield relationships between this independent variable and the dependent variable, mentor perception of relationship quality. These results are discussed next.

***Mentor and administrator agreement to program quality indicators.*** Only descriptive data were available in this area, due to the small number of programs involved in the study ( $n=5$ ). Also, as stated previously, there is a large discrepancy in the number of mentor administrators and mentors; therefore only limited information can be drawn from this data. Overall, both mentors and mentor administrators reported high levels of adherence to quality indicators. One exception was in the area of ongoing or

post-match training. The mentors reported a lower level of awareness of training after their match had begun. However, considering the unusually high level of experience in this group of mentors, it may have been that they did not feel the need for as much ongoing support or training and did not take advantage of it if offered. Another possibility was the reliability of the mentors' perceptions and memories. For example, mentors who had been with a program for more than a year, or even several years, may not have accurate recollections of the amount of training they received early in their involvement with the program.

Another area of difference between administrator and mentor responses concerned program evaluations. The mentors indicated a lower awareness of formal program evaluation procedures than reported by the administrators. Although this is concerning, it is possible that evaluation procedures may be in place, but mentors may not have an awareness either because they are relatively new to the program, or conversely, mentors who have been with the program several years, may not remember evaluative activities or questions that have not taken place recently. However, it is important to note that even when there were significant differences in the means ( $>.50$ ) the overall ratings were still high, indicating generally positive responses for both. For example, question number five of this section which queried post-match training had a range of 1.42 between the means of the administrator and the mentor responses. The administrator responses ( $M=1.50$ ) were all within categories of *very much agree* or *mostly agree*. The mentor responses ( $M=2.92$ ) still had a majority of responses (68.5%) indicating some degree of agreement (i.e., *very much*, *mostly* or *somewhat agree*). Similarly, in the area of program evaluations, there was a range of 1.20 between the mean

responses (administrators  $M=1.67$  and mentors  $M=2.47$ ). However, the administrator responses all (100%) indicated some level of agreement and more than four fifths (83.57%) of the mentor responses indicated a level of agreement.

In the area of screening that deals with issues of mentee safety, it is encouraging to note that across mentor administrators and mentors, there was 100% positive agreement. The queries of requirements of written applications and mentor background checks all received positive responses. However, in an area of emotional safety, especially for a vulnerable population of youth, a concern was noted in the area of match closings. Previous research suggests that the ending of a mentoring relationship whether it is planned or unplanned, is better handled by the mentee if there is some type of closure, such as a ceremony or interviews, to reiterate that change is a part of life, and the ending is not a fault of the mentee (Karcher, 2008a). However, almost 15% ( $n=11$ ) of the mentors reported no knowledge of such procedures or policies.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study was descriptive in nature in the sense that no variables were directly manipulated and the results are based on respondents' self-reports. This is an appropriate method to provide information to the field and establish a line of research (Stichter & Conroy, 2004; Thompson et al., 2005); however, the results should be interpreted with caution. Another limitation is the size and makeup of the sample of mentor participants. The sample is relatively small ( $n=72$ ) and there is some evidence that some characteristics of the participants may not be representative of all mentors. For instance, the level of education and experience of this group was relatively high. All of the

mentors indicated some type of post high school education or training, and a very large number of the mentors indicated college degrees, with many indicating advanced degrees. Since many programs rely fairly heavily on college students and even high school students, the level of support and training that this group of mentors felt was adequate may be different than a group which included younger, less experienced mentors. A larger, more varied group may have produced different statistical results.

Another possible limitation is, as mentioned earlier, the reliance on self-reporting instruments. All information relied on reports from mentors and mentor administrators. Mentors may tend to overestimate the severity of risk experienced by their mentees (Spencer, 2007b). Triangulation of the data by examination of documentation of program procedures and corresponding survey of mentees matched with surveyed mentors in future research would add validity to the results.

Although several portions of the instrument had well-established psychometric properties, the sections querying demographics of the mentors and the section concerning program quality were especially designed for this study, and did not have previously established psychometric properties. Repeated use of the instrument would provide substantiation (DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005). Also, in this type of research there is a danger that the participants may provide what they perceive as socially acceptable responses. However, steps were taken to minimize this possibility including the use of procedures to protect confidentiality.

