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## **Executive Summary**

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### ***Purpose of the Report***

This research was commissioned to explore national and international approaches to mentoring, particularly in school settings, and produce a document for consideration by Australian schools that could inform policy and implementation of mentoring in schools.

The specific objectives were to identify:

- models of good practice of mentoring in school settings;
- issues associated with the implementation of mentoring programs in school settings; and
- key recommendations for consideration by Australian schools and education systems.

### ***The Scope of the Project***

The focus of the research is mentoring in schools by members of the broader community, and in particular older persons. Therefore for the purpose of this project, the mentoring programs under consideration are those that are school based or conducted under the auspices of the school. This project is also conducted in the International Year of Older Persons and rather than define 'older persons' in terms of a specific age group, older persons are considered more broadly. Thus mentors may include any members of the community able to commit time to spend with a school student or students, and range from tertiary students to retirees.

### ***Methodology***

The research uses a predominantly qualitative methodology, including a review of relevant literature from Australia and overseas, in depth case studies of selected Australian programs, and an analysis of the available information to develop a set of principles to inform successful implementation of mentoring in Australian schools.

The case studies were selected to illustrate a range of features which mentoring programs might display and to provide national coverage. Programs were located in metropolitan, rural, regional and remote sites of NSW, WA, SA and ACT. Information was gathered through program materials and documents, selected site visits, as well as face-to-face, telephone and email interviews with a range of participants.

### ***What is Mentoring?***

The literature and case studies reveal a wide range of definitions and interpretations of the term mentoring. However, all have a common theme of an older, more experienced person guiding and helping a younger person in his or her development. The crucial component of mentoring is the trusting relationship that develops between the mentor and the mentee.

## ***Why Mentoring?***

Support for mentoring programs comes from a number of sources. In the original concept of mentoring a privileged, talented young person was assisted to optimise his development as a future leader. This is the basis for mentoring programs within organisations such as business or higher education, and is mirrored in school programs for gifted and talented children. A second major source concerns the impact of societal changes, which have reduced the traditional social supports for some young people. Mentoring can provide at least one caring and supportive relationship. Finally, mentoring can provide a fulfilling role for older persons in an increasingly ageing society. Mentoring has the potential to benefit all participants.

## ***Outcomes***

Although many mentoring programs are initially designed to improve specific academic outcomes, mentoring can have a range of benefits for the mentee. School-based outcomes include increased achievement in specific school subjects, as well increased retention and participation. Other reported school-based outcomes relate to personal and social development, such as reduced feelings of sadness and loneliness, and improved relationships with peers. A strong theme from the literature and case studies is that the mentoring experience leads to increased feelings of self-worth and self-confidence. This results in students being more willing to attempt school tasks. These positive outcomes are also evident in other contexts. For example, improved family relationships have been reported as well as better decision-making skills regarding current and future life choices.

From the literature and the case studies it is evident that mentoring also results in perceived benefits for the mentors, the families, the schools and the community. Mentors report feelings of fulfilment through passing on their skills and knowledge to a younger generation. Feedback from parents indicates their pleasure and pride in the extent of their children's achievements. For schools, mentoring promotes positive school-community links. Through the range of relationships that develop, all participants gain a greater understanding and appreciation of each other and their contributions to society.

## ***The Case Studies***

The literature describes a range of ways that mentoring programs might be structured both in and out of school settings. Mentoring programs in schools, however, generally involve one mentor working regularly with one student or with a small group of students over a school term or a school year. Some large programs operate on multiple sites. The focus of programs varies depending on the characteristics of targeted students. Mentors are similarly diverse. Programs may be organised at the individual school level or through links with the wider school system, business, higher education or community organisations. The selected case studies illustrate some of the ways these variables have been combined to develop successful mentoring programs in schools.

## ***Key Features of Successful Mentoring Programs***

The case studies illustrate the diversity of possible structures which mentoring programs might display in terms of organisation, focus and participants. Because of this diversity, it is difficult

to be prescriptive about the key features that lead to success. The literature, however, indicates there are some factors common to successful mentoring programs. These may be grouped into the four phases of developing a mentoring program. They could be used as a check list of factors that need to be addressed.

## Phase 1: Establishing a Program

### *Purpose / Goals*

- well-defined, written purpose statement
- agreed outcomes set with involvement of stakeholders

### *Planning the Program*

- written administrative and program procedures - a long-range plan that has community input
- inclusiveness of racial, economic and gender representation as appropriate to the program
- risk management, confidentiality policies and generally accepted accounting practices
- paid or volunteer staff with appropriate skills and written job descriptions

### *Coordinator or Team*

- good field staff who liaise between mentors, students, schools and families

### *Resources*

- adequate financial and in-kind resources - time, human and material resources acquired
- staffing based on organisation's goals, needs of mentors and participants, availability of community resources, and staff and other volunteers' skill level.
- collaboration with diverse groups such as professional organisations and universities

## Phase 2: Selecting and Training Program Participants

### *Recruitment of Mentors*

- written eligibility requirements for program participants
- appropriate screening, matching and training
- good match between program goals and mentor expectations

### *Screening and Selection of Mentors*

- careful selection of potential mentors plus ongoing supervision

### *Preparing and Training Mentors*

- train mentors and mentees eg active listening skills, learning styles, issues in various phases
- preparation of mentors for the mentoring role with ongoing assistance and training

### *Selecting Mentees*

- appropriate to program goals and resources

- personal and parental consent

#### *Preparing Mentees*

- young people prepared before program regarding expectations and behaviour

#### *Matching Mentors and Mentees*

- sensitive pairing, preferably allowing choice

### Phase 3: Implementing a Program

#### *Practicalities*

- regular, consistent contact between the mentor and mentee
- appropriate location to meet

#### *Activities for Mentors and Mentees*

- specific tasks set up: diversity in activities while still allowing for individual choice
- opportunities for program-supported social activities for mentors and mentee

#### *Ongoing Support for the Program Participants*

- support system provided for mentors - adequate communication and training
- confidentiality in relationship
- support for mentoring process from school or system eg reward system for mentors and mentees

#### *Parent Involvement*

- family or guardian of the participant support program

#### *Conclusion of the Program*

- appropriate conclusion and recognition

### Phase 4: Evaluating a Program

#### *Why Evaluate?*

- program evaluation and ongoing assessment conducted

#### *Who Should do the Evaluation?*

- all participants involved - preferably independent evaluator

#### *Both Process and Outcome Data*

- data collected throughout program
- relates to program goals

#### *Using the Evaluation Data*

- used to provide feedback and assess impact

## ***Issues of Implementation and Principles***

Many of the issues raised are inter-related and quite complex. The importance of each may differ somewhat from program to program, and what is a constraint in one setting may not be in another. The issues are discussed under the four main areas of Organisation, The People Involved, Research and Evaluation, and Mentoring Support Networks.

### **Organisation**

#### *Models of Mentoring*

There is a diverse range of models of mentoring already operating successfully in Australian schools. The case studies describe a range of ways mentoring programs have been developed in Australian schools in terms of the different organisational structures, the focus of the mentoring activity, the students group targeted and the characteristics of the mentors. The programs described in this report are sufficiently diverse and flexible that they could be adapted to suit the mentoring needs of most educational systems, groups of schools or individual schools.

#### *Scope*

Mentoring has positive outcomes for a range of students, but mentoring is not a panacea for all. The more 'at-risk' students may need other supports, and mentors of at-risk students may need specific and on-going training and support.

#### *Guidelines*

Mentoring is largely a grassroots movement in this country, with some support from educational systems, government and community groups. Due to the scarcity of official guidelines, those involved in mentoring have developed their own frameworks, often using available information from overseas. Many have developed creative solutions to obstacles as they arise. Areas where guidelines are urgently needed are in the area risk management and the management of volunteers. These include procedures for screening and supervision in schools, as well as the development of job descriptions and contracts. The first involves the development of policies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students while engaged in school-community activities such as mentoring programs. State educational systems are currently discussing issues surrounding volunteers in schools, but all agree it is a complex issue with no easy solutions. In most cases, memos have reminded principals of their ultimate responsibility for the duty of care for students in their school and recommended methods for the screening of volunteers (such as police checks, personal interviews, statutory declarations and contacting referees). Also, participants are not always fully aware of what is expected of them or aspects such as insurance coverage for individuals and organisations. As these vary widely even within the one mentoring program, they need to be negotiated and detailed in job descriptions, which are signed by all parties involved.

Although some mentoring programs have evolved almost by serendipity, schools considering embarking on the development of a mentoring program need to clearly articulate their goals

and expectations, before putting together their mentoring plan. The case studies presented in this report should inform this process. Access to others who have been involved in programs is also advantageous.

### *Size*

Most of the mentoring programs examined involve small numbers of mentor-mentee relationships. Although no one really wanted to give numbers that can be supported within a school, a few guidelines can be inferred. Programs are not self-supporting in that they can't be started and left to run by themselves. The literature from the USA suggests mentoring is a mass movement, but when it comes down to individual schools implementing and maintaining a program, it is more appropriate to think in 'boutique' proportions. When the school initiates and organises the program, the coordinator (and/or others involved) is responsible for a huge range of aspects including promoting the program within the school and elsewhere, recruiting and screening mentors, selecting students, matching mentors and students, initial training, maintaining relationships or ending them, ongoing training and support, evaluation, providing appropriate materials, preparing applications for funding or justifying budgets. A large school employing the equivalent of one person to run a program with no other responsibilities in the school may be able to maintain 50 one-to-one mentor relationships. Some schools with half time coordinators can sustain around 20 or so. Where the coordinator has other roles and responsibilities the number drops to less than 10. Where the mentors come from a larger organisation, or are organised through another group, this may free the coordinator from some of the wider promotion, recruiting and training responsibilities, but not those that are school specific. The program must still be promoted within the school; the coordinator must deal with school requirements for screening and provide training specific to the students in the school. Also, it adds another level of contacts to maintain.

### *Resourcing*

The largest constraint on the further development of mentoring programs in Australia is the availability of funding, both to initiate mentoring programs and to provide ongoing support over many years. Applying for funding is also a time-consuming task. Coordinators need to know about potential funding opportunities, and have the time to develop a proposal. Budgets need to take account of funding needs at the various levels of the organisational structures, ie at the whole program and school levels. At the school level there are a wide range of items: the coordinator's time, materials for mentoring, evaluation, screening and insurance costs, training, morning teas or other contact meetings, and memberships to associations (if relevant). The location where mentors and students meet is also an issue, as many schools do not have spare space set aside for this purpose. Many meet in the school library, an office, outside in the school grounds or an empty classroom if one is available. If computers or email facilities are an essential component of the mentoring, these need to be adequately resourced.

If mentoring is to become a viable part of Australian schools it needs to be resourced on top of existing funding. At present, mentoring runs on good will. It thrives now in places where those involved are enthusiastic and dedicated and spend far in excess of their time and energy than their positions require. Some of the large programs or coordinators have received recognition through awards, but this has not assisted greatly with generating ongoing funding.

### *Naming and Promotion*

The mentoring program needs to be recognised and celebrated in the school. Some schools feel that if funding is tied to disadvantaged groups, drawing attention to the program within the school or the community will further disadvantage the students and their families. This is a critical issue, as the programs need to remain true to their funding but also gain support from within the school and the wider community. Some schools and organisations have worked out ways to promote their mentoring programs in positive ways, by focusing on the mentors, the building of partnerships between school and community, or the expected outcomes.

### *The People Involved*

The most powerful impression made on the researchers in conducting the case studies for this project was the commitment, dedication, enthusiasm and generosity of those involved in mentoring. This was the link that was common to all the programs, and the coordinators, mentors and students involved. In the case of the coordinators, there was a 'passion' evident. The coordinators and mentors all seemed to genuinely like other people and enjoyed spending time with others.

### *Coordinators and Teachers*

The coordinator of the program needs to be enthusiastic, organised and have good people skills. All programs need a coordinator in the school, but the person filling this role may vary with the focus of the mentoring program and the size of the school. If the focus is general literacy, numeracy or support, the coordinator is often a person with a support role in the school. In small schools or primary schools, the coordinator may be a regular teacher, deputy principal or principal. If the focus is on a specific learning area, the teacher of that subject area is more likely to be the coordinator. Thus, the involvement of a student's teachers may vary with different mentoring programs. In some programs, due to time constraints or the focus of the program, teachers do not appear to play a significant role in determining the mentoring activities. However, communication between teachers and mentors can provide each with feedback regarding progress, opportunities to discuss concerns and assist future planning. Mentors, in particular, indicate that they appreciate direct feedback from teachers. As much as possible a student's teachers need to be included in planning and involved in evaluating the outcomes of mentoring.

### *Students*

The main student groups targeted include students who are underachieving and those who would benefit from specific expertise in a particular academic area, extra social support, or talking through career or life options. The ages ranged from kindergarten to year 12, the only real limitations on age being for business and career focussed mentoring which was more appropriate for year 9-12 students.

### *Mentors*

The mentors could be just about anyone with the patience, time and energy to empathise with and assist a young person. They also need to be non-judgemental and have good listening skills. Some programs, particularly those harnessing older persons, highlight the claim that no qualifications are required to become a mentor. In many instances this would be the case,

provided mentors receive a basic level of training and know they have access to specific training and support if and when required. Mentors tend to be seniors and retired people or parents; tertiary students; people with the specific expertise used as the focus of the mentoring; groups of people from a particular business or industry, social or service club; friends or contacts of those involved. Mentors are not teachers but augment the teacher (and parent) role and provide additional support to students on a more individual basis.

### *Mentor-Mentee Relationships*

Mentoring programs that focus on specific academic subject areas, such as business or science, recruit mentors with specific expertise in that area (ie 'expert' mentors). Others use the expertise of the mentor, eg a high profile in sport, as a medium to concentrate on areas of motivation and self-confidence. These programs have much in common, but the former tends to target students who excel in the area, whereas the latter targets students expressing low self-esteem or other motivational indicators. Programs focussing on general literacy or numeracy, social support or general life skills (including social skills, organisational skills and decision making) tend towards a mentor with broad life experience. This fits more of a 'coping' model where the mentor and mentee work through the student's issues together. In practice, the line between expert and coping seems to blur as the mentoring relationship develops and the 'expert' mentor and student delve into extra-curricula issues, and the 'coping' mentor draws on their expertise in life skills.

Older persons have tended to be used in programs operating more on a coping model. Some declare that their talents are not used as fully as possible. At one level this is essentially an individual matter, and is dependent on coordinators knowing the mentors' areas of interest, expertise and experience, and making use of them. At another level, it is about those developing programs considering older persons as potential mentors who may have the specific expertise required.

There are various strategies for making specific matches between mentors and students. The coordinator may decide on the matching, or mechanisms may be put in place for mentors and mentees to self select. In either case, time is needed for getting acquainted. Issues of gender, ethnicity, culture and socio-economic status need to be acknowledged and considered in the matching process. There are arguments both ways for same or cross matching with respect to these aspects. For instance, concerns were expressed about the need to recruit more male mentors, as a good proportion of 'at-risk' students are boys considered to be in need of a supportive relationship with an adult male.

Also, the school system and schools have a particular culture. Mentoring programs can give students insights into the culture within which the mentor works or lives. It can also work the other way and give mentors insights into the lives of students and that of teachers in schools. This can be a positive, but can become an impediment if those involved are not made aware of some of the differences that do exist.

Provisions need to be made for instances of unsuccessful matching or where a mentor or student withdraws for other reasons, such as illness, work commitments or travel. In the first case each party needs to be able to withdraw from the relationship, and may need mediation

for this to happen. A failed or truncated relationship may be detrimental to all concerned. Rematching may be a solution in some cases, but no one should be obliged to enter a new mentoring relationship.

### *Parents*

Parents can take a variety of roles in mentoring programs. In some programs parents of the school are involved as mentors. While there are advantages in having mentors connected with the school, this situation can create dilemmas of trust for school staff with respect to screening and duty of care. Clear guidelines would alleviate some of these concerns. In all programs, parents or caregivers need to be informed of the mentoring and their consent obtained. While this is difficult in some instances, programs that have involved parents have found them to be supportive and valuable sources of feedback.

### *Relationships*

This may seem a trivial observation, but mentoring is about relationships. Importantly, it is not just about the mentor-mentee relationship, but about the multiple relationships and support mechanisms involved in the mentor program as a whole. Even in the simplest model with a teacher, two mentors and a handful of students – there are several relationships to be established, maintained and supported. In the larger programs, relationships occur at many levels. The importance of recognising and supporting different relationships was highlighted by references made, by mentors particularly, to other programs and other schools in which they had helped out, where this appeared not to be the case. Examples were lack of interest, little support, feedback or contact with others involved. Paying attention to all the relationships is one of the marks of good practice. If this occurs, mentoring programs have the potential to create many opportunities for informal mentoring and enhance the building of school communities, and that of schools with the wider community.

### *Training*

The focus on training is often on the training of the mentor, but all those involved need training and to be clear on their role, responsibilities and restrictions. Mentors need initial training in understanding children or adolescents, school culture and procedures, and issues concerning the particular student group or activities to be undertaken. Mentors also need guidelines or suggestions on how to engage the students or suggested activities for the first few meetings. Many mentors adapt these or develop their own, but most need some guidelines to get them started. Training can then occur ‘on the job’ as needs arise, as long as contact and open communication is maintained between the mentor and coordinator. This requires mechanisms of feedback from mentor to teacher or coordinator and vice versa. Some generic training is available through organisations such as the LAP, SVP or TAFE. Schools still need to be aware of specific training to meet the needs of their students and mentors. Students often need training in how to greet or contact mentors and appropriate behaviour, as well as program specific skills (eg email mentoring). Depending on expertise and experience, those involved in implementing programs (such as large-scale program coordinators, schools and school-based coordinators/teachers), need assistance with managing volunteers, applying for grants, promoting and evaluating the program.

## Research and Evaluation

Although the focus of mentoring programs may differ in detail the underlying rationale behind all of them is to enhance the learning outcomes or realise the potential of the students. Whatever the specific learning outcomes might be, there is a strongly held belief amongst program coordinators, mentors and students of substantial increases in self-confidence and a willingness to give learning a go.

Determining the desired outcomes and whether they have been achieved is an important issue, and one that mentoring programs worldwide have not dealt with well. Funding is often dependent on evaluation, and well-designed evaluation is often dependent on good funding. While evaluation of the outcomes for students may be the primary concern, evaluation of the program as a whole needs to be undertaken. Evaluation needs to be designed to provide information on whether the program has achieved the objectives and if the needs of the target students have changed, and to obtain feedback from all participants to aid day to day decision making and program improvement. Programs need to include evaluation in their planning so that evaluation strategies match the expected program outcomes and processes, and include it in their budgets. Program planners need to ask questions concerning expectations (short and longer term), how they will know if expectations have been met, the kind of data that will provide this information, timing of data gathering, and who will coordinate and carry out the evaluation. Related questions involve what to do with the evaluation information and provide feedback on success to those involved, how to use it for improving the specific program concerned and how to disseminate the information more widely to assist others in the development of mentoring programs.

In the literature there is a general lack of longitudinal data. If the rationale for a mentoring program is a preventative one, how these longer-term outcomes can be measured and the effects separated from those related to the other activities in which students may be involved must be considered. These are important issues that will impact on the future place of mentoring as a strategy for schools.

## Mentoring Support Networks

Many of the coordinators and mentors expressed a desire to learn more about mentoring, and the need for mutual support from others, including those involved in mentoring programs elsewhere. Several of the larger programs publish newsletters to inform participants of the activities of others (including personal mentoring stories), promote training opportunities, and generally maintain contact and a sense of belonging. Also, there is a need for a network to link programs, which could provide information, advice, and social support and help overcome the feelings many have of isolation. In the USA, websites have been set up with the purpose of spreading information. There is expertise in Australia, however, that has been gained over many years and there are materials available for those wishing to implement a mentoring program.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations on mentoring in schools arising from this project are set out below. The recommendations for consideration by Australian education systems and governments are addressed first followed by the recommendations for schools.

### **For Education Systems and Governments**

#### *Encourage and support the development of mentoring programs in schools*

Mentoring is a strategy with the potential to meet the individual learning needs of a wide range of students. It can provide regular individual attention to a student or group of students that is not always possible in the regular classroom. Mentoring can lead to a range of enhanced learning outcomes for students – academic, motivational, social and personal, at the same time providing benefits to the mentors, the school and the community. Also, it can be linked with policy developments in curriculum, and provides a tangible way for schools to realise the development of learning communities.

#### *Utilise the existing expertise in implementing mentoring programs in Australia to assist in the development of new programs in schools*

There is considerable expertise in schools and the community that has been developed over many years of implementing mentoring programs in schools.

#### *Encourage and support the involvement of older persons and other community members in mentoring programs in schools*

Older persons in the community have a valuable role to play in mentoring programs in schools, but their potential has not been fully realised. There is a wide range of older and younger community members, who have shown interest in being involved in mentoring in schools. These include seniors and retirees, parents, tertiary students, and those involved in business, industry, professions, and community-based organisations.

#### *Facilitate the development of general guidelines for risk management and managing volunteers in schools*

As many mentoring programs in schools involve the participation of volunteers, clear guidelines need to be developed to assist schools in managing volunteers. This includes areas of recruiting, screening, articulating roles and responsibilities, duty of care and ongoing supervision, training, providing support and feedback. At present many of these aspects are not clearly articulated and official guidelines are fragmented.

