

MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Findings from *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*

Kathryn Taaffe McLearn, Diane Colasanto, and Cathy Schoen

July 1998

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Survey Findings.....	3
Summary and Implications.....	11
Survey Methodology.....	13
Appendix A: Charts.....	15
Appendix B: Tables.....	27

MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Findings from *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a time of risk and opportunity. During the critical transition to adulthood, youths are learning skills, attitudes, and behaviors that will affect their lifelong ability to lead productive and healthy lives. In the search for interventions that could enhance this transition, mentoring has been widely noted for its potential to provide support and guidance. Out of the hope that caring adults can provide encouragement and impart skills and values necessary for later success in school and employment, new efforts are under way in cities across the nation to expand the numbers of adults willing to volunteer as mentors.

Over the past decade, The Commonwealth Fund, along with other nonprofit and public entities, has supported efforts to develop and test the value of innovative mentoring programs. Yet, little information exists about the impact of mentoring activities, the mentoring experience, the types of youths in mentoring relationships, the extent and variety of mentoring activities, which adults are most likely to volunteer as mentors, or features of successful mentoring relationships.

To enhance the nation's understanding of the effects of mentoring youth and to learn from a broad array of mentoring relationships, The Commonwealth Fund commissioned Princeton Survey Research Associates to conduct *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*. From January through March 1998, this national telephone survey included interviews with 1,504 adults who have been mentors to youths ages 10 to 18 during the past five years.

Mentors report that they believe mentoring works, that they have helped with or prevented problems for a young person. Whether in formal, structured mentoring programs or in relationships formed through informal family, church, or neighborhood connections, the large majority of mentors believe they have had helped solve at least one problem, and many name more than one. Mentors find the relationship with youth highly satisfying and rewarding, and say they would do again.

Mentoring is reaching a high-risk group of adolescents who are likely to face multiple problems in school and at home, and to have little confidence in themselves. These young people are often growing up in difficult circumstances, with families struggling financially and/or with parents who are unavailable or unable to provide needed support. Mentors believe they have been particularly successful in helping youths overcome such problems as having negative feelings about themselves, skipping school, and poor grades. Analysis of survey findings shows that mentoring is more likely to be successful when the relationship

endures at least two years, and when the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and offers guidance for the young person.

Mentoring ranks high among adult volunteer activities with children and youth. Nearly one of three adults initially interviewed has served as a mentor during his or her lifetime, and this rate rivals other prevalent volunteer activities with youth such as sports teams and scouting. One of seven adults is currently involved in a mentoring relationship.

Most mentoring relationships have been formed through informal connections. Still, a wide variety of groups are sponsoring formal mentoring programs. Among these programs, those sponsored by schools, universities, and churches dominate. Mentors often participate through programs sponsored by their employers.

Programs seeking to expand and recruit new mentors might well look to those volunteering for other community activities with children and youth. Adults who mentor are more likely than those who have never mentored to volunteer to work with young people in a variety of community activities. In general, mentors say they are motivated by a desire to help and work with youth.

Mentors believe that mentoring makes a difference. The challenge lies in expanding programs to reach a greater portion of youth at risk and to recruit new mentors.

SURVEY FINDINGS

MENTORING MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Many young people growing up in America are at risk. They face problems with negative feelings about themselves, poor performance in school, and frequently engage in risk-taking behaviors. All too often, youths are growing up in families where parents are coping with financial stress and their own personal problems, and are simply not available or able to provide guidance and support.

A key goal of mentoring programs is to provide a caring and supportive adult for youths at risk. Mentoring relationships offer these youths the potential to overcome hurdles, cope with problems, and learn basic skills necessary for a productive, healthy adulthood.

The survey finds that mentoring is succeeding in reaching a high-risk group of adolescents and making a difference in their lives. Mentors believe that their mentoring relationships have been instrumental in helping youths solve or avert problems, and that they have had a positive impact on the life of the young person they mentored.

Young people in mentoring relationships are at risk. Eight of ten young people in mentoring relationships have one or more problems out of a list of twelve problems investigated by the survey that could put their success in school, health, or development at risk.¹ Based on mentors' assessments, nearly one of four young people in mentoring relationships (23%) has five or more problems.

The five most prevalent problems faced by young people in mentoring relationships are: negative feelings about themselves (55%), poor relationships with family members (49%), poor grades (42%), hanging out with the wrong crowd (41%), and getting into trouble at school (36%). Mentors report that approximately one of four mentees has problems with substance abuse, skipping school, and getting into trouble outside of school. About one of ten young people has run away from home, been physically or sexually abused, or experienced an eating disorder.

Youths in mentoring relationships are often growing up in difficult circumstances. Nearly half the young people in mentoring relationships (45%) are growing up in families with serious financial problems: 38 percent of mentors say the youth's family

¹ The problems included: poor grades, getting into trouble at school, risky behaviors (smoking, drinking, drug use), negative feelings about himself/herself, poor relationships with family members, skipping school, getting into trouble outside of school, hanging out with the wrong crowd, eating disorders, physical or sexual abuse, sexual activity, and running away from home.

is struggling financially and 7 percent say the family is in a desperate financial situation. When asked about other problems in the youth's home, nearly one-third (32%) of mentors report that the youth's parents appear to have serious problems with alcohol and drug abuse, mental health problems, trouble with the law, or domestic violence.

Youths in mentoring relationships are often growing up without the benefit of two parents. Barely half are growing up in two-parent families. Eleven percent of mentees were not living with any parent at the time of the mentoring relationship, and 30 percent were living with only one parent.

Mentoring has a positive impact on the lives of young people. A large majority of adults who have been mentors to a youth feel they have been instrumental in helping with or preventing a life problem for the young person they mentored. Eighty-five percent—more than eight of ten mentors—name at least one problem they believe was improved due to mentoring, and many cite more than one.

- Mentors feel most effective in alleviating the youths' negative feelings about themselves. Sixty-two percent who mentored a youth with negative feelings about him/herself believe they alleviated these feelings.
- About half of mentors feel they have had a significant, positive influence in helping the youth address problems with skipping school (52%), poor grades (48%), getting into trouble at school (49%) or out of school (47%), or substance abuse (45%).
- Although mentors were less likely to cite abuse and running away from home as problems for the youths they mentored, most mentors in relationships with young people who had these problems feel that mentoring had a major, positive impact: 61 percent felt they had helped a lot with youths at risk for running away from home and 55 percent felt they helped those suffering from physical or sexual abuse.
- Mentors are relatively less successful in addressing problems with difficult family relationships or eating disorders. Only a quarter felt they had helped a lot with eating disorders (26%), and about one-third thought they had helped with poor relationships with family members (35%).