## **Implications for Practice**

**Program quality.** High quality programs are important to continue to maintain, considering the vulnerability of the populations they often serve. Implications may be drawn from this study to aid in the administration of high quality mentoring programs. The results are consistent with the premises of previous research, which suggest the style of mentor interactions, and the value the mentor and mentee place upon the interactions and activities they engage in, are important to the development of the relationship (Cavell et al., 2009; Karcher & Nakkula, 2010).

This study utilized the research and information provided by the “*The Elements of Effective Practices, 3rd Ed.*” (Mentor, 2009), in order to better understand the level of adherence to specific components of mentoring programs according to the perceptions of mentors and mentor administrators. The national organization of Mentor.org provides practical resources to assist mentoring programs in providing high quality programming to their mentor/mentee dyads. These resources include freely downloadable training materials, ideas for relationship building activities, and evaluation materials. Additionally, Mentor.org acts as a clearinghouse for mentor organizations on a variety of issues such as reliable resources for background checks, methods of recruitment and retention of mentors and information on funding sources.

***Individualized training and support.*** Because mentoring is such an individual intervention (DuBois et al., 2002; Rhodes, 2005) it is important for program administrators to be aware of the particular type and intensity of experience of their mentors in order to specifically gauge training and support needs. This may be accomplished by initial screening of potential and beginning mentors as well as ongoing

interactions both pre and post-match. Ongoing interactions and communications will also provide program administrators opportunities to be sure that mentors are aware of the potential the mentoring relationship may have to the mentee. The responses from the mentors and mentor administrators in this study emphasize the importance of planned, supportive interaction between mentors and program administrators in the early stages of the mentor/mentee relationship. The mentor administrators answered very positively when asked if information was provided to mentors in the training process to prepare them for such things as program expectations, policies and dealing with difficult mentee behavior. However, approximately one fourth of the mentors indicated less agreement, which means there may be a need for open and continued communication between mentors and mentor administrators in this particularly individualized intervention. Additionally, active interaction between program administrators and mentors would allow mentors to provide input into the potential types of activities and setting that they feel would allow substantive interactions with their mentee. This shared, ongoing input may allow the mentor to engage in interactions that they feel are important to their mentee, and may therefore be more likely to allow relationship growth (Karcher & Nakkula, 2010).

*Individual risk factors of mentees.* Considering the large numbers and different types of risks factors, it is also important for the mentoring administrators to consider the particular risk factors of their mentees to guide program planning, as well as needs as for training and support of their particular population of mentors (Rhodes, 2002). For instance, a college student may need more training and support; however, they may also be motivated by the opportunity to learn more about working with children, especially if

they are working towards a career where this type of experience would be helpful. Some of the college students majoring in criminal justice who mentored an adjudicated youth as a part of a for credit class reported close relationships with their mentee and even an intent to continue the relationship beyond the semester end (Holsinger & Ayers, 2004).

In the present study, there were lower mean scores overall for the variable subcategory of *motivation-career*. However, matching a population of mentees who exhibit a particular risk factor with a corresponding population of specific mentors who are motivated by an interest in a career that corresponds to the mentees specific risk factors as in the above mentioned program may be particularly effective. Even if the mentee risk and mentor motivations are not this closely matched, an awareness of the risk factors of the mentees, as well as the motivations and training needs of the mentors may provide valuable insights into programming.

The data from this study indicated very altruistic motivations of the participant mentors. Considering the multiple mentee risk factors identified mentors who are motivated by wanting to make a difference in the life of another person, could become disillusioned or discouraged if they do not see substantive changes taking place with their mentee. In this study almost one third of the participants said indicated that they felt distant from their mentees sometimes, and that they “sometimes” did not feel their mentee was getting enough out of the relationship. Therefore, it is important that mentors receive information and training not only of the ways they can positively impact a young person at high risk, but also of the limitations of their role.

***Relationship development.*** An important finding in the present study was the relationship between actively engaging in activities such as talking, sharing thoughts and

feelings, and mentor perception of relationship quality. Although the active engagement of substantive sharing activities between the dyad depends on the willingness of the pair to engage, the program administrator may be able to construct activities to promote relationship growth such as structured community building activities, low stress, engaging activities that are preferred by the particular mentee population. The facilitation of group support of the mentors to discuss issues that arise with their mentees and how to overcome barriers to relationship development may also be a way for program administrators to promote relationship growth between the dyad. Group activities for the dyads as well as for mentor support may also help to promote a familial or community type of connection among the entire group. This type of connection has often been mentioned in studies of informal mentoring in which community connections and relationships are maintained for many years (Flores & Obasi, 2005; Klaw et al., 2003; Spencer, 2007c).