#### *Promote the collaboration of schools with community and business organisations*

Mentoring programs can provide mutual benefits for schools, businesses and community groups and contribute to the development of better understanding of the role of each in society. Business and community organisations can also assist schools with recruiting mentors, provide expertise in some areas of mentoring, and assist with sponsorship.

*Provide realistic funding for the development of mentoring programs in schools and their ongoing implementation and evaluation*

Funding of mentoring in schools needs to reflect the time and resources needed to establish, implement and evaluate a mentoring program, and provide for the ongoing requirement for management of the program and support of the participants.

*Support further research on mentoring in schools*

The implementation of mentoring programs in Australia and overseas has had a pragmatic focus and mainly concentrated on 'what works'. It has developed in essentially a theoretical vacuum and has made little use of existing conceptual knowledge of how people learn and interact. The development of elaborated conceptual models of mentoring will assist in understanding how mentoring works, how it can be improved, and the development of more appropriate evaluation frameworks.

*Facilitate the establishment of a mentoring network to promote mentoring, disseminate information and provide support*

A mentoring support network would facilitate the development of mentoring programs in schools by providing a mechanism for exchanging existing knowledge and ideas, and providing wider support for those involved. It also builds on the nature of mentoring as a means of developing supportive relationships amongst people.

## For Schools

*Seek out as much information as possible about mentoring and mentoring programs*

There is considerable expertise in schools and the community that has been developed over many years of implementing mentoring programs in schools. Make use of this expertise and talk with others who have implemented similar programs. This report should assist in this endeavour.

*Commence with a small mentoring program to meet specific student needs*

Mentoring programs are about relationships, and implementing a program is likely to take more time than expected. New programs are likely to be more effective if schools concentrate on developing a small number of mentor relationships to meet specific student needs.

*Investigate developing a mentoring program collaboratively with a business or community organisation*

Mentoring programs can provide mutual benefits for schools, businesses and community groups and contribute to the development of better understanding of the role of each in society. Business and community organisations can also assist schools with recruiting mentors, provide expertise in some areas of mentoring, and assist with sponsorship.

*Plan the mentoring program carefully, taking into consideration the features that contribute to a successful program (detailed in this report)*

There are numerous factors to be considered in establishing implementing and evaluating a mentoring program. The features of successful programs detailed in this report provide a good starting point. While all factors need to be considered, some of the key factors include: determine clear goals and expectations, allocate sufficient resources to the program (obtain grants where possible), involve all interested people in the development process and keep people informed, develop clear guidelines and procedures for managing volunteers, develop support mechanisms for everyone in the program, develop mechanisms for dealing with mismatches and ending mentoring relationships, and involve all participants in feedback and evaluation.

*Ensure the mentoring program has a positive image and its own identity that links explicitly with the curriculum and/or ethos of the school*

Effective mentoring programs are clearly linked with other aspects of the school, such as the curriculum, and are in concert with the ethos of the school. In order that the participants feel it is a privilege to be a part of the mentoring program, it needs to have a positive image and a specific identity within the school.

*Encourage and support teachers who want to implement a mentoring program at the school*

Effective mentoring programs need enthusiastic coordinators who support the concept of mentoring to develop a mentoring program. Coordinators also need the support of the school as a whole.

*Seek out mentors to match the rationale of the program and the needs of individual students*

There is a wide range of older and younger community members, who have shown interest in being involved in mentoring in schools. These include seniors and retirees, parents, tertiary students, and those involved in business, industry, professions, and community-based organisations. Initial contacts can be made through local businesses, service clubs, community organisations, other educational institutions, parents and citizens groups, word of mouth or local media.



# Chapter One

## Introduction

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### ***Purpose of the Report***

Mentoring is gaining in popularity in education, business and community contexts, as a strategy for enhancing academic, social, personal and career outcomes for the mentee. The Commonwealth is interested in harnessing the skills of the broader community, and especially those of older persons, to improve learning outcomes through mentoring in Australian schools. This research was commissioned to explore national and international approaches to mentoring, particularly in school settings, and produce a document for consideration by Australian schools that could inform policy and implementation of mentoring in schools.

The specific objectives were to identify:

- models of good practice of mentoring in school;
- issues associated with the implementation of mentoring programs in school settings;
- key recommendations for consideration by Australian schools and education systems.

### ***The Scope of the Project***

Mentoring of school-aged young people occurs in many settings (in and out of school), and the mentors may range from older peers and teachers from within the school, to students from other educational institutions or professional and community members. The focus of this research is mentoring in schools by members of the broader community, particularly older persons. This means that some 'mentoring' that occurs in schools is outside the scope of this project. The following descriptions of mentoring 'in schools' and 'by older persons and the broader community' explain how these terms have been interpreted for the purpose of this project

#### **Mentoring in Schools**

The mentoring programs under consideration are those that are school based or conducted under the auspices of the school.

#### **Older Persons and the Broader Community**

This project is conducted in the International Year of Older Persons and the title reflects this emphasis. Rather than define 'older persons' in terms of a specific age group, older persons are considered more broadly. The term 'older persons' varies in meaning across countries and within Australia. It could be considered in age relative terms, as any person older than the mentee(s), or in terms of the experience of the mentor and the potential of the mentoring relationship to enhance the students' learning outcomes.

Thus for the purpose of this research, mentors may be any members of the community able to commit time to spend with a school student or students. They may range from tertiary students to retirees and may be a parent or other family member of children at the school

concerned. Programs set up specifically to involve members of the school staff or fellow students as mentors are not included.

## **Terms**

As mentoring covers a range of activities a number of different terms are used to describe the participants in a mentoring program. In the literature and in the programs explored through case study the 'mentor' is variously called a mentor, tutor, volunteer, coach, parent or friend, and the 'mentee' is called a mentee, protege, student or young person. The report uses program-specific terms where appropriate, otherwise 'mentor' and 'mentee' is used.

## **Methodology**

The research uses a predominantly qualitative methodology, including a review of relevant literature from Australia and overseas, in-depth case studies of selected Australian programs, and an analysis of the available information to develop a set of principles to inform successful implementation of mentoring in Australian schools.

## **The Literature Review**

The review of literature initially covered mentoring in a range of contexts, such as education, business and community. Searches included research databases (eg ERIC, PsychLIT), the Internet, and personal collections and contacts. The review was then narrowed to focus on the literature providing information relevant to mentoring in school contexts. The literature search identified a number of mentoring programs and research findings related to the value of mentoring and issues related to the implementation of programs, improved learning outcomes for students and benefits for mentors.

## **Identification of Programs**

A number of mentoring programs in Australia and overseas were identified through the literature search and from personal contacts. In order to identify a wider range of programs, including small school-based programs, a number of mechanisms were devised to canvass information about mentoring programs from a variety of sources. One method was to invite schools, which have mentoring programs or participate in them to self-nominate or be nominated by others. Letters were sent to education systems, regional education offices and educational organisations throughout Australia, and requests for information were made through relevant listservs and education networks, and through The Schools Today section in *The Australian*. Contacts were asked to supply information (if known) such as program title, brief description, contact person, location of school(s) involved, other groups or organisations involved, characteristics of mentors/tutors, and target groups of students. The procedure uncovered 200 programs, which were considered to be mentoring programs, but only 45 met the criteria of being school based and involving community members as mentors. It may be argued that these programs are representative of those in existence. The list is not exhaustive, however, as information about programs is still being received as the call for program identification continues to spread.

## **The Case Studies**

The programs identified differed in a number of ways. They covered a range of models of organisation and structure, focussed on different aspects of education, involved a range of people as mentors, targeted a range of students, and were located in a range of school settings or covered multiple sites. The case studies were selected to illustrate this range of features and

to provide national coverage. The procedure prioritised programs harnessing 'older persons' as mentors. Selection was also mindful of gender balance and coverage of different age groups within the school population. The programs selected cover metropolitan, rural, regional and remote sites, and are located in New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory. The features of the programs selected for case study are shown in Table 1.

The case studies were based on a transactional model that assumes the importance of understanding people and programs in context through data gathered in direct contact with the program and its participants (Patton, 1990). Information was gathered through examination of program materials and documents, selected site visits, as well as personal telephone and email interviews with a range of participants. As the larger programs were implemented in multiple sites, where possible the case studies included more than one school in different types of sites (eg suburban and rural).

*Table 1: Features of the programs selected for case studies*

Model	Focus	Location	Age of student	Mentor characteristics	State
within school system (LAP)	students at risk (varied), gifted students	multiple sites	all ages	parents, seniors	SA
external organisation - schools (SVP)	students at risk (varied), based on literacy	multiple sites, including remote	all ages, but mainly upper primary and lower secondary	retired and seniors	WA
school system consultant with group of schools	specific vocational	multiple sites	upper secondary	community members with specific expertise and experience	SA
school - private consultant - TAFE	general vocational	regional	years 9-10	middle aged members of community attending TAFE	NSW
individual school	business enterprise	city CBD	year 9-12	parents and other business contacts	NSW
external organisation servicing schools	sport and self-esteem	multiple sites, any location possible	all ages	high profile sports' men and women	WA, NSW
university - schools	science interest and achievement	metropolitan and rural	secondary	university students	WA

one class in a school	gifted students working on specific projects	suburban	upper primary	parents with expertise	ACT
school - business	general support	inner city	years 9-10	employees of a bank	NSW

In order to obtain information from different perspectives, a range of people associated in different ways with each program were asked to participate in the case study. As the programs and the people associated with them differed, advice was sought from the coordinator of each program. At this point, issues of confidentiality and methods of data collection were raised and negotiated. Where appropriate and practical, individual face-to-face interviews or focus group interviews were carried out. Otherwise telephone and email interviews, and personal stories in newsletters were used to address issues of confidentiality, power relations, peer support, literacy, cultural mores, and geographic location in varying ways. People interviewed included the developer, designer and/or coordinator, those involved in the selection/screening and training of participants, and students and mentors who have participated or are currently participating in the program. In some instances parents were included.

In most cases, two members of the research team were able to travel to each site. The questions were developed to elicit each participant's understanding of the program, how it operated from their perspective, the outcomes of which they were aware, their feelings about the program, any problems they had encountered, their suggestions and advice to others about mentoring programs (see Appendix I).

### Data Analysis

The literature and case study data were analysed to identify common and unique features of the mentoring programs and the characteristics of each type of program that contributed to its success. A similar procedure was used to investigate the impediments and constraints on implementing mentoring programs. To complement this and to provide nationwide data, information was requested from relevant state and educational bodies on legislation concerned with duty of care in schools, procedures and guidelines for allowing community members to participate in activities such as mentoring in schools.

All phases of the project were drawn together to develop a set of principles or issues that would assist in implementing mentoring programs in schools, and key recommendations for consideration by Australian schools. As a focus of the research is mentoring by 'older persons', the benefits to this group and society in general were also considered.

### Ethical issues

The project was mindful of the ethical issues involved in any research that involves people, such as the privacy and dignity of participants, and the confidentiality and anonymity of data generated. The Murdoch University Human Ethics Research Committee administers strict guidelines that include gaining informed consent from all participants, working through issues of privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and potential disadvantage or harm to the participants.

Particular issues of access and equity arise in a number of ways in this project. These were borne in mind with respect to the range of students included as well as the range of mentors. Procedures ensured the inclusion of programs in as wide a range of geographical locations as possible, involving various 'older persons' with diverse expertise and experience, and targeting different groups and ages of students, including 'students at educational risk'. The schools were chosen to reflect a range of student groups, including students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, indigenous backgrounds, those facing socio-economic disadvantage, students identified as gifted and talented, as well as those from middle class and advantaged backgrounds.

It was anticipated that school staff would be reasonably willing to be involved in the research, but it was possible that some of the students or mentors may be hesitant. Mentoring programs are based on the building of shared trust and respect for the people involved. This needed to be maintained in the research process. The coordinators chose the people with whom we spoke, and thus they were a selected group. The criteria used by each coordinator no doubt differed, but we had the impression we were not only exposed to those involved in the most effective mentor-mentee relationships. Rather, a common criterion appeared to be that the participants would be able to verbalise their thoughts and feelings. In at least one case the mentor 'prepared' the mentee for the interview.

In order to protect the identities of participants in the research, especially the students, none of the schools are specifically identified in this report. We have identified, with permission, the larger programs, coordinators and educational systems involved in the case studies and those identified in the literature. As many of the program coordinators would be happy to be contacted, a list of addresses is provided at the end of the report.

### ***The Structure of this Report***

The literature on mentoring reviewed for this project is discussed in Chapter Two. The questions of what is mentoring and why mentoring are addressed, leading to a discussion of the different ways that mentoring can be categorised in order to assist in the development of different models of mentoring. The reported outcomes of mentoring are considered in relation to the research and evaluation of mentoring programs. The chapter concludes with a description of four international mentoring programs and a check list of the features considered in the literature to be common to successful mentoring programs.

Chapter Three presents case studies of nine mentoring programs operating in Australian schools explored from the perspectives of the different participants. The discussion highlights the features that contribute to the programs being successful as well as the problems and challenges that were encountered.

Issues important for the implementation of mentoring in Australian schools are discussed in Chapter Four. These are drawn from the literature and an analysis of the case studies. Constraints and impediments that need to be addressed are outlined together with suggestions and possible solutions. The chapter concludes with a set of recommendations for consideration by Australian education systems and governments and schools.

## Chapter Two

### Mentoring: A Review of the Literature

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#### *Introductory Comments*

The review of the literature on mentoring revealed four main areas of interest to this project. These include the rationale for mentoring, reviews of mentoring programs with a synthesis of findings, the description and/or evaluation of individual mentoring programs, and ‘how to’ guides for practitioners to establish successful mentoring programs. The focus of this project is mentoring in the school context, but mentoring in schools comprises only a small proportion of this literature. Mentoring as a strategy has been used in a variety of contexts and a large part of the literature relates to mentoring in government or private sector organisations and higher education institutions. Other materials relate to mentoring youth in the community, but not in schools. Findings relating to all these contexts are used where appropriate in this review, to develop an understanding of the issues and to develop principles of good practice for school contexts.

Much of the literature originates from the United States of America (USA) where mentoring programs are widespread and supported by national policies. This is reflected in this literature review, although literature from a range of countries such as United Kingdom (UK), Canada, Israel and Australia has been included.

A striking element of the literature is the lack of evidence of specific outcomes from mentoring. Evaluation of learning outcomes is more prevalent in mentoring programs conducted within universities, or when the mentors come from universities. Often, the focus of these latter studies has been the benefits for the mentors rather than the students in schools.

Another focus for this project is the involvement of community members, particularly older persons, as mentors in schools. Again, the literature includes information about programs using a variety of people as mentors, including teachers, coaches, friends, business people and older students. Findings from such programs are also used to inform this project.

The following seven broad questions have been used to focus the review:

- what is mentoring?
- why mentoring?
- what models of mentoring are possible?
- what are the outcomes for mentees and mentors?
- what are the policies on mentoring?
- what international programs involve mentoring in schools?
- what are the key features of successful programs?

Specific issues of implementation, and the attendant constraints and impediments are detailed and discussed in Chapter Four.

## ***What is Mentoring?***

Mentoring is usually thought of in terms of the traditional or 'classic' definition. When examining the international literature and Australian survey information gathered for this project, however, it became apparent that mentoring may also occur in a variety of other forms for a variety of purposes, and be referred to in a variety of ways. Types of mentoring emerging from the literature will be described in a later section, in order to demonstrate the range of mentoring programs and the possible models that might be considered in school settings. In this first section, to set the scene, classic or traditional mentoring is described.

### **Classic Mentoring**

Carruthers (1993) gives a detailed account of the origin of the term 'mentor'. Mentor, in Greek mythology, was the faithful companion of Odysseus, King of Ithaca. When Odysseus set off for the Trojan wars, Mentor was put in charge of the household with particular responsibility for ensuring that the king's son, Telemachus, was raised to be a fit person to succeed his father. Therefore Mentor had to be father figure, teacher, role model, approachable counsellor, trusted adviser, challenger, and encourager. Athene sometimes took over from Mentor, so Carruthers suggests that there is perhaps the need to add the role of the mother figure and wisdom to the list of attributes.

Although the term 'mentee' is used in this report, a mentor is generally said to form a relationship with a 'protégé'. This highlights the protective aspect of the role as 'protégé' in French means to protect. "Protection and development of the protégé make up the core of what has been meant by mentoring down through the centuries" (Carruthers, 1993, p. 9).

Much of the literature relating to mentoring assumes this definition of classic mentoring where an unrelated adult takes on responsibility for socialising a youth above and beyond the extent normally required by their social role. A depth of commitment and breadth of involvement are shown. Examples from different times include governesses whose duties went beyond formal instruction in a particular subject matter to areas such as role modelling of dedication to learning and knowledge of social forms. Sports coaches, music teachers, and trade masters responsible for apprenticeships may all have taken on this classical mentoring role (Guetzloe, 1997; Hamilton & Darling, 1989; Withers & Batten, 1995).

Figure 1 gives examples of definitions based on the classical model of mentoring. In general they demonstrate a common theme of an older, more experienced person guiding and helping a younger person in his or her development.

*Figure 1: Definitions of Classic Mentoring*

- "...the term generally refers to a relationship established between a young person and one who is older that lasts over time and is focused primarily on the developmental needs of the younger individual" (Guetzloe, 1997, p. 100).
- "...a mentor functions as a guide and supporter, establishing trust and demonstrating empathic understanding while at the same time, introducing new and often contradictory

ideas and helping the protégé develop a positive sense of the future" (Pascarelli, 1998, p. 234).

- "A mentor seeks to help a youth navigate through the everyday challenges of school, society, and the community by drawing upon his or her greater knowledge and experience, and genuine concern for the youth" (Lauland, 1998, p. 2).
- "Mentors worthy of the name serve as teacher, sponsor, role model, confidant, and more" (Little, 1990, pp. 298-9).
- "Today, a mentor is any caring, mature person who forms a one-on-one relationship with someone in need. A mentor is defined as one who listens to, cares for, gives advice to, and shares information and life/career experiences with another, especially a young person requiring assistance" (Dondero, 1997, p. 882).
- In the Public Service "a mentoring relationship is characterised by an experienced public servant (the Mentor) taking an active role in the development of a graduate's development through offering guidance, support, and advice" (Martin, 1997, p. 1).

### Towards a Broader Definition of Mentoring

The different wording and emphasis of these definitions provides a dilemma for mentoring research. In reviewing the mentoring literatures in the fields of higher education, management / organisational behaviour and psychology. Jacobi (1991) argues that this definitional diversity continues to "plague" mentoring research. She maintains that the definitions ascribe different sets of functions or roles to mentors, characterise the mentor-protégé relationship in different ways, and claims that this has "almost certainly devalued the concept for application in 'hard' research" (p. 508). Jacobi has identified 15 functions or roles that have been ascribed to mentors including acceptance, socialisation, challenge, protection, advocacy, coaching, instruction and to stimulate acquisition of knowledge. In Jacobi's view these reflect three main components of the mentoring relationship; (a) emotional and social support, (b) direct assistance with career and professional development, and (c) role modelling. These functions are applicable to mentoring of students in schools, but direct assistance with learning may better represent the second component. Jacobi links the components to four theoretical perspectives that propose a link between mentoring and academic success, none of which adequately address the complexity of mentoring.

Other researchers have attempted to distinguish mentoring from other activities such as tutoring and apprenticeships. Goodlad (1995b) represents the difference between tutoring and mentoring in terms of the focus, location, mode and duration. Mentoring is characterised as focusing on life skills, is often outside the classroom, is one-to-one and lasts several months to several years. On the other hand, he represents tutoring as focusing on academic learning that usually occurs in the classroom, with one tutor to a group of students and may last for a few weeks. Goodlad's purpose is to show that cross-institutional tutoring and mentoring of school students by tertiary students combines both of these elements, and acknowledges that there are many possible permutations and combinations. O'Neill (in press) considers mentoring and tutoring in both school and industry/business settings. He distinguishes between tutoring, traditional apprenticeship, traditional career mentoring and curriculum-based telementoring in terms of the length of the relationship, but also the goal and the method or purpose of problem selection. A distinguishing feature in O'Neill's analysis is that in mentoring the mentee brings his or her problem to the mentor, whereas in tutoring or apprenticeship the tutor or master

selects the problem or sequence of learning. This distinction may not be a clear cut as O'Neill suggests.

Also, there is general disagreement in the literature about the importance of other aspects of the mentoring relationship and the extent of variation that can be accommodated under the term mentoring. These include the degree of supervision, the age difference between mentor and mentee, the level of intimacy and intensity of the relationship, gender or ethnic similarity, and the motivations of individuals to act as mentors (Jacobi, 1991; Saito & Blyth, 1992). Jacobi's analysis does provide five points for which there is agreement that might form the basis of a definition of mentoring. These may be summarised as:

- Mentoring relationships are helping relationships focused on achievement;
- The functions of mentoring include any or all of the three broad components emotional and psychosocial support, direct assistance and role modelling;
- Mentoring relationships are reciprocal relationships;
- Mentoring relationships are personal in that they require direct interactions between the mentor and the mentee; and
- Relative to their mentees, mentors show greater experience, influence and achievement within a particular setting.