MENTORING IS A SATISFYING AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE

Mentoring requires a commitment of time and a willingness by mentors to volunteer with youth other than their own child. The large majority of adults who have mentored in recent years find the commitment is worth it. Mentors value their experience as mentors, stating that they are very satisfied with the experience and personally learned something through

mentoring. The majority say they would do it again and would recommend mentoring to a friend.

Mentors say they were motivated by a belief that the young person needed help and out of an interest in working with youth. Their experiences confirmed their expectation of a rewarding experience.

Mentors find mentoring a very satisfying experience. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of mentors say their experience has been very positive and nearly all say the experience was somewhat or very positive (97%). Similarly high percentages of positive and very positive ratings prevailed regardless of the length of time of the relationship, original impetus to mentor, or type of mentoring program.

Most mentors learned or gained something personally from their mentoring experiences. Four of five mentors (83%) say they learned or gained something through the experience of being a mentor, including feeling that they were a better person, increased patience, friendship, a feeling of effectiveness, new skills (such as listening and working with people). Mentors were asked what they liked best about being a mentor. Virtually all could name a positive aspect of the experience.

Less than half (46%) of mentors could mention something they disliked about mentoring. When probed about problems that arose in the relationship, nearly half said the time commitment (43%) and peer pressure on the youth were somewhat of a problem. However, only a minority thought either were big problems: time (12%) and peer pressure (17%).

Mentors would mentor again and recommend mentoring to a friend. A majority of mentors say they are very likely to mentor again (54%), and more than four of five would be somewhat or very likely to mentor again (84%). Nearly all mentors (91%) state that they are likely to recommend mentoring to a friend: the majority are very likely (59%).

Adults are motivated to mentor because they believe the young person needs help and they can make a difference. When asked what was the most important reason in their decision to mentor, 43 percent of mentors stated that the young person needed help and over a quarter of mentors (27%) stated they wanted to do good for others.

HOW PREVALENT IS MENTORING AND WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO MENTOR?

The survey finds that mentoring is a relatively prevalent community volunteer activity for adults who wish to help children or young people. Based on reports of an array of possible adult volunteer activities with youth, mentoring occurs at rates comparable to other popular

community activities such as sports teams. Adults who have mentored are more likely than adults who had never mentored to also participate in other volunteer activities with children and young people.

Many adults have volunteered to be a mentor to children and young people. Nearly one of three adults (31%) age 18 or older has been a mentor to a child or young person at some point in his or her life. One of seven (14%) adults is currently mentoring a child of any age.

Mentoring rates are near those of other community volunteer activities with young people. About one of three adults reports he or she is a mentor. This rate is near the proportion of adults who have ever participated in organized sports such as Little League (37%) and community programs such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts (38%). Only volunteer rates for Sunday school or other religious activities (47%) were dramatically higher than mentoring rates.

Adults who have mentored tend to be involved in other community volunteer activities with children and young people. Adults who have mentored were typically involved in other volunteer activities as well. Half had participated in organized sports teams (50%) or Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts (48%), and 61 percent had volunteered for Sunday school or religious activities. Overall, adults who have mentored were 50 percent or more likely to participate in community volunteer activities than were those who have never mentored.

Mentors are more likely than adults who have never mentored to be college-educated, have higher annual family income, and to have had a mentor when they were growing up. One of three mentors (32%) is college-educated and four of ten (44%) have incomes above \$35,000. In contrast, among adults who have never mentored, only 20 percent are college-educated and one of three (31%) has an income above \$35,000. Having a mentor as a youth also appeared to foster a willingness to mentor in the future. More than two-thirds (69%) of adults who have mentored had an adult other than their parent that provided them with ongoing guidance and support. In contrast, only 42 percent of those who have never mentored had a mentor when young.

SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS: FACTORS THAT IMPROVE SUCCESS

Overall, mentors report a positive impact on problems faced by the youths they have mentored. Mentors, in general, report high rates of success in preventing problems as well as helping youths deal with existing problems. In analyzing relatively more successful relationships, several factors led to higher success rates. Relationships that last at least two years led to greater overall success in solving or averting problems. Success rates also

improved when the mentor and young person engaged in a wide range of activities, including guidance and support. Young people in extremely difficult circumstances also benefit from having a mentor 50 years of age or older, more frequent telephone contact with the mentor, and having the mentor provide networking opportunities. In general, however, success was more difficult with young people with multiple problems.

Mentoring relationships that last at least two years are more likely to have a positive influence on the life of the youth. Compared with shorter-term relationships, mentors in relationships that last at least two years are able to help solve or avert problems in all five of the most frequent youth problem areas: negative feelings about themselves (55% vs. 45%), poor relationships with family members (34% vs. 20%), hanging out with the wrong crowd (42% vs. 27%), poor grades (42% vs. 34%), and getting into trouble out of school (41% vs. 31%). Mentors in longer-term relationships are also significantly more likely to say they helped a lot or to prevent problems with smoking, drinking, and drug use (38% vs. 27%). Very-long-term relationships, those lasting at least five years, do not seem to be any more effective in dealing with behavioral problems than relationships lasting two, three, or four years.

Mentoring relationships are more successful when the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and offers guidance to the young person. Mentors report engaging in a variety of activities with youth and offering different forms of guidance. The survey investigated 15 different activities.² Leading activities reported by the majority of mentors include: teaching social skills (83%), standing up for the youth when in trouble (75%), providing social or cultural experiences (71%), exposing the youth to the mentor's own work (68%), career introductions (62%), and teaching job-related skills (54%). Nearly half (49%) say they spend "a lot" of time talking with the young person about personal problems or issues.

For all types of young people in mentoring, success is more likely when the mentor engages in a wide range of activities and guidance for the young person. A third of mentors who engage in at least 12 out of 15 possible activities with the young person believe they are able to have an impact on each of his or her actual or threatened problems. In contrast, only 20 percent of mentors who engage in relatively few activities (eight or fewer of the 15 investigated) believe they have the same degree of success.

Mentoring relationships for young people in very difficult life circumstances benefit when mentors are older, have frequent telephone contact with the mentee, and provide networking contacts. Young people living in very difficult circumstances or with

² These activities included: working on academics, talking about college opportunities, going to a cultural or sports event, doing a physical activity together, talking about the youth's personal issues, eating together, just hanging out, participating in job internship, providing cultural or social opportunities, teaching social skills or manners, teaching work skills, networking, exposing to own work, standing up for youth when in trouble and helping get a job.

severe behavioral problems were generally at greater risk for multiple problems.³ In addition to longer mentoring relationships and scope of activities, youth in very difficult circumstances benefit from having a mentor who is 50 years of age or older, who introduces them to other people who can help them, and who spends at least four or more hours per month with them in telephone conversations.