***Procedures for relationship closure.*** Because of the particular vulnerability often present in mentees for failed relationships, a mentoring relationship that ends, prematurely or not, can be seen by the mentee as a personal failure and may be emotionally damaging (Grossman & Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes, 2002). Therefore an important identified quality standard through “*The Elements of Effective Practices, 3rd Ed.*” (Mentor, 2009), is formal procedures or ceremonies for planned relationship endings, such as at the end of a semester or program. It is also important to have specific procedures in place such as exit interviews for unplanned closures. A positive finding from the descriptive data was a mean of 2.0 for both the mentors and mentor administrators in the questions querying understanding and availability of relationship

ending procedures. However, almost 15% of the mentors ( $n=11$ ) indicated no knowledge of such procedures. Even though this is a small number, it is important to mention because of the potential for emotional damage to vulnerable mentees. Program administrators are cautioned to continue to be especially diligent in adherence to this important aspect of their programs.

***Recruiting and screening of mentors.*** The findings of this study indicate highly altruistic motivations of this population of mentors. Mentors were more likely to indicate an outwardly focused motivation to engage in a mentoring relationship such as "...being involved in a cause that is important to me..." than being involved for reasons that benefit themselves such as career advancement. According to Clary, (1998), it is important for program administrators to be aware of mentor motivations when training and screening. However, Clary (1998) feels the most important consideration as to motivation is for the mentors' experiences to match their motivations and expectations. For instance, if a mentor is involved because of a desire to help a youth, she may be unwilling to continue the relationship if there is a perception the relationship is not one that is of high quality and beneficial to the mentee. Therefore, program administrators may improve program quality by being aware of mentors' initial motivations, providing information to make sure the mentor has realistic expectations of the experience and providing ongoing support that will help meet the mentor's expectations within the context of a beneficial relationship for the mentee.

## **Directions for Future Research**

This study documented important information about mentors' perceptions of the quality of their relationships with their mentees and the ways this information may influence their likelihood to persist in their mentoring relationships. This study also provides guidance for the direction of future research. Although school-based mentoring programs are prolific, there is still much that is not known about what specifically happens within the relationship and the ways that program administrators may best support the dyads (DuBois et al., 2011; Herrera et al., 2010).

***Larger and more varied sampling.*** The particular mentors and mentor programs sampled within this study showed particularly high adherence to effective program practices. The mean responses of the mentor administrators ranged from 1 to 3.20 and the mean responses of the mentors ranged from 1.19 to 2.92. All of the means were within the range of positive responses. As previously discussed, a limitation of this study was the small numbers of programs and mentors who participated. Inclusion of larger numbers of mentors and mentor programs with more varied practices and populations may provide more information as to adherence to particular standards influence mentor perception of relationship quality and persistence.

***Program quality.*** One concern highlighted by previous researchers is the large number of children and youth at risk on waiting lists to be matched to a mentor (Herrera, 2011). Because of this, programs have sometimes over-focused on mentor recruitment and program development rather than quality and sustainment of programming (DuBois et al., 2002; Rhodes, 2002). This study as well as other previous research has highlighted the importance of focusing on the quality and durability of the mentor/mentee

relationship (Spencer & Liang, 2009). Future research that focuses on effective methods of support and training for mentors as a method of building and sustaining effective mentoring programs would be beneficial.

***Support and training of mentors with specific risk factors.*** The programs reviewed as a part of this study included programs tailored to mentees with particular risk factors, as well as those with more general acceptance of mentees referred. Future research which compares the program practices such as mentoring screening, training, and support of mentors including the differential effect of tailored mentor programs versus non tailored programs may provide valuable information to the field. Particular areas of interest may include the effect of focused training and support for mentors in particular programs and how training and support relates to mentor perception of relationship quality.