This framework is still based on classic mentoring and reflects Jacobi's belief in the need for a narrow clearly defined view of mentoring. This may not be adequate to encompass the myriad of mentoring programs described in the modern literature. It is inclusive of the various functions of mentoring, but doesn't take account of the various forms of mentoring or different relationship structures (eg see typologies of Saito & Blyth, 1992 discussed in a later section of this review). Another approach is to acknowledge that the concept of mentoring provides a framework for a range of different relationships that share similar aims, but which can be modified to suit the setting and the individuals involved. This project adopts a broad view of mentoring.

### ***Why Mentoring?***

For many years, parents, practitioners, philosophers, researchers, and policymakers have agreed that every child needs a dependable, consistent, and positive relationship with at least one adult in order to achieve his or her fullest potential in emotional health, academic achievement, interpersonal relationships, and vocational knowledge and skills.

(Guetzloe, 1997, p. 100)

### **Introduction**

The question 'why mentoring?' focuses on the rationale or justification for implementing mentoring programs. Support for mentoring programs comes from a number of sources. A view developed from classical mentoring is that a talented younger person can be guided and extended by a mentor with the relevant expertise. This is the rationale behind mentoring in business and higher education. Within the school context, this is extended to the mentoring of gifted and talented students, as well as those considered to have potential. A more recent and compelling argument concerns changes in Western Society, which are seen as impacting negatively on the relationships available to young people, especially adolescents. A related argument stems from the research on resilience, along with the idea that mentors are able to meet the needs presented. Also, mentoring provides a possible role for older persons in an

ageing society. With respect to outcomes, mentoring is claimed to have perceived and real benefits for both the mentees and mentors. These aspects are addressed in turn.

Government policy can also provide an impetus for the implementation of programs. The widespread development of mentoring programs in the USA and the somewhat different situation in Australia will be discussed in terms of the political and social milieu.

### Societal Changes

In Western society, parents are the central source of emotional, financial and social support for their children. Many young people also have larger networks of adults who may share in these functions and give extra attention, affection, guidance and a sense of direction. Students who are successful academically have support from parents and teachers as well as sustained access to other knowledgeable and caring adults (Lauland, 1998).

Recent societal changes in families and communities have eroded this network of supportive adults. Fewer people know their neighbours, a single parent heads more households, time pressures can limit community involvement of adults and make networks harder to access. This can result in a lack of constructive adult guidance for young people left on their own, leading to reliance on possibly inadequate, temporary and uninformed peer support. Current pressures of poverty, divorce, teen pregnancy, drug abuse, violence and stress compound the situation. Troubled families may often be physically or socially isolated from the larger community, so youth in the greatest need of help from outside the family may be the least likely to receive it (Lauland, 1998). One effect is the transfer of family caretaking to already overburdened schools (Pascarelli, 1998; Songsthaugen & Lee, 1996).

### *Adolescent Issues*

The situation for adolescents appears even more crucial. In 1990, 15.6% of crimes in the USA were perpetrated by 14-17 year olds (Dondero, 1997). The United States Department of Education (1996) estimates that the percentage of at moderately at risk adolescents is 25% and that another 25% of adolescents are significantly at risk. In a 1998 Australian survey conducted as part of the International Year of Older Persons (WA Government, 1999), most youth and older people felt positively towards the other age group. Young people were aware and uncomfortable, however, that older people seemed threatened by their presence in the street. Recent media reporting of crimes against the elderly exacerbated this situation. So for adolescents there are actual and perceived issues relating to their interactions in society.

Many young people can identify adults who are important to them. Hamilton & Darling (1989) found that 82% of the adolescents in their study, named at least one unrelated adult as an important person in their lives. They suggest a number of factors contributing to the increased importance of the role of non-parental adults in mentoring roles during adolescence. Adolescents have a drive to differentiate themselves from their parents and so are more open to the influence of other adults. Such adults bring contact with and valuable insights into the wider world. Entering into a close, meaningful relationship with an adult other than a parent allows the adolescent to be involved in more informal adult relationships in preparation for their own adulthood. Finally, as children become adolescents and young adults, they gain more opportunities to initiate relationships with others based on their own interests.

## Links to Resilience

As well as the importance of support from non-parental adults in general development and in adolescence in particular, support for the idea of mentoring comes from research into the concept of resilience. Positive relationships are powerful in assisting youths in potentially disadvantaged situations in the development of resilient qualities such as having healthy, non-violent relationships, a positive outlook, high self-esteem, strong problem-solving skills and a sense of humour (Bein, 1999). Dondero (1997) describes examples from two studies. In a 1990 report, Smink reported that dropouts often cite the absence of anyone who cares about them as one of primary reasons for leaving school. Lefkowitz, in a 1989 publication, suggested that interested adults are an important factor for youths who have overcome the burden of street life to now lead successful and productive lives.

The Western Australian Child Health Survey (Zubrick et al, 1995), a comprehensive study of factors affecting the health and well-being of West Australian young people, reports that community organisations are critical in promoting two key protective factors for children against the development of mental health problems. They are a sense of being cared about, and a sense of connectedness in their lives, particularly a sense of connectedness to family and school. The role of the wider community is seen as crucial and it is recommended that policies and practices be put in place "which support the importance of child rearing activities, not only on the part of parents, caregivers and teachers, but also of friends, neighbours, employers, communities, and the economic, social and political institutions of society generally" (p. 55).

## Mentors Meet the Needs

Because of the societal changes outlined above, Pascarelli (1998) claims that today's youth have cravings for belongingness, connectedness and meaning which point to the need for more significant others to "guide, support, coach and, in some cases, simply to physically attend" (p. 231). There is an increasing realisation that support occurs less frequently in natural social systems and that mentoring programs can provide young people with a foundation for building resilience through a caring and supportive relationship with at least one adult (Bein 1999).

Roles and responsibilities previously undertaken by the family, school, church and community, have now become a focus of organisational and government programs seeking to compensate for a lack of adult attention, guidance and support. Mentoring is one of these strategies (Guetzloe, 1997). Freedman (1995) suggests that mentoring "springs from the fundamental insight that adults in our society are not spending enough time with kids" (p. 217). Walker (1996, cited in Lauland, 1998) suggests that the number of young people in the USA who could benefit from having a mentor is estimated as ranging from five to fifteen million. This proportion would equate to a half to one million school-aged Australian children.

## Towards a Society for All Ages

If young people are in increasing need of mentors in the community, who will meet this need? Freedman (1995) maintains it is an irony of the volunteer mentoring movement that it has focused on recruiting the "busiest people in society – middle-class, middle-aged 'role models'" (p. 226). There are two other groups that are well placed to provide mentoring roles – young people (older 'peers') and senior citizens.

As well as societal changes affecting the support and networks available for young people, there is an increasing worldwide trend for extended lifespan in the general population. With

the prediction that over the next generations, the proportion of people aged 60 or more will increase from one in fourteen to one in four, the United Nations general assembly has proclaimed 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons. The theme for the year is Towards a Society for All Ages.

The International Year of Older Persons Information Kit (WA Government, 1999) describes five key areas of importance for older people. One of these is 'participation', described as an active role in decision making and communicating in the family, the community and society as a whole. The various programs and activities planned for 1999 are designed to increase acceptance, understanding and appreciation of the contributions of seniors and to ensure greater social interaction, self-worth and quality of life for all ages.

Meyers (1992) explains how societal changes are affecting older people. Roles are no longer linear and predictable and different roles are emerging for people aged 50 and older. In 'The Second Career' role, there is the opportunity to test out new areas of interest or to work without money as a volunteer. Volunteer roles provide social contact, active involvement, contribution to a project and a sense of satisfaction. Nearly one quarter of West Australian volunteers are aged 55 years or over (WA Government, 1999).

Another role for older people described by Meyers (1992) is 'The Grandparent' role which may be formal, distant or fun-seeking. "Grandparents can be role models, teachers, problem-solvers, [a] place of refuge for troubled grandchildren, and even surrogate parents, in some cases" (p. 2). In other words, they may take on a mentoring role.

It seems increasingly logical that senior citizens, the fastest growing segment of the population, are well placed to provide the missing support for young people. Meyers cites Freedman's 1988 publication which reported

many older people easily formed friendships with youth because of their patience and empathy and their eagerness to share their wealth of accumulated knowledge and experience. Elderly mentors from less advantaged backgrounds were especially effective in working with hard-to-reach youth. (1992, p. 5)

Similarly, Dondero (1997, p. 184) maintains that "senior citizens make excellent mentors because they have abundant life experiences and the time to devote to the program."

As society becomes increasingly older, the fulfilment and satisfaction of the older generation are becoming correspondingly greater concerns. Mentorship is one way in which older adults may realise the significance of their lives and professional contributions.

(Bova & Phillips, 1984, p. 16)

### ***What Models of Mentoring are Possible?***

Mentoring occurs in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes. Some programs are designed to develop specific discipline-related knowledge or skills, while others may use the mentor relationship to assist the young person to develop career aspirations or general life skills and social support. Such different purposes may determine the most appropriate characteristics of the mentor, the program organisation or structure.

Several writers have tried to make sense of the variety of mentoring programs by categorising them in different ways. These may be referred to as different models of mentoring. As previously discussed, Jacobi (1991) identified four theoretical perspectives underlying the different mentoring functions. These perspectives and the corresponding mentoring component are involvement in learning (characterised by direct assistance), academic and social integration (emotional support), social support (direct assistance and emotional support), and social and cognitive development (role modelling). Within the role modelling function, social learning theorists have distinguished between 'expert' and 'coping' models. Research has shown that young people identify more closely with models that are like themselves in a number of ways (eg same gender or cultural group, similar age or experiential background). Although the research evidence with respect to the importance of matching mentor and mentee characteristics is not clear, it may be important for developers of mentor programs to consider whether a coping or expert mentor is more appropriate for the purpose of the program.

Other ways of categorising programs that may assist schools in developing appropriate programs include the method of forming mentoring relationship (formal versus informal mentoring), typologies of different mentor-mentee arrangements, and the organisational structure supporting programs. Models of mentoring have also been developed that describe the process of mentoring as a series of stages (Mentoring Works, 1999; Pascarelli, 1998). These different models of mentoring are discussed.

### Informal versus Formal Mentoring

It is clear that many young people develop their own networks where they are supported by mentoring relationships (Lauland, 1998). These may be described as *informal* mentoring. However, where these networks are not available or do not provide the particular support needed, *formal* programs that do provide this support may be developed. Some of these programs are specifically set up with mentoring relationships as the focal point. Other programs focus on particular activities, and only provide an *opportunity* for mentoring relationships to occur. As Freedman (1995) suggests, formal mentoring programs may also provide opportunities for more 'natural' mentoring relationships with the program staff and directors with whom they are in regular contact.

Although the rationale behind the establishment of formal mentoring programs is quite strong, not all writers agree that formal programs are a logical or viable proposition. Dodgson (in Carruthers, 1993) explains that there are three ways of forming mentoring relationships: initiated by protégé; initiated by mentor; and serendipity. No allowance is made for formal mentoring programs. In formal mentoring, the mentor-mentee dyad is formed under instruction by another party, whereas in informal mentoring, members of the dyad choose each other. Carruthers (1993, p. 13) suggests that best results are obtained "when as much choice as possible is permitted in the matching process".

Concerns about formal programs are also expressed by Little (1990) who believes that mentoring is best interpreted from a 'gift exchange' economy perspective. This is seen to be fundamentally incompatible with a more narrowly defined market economy perspective, in which "legislative or bureaucratic actions [are] bent on converting the fundamentally personal, informal, and intense relations of mentoring to formal arrangements..." (p. 299).

The broader cultural legacy of mentoring presents a model of human relationship that does not lend itself well to policy intervention... Formal initiatives to develop and support mentor roles are thus in some respects an odd enterprise.

(Carruthers, 1993, p. 299)

Nevertheless, formal mentoring programs, for the reasons already discussed, are popular and are increasing.

### Typologies of Mentoring

Philip and Hendry (1996) maintain from their findings that “a variety of social relationships and networks, beyond the more traditional ‘one adult matched to one adolescent’ model, can incorporate important elements of mentoring and be influential in helping young people in their transitions towards adulthood” (p. 200). Saito and Blyth (1992) created a typology of five different mentoring arrangements from the literature on mentoring programs. Their typology is based on variations in the dimensions of the structure of relationship, minimum length of contact, intensity of relationship, nature of activity, activity location, and supervision. They describe team mentoring (where more than one mentor works with a young person) and group mentoring (where a mentor works with a group of young people) that vary from the one-to-one model. Within the one-to-one model they distinguish between classic or traditional mentoring (which they describe as friendship and role model oriented), and mentoring that involves long-termed (one year) focussed activities of a remedial nature or short-term (one term) focussed activities, which have very specific goals.

Although the one mentor to one mentee and one mentor to a small group in face to face settings are the most common arrangements in school mentoring, a number of other arrangements are described in the broader mentoring literature, and are occasionally found in schools. These include another version of team mentoring where a number of mentors are matched with a number of mentees providing a ‘mentor-rich environment’ (Freedman, 1995), tripartite mentoring where a young person is both a mentee and a mentor of a peer or younger person (Freedman, 1995; Lauland, 1998), and telementoring where a mentor and mentee interact through technology such as email (Lauland, 1998; Miller, 1998). The Figure in Appendix II summarises a range of types of mentoring programs relating to young people which are described in the literature and which might occur formally or informally. Although few of these models are presently represented in mentoring in schools, they may be worth consideration for particular purposes.

### Organisational structures

The way in which a mentoring program is structured will usually depend on which people or what organisations are involved. Crockett and Smink have categorised school-based programs according to the nature of the organising bodies. Figure 2 illustrates such a categorisation system (cited in Guetzloe, 1997).

Figure 2. Organisation of School Mentor Programs

- **school programs**: run by school personnel at a school or district level
  - **community programs**: designed and managed by service clubs or community agencies
  - **business-education partnerships**: sponsored by local businesses or chambers of commerce
  - **higher education-sponsored programs**: developed through collaborations between schools and higher education institutions such as colleges and universities
- (Guetzloe, 1997)

### Models of the Mentoring Process

The mentoring relationship is not a static relationship, but undergoes change over its duration. Several writers have explored the process of mentoring in terms of stages of development, which mirror the stages of group development in learning settings (eg MacCallum & Macbeth, 1997; Schmuck & Schmuck, 1997).

Pascarelli (1998) suggests a four stage model of classical mentoring consisting of the stages initiation, cultivation, transformation and separation, each with a separate component of the 'Mentor's Creed'. The *initiation* stage is a 'checking out' stage where each person is learning about and appreciating the other. Genuine warmth must be communicated in a caring, non-sentimental way through attending and by trying to see the mentee's perspective - "I am here for you".

In the next stage, *cultivation*, the mentor builds on the strengths of the mentee and sparingly shares their own - the focus must remain on the young person with any advice being cautiously given. It is important to avoid judging, imposing, confronting or dominating. The mentor's role in this stage is to illuminate issues and help the mentee look at options, consequences and solutions - "I believe in you".

In the third stage of this model, *transformation*, the mentee begins to take responsibility for their actions and moves towards increasing autonomy. The mentor's role is to provide timely, concrete and non-judgmental feedback - "I will not let you fail".

Finally, the *separation* stage reflects the creed statement of "You have the power". This stage is the culmination of the mentoring arrangement with the mentee taking risks, inventing and trying out new approaches. It is a time for reflecting, acknowledging, and making learning explicit. The mentor helps empower the mentee by drawing out their personal strengths and sense of purpose. Pascarelli clearly focuses on the interpersonal relationship between the mentor and mentee and sees this as crucial.

Mentoring Works (1999) proposes three stages in mentoring relationships that again each have a different focus. Stage 1 is *developing rapport and building trust*. This stage involves goal setting and the establishment of confidentiality. The mentee may test out the mentor so it is important that he or she be predictable and consistent. The second stage, *the middle - reaching goals*, is a period of closeness that affirms the uniqueness of the relationship and that it may at times be rocky or smooth. The mentee relies on the support and resources of the

mentor who may also need support. The final stage is *closure*: in which natural related emotions such as grief, denial, and resentment need to be identified. Opportunities need to be provided for saying goodbye in a healthy, respectful and affirming way. Appropriate ways of staying in touch need to be addressed and the participants should celebrate!

### ***What are the Outcomes for Mentees and Mentors?***

The literature proposes that mentoring programs can help counteract the societal changes, which may be detrimental to both younger and older persons. While there is a general consensus that effective mentoring programs develop a sense of achievement, of belonging, and of self-esteem while making a young person feel secure, limited quality data is available which shows the true impact of mentoring (Little, 1990; Roberts & Cotton, 1994; Struchen & Porta, 1997). Little (1990, p. 297) suggests that rhetoric and action have "outpaced both conceptual development and empirical warrant".

### **Issues of Research Methodology and the Evaluation of Mentoring Outcomes**

The nature of evidence gathered to support mentoring programs is also a concern expressed in the literature. Mentoring programs "rely heavily on impressionistic and anecdotal evidence to support claims of effectiveness" (Bein, 1999, p. 121) or consist mainly of descriptive studies (Hamilton & Darling, 1989). Little (1990) and Philip and Hendry (1996) critique the methodology of previous research as having small sample sizes, an over reliance on retrospective accounts, and an absence of control or comparison groups. There is also a scarcity of longitudinal designs. Actual observations of mentors' work are rare in designs or published reports. Another lack is seen to be that "There are virtually no structured studies that compare formal mentor arrangements with the conditions, contexts, dynamics, and consequences of naturally occurring mentor relations" (Little, 1990, p. 343).

This raises another problem in evaluation - the very nature of the mentoring relationship itself. When promoting mentoring as a strategy in the Public Employment sector (Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, 1996), this factor was highlighted. Often, one-to-one mentoring relationships, particularly in a workplace context are long term and unstructured and have a strong element of confidentiality. Formal evaluation may threaten the privacy of this type of relationship. It is suggested that structured activities be incorporated which lend themselves to feedback and evaluation.

Because mentor programs operate in very different ways for different purposes, comparing programs is also a difficulty. Jacobi's (1991) analysis highlights this problem. Programs may focus on a range of important issues such as academic tutoring or career skills, or on providing friendship, extra support and guidance for the young person. Evaluations may differ in nature because of the different formats of programs (Struchen & Porta, 1997). Saito & Blyth (1992) suggest focussing on the processes and outcomes of the mentoring relationships, rather than comparing the effectiveness of different types of mentoring programs. Where programs take on a preventative role in terms of developing later resilience, the impact of a program may not be evident for years or decades (Struchen & Porta, 1997). If short term outcomes are needed to justify continued funding, this may be a problem.

The methodological concerns relating to the evaluation of mentoring programs are evident when an attempt is made to document empirically-based successful outcomes. Many reports in the literature give general results of evaluations without explaining the methodology used.

The main purpose of such reports is to promote the idea of mentoring and to explain how to become involved in, or how best to establish a program. Some documented evaluations focus on the socio-emotional benefits of the mentoring relationships themselves, and use positive feedback from the participants to support the continuation of the program. Few reports document specific educational outcomes for mentored students. Lack of control group data, short time frames and the use of measures that do not necessarily reflect the purpose of the program often limit studies attempting to do this.

The following section describes the outcomes attributable to different mentoring programs. Where possible, methodological concerns are addressed in the discussion. The beneficial outcomes may be considered in terms of benefits for the mentee and also benefits for the mentor, and will be dealt with in that order. A final issue, that of potential negative outcomes, is then be considered.

### Benefits for the Mentee

Mentoring can have a range of benefits for the mentee. A number of researchers have attempted to give a valid overview of outcomes by reviewing programs in multiple locations or only taking account of programs with methodologically-sound evaluations. These outcomes are summarised below, followed by an elaboration of several of the studies most relevant to mentoring in schools.

A number of programs have reported increased retention and participation, such as improved attendance at school, staying on at school or going on to tertiary study (Bein, 1999; Pascarelli, 1998; Shumer, 1994). This kind of outcome is easily measured and often reported. Another common aspect relates to the enhancement of affect in terms of self-confidence (Pascarelli, 1998), higher self-worth and motivation (US Department of Education, 1996; Miller, 1998; Roberts & Cotton, 1994; Tester, 1997), reduced feelings of sadness and loneliness (Rogers & Taylor, 1997), or the promotion of competence and "providing self-assurance and support in the face of new situations" (Hamilton & Darling, 1989, p. 121).

There is also evidence of improved relationships with peers and family (Bein, 1999) and improved problem solving skills (Pascarelli, 1998). Often these have been reflected in reduced teenage pregnancy and reduced gang involvement (Pringle et al., cited in Bein, 1999) and improved refusal skills regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drugs (Rogers & Taylor, 1997).

Mentoring can also provide direct assistance, help youths develop, and provide clear role models in knowledge, behaviour and attitudes (Beardon, 1990; Goodlad, 1995a, 1998). It can serve both as 'prevention' and 'treatment', and be an important way to "reach the unreachable" (Withers & Batten, 1995, p. 79). As well as acting as a role model for the learner, the mentor gives something to aim at that is tangible. The mentor can also try to prevent damage to the learner's self-esteem from failure, by attributing the failure or relative lack of success to a factor that is adaptable, rather than to lack of ability or bad luck, both of which have a debilitating influence on motivation (Burns, 1995). In employment or career oriented mentor programs the role model function is seen as important again. There is also access to the mentor's network, the acquisition of skills and knowledge, and for those already in employment, the possibility of improved promotion opportunities and increased status (Martin, 1997).