MENTORING: TYPES OF PROGRAMS, SPONSORS, AND IMPORTANT SUPPORTS FOR MENTORS

Given the nationwide interest in expanding mentoring programs, a common image of adults mentoring a child or young person is a relationship developed through participation in a formal, structured mentoring program, typically with a nationally recognized program. The survey finds, however, that most frequently mentoring relationships develop through informal contacts between the adult and youth through neighborhood, church, or family connections. Among more formal mentoring programs, a wide variety of sponsors exists: local school, university, and church groups dominate. Employers also provide a gateway for mentors. Those in formal mentoring programs cite training and ongoing mechanisms for support to be critical factors in making the mentoring relationship successful.

The majority of mentoring relationships develop through informal connections with youth. Among all adults who have mentored a youth within the past five years, 83 percent did so through informal contact with the youth rather than a program sponsored by an organization. Only 17 percent of adults participated through formal, structured programs.

Although initial contact with youth varied, formal and informal relationships are strikingly similar. Whether formed through formal programs or informal contacts, formal and informal mentoring relationships are strikingly similar in terms of mentor reports regarding the positive impact on youth, the types of activities in the mentoring relationship, the types of guidance and support of youth provided, and the amount meeting time with youth. Key differences in the two types of programs are in the amount of support and sources support provided to mentors, and the origin and impetus for the initial contact with the young person.

Formal mentoring programs include a wide range of sponsors. Typically local organizations sponsor mentor programs. Two-thirds of mentors in formal programs say the program was sponsored either by a school, college, or university (33%) or a local church (31%). Government agencies accounted for another 16 percent of sponsors, and private business 10 percent.

³ In the analysis, youths classified in particularly difficult circumstances included: having a parent with serious emotional, legal, or substance abuse problems; living in a family in a desperate financial situation; not living with a biological or adoptive parent; being physically or sexually abused; or being a juvenile offender.

Workplaces appear to be a major route into mentoring. More than one-quarter (27%) of mentors say they were in a program sponsored by their employer.

Formal mentoring programs typically have mechanisms for ongoing support. Mentors value this support. Eight of ten mentors (84%) have ongoing support provided by their programs. Two-thirds of formal mentors (63%) have group sessions where mentors can get together and talk about the mentoring relationship, and nearly all with such sessions available (90%) have attended at least one session.

The vast majority of formal mentors (85%) believe their program provides the right amount of support and only 14 percent would like more help. Two-thirds of mentors who have attended group sessions say the sessions were very useful. About a third of formal mentors in programs that do not provide ongoing support say this support would have been very helpful.

Mentors believe formal training or an orientation period helps. Nearly three of four formal mentoring programs (72%) provide mentors with training or an orientation. Of those with training, eight of ten mentors think they had received the right amount. Eight of ten mentors without training believe training would have been helpful (44% very helpful and 40% somewhat helpful).

On average, mentors receive about 16 hours of training. Over half of the programs cover the following topics: program rules, communication skills, how to build a relationship of trust with a young person, listening skills, adolescent development, and recognizing child abuse and neglect. Formal mentors who receive training as compared with those who did not receive formal training are much more likely to talk frequently with the young person about his or her personal problems (52% vs. 32%). However, the amount and content of training does not appear to have a significant impact on the likely success of the mentoring relationship.

A majority of mentoring programs succeed in matching mentors and young people. Eight of ten mentors report that the staff do an excellent (32%) or good job (47%) in matching them with a student who could benefit from a person with their interests, experiences, and personality. However, 11 percent say that no matching occurred.

Formal and informal mentors both report that being understanding and a good listener as well as having commitment are key ingredients to being a successful mentor. When asked the most important characteristic of a mentor, one of five mentors replies that being understanding and patient (22%) and a good listener (22%) are important. Mentors, whether formal or informal, also show a commitment to the relationship: nearly eight of ten (77%) never or hardly ever cancel a scheduled meeting with their mentee. Similarly, the

young people are committed to the relationship: nearly three-quarters (73%) never or hardly ever cancel their meeting with their mentor.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

At a time when this nation is searching for ways to reach out to youth, the survey findings indicate that mentoring makes a difference for youth at risk. Moreover, mentors value their experiences mentoring young people. These findings based on mentor reports confirm and support studies of mentoring programs that find mentoring makes a positive difference for youths at risk.⁴

The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People indicates that youths in mentoring relationships are indeed at risk. Eight of ten young people have one or more problems that could adversely affect their healthy development and school success. Confronted with these problems, mentors report a high rate of success in helping young people overcome problems of the youth's negative feelings about themselves, poor grades, substance abuse, getting into trouble in and out of school, and physical or sexual abuse.

Efforts are under way in cities across the nation to expand the numbers of adults willing to volunteer as mentors. The survey findings suggest strategies for recruiting future generations of mentors. The high rate of adults who mentor and also volunteer in other community activities indicate that recruitment efforts could reach out to adults who volunteer in community activities such as Sunday schools, organized sports such as Little League, scouting groups, and academic tutoring programs.

Increasing the rate of employer-sponsored mentoring programs also offers a recruitment strategy. Employers appear to be a major route into formal mentoring programs for their employees. Including local employers in this effort is important since most mentoring occurs at the community level.

In addition, the information about the mentors themselves provides a valuable indicator of how best to locate additional adults in mentoring. Mentors are more likely to be college-educated, to have higher annual incomes, and to have had a mentor when a child.

Current and former mentors are a recruitment resource. Mentors state they would be likely to mentor again and to recommend mentoring to a friend. Given the high rate of satisfaction with mentoring, mentors are also important ambassadors for mentoring.

Promotional efforts could emphasize the fact that adult mentors can make a difference in the lives of young people. The expectation of being able to help is likely to appeal to future mentors based on survey findings about mentor motivation. Adults who

⁴ For example, see Joseph P. Tierney, Jean Baldwin Grossman, and Nancy L. Resch, *Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers/Big Sisters*, Public/Private Ventures, November 1995.

mentor say they were motivated to do so because they believed they could make a difference and help the young person.

For policymakers and program administrators, the survey points to factors that are likely to foster more successful mentoring relationships. These include engaging youths in a wide range of activities and offering them guidance, and maintaining relationships for at least two years. Additionally, formal training and mechanisms for ongoing support for mentors are valued components of mentoring programs.