***Specific variables in future research.*** Because mentoring is a highly individualized intervention, there are many different variables that may influence the relationship and the best manner to support the mentor and mentee. Some additional variables not explored in this study, that may possibly influence the relationship include the particular culture, gender, and socio-economic status of both the mentee and the mentor. Previous research has suggested that these variables may sometimes be barriers to success in mentoring programs, especially when there are vast differences between the mentor and mentee (Rhodes, 2002; Spencer, 2007b). More in-depth information about how specific cultural nuances may affect the mentees' ability to initially respond to their mentors may be particularly valuable. Additionally, more research focused on further exploration into the specific variables and nuances within the relationship development of

the mentoring dyad would be beneficial. Future research that includes mentees' perception of relationship quality is also needed.

In the previous discussion concerning risk factors, building a more inclusive role for the parents of the mentee was mentioned and is another area for future research. According to Spencer (2011), historically mentoring research has either excluded parents or asked them to provide input in a very marginal manner. More fully including the parents in future research could provide valuable information as to the needs of the family and methods of support as related to mentee outcomes.

***Mentee outcomes.*** This study has focused on a particular area within the mentor/mentee relationship, specifically investigation of the variables that may influence the mentor perception of relationship quality, which may increase the likelihood of the mentor/mentee relationship to be better sustained over time. The eventual outcome of this sustained relationship is hoped to be improved outcomes for the mentee in social and/or academic outcomes. Additionally, investigating how mentor and mentee perception of relationship quality may relate to specific mentee outcomes such as improved relationship development, improved school attendance, academic competency, and high school completion is important.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to identify specific characteristics within-mentors and mentoring programs associated with mentor perception of relationship quality. The main findings of this study included the relationship between the mentoring style of the mentor and the mentor's self-reported perception of relationship quality. Specifically,

*Mentor style-share* accounted for 23% of the variance in mentor perception of relationship quality. Although the variable *motivation* was not statistically significant in the mentors' perception of relationship quality, some interesting patterns were observed. Overall, mentors reported their motivations to be highly altruistic, and reported their motivations to be more outwardly focused on helping others rather than inwardly focused on motivations such as career development.

Limitations of this study included the small number of participants and mentor programs which participated. There was also some evidence that this sample of mentors may not be fully representative of mentors in general. Another limitation was the reliance on self-reported information. The addition of information from mentees and documentation of program practices would strengthen the study.

Implications for practice include the importance of mentor program administrators' attention to the training and support needs of the mentor, including the attention to the particular risk factors of the mentees as related to mentor training and support. The findings from this study also suggest the importance of providing concrete and specific opportunities for the mentor and mentee to build and deepen their relationship. The literature reviewed in this study also suggests that developing a feeling of community within the mentors and mentees may add an important level of support as well as provide a familial atmosphere similar to those mentioned in informal mentoring studies and possibly increase the longevity of relationships (Flores & Obasi, 2005; Klaw et al., 2003; Spencer, 2007c).

Directions for future research include investigation of specific additional variables not explored in this study such as socioeconomic status, culture differences and

additional risk factors. Additional research is also needed to investigate the mentees view of the relationship. Additional research replicating the present study with a larger and more varied sample would extend the findings from this study and provide more information about the effects of program quality on mentor perception of relationship quality. This study investigated specific elements of mentoring relationships; additional research on the effect mentor perception of relationship quality on student behavioral and academic outcomes is needed.

## APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS.

Please choose the category that best describes you.

1. Which of the following categories best describes your educational experiences?
  - a. High School Graduate or GED
  - b. Formal Technical Training
  - c. College -Highest Level Completed \_\_\_\_\_ some college \_\_\_\_\_ 2 year college degree \_\_\_\_\_  
Technical Certificate Program \_Bachelor \_Masters \_Professional \_ Ph.D. Area of  
Study \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Other
2. How would you best describe your type of work?
  - a. College Student
  - b. Service Industry
  - c. Retail Industry
  - d. Educator
  - e. Management
  - f. Retiree
  - g. Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. What age category best describes you?
  - a. 25 or under
  - b. 26-30
  - c. 31-35
  - d. 36-40
  - e. 41-50
  - f. 51-60
  - g. 60+
4. My experience with children and/or adolescents includes interactions through: (Choose all that apply)
  - a. family such as my children, grandchildren, or nieces, nephews, etc.
  - b. my work.
  - c. other volunteer experiences.
  - d. I have little experience with children/adolescents, but I am hoping to gain experience through mentoring.

## APPENDIX B: MENTOR STYLE QUESTIONS

Please tell us how important each focus is to you.