Some programs have shown improvement in school achievement (Bein, 1999), but the findings are often mixed and may be dependent on other factors (Hon & Shorr, 1998; Miller, 1998; Shumer, 1994). McPartland and Nettles' research on project RAISE (Bein, 1999; Freedman, 1995) found that middle school students with university student mentors were more likely to improve their grades in English and to improve their attendance. Pringle et al. (Bein, 1999) synthesised evaluation research from 31 federally funded USA projects and found mentoring to be positively correlated with grade point average and standardised test scores, as well as attendance rates, graduation rates, lower teenage pregnancy rates and reduced gang involvement. Also, Shumer (1994) reported positive quantitative outcomes (improved grades and reduced absence rates) when comparing students in a program with comparison groups. The program involved college tutors and aimed at increasing students' post-school skills and options. It was, however, multidimensional and involved a number of interventions apart from mentoring.

An UK study found mixed results when evaluating mentoring programs in seven schools (Miller, 1998). The general aim of the programs was to increase year 11 students' GCSE scores, achievement motivation and employability through community and business mentors working with the students. In one of the schools the mentors came through a local community volunteer bureau and in the other schools mentors were from various local businesses, one of which was a bank. An expected GCSE score was calculated and actual results of 90 mentored students compared with matched control groups (of 93 students) not involved in mentoring or other attainment raising interventions. Significant differences, in favour of the mentored students were found in four of the seven schools. No differences in GCSE scores were found in the one school using small group mentoring. The researcher noted that there appeared to be some differences in expectations, with schools hoping mainly for increased motivation and employability and the students for better scores. Also, the schools excluded students with behavioural or attendance problems, arguing that such disaffected students would alienate business mentors. This meant students in this program were not necessarily at-risk. Qualitative data collected indicated improved motivation as evidenced through increased homework completion and greater enthusiasm in class. When students reported no benefits, it was sometimes because students said they were already motivated. Students who went regularly to their mentor's work place developed more employment related skills and received more opportunities for work experience. Benefits to the mentors and to their business organisations were also documented.

Roberts & Cotton (1994) assessed a mentoring program using a strict experimental design. The program involved 76 African American year 11 students from two high schools, who were mentored for an hour per week by professional people (of a range of ages). The mentors provided "practical advice, setting goals, evaluating academic performance, and motivating them" (p. 1369) through activities at the school and at the mentors' workplaces. The researchers measured global self-esteem and grade point average over a three-month period, and found limited positive support for the mentoring. They suggested that future research should select variables "which may be more sensitive to mentors' influence" (p. 1370) and that a test interval longer than three months may be needed to see any impact.

Rogers & Taylor (1997) outline an intergenerational mentoring program, 'Across Ages', with older adults (with ages ranging from 51 to 93 years of age) mentoring 6th graders. Two

experimental groups (one receiving a number of interventions including mentoring; and one receiving the same interventions without mentoring) and a control group (no interventions) were used with nine measurement scales. These included reactions to stress and anxiety, self-perception, attitudes toward school and the future, problem-solving efficacy, attitudes/knowledge about older people, overall frequency of recent substance use and knowledge about substance abuse. Students in both experimental groups demonstrated statistically or marginally significant differences in seven of the nine measures compared with the control group. Scores were most favourable for the group, which received mentoring in addition to other interventions, in relation to knowledge and refusal skills relating to substance abuse, and to increased feelings of well being and self-worth. In particular, their school attendance was better - especially of those reported by teachers as being highly involved with their mentors.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BB/BS) is a large-scale mentoring program run by over 500 agencies across the USA. Although it is not school based, BB/BS involves volunteers from the community mentoring young people of school age. Many of the young people are from at-risk groups, over 60% are males, many coming from minority groups, single parent or low-income families, or families with a history of substance abuse or violence. The program is characterised by a high level of contact (4 hours per week, at least 3 times per month, with additional phone contact), an approach that defines the mentor as a friend rather than a preacher or a teacher, and that encourages mentors to support the students' endeavours rather than explicitly attempting change.

In 1992-93 Public/Private Ventures carried out a large-scale evaluation of the BB/BS program across a range of agencies (Tierney, Grossman & Resch, 1995). The study compared 959 mentees in the program (10 –16 years) with a matched group of young people selected for the program but still on the waiting list for a mentor. They measured changes in seven areas: antisocial activities, academic performance, attitudes and behaviours, relationships with family, relationships with friends, self-concept, and social and cultural enrichment. When compared with the non-mentored groups, findings showed mentees were 46% less likely to start using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol and 53% less likely to skip school. Violent behaviour was reduced by 33% and the mentees experienced positive attitudes to completing school work and improved peer and family relationships. The impact of the program was greater among minority participants. No improvements were found in the two areas of self-concept and social and cultural enrichment (Tierney, Grossman & Resch, 1995). There are programs run on the lines of BB/BS in Australia. The YWCA operates Big Sister/Big Brother Program in several states of Australia and the Jesuits operate BB/BS in Victoria.

Another criterion often used in the literature to suggest success is the growth of a particular program. Cabrini Connections (Cabrini Connections, 1999) was formed in 1992 and the Kids Connection program developed to support teens in public housing neighbourhoods. A variety of mentors work with students at their school after school hours. Kids' Connection combines tutoring, mentoring and school-to-work transition experiences. A commitment is made that once child joins the program, the organisation does everything it can to help them complete high school and enter a career. No detailed outcomes are presented in this report, but from five students and seven volunteers in 1993, the program now has more than 100 teens and 120 volunteers. "Children who started in the program years ago are now entering

college with a broad network of "concerned adults" serving as lifelong sources of jobs, interviews and adult-mentoring as these young people enter the workforce and grow in their careers" (Cabrini Connections, 1999).

Evaluations of only a few Australian programs have been located. The Sports Challenge International program (Tester, 1997) is a rapidly growing West Australian based program where small groups of students receive instruction on individual and team aspects of basketball from high-profile elite athletes. Using the Song & Hattie Self Concept Questionnaire, the program has been shown to have a positive impact on at-risk students over an eleven-month period. Other interventions also occurred including workshops for teachers and parents, and programs for non at-risk students and a lack of control groups that make it difficult to attribute causal relationships to the program. Anecdotal data, however, is also reported which suggests that participating students demonstrated more confidence and were happier with their self-image; relationships with family and friends had improved and some improvements in academic skills and motor skills occurred. Another Australian program 'School-to-Work-Plans' involved mature, unemployed adults assisting high school students by providing one-on-one support for the students' research and planning for post-school options (Dusseldorp, 1999). Qualitative data collected from the students, their teachers and their mentors indicated benefits for the mentors and the mentees. Both of these Australian programs are included in this report as case studies.

Although the literature reveals equivocal results regarding quantitative outcomes of mentoring programs, positive qualitative outcomes are more universally reported and writers remain enthusiastic about mentoring as an intervention strategy.

Mentoring is an old idea that works. Research has shown that mentoring is one of the five short-term imperatives for reversing the high dropout rate of high school students. Mentoring is a powerful way to provide adult contacts for youths who receive little guidance in their schools, homes, communities, and workplaces. Supportive one-on-one relationships provide youths with the opportunity to explore career paths and broaden their horizons. Adult mentors serve as beacons of hope for young people adrift in an uncertain world.

(Dondero, 1997, p. 1)

### Benefits for the Mentor

Some of the probable benefits for older mentors have already been discussed in terms of providing a fulfilling and important role. Bova & Phillips (1984) discuss Erikson's concept of "generativity versus stagnation". Generativity occurs when an older person chooses to take responsibility by caring for, and fostering the growth and development of others. Mentoring is a good example of this.

Mentors benefit from the relationship as well. Personal satisfaction and a feeling of accomplishment are gained during the mentoring process. Helping at-risk youths can also enhance self-esteem and provide a sense of usefulness, especially for senior citizens.

(Farmer, 1999, p. 186)

Mentoring within organisations leads to positive outcomes for the organisation itself, for example in terms of productivity. When mentors come from business organisations, there is an

altruistic benefit for mature men – a sense of being needed and of being recognised professionally (Carruthers, 1993). Presumably these benefits would also be relevant for mature business women!

## Negative Effects

The review of the literature reveals that there is often a focus only on positive effects of mentoring and questions about possible negative effects are rarely considered. Struchen & Porta (1997) express this concern saying that the literature often leaves out the impact of failed mentoring which is an especially important issue for at-risk youth. Often the very reason these youth are involved in mentoring programs is because they have a lack of supportive adults in their lives, and may also have poor relationships with their peers and teachers. A history of failed relationships is a very real possibility, and setting up yet another relationship which fails, may do even further harm to that individual's self-esteem and lessen the possibility for future positive interpersonal relationships. They term this 'drive-by' mentoring. Freedman (1995) warns that mentoring is often portrayed as a win-win situation, but can actually be quite risky.

Hon & Shorr (1998), in evaluating the program at Hollywood (California) High School 'Each One-Reach-One', do consider both positive and negative findings. Possible reasons for mismatches or failed relationships are explored. The major reason for such 'failures' is seen to be unrealistic expectations on the part of the mentors. While mentees sometimes reported positive benefits, their mentors had not seen the dramatic changes in attitude or communication skills they had expected. They report Freedman's 1992 study which found that the most successful mentors were those who showed up consistently aiming to have fun and make friends with the mentee. Those who came with a social agenda 'to make a difference' had no effect. Regular meetings for mentors were incorporated into the Each One-Reach-One program in order to reassure mentors that they are having a positive effect, even though they may be discouraged by their initial results.

The literature relating to mentoring adults in higher education and in workplaces also raises issues about possible negative effects, but surprisingly these are rarely, if ever, considered in the literature about mentoring youth. Bova & Phillips (1984), for example, suggest that along with the opportunities for personal and professional growth from mentoring programs, there are also risks such as exploitation of the mentee and envy of those not selected as mentees. Carruthers (1993) also cautions regarding the issue of elitism. Peers of those selected as mentors and mentees may become jealous of their situation. These issues may be particularly relevant to school programs that incorporate work-place experience, involve gifted and talent students or selected students interested in extra-curricular activities.

Carruthers (1993) describes the 'Matthew effect'. The term comes from St Matthew's gospel (Matthew 25:29): "For to every one who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away" (Revised Standard Version Bible). Where mentees are clearly gifted employees (or students), they may find mentors more easily than those with less obvious skills and so the gap between groups may increase.

Another possible negative consideration, probably less relevant in schools than in higher education settings, is known as the 'Salieri phenomenon' Carruthers (1993). Salieri, the court composer kept the genius of Mozart from being publicly recognised and this phenomenon is said to occur when a mentor prevents outstanding work of a mentee from receiving its just

acclaim. Care in selecting and matching mentors and mentees, and monitoring of programs is seen as ways of addressing such issues (Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, 1996).

### ***What are the Policies on Mentoring?***

#### **Mentoring as a Policy in the USA**

Large-scale mentoring programs are widespread in the USA and the concept of formal mentoring has been active for over a century. Last century the Friendly Visitors acted as role models for the poor (Guetzloe, 1997; Freedman, 1995), and in 1904 the Men's Club of the Central Presbyterian Church of New York began the Big Brothers, now called Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America. Over the last fifteen years, however, there appear to be some major policy decisions that have contributed to the further development and implementation of large scale mentoring programs in the USA.

A 1983 report on America's schools called 'A Nation at Risk' (National Commission on Excellence in Education; cited in Guetzloe, 1997) recommended collaboration between schools and private sector companies and universities to provide mentors for youth. The New York State Mentoring Program, matching at risk youth with mentors from various business and civic groups, municipal agencies, and universities was one result of this. President Clinton's 1995 'Summit for America's Future' led to the development of 'Connect America' projects (Baldock, 1998). Their mission is to create meaningful inter-generational social bonds to assist at risk young people.

In the President's 'Summit for America's Future' in Philadelphia, April 1997, it was said that one of five fundamental resources which every child in America should be able to access was "an on-going relationship with a caring adult mentor, tutor, or coach" (Lauland, 1998). One example of an outcome relating to this statement is the pledge by Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America to reach 200,000 mentor-mentee matches by the year 2000. Businesses have also become involved. For example Carson Inc made a commitment to give employees up to 100 hours of paid time to serve as mentors (Lauland, 1998). Guetzloe (1997, p. 101) writes about "a veritable explosion of programs that claim mentoring as either their major thrust or one of their primary modes of intervention" and identifies a variety of risk factors, populations and purposes that have been targeted. The Arizona A.P.P.L.E. Corps has expanded over five years from a relatively small program to one having involved 33,000 children and adults. Withers & Batten (1995) refer to "mass mentoring" such as the program Career Beginnings which has involved over 7000 mentors and 7000 students. Campus Compact hopes to attract one million college and high school students in all parts of the USA to serve for a year as one-to-one mentors for at risk youth in grades 4-9.

<p>The fervour for mentoring is rooted in a quintessentially American outlook, which is optimistic, individualistic, anti-institutional, and anchored in the belief that we - even the most disadvantaged among us - can reinvent ourselves and overcome the odds, no matter how daunting.</p> <p>(Freedman, 1993; cited in Bein, 1999 p. 120)</p>
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## Mentoring in Australia

Although mentoring has not been adopted in Australia on the same scale apparent in the literature about the USA, response to the survey conducted for this project, has revealed a wide range of small and large scale programs. These have either been established specifically as mentoring programs or have mentoring as a component within them.

Perhaps one reason for the generally smaller scope of programs, apart from the smaller population, is the lack of a national focus. Most mentors are volunteers, and in Australia regulation and funding of such programs, particularly senior-specific volunteer programs, occur at a state level. This funding may be limited or short-term and “senior volunteers do not receive tangible rewards for their volunteer work such as those offered to senior volunteers in government-sponsored programs in the USA” (Baldock, 1998, p. 12). The Retired and Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP), which has its origins in the US, is operating across Australia through the state Volunteering centres (RSVP, 1999). These centres assist in connecting retired and seniors with organisations that need volunteers, but only a small proportion of these volunteers are involved in mentoring in schools.

The practice of business organisations giving employees paid time to act as mentors does not appear to be as widespread in Australia as in the USA. It is becoming more common in Australia, however, and one of the case study programs included in this report involves employees from a banking corporation.

### ***What International Mentoring Programs involve Mentoring in Schools?***

The majority of programs for school-aged students described in the literature are out-of-school programs in that they occur out of school time and often outside the auspices of the school. This may reflect the proportion of school programs in existence, but it may reflect the lack of time available to school personnel to document programs in which they are involved! Mentoring in schools in the USA has tended to focus on special groups of children and young people, specifically those at academic risk, from socio-economically disadvantaged groups (eg Big Brother/Big Sister) or those involved with juvenile justice systems (eg Juvenile Mentoring Program [JUMP]) (Grossman & Garry, 1997). Both of these programs are run by community-based organisations or agencies and rarely involve schools.

The programs described below are international programs that are school based or have strong connections with schools. They are based on a variety of models of mentoring, involving different organisational structures, mentor-mentee arrangements, and a range of individuals as mentors and mentees. The first two involve tertiary students as mentors, with the mentoring occurring mainly in schools or school time in one example, and out of school time in the other. The third example is a long-term diverse project that involves the mentoring of a particular disadvantaged group of students by male mentors from all sections of the community. Finally, a technology-based program is described that uses employees from a business to mentor students working on a project of their own choosing. These programs have been selected to illustrate the diversity of mentoring programs that can lead to a variety of successful outcomes.

### **Cross-educational Tutoring and Mentoring – The Pimlico Connection (UK)**

Cross-educational programs (or those sponsored by higher education institutions) have been operating in the United Kingdom since 1975 and have utilised young people from tertiary

institutions as tutors and mentors in local schools. In the pioneering scheme, 'The Pimlico Connection', students from the Imperial College, University of London helped teach science, mathematics, and craft design technology in local school classrooms on a weekly basis for approximately 14 weeks (Goodlad & Hirst, 1989). The main aim was to make these subjects more enjoyable for students by counteracting the lack of individual teacher attention and allowing more practical work, which had been limited because of lack of supervision. The constructive oral communication of students with the tutor would encourage the discussion of ideas and the experience may increase the students' aspirations by finding out about Imperial College and the opportunities that exist beyond school. University students would also benefit by gaining realistic practice in communicating concepts and ideas, and improving their interpersonal skills, self-confidence, and awareness of people from different social backgrounds.

Imperial College students recruited to the program are required to attend a two-hour training session presented by the program coordinator and the Pimlico Connection Student Society Committee. The session familiarises students with the role of the tutor in the classroom and allows informed choice as to whether or not to participate. Training emphasises the commitment necessary, the need to view the role from an adult perspective, issues of support and the tutor-teacher-pupil partnership, and examples of the kinds of situations tutors would face (Goodlad, 1998, Appendix B).

Over 10 years, students, teachers and tutors have responded to various questionnaires relating to the program and the results have shown benefits for all three groups. Students said that lessons became more interesting, easier to follow, and more enjoyable, and that they learnt more when they had tutors. Tutors reported a number of benefits including reinforcing their own knowledge of the subject, gaining practice in communicating scientific ideas, gaining insight into how others perceive one's subject, increasing self-confidence, feeling they were doing something useful and arousing an interest in teaching. Over 60% of the classroom teachers reported that lessons with the tutors were easier to handle and more enjoyable, and that the students seemed to learn more than usual (Goodlad & Hirst, 1989).

In 1992, the program was extended to include educational trips to the Science Museum London, with student tutors acting as 'museum interpreters' for the school students (McIvor, 1998). In effect this program set up a three-way collaboration between the university, the local schools and the museum. After training, several tutors would spend two weeks in a classroom before and after the museum visit, and assist the teacher with preparing the class for the visit and assist them to integrate the visit into the normal program of study. McIvor explains the development of this program over a period of several years that involved regular revisions based on evaluation feedback from all the participants. Some of the issues and problems highlighted showed the need for one recognised person to liaise with schools, better preparation and training of tutors with an additional training session at the museum, and better briefing of the teachers receiving tutors. This has led to the development of written support material for museum tutors, the further development of training techniques, policies and management procedures, and further evaluation in terms of costs and benefits to each party participating.

In 1998 there were over 180 cross-institutional tutoring and mentoring schemes in the UK and similar schemes operating around the world in countries such as USA, Israel, New Zealand,

Australia, Europe, South Africa, India, Thailand (Goodlad, 1998). Many schemes have been systematically evaluated and documented successful outcomes (eg CSV, 1990; Goodlad, 1995a, 1998; Goodlad & Hirst, 1989). The STAR (Science and Technology Awareness Raising) Program in Western Australia is an example of one of these programs. Goodlad (1995a, 1998) has collected papers documenting a number of these programs and over 20 international programs are summarised in the appendix of each of the volumes, providing information about aims, activities and evaluation.

### Perach (Israel)

Perach, 'flower' in Hebrew, is a publicly supervised tutorial/mentoring program that involves 45,000 Israeli children each year. It began in 1975 as an experimental project under the auspices of the Weizmann Institute of Science. It is now a nationwide program in which Israeli university and college students work with needy school children. Originally, mentoring was one-to-one, but more recently group-tutored enrichment programs in health, science, nature studies, and the arts have been added (Frekso & Kowalsky, 1998; Perach, 1999).

The Perach web page sets out the goals of the program, which are to:

- cultivate and enrich Jewish and Arab children from disadvantaged families through a close relationship with a tutor-mentor;
- assist with the cost of higher education for students (tutor-mentors) in need of financial aid, through partial scholarships or academic credits;
- promote tolerance and understanding through joint activities between Jews and Arabs. (Perach, 1999)

The rationale behind Perach is the belief that attention from a caring young adult who is a potential role model, makes the children more likely to fulfil their potential, in terms of self esteem and academic potential. Coordinators in eight regional offices in universities around the country choose, support and guide the tutors who meet with their students twice per week for two-hour periods over one year. Meetings are usually out of school hours, and may be held at the child's school, home or at a Perach enrichment centre. Perach (1999) maintains that the voluntary nature of the program, recruitment process, and the extensive support system result in a low dropout rate.

The program has been evaluated several times over the years. Topping and Hill (1995) report a series of studies carried out by Eisenberg and associates during the 1980s, where tutored students were compared with matched non-tutored students. Findings revealed few gains in academic areas on standardised tests, but significant improvements in attitudes towards school, self-reported participation in class and time allocated to leisure reading. Tutored students also dropped out of school less often than non-tutored students did. Subsequent studies found that greater differences were evident where the tutor didn't join the program for the extrinsic reward of rebate of tuition fees, and tutor satisfaction was greater where they had established a good relationship with their student, who was from the same ethnic group.

### Project 2000 (USA)

PROJECT 2000 was developed in response to the perceived links between school failure for African American boys and their involvement with crime and violence in urban communities (Holland, 1996). It was developed as a preventative program whereas most intervention strategies attempting to address this issue were seen to be remediation models - introduced after the students had already failed. Another concern related to the prevalence of female

teachers in elementary schools. For many Black, inner city boys, their head of household is female and they therefore rarely see men in their community, or in their school, engaging in the activities such as songs and games evident in elementary schools. The primary objective of the program was to “provide positive adult male role models, particularly African American men, in the daily school life of African American boys”. Its secondary mission was to “assist the mostly female teachers of these students in teaching them the academic and social skills they will need to compete successfully in the 21st century” (Holland, 1996, p. 316-7).