Collectively, the voices of the mentors in this survey provide valuable information to pivotal sectors of society—policymakers, mentoring program sponsors, volunteer organizations, employers, and the public—about the value of mentoring. Expanding mentoring and building on features that make it more successful will require the concerted effort of all adults interested in helping young people become productive adults.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates, *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People* consisted of telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,504 adults who have mentored at least one person ages 10 to 18 during the past five years. The margin of error for the sample of qualified mentors is plus or minus four points.

Interviews were conducted in either English or Spanish, according to the respondent's preference. Two types of mentors were included in the sample. Formal mentors are adults serving as mentors by virtue of their participation in a structured mentoring program, either a national program such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters, or a local program such as those sponsored by a church or employer. Informal mentors are adults who connected with youths through communities or family and are not sponsored by an organization. Informal relationships can include relationships among extended family members, for example an aunt mentoring her niece.

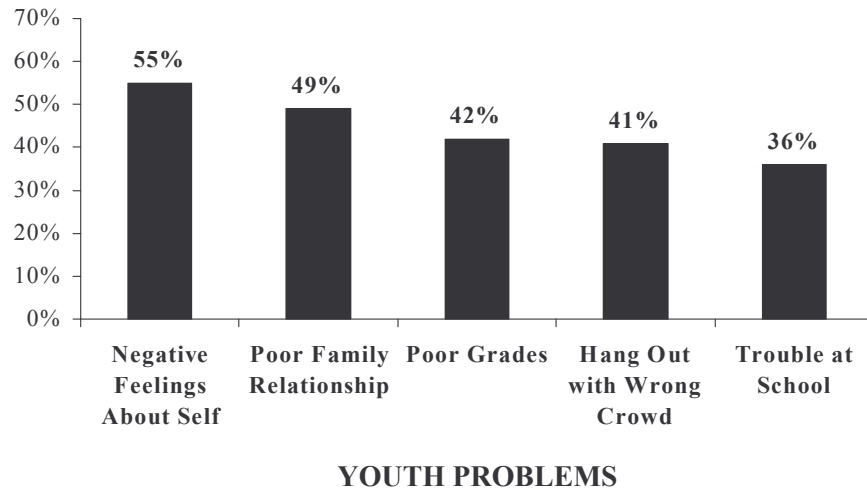
Mentors were located by screening a random sample of adults age 18 and older in telephone households and asking a series of qualifying questions. The random telephone numbers were selected disproportionately to increase the probability of selecting those likely to mentor based on previous research. Weights were used in analysis to remove the disproportionality of the sample design. After weighting, the sample is unbiased and representative of all mentors living in telephone households in the contiguous 48 states.

In the analysis of mentors' beliefs about their ability to help or prevent problems, statistical tests were used that took into account the complex survey design. Unless otherwise noted, results reported in the text were statistically significant at the 95 percent level or greater.

To analyze the impact of different factors contributing to greater success, a composite measure of the 12 problems and mentors' beliefs about their effectiveness was created. This composite ranged from 0 percent to 100 percent, where 0 percent indicated that the mentor neither helped nor prevented any problem for the youth, and 100 percent indicated that the mentor believed he or she helped "a lot" or prevented all problems confronting the youth. In the analysis of youths, the variety of activities with youths and youths in extremely difficult circumstances, regressions were run to control for characteristics of the youth, to examine the impact of the age of the mentor, phone contact, and other characteristics of the mentoring relationship. Results that were significant at the 98 percent level or greater are reported in the text.

APPENDIX A: CHARTS

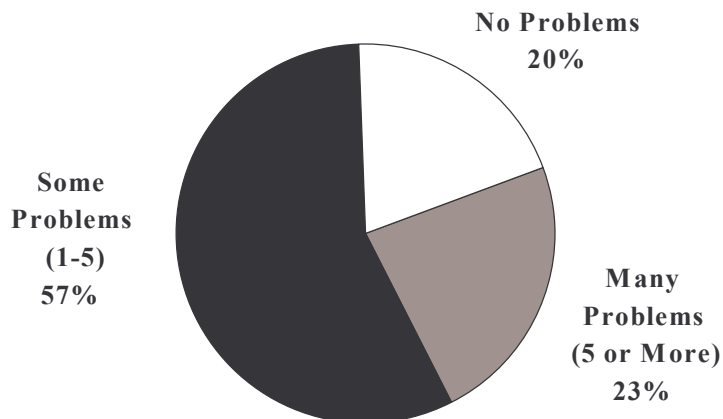
Problems Faced by Youth: Young People in Mentoring Are at Risk



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

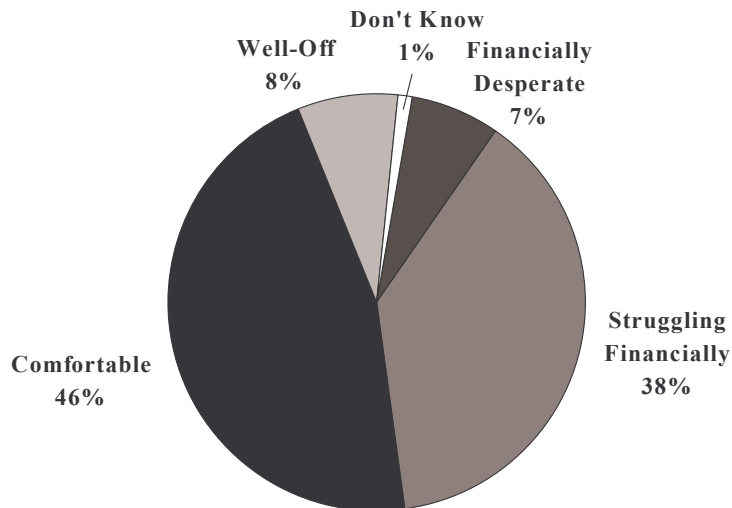
Most Young People in Mentoring Relationships Are at Risk for One or More Problems