*Remember, there are no “right” answers—each mentor has a different approach.*

1. Sharing your life experiences with your mentee?
  2. Having times when you do nothing but fun things with your mentee?
  3. Getting your mentee to develop his/her character (be honest, responsible, etc.)?
  4. Doing activities with your mentee that get him/her to think (like reading, puzzles, educational games, etc.)?
  5. Encouraging your mentee to push beyond what is comfortable or easy (to expect more of him/herself)?
  6. Focusing on feelings and emotional things with your mentee?
  7. Making time to goof around, laugh, and have light-hearted fun with your mentee?
  8. Teaching your mentee to manage or improve his/her behavior (control impulses, make better decisions, etc.)?
  9. Doing or saying things to improve your mentee's attitude towards school (or keep it positive if it is already good)?
  10. Exposing your mentee to new ideas and experiences?
  11. Telling your mentee about your job?
  12. Having time when you and your mentee just hang out together (no particular activity to do)?
  13. Getting your mentee to care more about other people?
  14. Helping your mentee with schoolwork?
  15. Getting your mentee to develop stronger skills and interests?
  16. Spending time just talking with your mentee?
  17. Having fun (yourself) while you are with your mentee?
  18. Teaching your mentee social skills (like table manners, how to meet people, etc.)?
  19. Involving academics in the match?
  20. Getting your mentee to think about serious issues in his/her life (school, relationships, etc.)?
- (Likert Scale, 1-6 Not Important-Most Important).

## **APPENDIX C: MENTOR PERCEIVED RELATIONSHIP QUALITY QUESTIONS**

For each statement below, please say how often it is true for you.

1. My mentee is open with me (shares thoughts and feelings).
2. I feel like the match is getting stronger.
3. My mentee is very private about his/her life at home (does not talk to me about it).
4. My mentee asks for my opinion or advice.
5. My mentee makes me aware of his/her problems or concerns.
6. I feel distant from my mentee.
7. I feel like my mentee and I are good friends (buddies, pals).
8. I feel unsure that my mentee is getting enough out of our match.
9. My mentee asks me for help when he/she has difficult schoolwork or a major project to do.
10. My mentee avoids talking with me about problems or issues at home.
11. My mentee is open with me about his/her friends.
12. I feel awkward or uncomfortable when I'm with my mentee.
13. I feel frustrated or disappointed about how the match is going.
14. My mentee is willing to learn from me.
15. My mentee does things to push me away.
16. I feel like I am making a difference in my mentee's life.
17. My mentee seems to want my help with his/her academics.
18. My mentee talks to me about it when he/she has problems with friends or peers.
19. My mentee shows me how much he/she cares about me (says things, smiles, does things, hugs me, etc.).
20. I feel like my mentee and I have a strong bond (are close or deeply connected).
21. My mentee seems uncomfortable (or resistant) when I try to help with problems he/she may be having.
22. I can trust what my mentee tells me.

## **APPENDIX D: MENTEE RISK QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS.**

We would like to understand the risk factors your mentee may have. You may check as many or as few factors as you feel appropriate. Do you feel your mentee has risk due to\*:

### **Home** factors such as:

- Past or present abuse
- Harsh parenting
- Incarceration of a parent
- Heavy responsibility of care of siblings
- Alcohol or drug use by a parent
- Single parent household

### **Community** factors such as:

- Gang involvement
- Drug or alcohol use
- Spends much time in community unsupervised
- Deviant peer groups
- Unsafe neighborhood

### **School** factors such as:

- Exhibits bullying behavior to other students
- Subject of bullying behavior from other students
- Poor relationships between mentee and teachers
- Poor behavior performance at school
- Poor academic performance

\*(Yes/No responses)

# APPENDIX E: CONSENT LETTER FOR MENTORS

## Consent to Participate in Mentor Perceived Relationship Quality Questionnaire

### Research

**Researcher's Name(s):** Cindy Ann Smith, Dr. Melissa Stormont

**Project Title:** Mentor Perceived Relationship Quality

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This research is being conducted to help understand how your mentoring program can better support the relationship between the mentors and mentees in your mentoring program. When you are invited to participate in research, you have the right to be informed about the study procedures so that you can decide whether you want to consent to participation. This form may contain words that you do not know. Please ask the researcher to explain any words or information that you do not understand.