The program began in 1988 when the class of 2000 entered school. For each year of the elementary and early secondary school phases, a different principle was stressed; listening, developing self-control, assuming responsibility, commitment, work, service, initiative, persistence and creativity. From 1988-1994, the project was sponsored, funded and staffed by an all-male community service organisation and volunteers were recruited from all segments of the city’s community, including truck drivers, doctors, lawyers, electricians and university students. They spent one-half day a week with the classes “serving as teacher assistants with an emphasis on providing one-on-one and group mentoring and tutoring for the 53 first-grade boys” (Holland, 1996, p. 318). Over 200 men participated up to the sixth grade and this allowed the maintenance of continuous bonds. During the elementary school phase, all program activity took place in the school setting or in the context of the schools, with volunteers rarely working without direct supervision of professional educators. This facilitated the volunteers’ willingness to be involved while allaying concerns about adult males working with young children.

The likelihood of an increasing influence of negative influences in the boys’ lives as they began their last year (6th grade) of elementary school and faced the transition to junior high school, led to the incorporation of PROJECT 2000 as a non-profit organisation in 1994. Three program volunteers became full-time employees and the program focus changed somewhat. The primary aim was to provide academic support, mentoring, personal development services, plus direction and guidance with career and postsecondary education options. In 1996 PROJECT 2000 HOUSE was established in the basement of the recreation centre in the public housing development where 90% of the students in the program lived. This then has become a visible focus for the program as well as a safe haven for the program participants - now called “PROJECT 2000 scholars”.

The program’s scholars are required to maintain a certain grade point average and maths, reading and general educational mentoring occur after school. Relationships have been established with the schools attended by the scholars. Parental permission is obtained for access to school records, regular school visits are made, program staff respond to any problem (behavioural or academic) that the scholar has at school, and meetings are attended and report cards collected if parents are unable to do so. Additional mentoring is provided by the same community organisation first involved in the program. Adult males, particularly African American men are recruited and trained to provide one-on-one or group mentoring.

PROJECT 2000 provides additional services to the scholars. For example several have lost friends or relatives through homicides over the past two years and psychological counselling, anger and grief management have been provided. All students also attend a 10-week interpersonal skills development seminar during eighth grade out of school hours and topics include conflict resolution, goal setting and prevention of pregnancy, STD/HIV/AIDS and

substance abuse. A leadership development seminar is conducted for those who have maintained a minimum grade point average the previous year, and they are also eligible for participation in a peer counselling seminar.

To recruit new scholars, workshops are held during the year for all fifth and sixth grade boys at the school involved. Those who are interested and maintain a certain minimum grade average and at least a C+ in their school's citizenship course are recruited.

In 1992-3 the program was formally evaluated using the PROJECT 2000 students as an experimental group and a control group of students from a comparable elementary school which, although offering some interventions such as after school tutors, did not have the adult male role models working in the classrooms. In the control group girls had higher academic grade point averages, but there were no gender differences in the project group. The project students had significantly higher GPAs than the controls. Differences between boys in the control group and boys in the project were 'significant and dramatic'. For example, more than 85% of PROJECT 2000 boys were at or above grade level in almost every subject area under examination, but 85% of the control group boys were below grade level. Students in the project also reported that the volunteers helped them in other areas than with their school subjects, which the control group did not. Another formal evaluation was planned for the end of the 1996-7 academic year, but it was already evident that the scholars in the program were achieving better than expected at secondary school.

Holland (1996) describes features of the program seen to contribute to its success. Interventions are early as the early primary school years are seen to be vital in developing academic skills and positive attitudes. The program brings educational mentoring and support into the boys' home community and this allows it to have community specific activities and to involve volunteers from the local area who have a vested interest in seeing these boys succeed. It also avoids the very real physical dangers of having to venture into other neighbourhoods. One major limitation is finding responsible men available to do the volunteer work required during the day. The program has since been replicated in other areas. One such program uses business mentors who are provided with release from work.

### Telementoring (USA)

A mentoring program that utilises email as the medium of contact is called telementoring. The HP E-mail Mentoring Program was one of the pioneers of this form of mentoring. It began in the USA in 1995 and aims to improve mathematics and science achievement among 5th to 12th grade students, and to increase the number of females and minorities studying and teaching mathematics and science (Lauland, 1998). A one-to-one telementoring relationship is developed via email between students and Hewlett Packard employee mentors. The International Telementor Center at the Science, Mathematics and Technology Education at the Colorado State University (CSMATE) now manage the program. The Center facilitates electronic mentoring relationships between professional adults and students worldwide (International Telementor Center, 1999). The telementoring website contains instructions for joining the program, a student's application form and pre-survey. Teachers apply to join the program on behalf of their students and supervise the mentoring. Both teachers and students need internet and email access.

Mentors submit an on-line application to the HP Mentor program staff who match them with students on specific needs, common career interests, academic studies, and hobbies. Mentors are responsible for communicating with the students at least 2-3 times per week throughout the 36-week academic period. Mentors must agree to be a positive role model, encourage students to excel in maths and science, use appropriate grammar and effective communication skills, encourage students to use the internet as a resource, and correspond with the students, teachers, and program staff.

Lauland (1998) claims that nearly 2900 students in the USA, Canada, Australia and France are involved with 2900 mentors from fourteen countries. Costs in the program are said to be minimal, requiring only basic administrative expenditures, and email and internet related expenditures. In an evaluation of the project (Cobb, 1997), teachers indicated positive results for students such as increased attendance, use of technology, involvement at school, self-confidence, and motivation. Although the literature suggests the overall outcomes of this program are positive, there have been a few problems. Some teachers and students found the time commitment to the program to be much greater than they expected, and there were communication difficulties, due to unfamiliarity with each other's organisational cultures and lack of school-site email access and technical support (Cobb, 1997).

### ***What are the Key Features of Successful Programs?***

The literature abounds with information suggesting the overall features or 'ingredients' of successful mentoring programs (eg Bein, 1999; Board of Teacher Registration, 1991; Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment, 1996; Freedman, 1995; Guetzloe, 1997; Pascarelli, 1998; Lauland, 1998; Withers & Batten, 1995). Figure 3 sets out the main factors discussed in the literature as contributing to the success of programs. They are presented in terms of the phases of establishing, implementing and evaluating a mentoring program. The items could be used as a check list of issues to be addressed in implementing a mentoring program. The specific issues are elaborated in Chapter Four of this report, where the features of successful programs from the literature are integrated with the features evident in the case study programs.

Figure 3: Features of Successful Mentoring Programs

**Phase 1: establishing a program**

*purpose / goals*

- well-defined, written purpose statement
- agreed outcomes set with involvement of stakeholders

*planning the program*

- written administrative and program procedures - a long-range plan that has community input
- inclusiveness of racial, economic and gender representation as appropriate to the program
- risk management, confidentiality policies and generally accepted accounting practices
- paid or volunteer staff with appropriate skills and written job descriptions

*coordinator or team*

- good field staff who liaise between mentors, students, schools and families

*resources*

- adequate financial and in-kind resources - time, human and material resources acquired
- staffing based on organisation's goals, needs of mentors and participants, availability of community resources, and staff and other volunteers' skill level
- collaboration with diverse groups such as professional organisations and universities

**Phase 2: selecting, preparing, matching mentors and mentees**

*recruitment of mentors*

- written eligibility requirements for program participants
- appropriate screening, matching and training
- good match between program goals and mentor expectations

*screening and selection of mentors*

- careful selection of potential mentors plus ongoing supervision

*preparing and training mentors*

- train mentors and mentees, eg active listening skills, learning styles, issues in various phases
- preparation of mentors for the mentoring role with ongoing assistance and training

*selecting mentees*

- appropriate to program goals and resources
- personal and parental consent

*preparing mentees*

- young people prepared before program regarding expectations and behaviour

*matching mentors and mentees*

- sensitive pairing, preferably allowing choice

**Phase 3: implementing a program**

*practicalities*

- regular, consistent contact between the mentor and mentee
- appropriate location for the mentoring that gives the program an identity and allows for supervision

*activities for mentors and mentees*

- specific tasks set up: diversity in activities while still allowing for individual choice
- opportunities for program-supported social activities for mentors and youth

*ongoing support for the program participants*

- support system provided for mentors - adequate communication and training
- confidentiality in relationship
- support for mentoring process from school or system eg reward system for mentors and mentees

*parent involvement*

- family or guardian of the participant support program

*conclusion of the program*

- appropriate conclusion and recognition

**Phase 4: evaluating a program**

*why evaluate?*

program evaluation and ongoing assessment conducted

*who should do the evaluation?*

- all participants involved - preferably independent evaluator

*process and outcome data*

- data collected throughout program
- relates to program goals

*using the evaluation data*

- used to provide feedback and assess impact

This chapter has reviewed the literature on mentoring and provides a framework for examining a range of possible models of mentoring for Australian schools. The case studies presented in the next chapter explore nine Australian mentoring programs from the perspectives of the participants.

## Chapter Three

### Case Studies of Mentoring in Australia

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There are many programs or schemes that could be classified as mentoring programs and these differ in a variety of ways. As explored in the literature review, some explicitly acknowledge the central function of a mentor while others, either implicitly or explicitly, include mentoring as one element of the program. The impetus for implementing a mentoring program may come from the school or education system or from other organisations. The purpose may be personal development, improved academic achievement, educational or vocational opportunity. Each program may contain different combinations of mentoring elements such as role modelling, counselling, tutoring, coaching, sponsorship and friendship. Some programs are modifications of international or national programs, others are developed through local initiatives to meet the needs of specific groups of students and the special attributes of mentors.

Mentoring infers a high degree of contact between the mentor and the young people, whether the relationship is one-to-one or one mentor to a small group of students. The frequency and time period of this contact may also vary from a month to over a year, but needs to be sufficient for a relationship to develop between mentor and mentee(s). The theoretical basis or assumptions underlying the rationale for the programs may also differ. Some programs are based on an expert tutor or mentor model and others on a coping model, with whom the young people may more closely identify. Because of the school context, a number of other issues arise. Some mentors may be voluntary while others may be paid. Where and when the mentoring takes place may impact on issues such as insurance and duty of care.

These characteristics combine in complex ways. The nine case studies presented in this chapter show how these variables have come together in particular mentoring programs, some of the constraints and difficulties that the participants have confronted and how they have been worked through. In constructing the case studies the researchers interviewed a range of participants and examined available program documents. These interviews were not meant to be an evaluation of the program, but rather to illustrate what it is like to participate in such a program. The following table summarises the programs in terms of their organisation and structure, focus, location and the characteristics of the mentors and students targeted.

Table 2: Overview of the mentoring programs selected for the case studies

Title	Organisation	Structure	Focus	Location	Targeted students	Mentor characteristics
Learning Assistance Program (LAP)	school system consultant – multiple school sites – individual community mentors	one-to-one	depends on individual need	suburban, rural and remote, SA	K -12 with any individual need	parents and seniors
School Volunteer Program (SVP)	multiple school sites - external mentoring organisation	one-to-one	based on literacy or other individual need	suburban, rural and remote, WA	K – 12 at risk, but mainly upper primary and lower secondary	retirees and seniors
Vocational Education Projects (VET)	school system consultant – group of schools – individual mentors	variety	specific vocational	suburban and rural, SA	secondary students at risk of low retention and participation	community members with specific expertise and experience
A School-to-Work Program	individual school-private consultant-TAFE partnership	one-to-one, one-to-two and whole group	general vocational	regional, NSW	years 9 –10 self selected	older members of community attending TAFE
Enterprise Education: A School Business Club	individual school – individual business mentors	one-to-one and group	business enterprise	city, NSW	secondary students in business club	parents and other business contacts
Sports Challenge Program	external mentoring organisation – multiple school sites	small groups	sport and self esteem	suburban, regional, rural, remote, WA, NSW	years 4 –10, at risk students	high profile sports men and women
STARnet	multiple school sites - university IT link	one-to-one and small group	science interest, achievement	regional and rural, WA	secondary science students	university students
Mentoring of Gifted Students	individual class – individual mentors	one-to-one and small group	specific academic projects	suburban, ACT	year 5/6, gifted and talented students	parents with specific expertise
One School and a Bank	individual school-business partnership	one-to-one and whole group	general support	city, NSW	years 9 –10 underachievers	bank employees

## **Learning Assistance Programme (LAP)**

### ***One-to-One Mentoring – Multipurpose and Multiage***

#### **The Program**

The Learning Assistance Program (LAP) had its beginnings in 1976 when Penny Penhall was a parent volunteer at her children's South Australian school. She saw a need to provide a more coordinated and professional parent volunteer program. LAP was developed with the assistance of a Schools Commission Innovation grant and has continued to expand. Materials supporting the program were written in 1992, the LAP Association was formed in 1995 and LAP now operates in about 1000 schools with 10,000 volunteers. The comprehensive LAP materials are based on experience – “what works”. Over the past few years LAP has expanded to include several international schools. Now Penny, as well as being the LAP Coordinator for a large Catholic College, is also the coordinator for all Catholic Education LAP in South Australia, and all national and international programs. Regular newsletters keep interested people informed of LAP activities and provide a link between LAP participants.

The focus of LAP is to bring members of the community, usually but not always parents, into the school to help children with any type of need in a one-to-one situation. The volunteer becomes for the student a friend and mentor. The program generally has a coordinator at the school level who might be a teacher, another staff member or a volunteer. Typically, interested schools send representatives to a workshop about LAP and purchase the materials which provide a comprehensive guide to establishing and running the program. One of LAP's major features is that clear guidelines are given for its operation, but schools can adapt it to suit their own situation. For example, the Coordinators' Handbook (Penhall, Brown & Carmody, 1992) contains information about all aspects of a program from budgeting and resourcing to reflection and review. It includes sample forms giving guidelines for volunteers, a volunteer information sheet, a student information sheet and a session recording sheet for prospective schools to use or modify. According to the handbook, the success of the program is based on five principles. They are that LAP:

- is always one-to-one
- is about relationships
- builds confidence and self-esteem
- takes a creative approach to learning
- promotes parent and community participation in schools. (Penhall et al., 1992, p. 9)

#### **The Case Study**

To provide an insight into how LAP operates, interviews were held in two schools. Penny Penhall, the LAP Consultant, was interviewed at the school where she currently works. Other participants interviewed at the same school were two LAP volunteers (both female), a male deputy and two primary school-aged students (one boy and one girl). The researchers were also taken to a small, state primary school in a disadvantaged area where we interviewed the LAP Coordinator, a volunteer and a student (all female).

At the large coeducational K-12 college, 50 students from all year levels take part in the program with somewhat fewer volunteers as some work with more than one student. A special LAP room contains tables and chairs for about three pairs of students and volunteers to work, shelves with books, games and other resources, computers for student software, as well as staff desks, computer and filing cabinets. There are tea and coffee making facilities and the walls have photographs and posters relating to LAP activities, including a recent European conference. A regular classroom is next door and sounds of lessons can be heard through a door. LAP staff, students and volunteers come and go so the whole atmosphere is one of purposeful activity in a friendly, welcoming environment.

At the state primary school visited, there are currently 25 students from all year levels in the program – about equal numbers of boys and girls. Of the 22 volunteers, five are men, and one volunteer has three students. Most volunteers are parents, with one mature age community member and one student teacher. A smaller room in between open-plan classrooms is available for LAP in this school. Here there is a labelled drawer for each student and plenty of resources and projects under construction around the room.

At both schools and in general in LAP programs, volunteers meet with their students once a week for about an hour, mostly for one school year although some continue to meet over a number of years. Programs are worked out between the teacher, LAP coordinator, volunteer and student, and brief notes are kept as a record of each meeting. Regular reports are sent to parents about their child's progress.

Both schools followed the suggestion made in the LAP materials that, where possible, the program operates from a separate venue. This gives it a “physical, tangible identity” and allows for the development of a welcoming, informal atmosphere for both the volunteers and students. Having tea and coffee (and cake!) available encourages volunteers to stay on to chat, allows for informal meetings and makes them want to come back. As with other programs, the impression received is that those involved in the program reflect its aims. All the staff and volunteers met were helpful, friendly and welcoming.

## Resourcing

Penny's position is presently funded by the school where she works and by Catholic Education. In return she coordinates LAP at this school and provides workshops free of charge to Catholic schools. Other schools pay for workshops and this money is then used to fund LAP activities. This year, for example, an assistant is employed for two days per week to manage some of the administrative work involved with the broader program. For most schools, however, coordinators are paid out of school funds or through special funding, or do LAP as part of their role in the school.

At the state school visited the coordinator is employed as a School Services Officer (a position which seems to be unique to South Australian schools but which allows a great deal of flexibility). She is allocated two hours a week to coordinate LAP but says she spends at least six hours at school (generally starting at 7.30 to do this) as well as some of her own time organising and shopping for the program. Time is spent tidying resources, going through records, chatting to volunteers or phoning them if contact was not made at the school. The

school provides a room and a \$500 budget for resources such as paints. If a volunteer is absent, the coordinator works with the child herself for the allocated time, together writing to the volunteer if they are sick or away on holiday. In this way the child doesn't feel they have missed out.

The impression gained at both schools is that much is done with relatively few resources, and that those involved give generously of their own time, over and above any 'official' allocated time.

### The Mentors

Although Catholic Education does not require formal police clearances for school volunteers, duty of care and professionalism are seen by all involved to be very important. People from outside the school community need a resume, references and a formal interview, and those currently in a school are interviewed. Placing the LAP room next to a classroom, using it as a staff office, having a number of pairs working at the same time, and other people coming and going, are deliberate strategies to provide an informal monitoring system.

All volunteers, after selection, attend a workshop on issues such as the mandatory notification of child abuse, duty of care and confidentiality. There is also a general introduction to what the program is about and participants receive a LAP pack, which outlines their roles and responsibilities. One-to-one preparation is given once a volunteer is matched with a student. This allows planning for individual needs. Where there are general needs, training is provided. For example at the large college, volunteers recently received training on using the internet so they can help their students. Workshops on PowerPoint and using digital cameras are planned. Regular training is provided twice a term with lots of informal, individual "on the spot", "as it's happening" training.

At the large college, year 12 students are also involved in the program in several ways. Some are former LAP students. Some mentor younger students for their work experience and others as a community service component for the International Baccalaureate offered by the school. These students are seen to have the skills to tutor and they also learn leadership skills. Penny is presently encouraging one boy to be a Year 12 Liaison Officer and his responsibilities include helping recruit new volunteers from year 12. They operate under the same conditions as adult volunteers.

This last point illustrates two features of this and other successful programs. The mentoring theme is carried through to other relationships, for example the coordinators also act as mentors to the volunteers in the program, and they focus on assisting students with their individual needs, as they arise. The latter is illustrated clearly in the following example. One student was anxious about being interviewed for this research so his volunteer mentor role-played some possible questions that might be asked. This in turn raised issues that had been bothering him, so these were then discussed.

Communication seems to be built into the program and was working effectively in the schools visited. Written parental consent is needed for students to participate in LAP and both schools interviewed involved parents in various ways. In one case the volunteer met with the

parents and teacher and found that they all had similar concerns and goals for the boy. All volunteers felt they received adequate training and support and spoke highly of their coordinators. Formal and informal contact with other volunteers was also valued. One mentor's advice to prospective volunteers was to "be yourself" – you don't need to be a teacher because what the child most needs is probably a friend. She also added that volunteers should ask for help if needed as there are many resources available in schools that parents don't know about.

## The Students

Students may become involved in LAP through recommendations from staff, from parents or from the students themselves. Where there are too many wanting volunteers, teachers are asked to prioritise. Basically anyone who might benefit from one-to-one help is considered. They may need help and encouragement with class work, have an interest or talent to be developed, be shy or disruptive, be experiencing difficulties with learning, or need someone to listen and to show they care.

Matching is carried out carefully, considering the interests and characteristics of the volunteers and students. As one coordinator said "sometimes you just know whether they're going to gel". She prepares both students (and volunteers) in case of unexpected absences and reports that the students are always good – they don't need telling how to behave. They are, however, reminded to thank their mentors for coming and to use good manners.

The students interviewed at the large college were able to discuss in detail the activities they did in LAP. One girl in year 4, who needed extension work, showed the results of science experiments (some still in progress!) which she and her mentor had been working on. They also talked about birthdays and other special events but not much about worries or school work. She missed out on reading when in the program but didn't have to catch up. The year 6 boy interviewed said they did "set work" on spelling or maths and talked about things they had been doing on the weekend. When asked if he felt "strange or special" about being in the program he replied "there's no point in feeling strange about something that's done to help you - especially if someone's gone out of their way to help you - it's nice to appreciate the things people do".

The year 2 student interviewed at the state school was a shy little Aboriginal girl with poor language skills. She was not sure of her year at school or when she came but was able to tell of the activities done with her mentor. She proudly showed her drawer with her current and previous books in it. When asked if they talked about other things, she said they did – one example being when her mum died. She knew that the door to the LAP room needed to be left open (that school's monitoring system) and where stickers were kept so she could have one at the end of the interview.