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

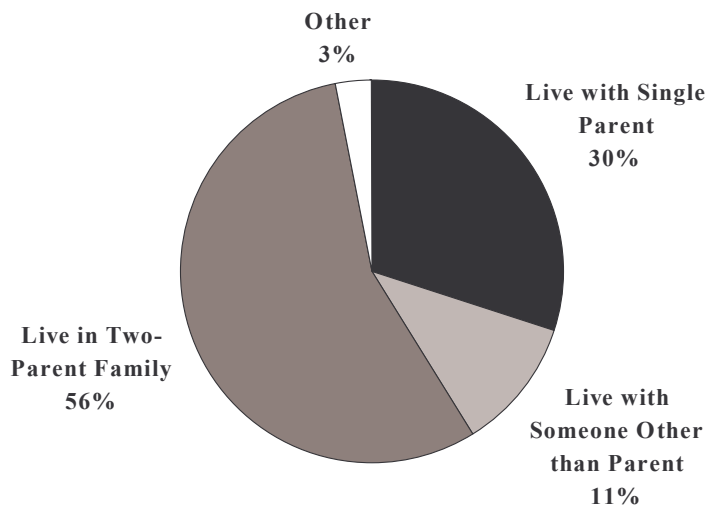
Youth in Mentoring: Family Income Nearly Half Live in Low-Income Families



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Youth in Mentoring: Family Structure Barely Half Live in Two-Parent Families

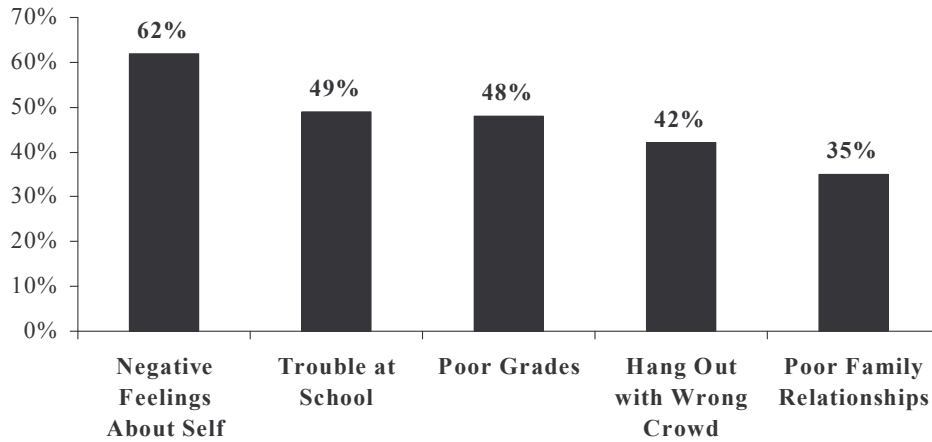


Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Mentoring Impact on Youth Problems Mentors Believe They Made a Difference

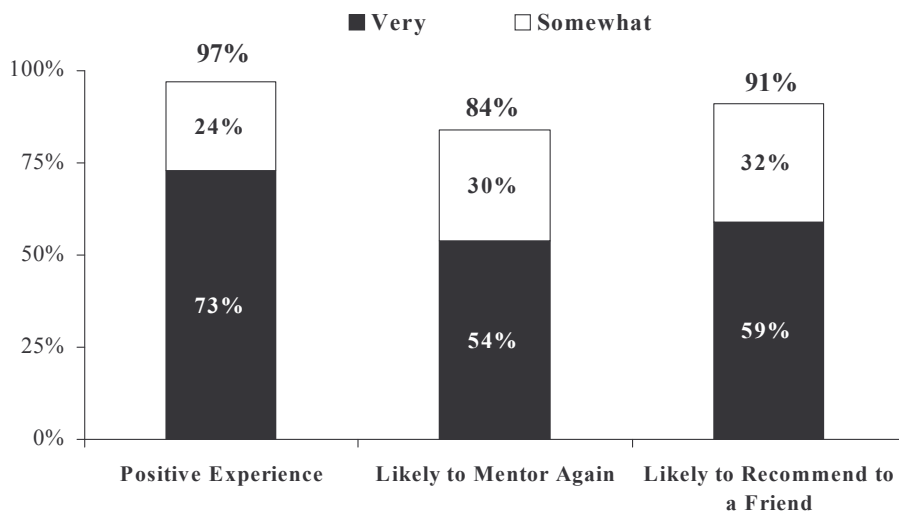
Percent of mentors who believe they "helped a lot" with the youth problem



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

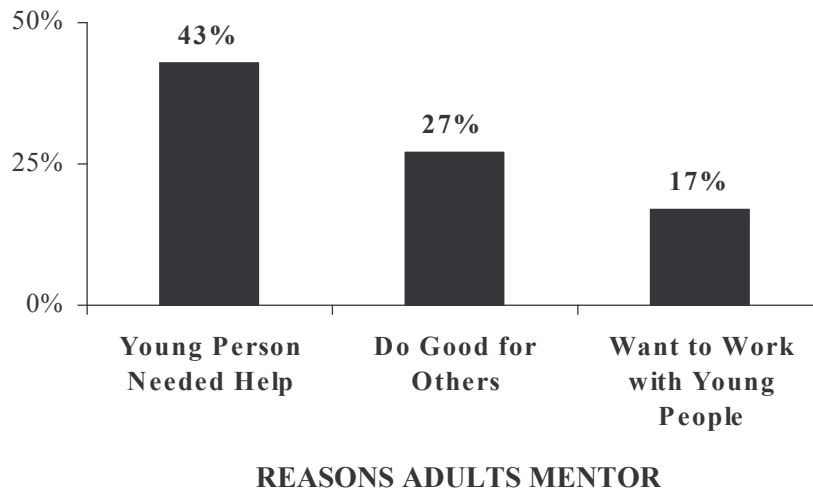
Mentors View Mentoring as a Positive Experience



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

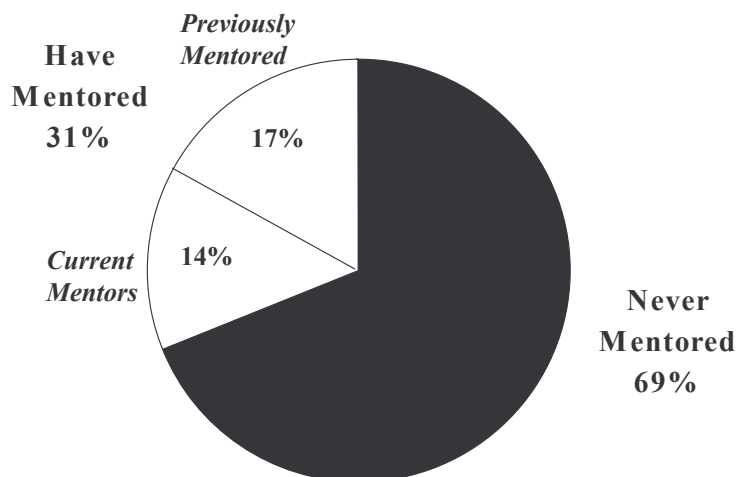
Adults Are Motivated to Mentor Because They Believe the Young Person Needs Help