You have the right to know what you will be asked to do so that you can decide whether or not to be in the study. Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to be in the study if you do not want to. You may refuse to be in the study and nothing will happen. If you do not want to continue to be in the study, you may stop at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

The purpose of this research is to explore whether specific characteristics of the mentor and/or of the mentoring program are associated with high quality relationships according to mentors. As the program administrator, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire asking questions concerning demographic information about your program and the procedures used in your program concerning training and support of your mentors. This questionnaire will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

In addition, you will be asked to invite your mentors to participate in an online questionnaire which will ask questions about their relationship with their mentee and some demographic questions about themselves. The mentor questionnaire will take about 20-30 minutes to complete. We anticipate that fifty to one hundred mentor programs such as yours will participate in this research and that several hundred mentors such as those in your program will also complete the questionnaire. By participating in this questionnaire, you and your mentors may help us better understand the way that mentoring programs can better support mentor/mentee relationships which will hopefully improve outcomes for youth in mentoring programs.

Additionally, we would like to also ask your permission to contact you approximately one year from now, to follow up on the status of your mentoring program. This follow up, would possibly include an email, with open ended questions regarding your continued involvement with the program. This follow up is in addition to the current study, and you do not have to agree to be involved in the follow up to be involved in this study.

We do not anticipate any type of increased risk to you by participating in this study, any more than you would be likely to experience during your normal day. We do not feel that any of the questions are unduly personal or invasive; however, you are free to choose not to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable with. All of the mentor responses to the questionnaire will be anonymous; although you will receive information in aggregate form as to your mentor's responses, you will not be able to see an individual mentors' answer. Your mentoring program will be assigned a number, and each of your mentors' will be assigned a corresponding number. The researchers will only see the mentor answers as associated with assigned numbers, identifying mentor programs, not according to individual names of mentors. The

information presented by all the mentors in your group will be shared with you and may be a useful type of feedback for your organization.

If you do agree to participate in the study, you may change your mind at any time, without any negative consequences. It is your choice to be in the study, and you may choose not to be in the study. As an expression of our appreciation for taking part in our study, you will receive a professional package including useful research based information for providing support for specific populations of mentees, a compilation of relevant research of different types of school based mentoring programs that have promising results, as well as other items that you may find useful in providing the most high quality support to your mentors and mentees.

As our way to thank your mentors for participating in the study, they will receive a “Mentoring to go” packet, containing games and ideas for activities that you may be useful to the mentors to use during mentor/mentee meetings. In addition, the packet will include helpful suggestions for mentors to deal with negative behavior as well as ideas the mentor may use to engage the mentee in conversation. Additionally, the mentors’ will be entered into a drawing for a Barnes and Noble Color Nook.

If you have any questions about the questionnaire, you may contact me or my advisor. Additionally, you may contact the Campus Institutional Review Board, if you have any concerns or complaints. All of our contact information is listed below:

*Cindy Ann Smith 573 356 7430 [casxr6@mail.missouri.edu](mailto:casxr6@mail.missouri.edu) (Researcher)*  
*Melissa Stormont 573 882 7383 [Stormontm@missouri.edu](mailto:Stormontm@missouri.edu) (Researcher, advisor)*

**Campus Institutional Review Board**

483 McReynolds Hall

Columbia, MO 65211

573-882-9585

E-Mail: [umcresearchcirb@missouri.edu](mailto:umcresearchcirb@missouri.edu)

Website: <http://www.research.missouri.edu/cirb/index.htm>

**I have read this consent form and my questions have been answered. By checking “I agree”, I am indicating that I want to be in the study. I know that I can remove myself from the study at any time without any problem.**

   I agree.

   I do not agree.

**Additionally, I would be willing to be contacted by the researcher approximately 1 year from now to answer questions concerning my continued involvement in the mentoring program. I can be contacted at: phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_**

**By providing my contact information and clicking I “agree” I am indicating my willingness to be contacted as outlined above. I also know that I can change my mind about this future involvement with no problem.**

   I agree.

   I do not agree.

## APPENDIX F: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS.

Please tell us more about your college experience.

- 1 Some College
- 2 2 yr. college degree
- 3 Technical Certificate Program
- 4 Bachelor Degree
- 5 Master's Degree
- 6 Law Degree
- 7 Medical Doctor
- 8 PhD

How would you best describe your work?