## Outcomes

To quote Penny Penhall, this program has had "lots of recognition but not evaluation". For example, because of her connection with LAP, she has received an International Fellowship, an Advance Australia Award for Service to Community Education (in 1995) and an OAM (an Order of Australia Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours). Although people have used LAP

for Masters and PhD research projects, there has never been a formal, independent evaluation. One is planned, however, through a contact in the UK. Evidence for the program's success is currently based on the great demand from schools, on positive feedback from those in the program and from anecdotal information. This program encourages the keeping of documentation about each volunteer-student meeting so there is a wealth of qualitative data which could be used for an evaluation. At present, according to Penny, people "come to the workshops, hear about the program, get motivated then go and do it". Various education authorities and school districts around Australia and internationally have taken on the program and supported its implementation in schools. Penny feels strongly that "you can't buy what these volunteers give you".

The coordinator at the smaller school could see benefits for all participants in LAP. Students had "blossomed". Each year students are asked how they feel about LAP and one boy with low self-esteem said of his mentor "he makes me feel wanted". Children who aren't involved in LAP want mentors. Those who do have them develop increased self-esteem take this back to class and try something different. Classroom teachers have given "nothing but positive feedback" and are supportive of the program – students being absent from class is not an issue. From the classroom teachers' perspective there are other positive outcomes. For example they get a break from disruptive students who return calmer and the teacher is refreshed. Parents working as volunteers are also seen to "blossom" and love what they do. Feedback from parents indicates that they are positive about LAP and support it. The coordinator sends notes home to the parents about the positive aspects of their child's progress. Although originally intended as a support for students in specific subject learning, the focus for her was now more on interpersonal issues. This had come about because those involved in LAP at the coordinator's previous school had been able to support each other in response to difficult issues at the school - for example, the death of a student and the imminent closure of the school. Now learning is structured through students making posters, learning positive words, playing games, and doing art and craft. The coordinator herself has also gained positive outcomes from being in the program. She took over LAP in the school "by default" when the teacher organising it had gone on leave and has found it "a great challenge". She was able to go to Munich to the international LAP conference and enjoyed the experience.

When the volunteers were asked about the program's success they cited the progress of individual students with whom they had worked. One spoke of a boy with emotional problems. The situation at school didn't change for him but his strategies to manage it did. He used LAP as a safe haven when the stresses from class and the playground became too much. In fact he needed to be weaned off using the LAP room during lunch times. He has since left school but still contacts Penny and a male volunteer who worked with him in later years. Another very shy Aboriginal boy worked with one volunteer for a whole year. It was said to be "very draining" but he eventually "came out of his shell". Before LAP, the teacher had never heard him speak.

When asked to rate the program for learning outcomes, the mentors rated LAP as 7-10 out of 10 depending on the particular situation, and for developing qualities such as self-confidence and sensitivity 9-10 out of 10. The biggest plus, according to one volunteer was that LAP

builds self-confidence and self-esteem and if the school can keep that going, other outcomes follow. One mentor rated the overall program as 10 out of 10 as she feels it provides a nurturing environment for both staff and students, and as a volunteer her own needs are also met. Better relationships are also formed between students, and between LAP students and their teachers who come to understand the children's needs more. There is also value to the general community as the students can see a relationship between school and real life, and volunteers can give something back to the community by using their diverse skills. One said the use of volunteers was important because "kids know you come because you want to", and less formal, more friendly relationships than those with teachers can be formed. The school deputy had similar stories of success to relate. The volunteers - anyone from retirees to 17 year olds - were helped as much as the students he believed. He had a family involvement the program. His son had been helped by a volunteer on returning from living overseas when he needed to catch up on a subject, his own father was a LAP volunteer in another school, and he himself was looking forward to being a volunteer when he retired!

The children interviewed were all equally positive. The girl doing extension activities said school had become more interesting and she rated its impact on her learning as 9 out of 10 and her feelings about going as 10 or 11 out of 10! She said it was fun to have a break from school work and to work with her volunteer. The serious little year 6 boy said being in LAP had got rid of his nervousness and so helped him to concentrate and improve his memory. He said his teacher had noticed his improvement and he rated the program for learning outcomes and for his feelings about going as 9.99 out of 10 ("nothing can be perfect"). However, when asked how it could be better, he said "I think it's absolutely perfect, there's no way they could improve it"! The LAP materials also give numerous accounts from volunteers and students about their successful LAP experiences.

### Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

Although the students couldn't think of anything that could be improved about the program, the mentors pointed out important issues. One stressed that the program needed the support of the school to be successful – the philosophy of the school and that of LAP needed to be in harmony. This is also stated in the coordinators' handbook (Penhall et al, 1992).

A good coordinator was seen by all as vital in preventing mismatches, but occasionally they did occur. The coordinator at the state school had only experienced one mismatch and that was when involved in LAP at a previous school where a parent didn't understand it was a special time for the child and brought in younger children. She eventually moved so the issue resolved itself. A volunteer expressed concern about a student she felt unable to help. Initially referred by his teacher, he was an "angry young man", who didn't seem to want to be helped. He was not interested in working with the volunteer and wanted her to do the work. She didn't know how to connect with him and felt that his problems were beyond the scope of what could be done in LAP – she felt it was not a solution to these kinds of difficulties. Another volunteer and the deputy principal also expressed concerns about unsuccessful matches.

Forming a good relationship with teachers was also seen as important for the program's success. Sometimes feedback from teachers may be difficult to obtain for volunteers. The

volunteer saying this, however, said she knows a lot of teachers so can ask informally how someone is going. She was formerly a teacher so this helped her interact with them. The volunteer at the state school had worked with LAP in different schools and, although it was seen as excellent where she currently was, at some schools she felt volunteers were limited by what the teacher wanted them to do.

Others spoke of the range of volunteers they would like to see involved in LAP. One volunteer thought it was important to encourage people who might not volunteer because they think they are not academically qualified. This was not necessary to support children in LAP. Another wanted to see more men as volunteers as a male mentor was seen as important for some children, and others thought grandparents and older people from the community would add an age difference in volunteers.

LAP was working well in the schools visited, but LAP had not continued in all the schools that had implemented it. During the research we heard about several schools who no longer had LAP programs for various reasons. One school, which had involved parents for many years as LAP volunteers, was now concentrating on year 12 students as mentors because the time allocation for the coordinator had been withdrawn and it was not possible to maintain the necessary contact with community volunteers.

An interesting issue at the large school concerned the multiple uses of the LAP room. One volunteer thought the coordinator needed a more private room in order to be able to make confidential phone calls and to reduce distractions for students. The other volunteer said that although she thought the room was a good thing, initially it could be threatening to be in same room with others and it could be difficult to discuss confidential issues. She overcomes this by walking around in the nearby courtyard. This strategy was often used in the first few sessions so the student could show the volunteer things in the schoolyard, and it enabled them to get out of the classroom setting. The coordinator, however, said that although she had thought about getting an office, it was important to be “in the middle of things”.

Funding the program was a real issue. Even after 23 years, Penny said she has never been able to solve the problem of how to fund coordinators. Sometimes they may be paid extra money for extra responsibilities (for example if they are a LAP coordinator as part of a key teacher role), but they do not get extra time. At the smaller school the coordinator said she spends a lot of time building up parent volunteers - coordinators needs patience. Because of volunteers' commitments it is hard to organise a time for regular meetings so support tends to be one-to-one and this is more time consuming. She would also like more pairs but finds it hard to manage the number she already has. One reason for this, from the researchers' perspective, is again that the program tries to reflect its aims. The coordinator gives volunteers hand written notes, special coffee bags, and provides one-to-one support as well as formal meetings. She feels she has just got the program under control – she could get more volunteers but then she couldn't run the program properly. She “needs more time”.

As the overall coordinator of LAP, Penny expressed other concerns for the future. Her challenge is to keep LAP's momentum going and yet this is difficult without funding for a planned strategy. To date, growth has been reactive – “hit or miss”. Penny feels she has

another 10 years before retirement “to get the structures right”. This would involve for example setting up a European branch of the LAP Association. It seems, based on the program’s success so far, that such structures will emerge. The deputy principal reflected that the structure of the program empowers others so they can take over the role of their mentors. This was evident from the way all participants in the program supported each other.

## Summary

LAP is a large, school based mentoring program that exemplifies many features of successful programs suggested in the literature. The role of the coordinators is crucial and they are provided with clear, comprehensive materials and consultancy support. The mentors themselves are carefully selected, well trained, and receive ongoing support. The aims and philosophies of the program are clearly stated in the accompanying literature and these are reflected in its operation. Individual differences in students are respected, and schools adopting the program have some flexibility. Lack of funding is a real issue preventing strategic planning and expansion of the program, both on a broad scale and at the individual school level, due to coordinators lacking the time to organise more pairs in their schools. Although comprehensive records are kept, there are no formal evaluation studies to validate the success shown by the program’s anecdotal evidence and the expansion of this program over the years from a one- school program to an international concern.

## **The School Volunteer Program (SVP)**

### ***One-to-One Mentoring by Seniors***

#### The Program

The School Volunteer Program (SVP) is a large intergenerational mentoring initiative, which operates in 80 schools in Western Australia, several others in the Northern Territory and ACT, and one in the United Kingdom. In 1999, over 1,000 mentors work on a one-to-one basis with over 2,000 primary and secondary students. The mentors are volunteers from the community and most are over 50 years of age. The program grew from one man's response to the level of literacy problems in Australia and his initial commitment to want "to help one kid". He approached the principal of his local high school and began working with one student. After talking with others, he found that there was a similar depth of feeling in the community.

Funding to set up the program was provided in 1994 by a grant from the Gordon Reid Foundation through the Council on the Ageing (WA), with ongoing support and encouragement from Rotary International. In 1995 a steering committee was set up to administer the operations of SVP, with representatives from each of these organisations. Later volunteer and teacher representatives were invited to join the committee. The program is presently coordinated from Perth, by Fred Frank, the man who began SVP, and managed by the Board of Management of The School Volunteer Program Incorporated (since late 1996).

The stated mission of SVP is to:

- encourage children to achieve their full potential by developing improved life skills, thereby enhancing their quality of life;
- help children to improve their literacy skills;
- promote the value of Seniors in our community, with particular reference to our ability to encourage and guide children who are having difficulty coping with formal education. (The School Volunteer Program, 1998, p. 1)

SVP is promoted in a variety of ways: word of mouth; community newspapers; church newsletters; laminated signs in shopping centres and doctor's surgeries (with sticky label contact information to take away); and talks on radio and to groups (such as Probus, Rotary and CWA). The program has some of the same features as the Retired and Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP), but focuses specifically on groups of older people wanting to mentor young people in schools.

The SVP has two components. One is the SVP organisation itself, which coordinates and carries out promotion of the program and the concept of intergenerational mentoring, recruitment, training and on-going support of mentors and schools. The other component is the local SVP in each individual school. At the local level, the SVP organisation is invited to initiate a group of volunteers. A school coordinator then provides the day-to-day coordination and development of specific mentor-student relationships. Each school (and specifically the

principal) ultimately bears the responsibility of supervising the program within their school and a teacher generally takes on the coordinator role.

### The Case Study

A total of 22 people involved with SVP in a variety of locations were interviewed for this case study. The overall SVP coordinator, Fred Frank was interviewed in Perth and provided general background to the program and details of its operation. The coordinator, a volunteer and two students from a large Perth metropolitan secondary school were interviewed, as were the Principal, coordinator, a teacher, four volunteers and four students from a Western Australian rural secondary school. Coordinators from two rural primary schools participated. A volunteer, a teacher and two students from one of those schools were also interviewed. As with all other programs described in this report, the researchers were welcomed and the coordinators efficiently set up meetings with a variety of participants who also generously gave of their time.

At the schools visited, SVP was only one of a number of programs aimed at addressing individual student's needs. For example, the city school also had a parent volunteer program run along similar lines to, and integrated with SVP but totally coordinated at the school level. In one rural primary school SVP was part of an "Alienated Students Transition Program" where 20 students from three schools were selected to attend workshops and a camp, and some of these students also had SVP mentors.

Each of the four schools using SVP operated along very similar lines. Volunteers met with their students once a week for about one hour. The coordinators generally provided materials in a central location where the mentors and students selected what they would use, and one provided individualised work in a file for each student. Teachers sometimes had input into the activities, usually via the coordinators, but this was not necessarily the case. Mentors were encouraged to record notes about each meeting but this seemed to be rare. The coordinators generally tried to have someone at the school speak to each volunteer on each visit. For example, one secondary school used the Chaplain as an extra support person for the program, and at one of the primary schools the mentors collected the children from the classroom so they usually spoke briefly with the classroom teacher.

Although SVP was seen to operate successfully in all the schools, the most visibly successful one was at the rural secondary school which was able to provide a specific location for the program. An old caretaker's house, which has now become incorporated into the school buildings, is used for a number of programs within the school including SVP. Students involved in extension programs also used the house and it was a welcoming, well-resourced learning centre where students could come to use the computers and games, talk to staff or to each other, and make hot chocolate.

### Resourcing

The program has recently spread into rural and remote areas of Western Australia, with funding specifically for that purpose. In 1998, SVP initiated Kimberley Magic (Mentors Assisting and Guiding Individual Children) and Goldfield Magic has been funded for 1999. A group of volunteers from another area provide support and encouragement in the first few

weeks. In order to provide recruiting and support in areas outside of Perth, particular volunteers have taken on the role of local area coordinators. At present there are coordinators in six areas in Western Australia; Mandurah, Busselton, Albany, Moora, and Kununurra as well as Perth.

The rapid growth of SVP and its potential to move into every school in Western Australia has prompted the Board to recommend the appointment of a full time paid administrator from 2000. Taking account of growth estimates, the 1998 Business Plan forecast an operating budget of \$70,000 in 1998, increasing to \$151,000 in 1999 and \$201,000 in 2000 (The School Volunteer Program, 1998, p. 12).

Financial support for SVP has come from a range of sources. In 1998 support was provided from the Education Department of WA, the Kimberley District Education Office, West Australian Newspapers Limited, the Jaycees Community Foundation Incorporated, Rotary International, the Lotteries Commission of Western Australia, Public Education Endowment Trust, the Office of Seniors Interests, the City of Fremantle, plus joining and membership fees from participating schools. In 1999, the Health Department of WA is also providing financial support.

Although SVP usually recruits, screens, selects and trains the mentors and publicises the program, funding at the school level is still needed. All coordinators interviewed ran SVP as part of their role in the school and were not allocated any time specifically for it. In the primary school where it was part of a wider, district funded, alienated students program, \$250 was allocated for the SVP program and the school paid \$34 for police clearances for new volunteers. In one secondary school, Rotary pays \$100 towards the annual \$250 SVP fee and for police clearances, and the school pays the rest of the fee and provides funds for morning teas. Resource materials were often those personally collected by the coordinators over the years or materials already in the schools, and sometimes the mentors brought their own materials - for example games their own children no longer used.

At the overall SVP organisational level, volunteers (including Fred Frank's family members) provide assistance in administering the program. At the school level, support from the school's administration staff is essential for using facilities such as rooms, telephones, and photocopying. The coordinators were supported practically (and emotionally!) by other school staff, by other coordinators and by the volunteers themselves. For example at the secondary schools, the Chaplain and School Psychologist were or had been involved in selecting students and matching them with mentors, and providing formal and informal support and training for mentors. One primary school had a parent volunteer who supported mentors and contacted them during their visits to the school. The two primary school coordinators interviewed met to discuss their programs and share ideas and experiences with each other.

### The Mentors

The coordinator, Fred Frank, reflected that many of the present mentors in SVP have a good sense of volunteering, possibly due to the high proportion who have a religious background. A survey conducted in 1995 showed that 90% had previous volunteer experience, and the most

common means of hearing about SVP were through a newspaper (37%), church (21%), radio (14%) or word of mouth (12%) (Frank, 1996, pp. 9-10).

A person interested in becoming a school volunteer contacts the coordinator (or area coordinator) and is sent an SVP pack including a letter, application form for membership of SVP, current newsletter (which lists the schools involved in the program) and a reply paid envelope. The application form requests information about background, interests and skills, preferred school, and asks for the name of a 'person of good standing' as a referee. The referee is always contacted, and if the referee has only known the applicant for a short time, the name of another referee is sought. If the person passes the screening at this stage, they are welcomed as a member of SVP, sent a name badge and invited to a half-day workshop, generally at the school requested. The volunteer's name is sent to the school and it is then the responsibility of the school to phone the person, and interview them if thought necessary - the coordinators at the schools visited did interview prospective mentors and did not select all of those offering.

The responses from a 1995 survey suggested this part of the operation needed some refinement, as schools were often tardy in contacting the volunteers with resulting loss in enthusiasm. The coordinator now contacts the volunteers after one month to gain feedback on progress. Also, SVP is trying to set up a volunteer coordinator within each school to take the load off the coordinating teacher, as was happening at one of the primary schools visited. According to Fred Frank, SVP recommends that the school request and pay for a Federal Police Clearance for each volunteer. Some schools are reluctant to ask for this and reaction from volunteers appears to be mixed. Some coordinators interviewed said their schools did this or the volunteers had already been cleared through SVP processes.

Fred Frank conducts the workshop to which the school-based coordinator is also invited. The workshop includes discussion of the aims of the program, issues of commitment, personal values, and confidentiality, and practical matters such as where to meet with the child and activities to do. These are further detailed in the 26 page manual each volunteer receives. The manual stresses that the mentors are not teachers, "our role is to assist, encourage, and through friendship raise the self-worth of the student we are assigned to" (Frank, 1999, p. 4). It goes on to say "we open the doors for learning so that teachers can teach" (p. 4).

Full-day training workshops are organised every year for volunteers and are usually well attended. These workshops have included anger management programs, working with aboriginal children by aboriginal speakers, how to use newspapers, and listening skills. The survey results (Frank, 1996) and interviews conducted for the present research suggest volunteers would like more training workshops. As they are provided free of charge to volunteers, they are limited by the amount of funding available. The city school with parent and SVP mentors, had managed to provide further training workshops last year with the School Psychologist providing information about communication skills, and the coordinator providing specific skills for helping students with reading difficulties.

The skills required in a successful volunteer, from Fred Frank's perspective, are patience, empathy with young people and life experience. Applicants who appear to be judgemental or

who want to impose their beliefs are discouraged from joining the program. One of the primary school coordinators echoed this by saying that the characteristics of preferred mentors were a willingness to listen and to offer the child some kind of respect. People who “have to make judgements all the time” were not seen to be suitable as many of the children have low self-esteem and are not given respect or valued by the people close to them. One mentor said the most important characteristics were patience, tolerance, a love of kids, trying to avoid being judgemental, and being unflappable. Another also said it was important to know what kids like - their music and clothes, to listen and to persevere. Her advice to mentors would be: “it’s not easy”! All were aware that they were not primarily teachers, and that their main role was to support and be a friend to their student.

The mentors interviewed reflected many of the above characteristics. Most had been involved in helping at schools before becoming part of SVP, some were volunteers at more than one school and some knew each other through service groups such as Rotary or through belonging to the same church. One heard about the program over the radio and others were personally invited to become a mentor by someone already involved in SVP. Their comments during the interviews revealed their care and concern for all children and their desire to help people with difficulties.

### The Students

Each school visited had a method of selecting students for its program based on that school’s particular goals. The city school focused on year 8 students with academic difficulties and there were eight of these in the program this year, but there were also students from Year 9 (4), Year 10 (1) and Year 12 (1). Year 8 students were generally identified by a standardised reading test (TORCH) given at the beginning of year 8. Parents of students below the 30th percentile rank were sent a letter inviting the students to join the scheme – for some this seemed to be the first time they had heard of a reading difficulty. Older students tended to self-select through the coordinator. Despite these selection methods, the coordinator said the program’s main goals were to target students who have low self-esteem, poor communication, a disadvantaged background, and low reading and maths achievement.

The primary schools prioritised children thought to need a mentor according to their needs – but mainly year 7s were targeted as it is primarily funded as a transition program. This year, six students (4 boys and 2 girls) each had a mentor at one of the schools, while at the other school six mentors worked individually with eight students and another mentor worked with a small group of younger students. The schools had developed a questionnaire to measure self-esteem and also used parent and teacher observation to select students. One coordinator said all the children needed someone who is constant in their lives. All schools contacted parents – the primary schools had originally sent letters but now made contact by phone and just obtained verbal permission. Many parents would not respond to letters but were happy for their children to be involved.

At the rural secondary school the Chaplain and teachers often suggested students for the program who would benefit from someone to talk to. The coordinator said there were probably 20 students in the school who would benefit and at one time had 17 students in the program. This year she has only organised matches with 10 volunteers. Because this school is

the local secondary school for the primary schools in the transition program, students coming into year 8 who had mentors in primary school were given first option of a mentor. The coordinators always talk to the students about being in the program. Some students who had had a mentor in primary school no longer felt they needed one – but some of these later changed their mind. Some mentors were also reluctant to transfer to the secondary school. Most students “jump at the chance” to be in it. Generally the coordinators also prepared students regarding greetings and politeness, and behaviour to visitors in the school. Although some students selected exhibited behavioural and social problems, their mentors think they are wonderful as they don't exhibit these problems in the one-to-one situation.

All coordinators put emphasis on appropriate matching. They generally knew the students quite well and interviewed the mentors personally, even though they already had information provided by SVP. All spoke of occasional mismatches but this did not seem to be a major problem with students being reallocated if they were not happy or if their mentor left.