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Prevalence of Mentoring in the Population Nearly One of Three Adults Has Mentored

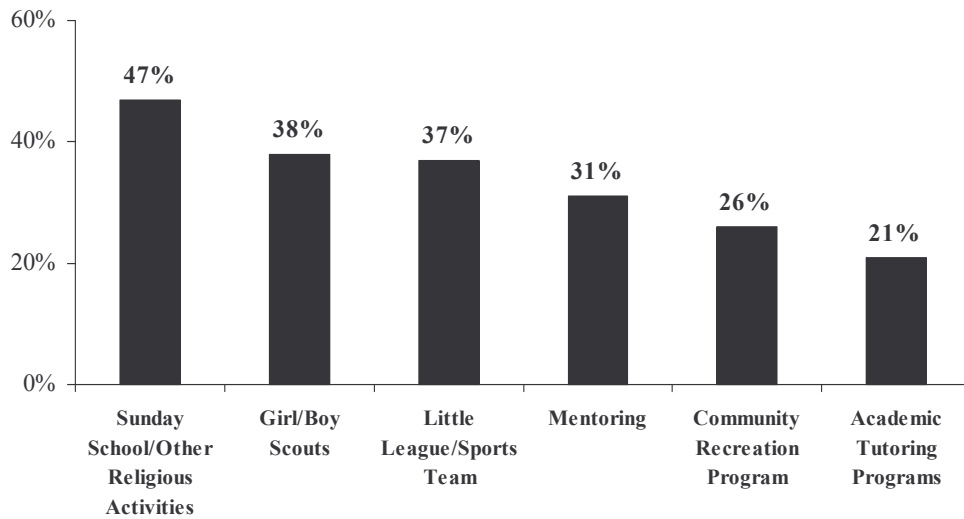


Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Adult Volunteer Activities with Youth: Mentoring Is a Prevalent Activity

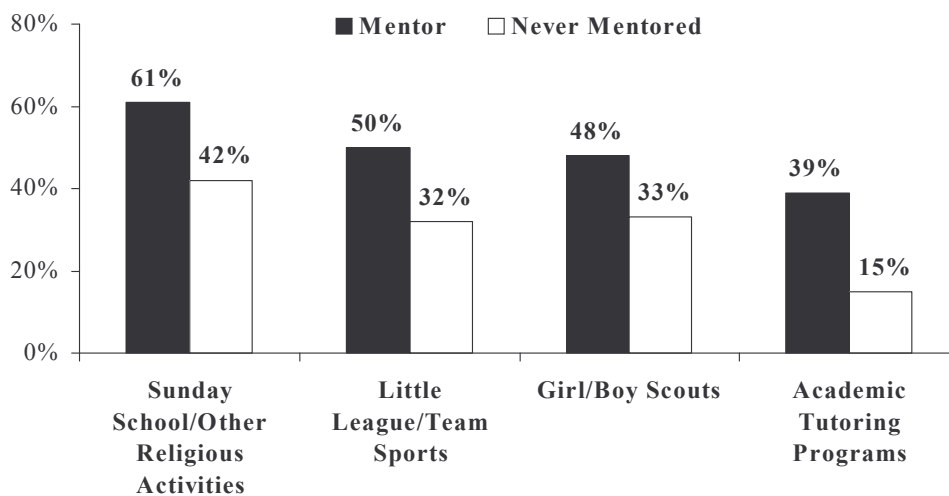
Percent of adults who have ever participated in activity



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

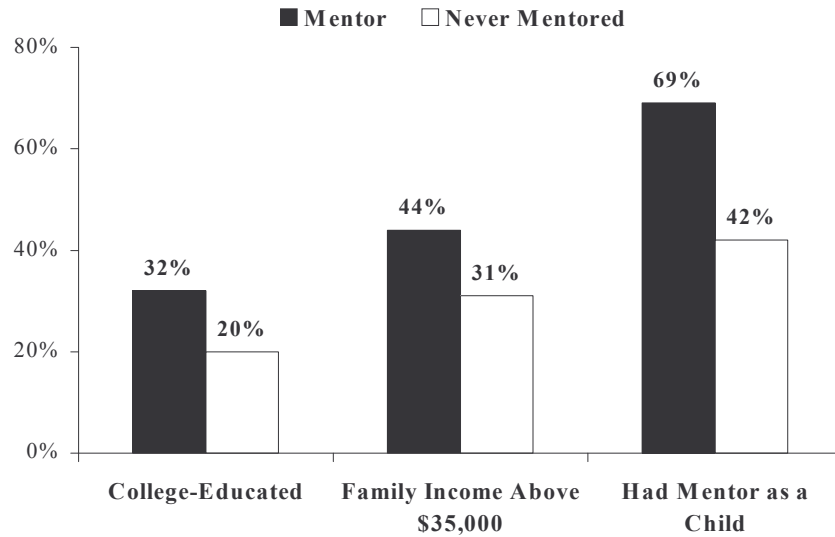
Adults Who Mentor Are Likely to Be Involved in Volunteer Activities with Children



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

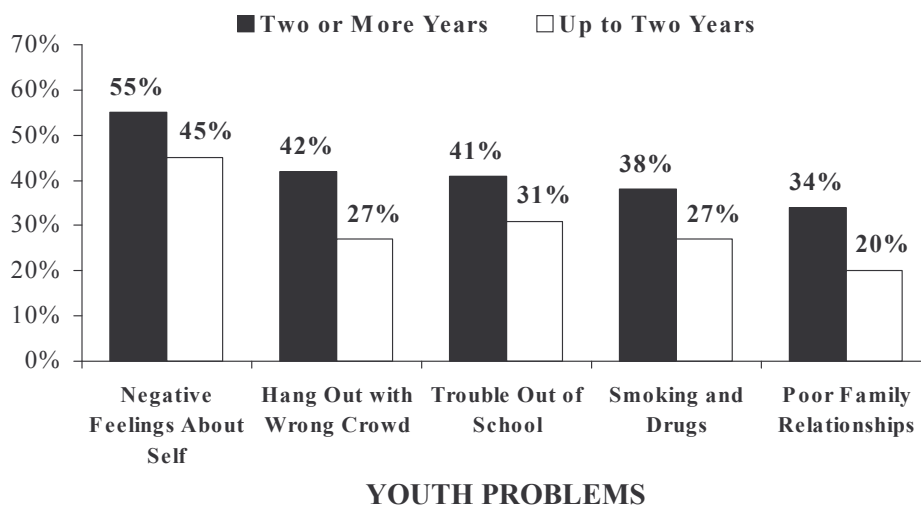
Who Is Likely to Mentor?