1. College Student
2. Service Industry
3. Retail Industry
4. Educator
5. Management
6. Medical
7. Retiree
8. Other

What age category best describes you?

- 1 25 or under
- 2 26-30
- 3 31-35
- 4 36-40
- 5 41-50
- 6 51-60
- 7 60+

## APPENDIX G: MENTOR VOLUNTEERISM QUESTIONNAIRE

**Mentor Volunteerism Questionnaire: Reasons for Volunteering as a Mentor**

We want to understand volunteer's reasons for mentoring. On this survey are items that concern your reasons for volunteering as a mentor. Please indicate how important each reason is for you. Your answers will be confidential and not shared publicly. Using the 7-point scale below, indicate how important or accurate each of the following possible reasons for volunteering is in determining why you became a mentor. Record your answer in the space next to each item.

- |         | not at all important/<br>accurate for you  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | extremely important/<br>accurate for you |
|---------|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| you     |  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 1.  | Mentoring may help me get my foot in the door at a place where I'd like to work          |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 2.  | My friends are mentors.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 3.  | I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.                                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 4.  | People I'm close to want me to be a mentor.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 5.  | Mentoring could make me feel important.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 6.  | Other people I know share an interest in community service.                              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 7.  | No matter how bad I've been feeling, being a mentor could help me to forget about it.    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 8.  | I am genuinely concerned about the youth I will be serving.                              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 9.  | By mentoring, I might feel less lonely.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 10. | I could make new contacts that might help my business career.                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 11. | Being a mentor may relieve me of some of my guilt over being more fortunate than others. |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 12. | I will learn more about the kinds of kids I will be mentoring.                           |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 13. | Mentoring will increase my self-esteem.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 14. | Mentoring will allow me to gain a new perspective on things.                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 15. | Mentoring will allow me to explore different career options.                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 16. | I feel compassion toward kids in need.   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 17. | Others with whom I am close place a high value on community service.                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 18. | Mentoring will let me learn through direct "hands on" experience.                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 19. | I feel it is important to help others.   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 20. | Mentoring will help me work through my own personal problems.                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 21. | Mentoring will help me succeed in my chosen profession.                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 22. | By mentoring I can do something for a cause that is important to me.                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 23. | Mentoring is an important activity to the people I know best.                            |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 24. | Mentoring would be a good escape from my own troubles.                                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 25. | I can learn how to deal with a variety of people.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 26. | Mentoring would make me feel needed.   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 27. | Mentoring could make me feel better about myself.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| ___ 28. | Mentoring experience will look good on my resume.  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |

- \_\_\_ 29. Mentoring is a way to make new friends.
- \_\_\_ 30. By mentoring I can explore my own strengths.

Clary, E. G., Snyder, M., Ridge, R. D., Copeland, J., Stukas, A. A., Haugen, J., et al. (1998). Understanding and assessing the motivations of volunteers: A functional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 74, 1516-1530.

## APPENDIX H: IRB PROJECT APPROVAL.

Dear Investigator:

Your human subject research project entitled An Investigation of Mentor and Program Characteristics Associated with Mentor Satisfaction meets the criteria for EXEMPT APPROVAL and will expire on August 19, 2012. Your approval will be contingent upon your agreement to annually submit the "Annual Exempt Research Certification" form to maintain current IRB approval.

Exempt Category: 45 CFR 46.101b(2)

**Study Documents:** Review the document storage section for IRB approved documents. You must utilize the documents that received IRB approval.

**Study Changes:** If you intend to make any changes to your exempt project, you must complete the Exempt Amendment Form for review and approval. **Submit an Exempt Amendment with your follow-up documents prior to distribution.**

MU policy requires that you retain all research records at MU for a period of seven years following the completion of the research. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Campus IRB office at (573) 882-9585.

Campus Institutional Review Board

## VITA

Cindy Ann Smith has taught students identified with educational disabilities including behavioral disorders, autism spectrum disorders, and cognitive disorders at the pre-K, elementary, middle school, and secondary levels. Additionally, she has provided contract positive behavioral support services through a state agency which provides services to families with children with disabilities. She is also an adjunct instructor for the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Her research interests include methods of supporting students with behavioral disorders, mentoring as an intervention for adolescents at high risk for academic and social failure, and effective preparation of pre-service teachers especially in the areas of collaboration between regular and special education, classroom management, and literacy instruction for students with disabilities.

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