### Outcomes

All the coordinators were positive, or as one said “passionate”, about the benefits of SVP. One primary school coordinator had recently taken over the role and said: "I think it's really valuable, that's why I took on the job". Some gave teachers and students evaluation questionnaires at the end of the year and one primary school coordinator said their program could be measured by the successful transitions made to high school. All gave specific examples of students who had demonstrated positive outcomes such as more confidence in the classroom, increased general knowledge, improved attendance, and not needing a mentor in high school. Evidence of success was based on behavioural observations rather than quantitative evidence. Students enjoy going to the program, those not in the program ask for a mentor, students give Christmas presents to their mentors and invite them to see them play sport, go to concerts etc, teachers ask for mentors for students, and mentors send postcards from overseas holidays. If mentors are absent, students get worried, especially if they are sick. At the primary schools, although some parents don't go to the year 7 graduation, the volunteers do and many give their student a gift. Although academic outcomes were important, and the mentors helped improve this (one coordinator rated it as 5 out of 10), it still was not as much as these at risk students needed. However, personal development was seen to be the greatest benefit (8-9 out of 10) - "For the kids we have, it's the critical thing". Another said that “taking an interest is just as important as teaching”.

The coordinators also said that their Principals valued the program as did their schools in general. One of the secondary school's English Departments uses the program in its accountability documentation. Positive feedback had been received from parents. Benefits for the community were seen as keeping the “at risk kids” at school and off the streets. The SVP was recognised by The Australian Heads of Government for three consecutive years, with an Australian Prevention Award as a most outstanding program, contributing to the reduction of violence in our community. This was a direct reflection on the calming influence that mentors are achieving with young people.

Literature produced for SVP says that mentors also gain a great deal from being involved in the program. Most mentors felt satisfaction from doing something worthwhile or making a

contribution, and many also felt a sense of achievement, had fun, met new people, gained a new perspective or increased confidence (Frank, 1996, p. 12). Their satisfaction came from the changes they perceived in the young people they were helping. Over 60% of mentors believed the students they were helping had gained in self-esteem, improved in reading and writing, were less likely to show frustration or violent mannerisms and showed greater tolerance towards others.

The mentors interviewed also expressed satisfaction about some of the student outcomes they had seen or heard about, and believed their involvement in SVP led to personal satisfaction. However, the mentors were quite modest and all expressed some doubts, either because they felt they could not help enough or because they had had experiences which they felt were not very successful. From the perspective of the researchers, however, it was evident that all had gone to great lengths to assist the particular needs of the individual students they were mentoring. They had got to know their students very well - some had been working with them for a number of years, and sought out information and resources from the school, and people such as the coordinators and teachers

For example one mentor from the city school had completed a maths course after her student asked if she could help her with maths. One of the rural secondary school mentors had wanted to help her student more with school work and had sat in on classes - but this made her realise that she actually couldn't help in this area. A male mentor at the same school could see his student improving so rapidly, he thought that maybe he hadn't had too many problems in the first place. All could give examples of specific outcomes their students had achieved since being in the program. One boy was now willing to read in class, another discussed the anger management material with her mother, and one boy with social and behavioural problems introduced his mentor to friends he was with at a local show. Another mentor could see that her student's self-confidence had improved in speaking and through the care she was now taking with her appearance. This girl's mentor had noticed, for example that her student's nails were bitten and had given her a gift of nail polish. She had also made a cake and brought it on the student's birthday and alerted the Chaplain about assistance when it became apparent that her family could not afford a school excursion.

Although most had received some direct positive feedback about their work with the students from teachers or from the coordinator, they were still uncertain about their impact. Because there was little opportunity to talk with teachers or coordinators, feedback was scarce. As one said: "you don't know if you're doing any good - if it's a mark, like spelling, you can see you're making a difference, but with (mentee), I hope I'm making a difference". The mentors appreciated the SVP newsletters where they heard about the impact other mentors were making, but were reluctant to give their own rating of the program's success as they felt it varied for different students.

One mentor at a primary school in particular was unsure of her success. Due to other commitments, she had only been able to attend workshops on literacy, but was working with a girl who had social problems. She had been given evidence that the student is improving in class and could see that she is quieter in their sessions (one of the girl's problems was that she would just talk continuously rather than interact appropriately with whoever she was with).

However, she felt that girl's problems are great and she's not qualified to help her. Although they have become friends she does not know how to help the girl make other friends without going beyond the guidelines of the program. She had actually contemplated giving up but her husband said that would be the worst thing so she was still with the student. For the rural primary schools in particular, training and support of mentors seems to be an critical issue.

Despite being uncertain about outcomes, all the mentors felt that what they were doing was important - they were giving a student an opportunity to talk to someone in a one-to-one, supportive situation and all realised that this was generally not possible for teachers and sometimes difficult for parents. Even when they were explicitly supposed to be helping with school related work, mentors were able (some with feelings of guilt) to abandon this if needed, or at least spend some time allowing the student to just talk.

The students were much more certain of the success of the mentoring than were their mentors! Their ratings for learning and personal outcomes ranged from 5-10 out of 10 but their comments were all positive. (The student who gave a 5 rating said success depended on what sort of mood he was in on the day.) One student said his volunteer had helped him understand a maths rule that he could now use in class. Another said the volunteer had helped with assignments and she had practised class talks in front of her mentor. One boy said his volunteer helped him set goals to get a job and while he used to get "aggro" last year, now he gets on better with kids because he has someone to talk to about any problems. A boy matched with an ex-policeman after getting into trouble with the law, had not been in trouble since. A primary school boy who had previously not done homework said that since having a mentor "I've handed in every bit of homework". A girl at the same school said she was more confident about going to high school as she was more "bullyproof". One secondary boy's volunteer had helped him get a job and he was learning lots more about his interest of mechanics through this.

None of the students minded missing classwork and only one said he had to catch up. All said their mentoring sessions were fun and interesting and two girls said it was nice to have a break from school work. All seven students interviewed said they talked to their parents about the program and some also talked to their friends who thought they were lucky. They made powerful comments about their involvement in the program. A year 10 boy said he didn't expect anything when starting with a volunteer because "I'd given up" - but he has learnt things and finds it "great". One year 9 girl was impressed that the mentor had gone out of her way to help her, out of the kindness of her heart - not because she was getting paid. "There are not many people like that". Another year 10 boy was a concern for the coordinator. His mentor was sick and he did not want to be reallocated to another one. In the interview he appeared quite sad about this and had rung his mentor's home to find out how he was. A year seven girl said it was good to talk about her life as it was "not much fun". From the students' perspective, the mentors had made a huge impact.

The teachers interviewed were also positive about the program. Teachers could become frustrated at not being able to help a student having difficulties because of lack of time for one-to-one assistance. The secondary teacher gave an example of a girl who never attempted an answer in class or put pen to paper. After working with a mentor she was prepared to give a

report in class. Other students were now more prepared to help her and the increased confidence had flowed into her work. Both agreed that any loss of class time was more than made up for by the benefits of the program. In fact “the House” and the library were considered by the students to be better places than the classroom and being in the program at the secondary school was seen to be a privilege not a penalty. The school appreciated the volunteers and tried to make them feel part of the place through providing morning teas and publicly thanking them.

The Principal of the rural secondary school was also enthusiastic about the value of the program. Both students and mentors enjoyed meeting and the students’ opportunities were enhanced. Male volunteers in particular provided male role models and grandfather figures for students and the volunteers developed stronger bonds with students than did teachers. The program enhanced community involvement and the “marketable value of school”. In particular, the Principal gave credit to the coordinator. She was committed and able to build excellent relationships with the students and staff and had made “the House” a “a nice place to go”.

### Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

Mentors and students interviewed tended to raise issues that were particular to their individual situation rather than to the program as a whole. Finding particular resources and ways of assisting with emotional problems were discussed. The mentors interviewed appeared quite resourceful and had eventually located what they needed. They also sought assistance from coordinators and other school support staff. The latter was more difficult for the primary school mentors who did not have easy access to support staff such as Chaplains or School Psychologists. One secondary school mentor had spoken to a social worker friend, the school Chaplain and others about how to handle her student’s problems. They had opened up other options of how to deal with issues but she was still conscious of “saying the wrong thing”. She now sees her role as more simply to “take the pressure off him, to demystify education for him - it can be enjoyable”. Continuing support from the coordinator was essential for her and for other mentors. She called her coordinator “a pivotal pin” - a happy, jovial person who can always squeeze a little more in.

The students were basically happy with their current situation. Some of the implementation issues they mentioned centred on students having an input. One boy said he preferred this year’s mentor who gave him choices, whereas last year his mentor selected material they would read. Others said they would like to do more activities they were interested in such as art or reading BMX magazines. Another boy would prefer a double period as one was not long enough. However, last year timetabling in two sessions a week had been tried for him but it had been too difficult to organise.

One issue highlighted in the literature and common to this and other programs selected for case studies is that of funding. From a general perspective, the SVP coordinator believes that the program needs an ongoing large private enterprise sponsor to ensure continuity of funding over the next few years. So far none has been found. One difficulty has been the concentration of corporate management in Sydney and Melbourne, and the apparent remoteness of Western Australia.

The schools visited all had to find funds for the program. The primary schools had received minimal funding through a District Retention and Participation grant, and the secondary schools incorporated it into their program for 'at risk' students or those with special needs. As previously stated, all school coordinators interviewed were doing the coordination of this program as a part of their regular duties and were not given a specific time allocation. At the city secondary school an experienced parent volunteer (part of the school's whole "Mentor Program") stated that the coordinator "needs help". It is a big job, not one that can be slotted in with others. She felt the school needed to allocate time for tasks such as linking up students and mentors and for monitoring the program. One coordinator said she did not have the time to apply for funding to get time for the program! This has several implications for how the programs operated, in particular for the training and support provided to mentors - seen as crucial in the literature and to those interviewed.

For example, the overall SVP administration maintains contact amongst mentors through training workshops and a quarterly newsletter, and contact amongst mentors at each school is openly encouraged. If mentors are not at the school at the same time this is sometimes difficult to achieve, so the schools are encouraged to have regular morning teas to recognise the volunteers and provide a forum for discussion. The coordinator at the city school stressed the importance of ongoing training and support for the mentors but said this takes time. Last year she had 4 periods a week to coordinate the program and was able to provide thank you morning teas. However, she has had no time to organise these this year and the training sessions were the only formal contact.

The mentors themselves had commented on the role of morning teas in making them feel welcome and valued in the schools. In particular one mentioned an end of year one where the students did the catering. At both primary schools the mentors were encouraged to all come at the same time and this allowed informal contact between mentors and with the parent coordinator who also came at this time. This was too difficult to manage at the secondary schools and in fact mentors were organised to come at different times because of a lack of space and resources. Informal contact and support between mentors was not such an issue for the rural area as most mentors knew each other in the community. Access to training workshops did seem to be more of an issue for them. A visit from experienced mentors from Perth, at the time of establishing SVP in this country area, was greatly appreciated by the mentors who went to that session.

At the secondary schools another time-consuming factor was negotiating a meeting time suitable for the mentors, students and the particular class teacher. One said this could take an hour per student and a coordinator needs good negotiation and organising skills. All tried to be flexible. In particular the rural secondary school had made some conscious organisational changes as the program had evolved. Notifying students and mentors if one was unable to attend was a definite issue in both secondary schools. The rural school now no longer uses first period as they couldn't let volunteers know if their student was absent. Now, with permission, they exchange phone numbers and each is asked to let the other know. It is hard to rely on school office staff to let a volunteer know if a student is absent, but it is important for the volunteers. Mondays are also no longer used for sessions as there are too many long

weekends and school organisation days. Notifying if a change of venue is needed is also a problem as students have to be found in class, mentors located, and alternative accommodation found - all very time-consuming in a large secondary school. However, someone is needed to check that pairs can meet as arranged. In a primary school the timetabling issue was not a great one but it was important that students did not miss a 'specialist' subject which might only be timetabled once a week.

Finding space in crowded schools for even two people to meet was an issue for all schools visited. The school with "the House" was best placed in this regard, although there was only one small room available so only one pair could really use it at a time. The other schools used different areas around the school - empty offices or classrooms, outside areas and, in one primary school, the sick bay (which did not look very appealing to the researchers!). The library was also used at all schools and was convenient for using resources but was often distracting when other classes were using it, and did not allow for privacy of meetings. When asked about supervision, this did not seem to be an issue for the coordinators. One said that the female mentors tended to want privacy, but others (mostly men) preferred to leave the door open or work in a visible place such as the library.

Another issue related to funding and therefore time constraints is that of the number of matches that a coordinator can support. All felt that there were more students in the school who would benefit from the program. The rural secondary coordinator had only arranged half the number of matches that were needed, because she wanted to be able to have personal contact with the volunteers. At the time of interviewing, the area coordinator was away on holidays, so recruiting at the Program level appeared to be on hold. More male mentors were needed and the schools could advertise for them but again this involved a time factor. Finding male mentors for boys seemed to be an issue in all schools. One male mentor said that there "seems to be never-ending supply" of boys for him to mentor.

Matching mentors and students is also raised in the SVP material (Frank, 1999). Although the program was set up to assist students at risk, only 37% mentors believed their skills and interests were being matched to the tasks they were assigned. This was evident from mentors interviewed who were obviously uncomfortable with their task of assisting with primarily social or emotional difficulties when their training and expectations had focussed on literacy problems. Others felt there was a greater need in the lower end of primary school so later difficulties could be prevented. One mentor, originally helping with the year 7 transition program had asked to do this and now worked with small groups of children in year 3.

One coordinator interviewed had a view of the program that seemed unusual when considering the literature and the experiences of the researchers over a large number of mentoring programs. Although she felt the program was extremely worthwhile, she felt that there was "a stigma" attached for the parents and students. Because the program was funded for "alienated" students she felt she could not advertise it or, for confidentiality reasons, use mentors who had any connection with the school. This is directly opposite to the views held by many others. She (and the other primary coordinator) was also worried about advertising for mentors as it could "attract the wrong people". One said she would like a "foolproof" way of recruiting volunteers. Interestingly there was no indication from the students or teacher

interviewed, those at their future secondary school, or apparently any feedback from parents, which indicated that anyone else had this idea of “stigma”. The coordinator did not seem open to suggestions about giving the program a positive name and identity. Perhaps she did not want to jeopardise the funding which was specifically for “alienated” students. However, Rotary was now helping recruit mentors and she was pleased with this.

A final issue raised by the coordinators was the attitude of teachers to the program. Obviously many, including those interviewed, are supportive. The coordinator concerned about stigma also was concerned that some teachers believe it's “a reward for naughty kids”. The other primary coordinator had a slightly different concern - teachers don't understand how scarce mentors are and think they can send out anyone for a mentor. Asking staff to prioritise students' needs was important. Also, some teachers might see having children receive extra help as a reflection on themselves. Rather than speaking to the whole staff about this, she preferred to deal with teacher resistance, demands or misconceptions indirectly “like water dripping on a stone”. She tried to persevere, show positives about the program, drop positive aspects into conversation, and be welcoming of mentors into the school.

## Summary

SVP is a good example of an intergenerational mentoring program that is school based and operated, with an organisation outside the school system providing expertise in recruitment, training and on-going mentor and school support. The program has developed a business plan and is planning for the future. It was evident from the comments of those interviewed that the mentors are working very effectively with their students. The schools valued the program and tried to show their support in various ways and endeavoured to overcome organisational difficulties such as timetabling and meeting places. SVP meets the needs of both the students and the older persons acting as mentors and links schools and students with their local community in a positive way. In particular, SVP has been able to harness the skills, experience and goodwill of older persons in the community.

As with other programs that use a separate organisation to support the school-based component, there are a few areas where problems may arise. While it is true that less needs to be done at the school level, there are still many organisational and support tasks necessary to ensure success at each location. In reality, schools have full responsibility for the program in the school and need to provide adequate time release for the coordinator who is the link person in the school. Individual support and training from the school coordinator is particularly important for mentors working with students who have multiple or major needs, and these may be the very students targeted in this intergenerational program. The schools visited were very conscious of the number of matches they could support without further resourcing. Centrally organised training provides a focus for the program and is cost effective in city locations, but may be less so in rural areas. There is more opportunity for mentors to “fall through the gaps”, due to inability to attend the SVP organised training sessions, and be expected to work without adequate training. Schools still need to take responsibility for ongoing and specific training of mentors. Providing adequate resourcing for the coordinator to support the mentors at the school level is a recurring theme in the literature and in this research project.

## Vocational Education Projects

### *Mentoring in Vocational Education for Students at Risk*

#### The Program

'Ready Set Go' is a South Australian Department of Education Training and Employment Vocational Education Strategy. In 1999 it funded a Mentoring Pilot Project aiming to investigate mentoring as a tool to enhance career education for secondary students at risk. An Education Department Curriculum Officer was appointed to develop and support the project, which was trialed in eight schools. Schools involved applied for funding, sent in Progress Reports and provided information for an independent evaluation report. Each school was funded with \$12-15,000, had its own local program manager, and developed a program to suit the needs of its particular location.

One unique aspect of this program is that although it is funded, supported and overseen by a central organisation (DETE), each school has been able to develop its own ways of assisting students. Many have linked with already established programs for students at risk, and the features of the individual projects vary considerably. For example, one school has linked its students with university and primary school students in a tripartite mentoring program based on activities at the local recreation centre. Another has involved mentors from the information technology industry, from TAFE and from the community in working with young women at risk to develop a web site. It is hoped that the links made with the mentors would open pathways and ease transition into TAFE. Another school used old scholars and SSO (School Support Officers) staff as mentors to complete tasks around the school.

Guidelines given to participating schools indicate that the diverse programs involved were connected through the following common principles:

- the programs are part of the public work of the school
- the programs work through connecting students to each other and the wider community
- adults, other than teachers, work with the students on learning programs that are curriculum based
- the programs are part of the core business of the school
- they also operate on the premise that both the mentor, and the young person being mentored, will gain some valuable (preferably accredited) learning as a result of being involved in this kind of partnership. (Abbott, Knight & Moody, 1998)

#### The Case Study

The pilot project selected for this case study was operating at a large outer Adelaide metropolitan secondary school in a disadvantaged area. Year 11 at risk students were targeted and they participated in VET pathways courses in music and horticulture. The aim was to link students with community mentors working in these industries so they could develop skills, obtain advice and hopefully work placements. Because this program was still being developed, the mentors and students had not yet been linked and so were not able to be

interviewed about their involvement in the program. Interviews were conducted at the school with the DETE Curriculum Officer supporting all the projects, and with the two staff (interviewed together) coordinating the program at this school. The Curriculum Officer was present during the other interviews and provided additional information and comments afterwards.

The school staff ('Margaret' and 'Steve') said the program had got off to a slow start at the school as they wanted to plan it carefully. There were 16 boys and 1 girl in the horticulture pathway, and 15 boys and 2 girls in the music pathway. These areas were selected as they felt there would be quite a few job opportunities in the local area and the students would find these pathways interesting. The horticulture students were able to select one of three groups. Some operated a shadehouse that provided an indoor plant service for classrooms and offices, others elected to repair a pond in the school grounds, and another group was going to pave and landscape a large, overgrown area in the school. Links had been made with brick paving companies, landscapers and the local council for assistance with planning and materials. The music students are involved in setting up a business of using recording studio equipment to produce CDs for musicians from local schools. These students are in classes four days a week and on the fifth day work in the school on their business. All students achieve TAFE modules and are also able to receive recognition for prior learning.

## Resourcing

DETE published an Information and Expression of Interest Proforma (Abbott et al., 1998) for schools which outlined the resourcing for the overall program. A total of approximately \$70,000 was to be available to schools to develop and implement their pilot during 1998 and 1999, and the distribution of this would depend on the needs, aims and contexts of each pilot. An additional \$25,000 was available to assist with the evaluation of the pilots and the dissemination of information allowing other schools to adapt the models. This is one of the few programs in which funding had been explicitly set aside at the program's inception for conducting an evaluation and for disseminating its findings.

Clear guidelines were given to all participating schools relating to underlying principles of operation, as well as the responsibilities of schools, program managers, mentors and students. Each pilot was required to submit a "Site Progress Report" giving a brief description of the program's operation, the resources used and a log of progress. The Curriculum Officer managing the Mentoring Pilots was available to schools and her role has been to support the schools in matters such as integrating the programs with current school courses, writing curriculum materials, managing finance and helping train mentors. She also holds regular meetings to bring together staff from the different pilot schools.

At the school visited, there are two staff members directly involved with the program. Margaret is an experienced teacher and is the VET Coordinator and Senior Student Counsellor at the school. As the VET Coordinator she oversees all the pathways of lower school courses. She also does subject counselling for senior students and has a teaching load. Coordinating the mentoring program is just one of the jobs which she "fits in". She says the time involved fluctuates. Steve interjected here and called her "superwoman". Steve was originally employed as a liaison officer for 30 hours per week through the Ready Set Go grant

to plan and develop contacts with local businesses. He is not a teacher and is a young man who has worked in both the horticulture and music industries. The school also now employs him as an Employment Officer to assist students with employment issues such as writing resumes. He is therefore now spending 14 hours per week in the liaison role for the mentoring project. This will enable him to continue in this project in a part time capacity until the end of the year.