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

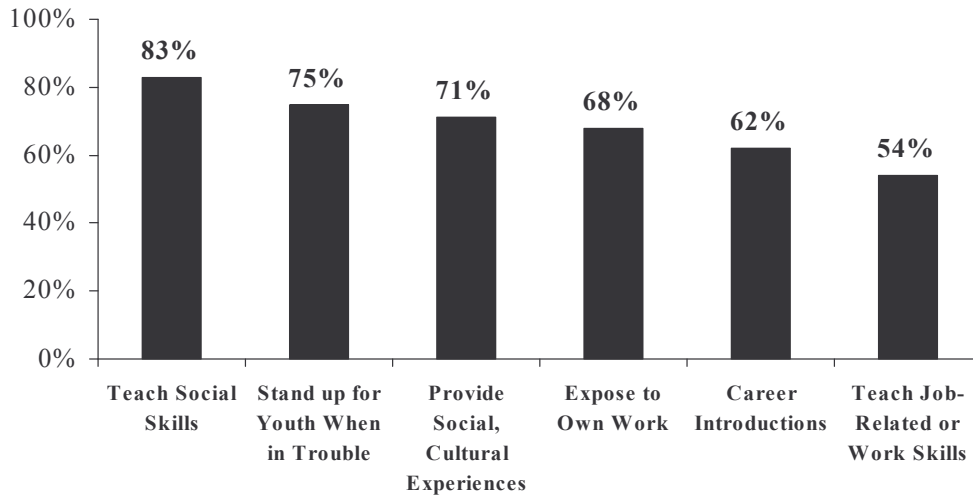
Longer Relationships Are More Likely to Help with or Prevent Problems



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

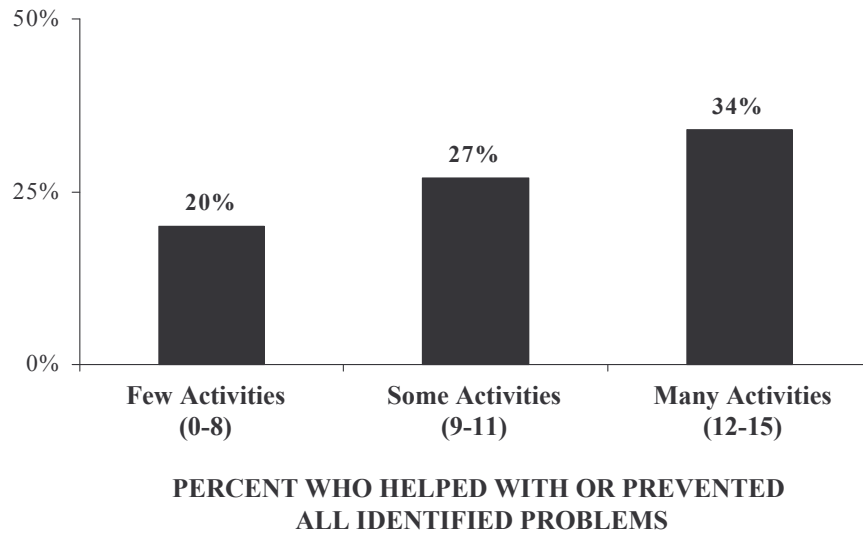
Mentors Participate in a Variety of Activities with Youths They Mentor



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

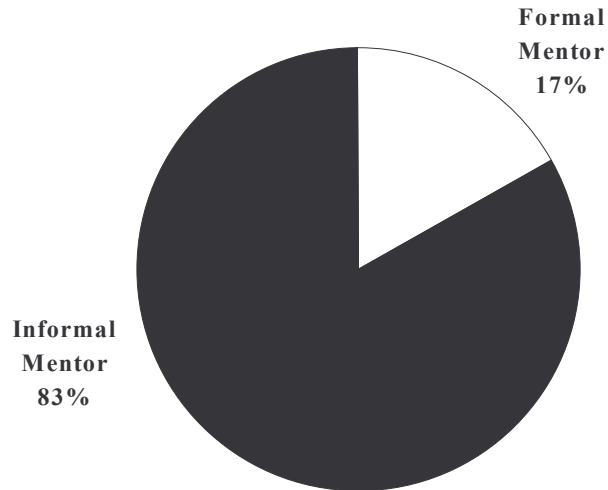
Mentoring Relationships Work Best with a Wide Variety of Activities



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

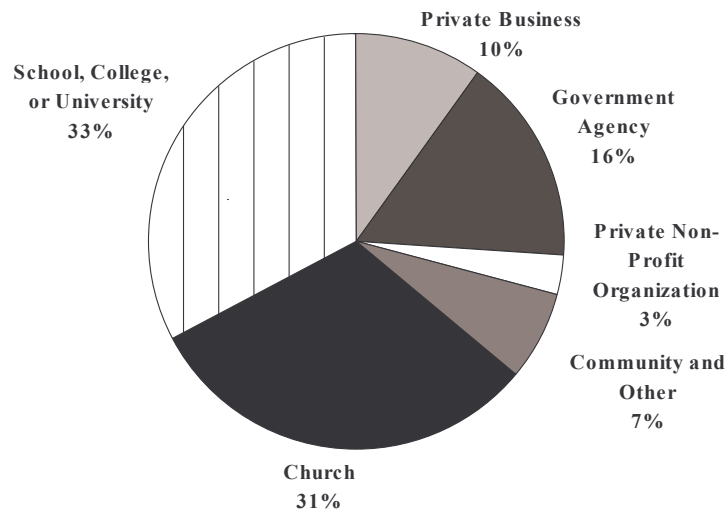
Informal Mentoring Relationships Are Most Prevalent



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

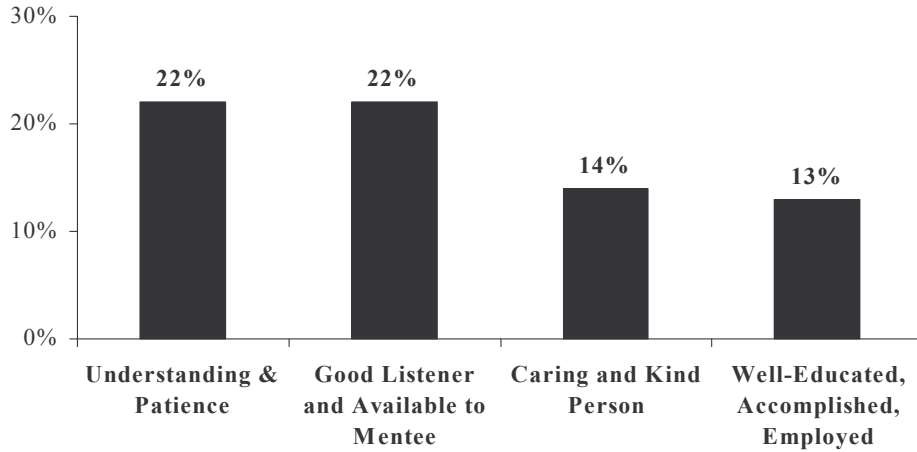
Sponsors of Formal Mentoring Programs



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

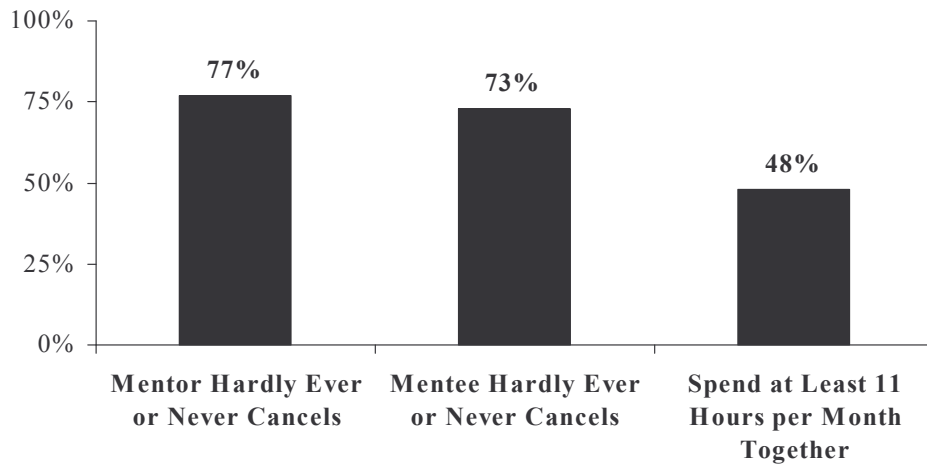
Mentors' Views of Skills and Personality Traits of a Good Mentor



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

Both Mentors and Mentees Are Committed to the Relationship



Source: *The Commonwealth Fund 1998 Survey of Adults Mentoring Young People*
Princeton Survey Research Associates, 1998

THE COMMONWEALTH FUND

APPENDIX B: TABLES

Table 1: Incidence of Problems for Youths in Mentoring and the Impact of Mentoring

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Youth Has Problem*</u>	<u>Mentor Helped</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>"A Lot"***</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Negative feelings about himself/herself	55	62
Poor relationships with his/her family members	49	35
Poor grades	42	48
Hanging out with the wrong crowd	41	42
Getting into trouble at school	36	49
Getting into trouble outside of school	29	47
Skipping School	24	52
Smoking, drinking, or drug use	22	45
Sexual activity	14	25
Running away from home	14	62
Physical or sexual abuse	10	55
An eating disorder	9	26

* Based on mentor reports.

** Based on youth who mentor believes has/had the problem.

Table 2: Incidence of Mentors Compared to Adults Who Have Never Mentored

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Have Mentored</u> %	<u>Never Mentored</u> %
<u>Other volunteer activities</u>			
Little league or other organized sports team	37	50	32*
Community recreation program	26	44	20*
Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts or some similar program	38	48	33*
Academic tutoring or literacy program	21	39	15*
Sunday school or other religious activities	47	61	42*
Some other program for young people	24	42	18*
<u>Respondent's sex</u>			
Female	55	54	54
Male	45	46	46
<u>Respondent's age</u>			
18-24 years of age	12	14	12
25-34	21	23	21
35-44	22	25	21
45-54	16	20	14*
55-64	11	9	10
65 and older	16	6	17*
<u>Background</u>			
Hispanic or Latino	8	8	8
White not Hispanic	76	76	76
Black not Hispanic	10	12	9
Other race	2	2	3
<u>Highest grade completed</u>			
Less than high school	16	10	17*
High school	32	27	34*
Some college or technical school	27	30	26
College or more	23	32	20*
<u>Income category</u>			
Less than \$10,000	10	8	11
\$10,000 to <\$15,000	7	6	7
\$15,000 to <\$25,000	13	13	13
\$25,000 to <\$35,000	13	15	13
\$35,000 to <\$50,000	14	16	13
\$50,000 or more	20	28	18*

* Difference between those who have and have not mentored are statistically significant at 95% level or greater.

Table 3: Mentors' Perceived Overall Impact by Length of Relationship*(% who helped or prevented problem)*

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Up to Two Years</u> %	<u>Two or More Years</u> %
Low self-esteem	45	55*
Poor grades	34	42*
Hanging w/wrong crowd	27	42*
Trouble out of school	31	41*
Trouble at school	36	38
Smoking, drinking, drug use	27	38*
Difficult relationships in family	20	34*
Skipping school	27	30
Running away from home	20	28*
Sexual activity	19	24
Victim of abuse	14	17
Eating disorder	8	11

* Difference by length of time of relationship is significant at 95% level or greater.

Table 4: Mentoring Activities with Youths by Type of Mentoring Relationship

	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Formal</u> %	<u>Informal</u> %
% of Mentors Who Spent "A Lot" or "Some" Time in Activities			
<u>Skills and Social</u>			
Working on academics or homework	64	68	63
Talking about or investigating college or career opportunities	62	57	63
Going to a library, museum, concert, play, movies, or sporting events	61	56	61
Participating in a sport together or going for a walk or hike	65	61	65
Talking about his/her personal issues or problems	89	87	90
Eating meals together	79	69	81*
Just hanging out	81	72	83*
Participating in a job internship or shadowing program	22	24	21
% Who Engaged in Activity			
<u>Guidance and Networking</u>			
Provide cultural, social, or entertainment opportunities that wouldn't normally be available to him/her	71	66	72
Teach social skills or manners	83	80	84
Teach job-related or work skills	54	53	54
Introduce him/her to other people who could help him/her reach his/her academic or career goals	62	64	62
Expose him/her to your own work	68	66	68
Stand up for him/her when he/she gets/got in trouble	75	59	78*
Help him/her get a job or serve as a job reference	34	27	36*
Lower activity level: 0-8	31	40	29*
Mid-range activities: 9-11	42	37	43
Wide-range activities: 12-15	27	24	27

* Difference between formal and informal mentors are statistically significant at 95% level or greater.