Additional resources for the program have come from a variety of sources. Local brick paving companies have donated paving bricks, a landscaper is being approached for assistance and the local Council will provide trees. An older student in the course has had experience in waterproofing so he will provide expertise in repairing a pond. The school gave a grant of \$3000 to set up the music students' business and the school received an \$80,000 grant (for innovative use of technology) which enabled recording studio equipment to be purchased.

### The Mentors

Schools in the pilot projects were given clear guidelines relating to many aspects of the program's operation including the selection, screening and preparing of mentors. When the school was visited, they were almost ready to match the students and mentors. This process had begun with a number of steps. Steve had developed contacts with local businesses. A pamphlet about each pathway had been produced giving "Information for Industry" that outlined the goals of the program, plus benefits for the employers and their roles and responsibilities. Relationships had been fostered with a variety of industry personnel, some of whom had already come into the school to give talks to the students. Steve was intending to match up students and mentors according to their goals and interests. Depending on these, appropriate activities would be decided upon - they did not want to be too prescriptive. Steve would also take the students individually to visit the mentor's workplace and felt it was "no good forcing" a match.

Issues such as parent consent forms and industry insurance were being finalised. Induction for the mentors was being planned and would include duty of care, mandatory reporting, and mentor responsibilities. Students also needed preparation in relation to workplace issues such as harassment and protective behaviours. Induction of mentors will be done individually as a group session was considered too difficult for those running a busy small business, and frequent contact was already being made with them. In general, they were trying to keep "red tape" to a minimum as, particularly in the music industry, the prospective mentors might not be used to this and might be "turned off". Margaret and Steve said the response from both industries to the project had been excellent.

Each person interviewed had a different view of the ideal mentor. Steve (involved mostly in the music program and young himself) felt it was important to try and keep the mentors and students close in age as he felt older people were not as liberal. Closer ages would result in fewer barriers as they would have more in common such as clothing styles and be able to relate to their mentors and be more likely to listen to them. Margaret (older and more involved in the horticulture pathway) disagreed, and felt that personality was a more important factor. Many of the horticulture mentors would be older, experienced workers. The

Curriculum Officer suggested that the age gap was not so important for younger adolescents, but later adolescence and young adults, may be more influenced by a mentor's appearance and ways of talking. The Curriculum Officer also said that one of the key things for program success in all the projects was knowing what you want the mentor to do - "put that up front".

It appeared that both Steve and Margaret were themselves acting as mentors to the students. Both had informal access to students through their other roles in the school and knew them well. Margaret was also supporting Steve and guiding him through the steps of establishing a program. Both felt it was important to not try and get things done too quickly and to "be willing to cut your losses" if ideas don't work - for example one earlier idea for a horticulture project had been dropped. They said it was important to get the students' responses to ideas before implementing them.

### The Students

The students involved in the program at this school (and in most other pilot schools) were those at risk of not completing school and of being able to independently access community services. They tended to be failing in their grades or making poor progress and could be recommended by the class teacher or counsellor to do particular courses. The music students tended to self-select as this was an interest for many students already. The horticulture pathway has been less successful. Some students were very interested at the outset, and for others interest has increased but it has been "slow going" according to Steve.

The Curriculum Officer, having worked with students at risk in a number of capacities, reinforced the difficulties and issues in developing programs for this target group. For example if the program was perceived as being "out of sync" with the school, it would be seen as a way of keeping those kids away from what the main purpose of school is. Steve and Margaret agreed that it was generally difficult finding appropriate work experience for students at risk. Often their needs were not matched with the actual placement. It is difficult to draw out their interests - it is time consuming gaining their confidence and asking the right questions. There is no time in a regular classroom to do this so often arranged work experience is not relevant for them. It appears to the researchers that Margaret and Steve have gone to great lengths to get to know their students, develop trust, gain an understanding of their goals and interests, and plan appropriate workplace and mentoring experiences.

### Outcomes

Unfortunately, because of the stage of progress of this project when interviews were conducted, no mentors, students or teachers could be asked about the outcomes of the project. However, the three people interviewed were able to give an account of progress to date and a draft copy of the evaluation report sent to the researchers contains outcome data for the wider program (Hodgins, Goddard & Rigoni, 1999).

According to Steve, the music students were loving the program which had "opened their eyes" to the industry. So far three or four students in that pathway had been matched with mentors, the students having chosen where they wanted to go. One person in the music industry is already coming in and acting as a mentor to the group. He will later provide tutorials and be available to assist via the telephone.

Margaret agreed that the program was giving students a fuller idea of what jobs are actually like. Some students have shown more interest in school and their attendance has improved. In the horticulture pathway the focus has been on lots of group discussion, problem solving and decision making. The students have asked “when are we going to learn something?” Margaret can see that they are starting to think for themselves whereas before they were expecting to be told what to do. This has been a threatening situation for some more traditional teachers, who have been working with these students in other subject areas.

Outcomes indicated by the overall program evaluation (Hodgins et al., 1999) show that quality relationships had developed between students and their mentors with the students being given trust, responsibilities and skills. Students also worked with highly committed, empathic teachers and mentors who genuinely wanted to see these students succeed. Students’ self-confidence also improved. For many of these at risk students this would have been a unique experience. The mentoring had “the most direct impact in terms of students attaining employment, traineeships or pursuing vocational pathways” (p. 21). The aim of increased retention was achieved because students were doing programs in which they were interested and which led to specific employment related outcomes. Overall, Hodgins et al. (1999) concluded that the factors contributing to best practice for these mentoring projects were:

- quality relationships
- choice (of mentors, activities etc)
- working with the students’ interests and capabilities
- maintaining expectations of success of the students. (p. )

Mentors interviewed for the program’s evaluation indicated that they had benefited and appreciated the trust they and the students had for each other. More tangible benefits were proposed in the brochures given to prospective employers/mentors by the school visited for the case study. These included: access to a pool of highly trained workers for recruiting competent employees; development of skills for existing employees who supervise students in the workplace; promotion of a business within the school and local community through the newsletter which is sent to 930 families; and a chance to provide feedback on the curriculum to make education more industry relevant. Only time will tell whether the program realises these benefits for the mentors.

### Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

The issue of teacher reaction to this program, referred to briefly in the previous section, has been an issue for the participants. Margaret put the proposals before a staff meeting and received only one negative response. Despite the support of the school principal, some staff have expressed concern when seeing the students doing “non-traditional” things such as using the photocopier or other out of class activities.

Originally the music students were told they could wear casual clothes on the day they were running their business. However, some students have since been challenged and they were then told they would have to wear school uniform. This was a real issue for the students who suggested they could wear a special shirt or a badge. When Margaret approached the deputy on their behalf, they found that they would have to go through various committees at the school

to have permission to wear something different. The program staff have been able to use this potentially discouraging incident as a teaching opportunity related to operating in a work place. The students were told they would need to market themselves in the school to gain understanding and they have had to engage in problem solving to determine ways to change traditional practices and perceptions.

The staff involved readily saw opportunities for expanding and improving the mentoring project at this school. In particular, Margaret had many ideas for the horticulture pathway and is discussing these with the current students. One student has written a letter to the principal and sent a plan for redeveloping part of the school grounds. The school does not have a gardener but they are hoping to use the two handymen as mentors. Margaret said, "You're only limited by your imagination". Margaret and Steve continued to raise the profile of the program through brochures and via the school newsletter.

The external evaluation raised several issues common to the pilot programs. These concerned:

- sustainability - how to maintain funding and continuity of mentors and staffing (some programs were viewed as dependant on the personalities and skills of the school staff involved)
- managing departmental and school regulations such as duty of care
- a belief by teachers generally that mentors should be paid. (Hodgins, et al., 1999)

The last point was peculiar to some of the pilot projects and was not raised in other case studies. Perhaps this was because teachers could see the commitment needed by mentors, many of whom were running their own businesses or were already working hard, as well as the extent of the special needs of the students targeted in these projects. Duty of care was a particular issue when the programs involved students meeting with mentors off the school site, and it didn't fit under the banner of Work Experience.

## Summary

The Ready Set Go Mentoring Pilot Project is an example of a program supporting students at risk to improve school retention and to facilitate transition to the workplace or further training. It displays several of the features of successful programs as suggested in the literature.

Firstly, it is a well-funded program, which includes provision for evaluation and program improvement. The central coordinator played a crucial role. She was able to support the projects in a practical way and also provided personal support for the staff. She linked program staff with each other and with other relevant people. Participants were, however, still able to remain autonomous in many ways.

Clear guidelines were provided about the goals of the program, the roles of participants and reporting and accountability requirements. However, the structure was flexible enough that schools could make their own decisions about the specific nature of their own program based on the needs and interests of their students and the local resources available.

Each project also seemed to reflect the qualities of the overall program in the way students were treated; clear goals and procedures, respect for individual needs and interests, and

encouragement of autonomous decision making. These features seemed particularly relevant for the target population – students at risk of long-term unemployment who had experienced little success in their previous ten or so years of schooling.

## **A School-To-Work Program**

### ***A School – TAFE Mentoring Partnership with External Coordination***

#### The Program

Information about this program was originally obtained through a search of the internet which located the Dusseldorp Skills Forum web page (<http://www.dsf.org.au>). This particular program in regional NSW links secondary school students with mentors from the community who are trained through a course at the local TAFE college. The main goal of the program is for students to develop School-to-Work plans. Local mature community members, who might be unemployed or working part-time because of restricted employment opportunities in the area, assist the students in identifying employment and training options, planning for their futures and learning about the workplace. Through the program both mentors and students are expected to develop self-confidence, self-esteem and explore employment opportunities.

Twenty two students from years 9 and 10 volunteered to join the pilot program in 1998 as an 'add on' to the regular curriculum (18 completed the program). Mature age students from the local TAFE Outreach program were later invited to assist students as mentors and received some training. An informal gathering was scheduled once a week at the school for mentors and students to meet and they were also encouraged to communicate outside school hours by phone and in person. The pilot program was completed in 1998 with a celebratory function in which participants talked about the skills they had gained in the program and received a certificate.

Dusseldorp Skills Forum (DSF) is a not for profit organisation with the broad charter of stimulating innovation in employment and educational practice. A Project Manager from DSF, after being invited to talk at the school about employment opportunities, was able to link people from the school and the TAFE, develop and support the program.

#### The Case Study

The DSF Project Officer organised a visit to the school as well as interviews with one of the coordinators at the school, a teacher, three mentors and four students who were all involved in the 1998 program. The mentors came especially for the interviews and the students stayed to be interviewed after the school had closed early for the day. The Project Director took the students home after their interviews and hosted the researchers at her house in between the school closing and an evening meeting. Once again, people went beyond what was expected.

We were also invited to an Information Evening for parents, students and mentors who would be commencing the 1999 program in July. This year 25 students have applied to join. Alterations to the program have been made based on the evaluation of the pilot project. The main differences are that the mentors will be involved from the beginning and will have completed a TAFE training course.

## Resourcing

The DSF Project Director played a large role in organising and supporting the program. Her salary was paid by DSF. The coordinator at the school level worked in the program as part of her role in career education (she estimated it took about a day a week) and two teachers agreed to run the program as an extra to their workload. Department of Education pre-vocational funding provided \$1000 which was used to compensate the teachers a little, to provide materials for the students as well as bus trips to various sites, a training day, and barbecues for participants. For 1999 \$1000 is also available and the school has reorganised some teaching time, but all agree it could not be done without the DSF Project Officer's time. Mentors provide their services free of charge.

The school supports the program in a number of ways, such as photocopying the materials used and the school newsletter publicises the program. Staff in the school office are also important as they welcome and farewell the mentors. The coordinator at the school said that it was important to have enthusiastic and innovative staff in the program.

## The Mentors

The mentors in 1998 were involved in the TAFE Outreach Program, which mainly caters for mature unemployed people in the area. Most students are aged 40-55 and have been forced out of the workplace by redundancies (Dusseldorp, 1999). In 1998 the mentors were trained by the DSF Project Director and provided with a comprehensive handbook (with information and space for recording information and evaluating the program outcomes) and opportunities for support, but from this year the training will be modified.

An organisation has been formed called Active Retirees & Mentors (ARM) which links with a number of other projects and community agencies in the region. ARM will recruit mentors, select and screen them, and require completion of a generic TAFE course of three hours per week for 6 weeks. Topics will include interpersonal skills, effective listening, conflict resolution, problems faced by today's youth, managing difficult behaviour, child protection legislation, confidentiality, employment and training opportunities, and mentor roles, rights and responsibilities.

Three mentors were interviewed to gain their viewpoints. All had heard about the program through TAFE and had undergone a police clearance and interviews. Activities with their students varied depending on the individuals. Two helped their students make contacts related to employment interests. One was very disappointed when her student failed to continue with a holiday job she had helped her find and another mentor was originally matched with two boys but one dropped out. The mentors were all positive about the program and thought it was important to listen to the students, to offer options rather than advice, to share experiences and knowledge and to encourage students to have the confidence to take responsibility for actions such as contacting people and speaking to strangers. One mentor said it was a great relief to be able to pass on his knowledge. All intended to be involved again and some were helping to recruit and induct new mentors.

The matching of mentors and students was basically through self-selection. Everyone gathered in the library and each said a little bit about themselves and their interests. This was rather stressful for everyone, including the organising teachers! After a short time, informal conversations developed and each mentor ended up matched with one or two students.

### The Students

The year 9 and 10 students in both 1998 and 1999 self-selected for the program. The four students interviewed gave a number of reasons why they joined the program: to explore career prospects, the encouragement of parents, an excuse to get out of regular classes and having enjoyed similar programs. The DSF Project Officer and a teacher prepared the students by reminding them to be polite and discussing how to interact with adults visiting the school. It was emphasised that the students were lucky to be having this opportunity.

One student interviewed explained that the mentor program started because teachers “couldn’t help everyone”. He said that he and his mentor talked mostly about school work and the mentor gave him advice, but they did talk about other things. They also worked on interview skills. From being “absolute strangers” they became “good friends”. He added that the mentors were always “there for us”, gave ideas and helped everyone keep motivated. The other students described similar activities. One student was thought to have dropped out of the program on finding out that work was actually required.

Another student proudly showed the folder she had made with relevant career pamphlets and photos of herself doing some work experience. She was very impressed that her mentor visited her on work experience to see how she was going. One boy said the barbecues held throughout the year were good as they could get to know everyone in the program. He also was delighted as his mentor encouraged him to contact an internationally famous person in his area of interest and that person spent about 20 minutes talking with him.

### Outcomes

The school coordinator had reservations at the beginning of the program about the use of mentors. She was concerned that the mentors would not be able to manage the students or take them in the right direction, or that the students would be too judgemental and not respond to older people. Having observed the students’ and mentors’ commitment and satisfaction, however, she expressed embarrassment about her earlier doubts. At the Presentation Night she noticed that the mentors physically stood beside their students and this reflected the support the relationships provided. Students from last year were looking forward to meeting their mentors again at a reunion barbecue planned for the following week.

One of the teachers stated that being involved in the program was an “exciting experience”. Students asked for her help and told her about their experiences so that she felt she also had a mentoring relationship with them - different from her normal class teacher relationships. She wasn’t sure about learning outcomes for the students and rated them as maybe 2 out of 10 but said she “didn’t care” as the interpersonal outcomes were rated as 12 out of 10! The Presentation Night evolved as a celebration of the relationships. There were also some surprises with certain students becoming involved in school activities such as the School Council and a drama production. Some parents had indicated to her that they were proud of

what their children had achieved and she felt important links with the community had been made. Friendships also developed between students in the program.

One student felt that all the students had gained in confidence - all students interviewed certainly displayed confidence when speaking to the researchers. He gave the illustration of the change from no-one wanting to talk at the first big meeting to the final presentation night where all students made a speech. He had made a new friend in the program. His parents were supportive, but busy so hadn't asked many questions during the program. They were "shocked" to see him talking to a "big executive" on the presentation night. Some students said they had also learnt to be more accepting of others and that it was good to have someone to talk to, who wasn't a teacher or parent. All students saw the presentation night as really important to the program. They rated the program as 8-9 out of 10 in regard to learning outcomes and 8-10 out of 10 for interpersonal gains.

Personal enjoyment and the students' gains in skills and confidence were seen as positive outcomes by all the mentors interviewed. One thought it was important that the students had someone to listen to who had more time than busy parents. Learning outcomes for students were rated as 8 out of 10 and she felt these would improve as she gained more experience. For an interpersonal rating, she said this would vary according to individuals - the time was not really long enough and some students were just in it "for a lark". Personally she enjoyed being part of the program and was "delighted" that she could help someone. One of the male mentors expressed a sense of fulfilment and rated the program as 10 out of 10 for himself personally.

The "family atmosphere" was seen to be important with mentors having contact with each other at TAFE and other places. The barbecues, involving all participants contributed to this atmosphere. The mentors felt a major part of the school and enjoyed the interaction with teachers. There was evidence that the school actively appreciated them with the office staff being welcoming, by having tea and coffee available, and through having arrangements in place to notify them if their student was ill. As the school coordinator said the mentors "need to know they are supported in the school by having a regular, consistent arrangement for their visit".

School staff also remarked that the mentors supported each other in practical ways such as sharing transport. Their partners also sometimes came along and supported the program. The confidence of the mentors improved - one person noticeably dressed more carefully as the program progressed.

### **Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements**

It was evident to the researchers, as in other successful programs, that the participants in this project were continually monitoring and evaluating its operation and making adjustments as needed. As the school coordinator said, it is important for the program to allow for flexibility for the participants. For example, the project did not originally include mentors. When they came, it was decided to have gatherings such as the barbecues. (According to one student they still need to find someone who can cook sausages!) Parents did not meet mentors until the Presentation Night last year, but this year they were included in the Information Night for

students and mentors. One-to-one pairings seemed more successful than a mentor being paired with two students and an effort was being made to recruit more mentors for this year so one-to-one pairings would be possible.

Some practical problems arising last year were addressed at the time, and other modifications will be made this year. For example, the program began on a rotating timetable but this was too hard to organise and was changed to a regular time. This year the students will miss out on one session of sport a week and this allows easier staff timetabling and means the students do not have to catch up on missed work which was seen by some to be a concern last year (Dusseldorp, 1999). To hold indoor gatherings for everyone was difficult as there was a problem having food in the library where the program operated. Using the library also meant other students could not have access to it. Locating the program activities is still an issue.

The teacher interviewed said that organising the program was too big a job for a teacher, especially with continuing Departmental requirements for the development of new programs for at risk students in schools. The school coordinator and DSF Project Officer, who was able to come in and out of the school with no classes to worry about, were able to offer support to the mentors. Coordinating the mentors and contacting them by phone was a major task done by the DSF Project Officer. This year two new teachers will run the actual course and a teacher involved in 1998 will coordinate the program at the school. She will be available to mentors before and after they work with their students and will organise excursions. Two hours per week will be provided for this.

Feedback from mentors and students interviewed tended to be about their specific concerns rather than those relating to the operation of the program as a whole. A few issues revolved around communication. One mentor agreed with the school coordinator that this year the program is more “professionally organised”, as last year the mentors did not know what to expect. Another mentor who had originally completed a literacy tutoring course at TAFE, said she would rather help in this area. One student said that perhaps the mentors could know a little more about the students before they came into the program. Students felt rejected if their mentor didn’t turn up and mentors had no one if kids didn’t come. This was an issue even though each pair had the other’s home phone numbers. A couple of students would have liked more time with their mentors, especially in the weeks leading up to the presentation night.

From the researchers’ perspective the Information Night for participants in the 1999 program was very well organised. Background to the project and to mentoring in general was given, then students and mentors from the original program spoke about their experiences and the enthusiastic teachers for 1999 explained the program activities. Refreshments followed question time and people were able to mingle and ask further questions. Those at the meeting included staff from another TAFE, who were also setting up a mentor training course. The focus of the night sometimes appeared to be on the benefits of mentoring - particularly on the development of positive interpersonal relationships. It was felt that this was appropriate for the adults attending but might have been rather overwhelming for the students who had applied to join a program primarily to develop School-to-Work Plans. This raises the issue discussed in the literature of differing expectations of participants. This can sometimes lead to difficulties and it will be interesting to see how this year’s students fare in the program.

Further mentoring programs are planned for the school that will focus more on students at risk, but there is still discussion as to whether this type of program would be suitable for those students. One of the teachers involved last year felt that students at educational risk would not be appropriate, as students needed to be well-organised and to have enough self-esteem to get on with the activities. A mentor commented that including students with emotional problems might do more damage [to the students]. The DSF Project Officer agreed that it was more positive to start with students who do not have particular problems.

## Summary

The School-to-Work program described here illustrates several features of successful mentoring programs outlined in the literature. Once again enthusiastic staff and a competent coordinator with time available were managing the program. All participants were involved in ongoing formal and informal evaluation of the program's operation with the aim of improvement. Mentors were trained and supported in a number of ways and the school made a real effort to show its appreciation. Mentors also supported each other and were used to recruit and induct new mentors. Whole group events such as barbecues and especially the successful Presentation Night were features of this program. The program was presented in a positive light to students -as a privilege - and they had to apply to join it. Parents were involved last year and will be involved from the beginning in 1999.

Issues faced by the program are also illustrative of those suggested in the literature. The ever present need for funding, especially for program staff time was evident. Without the DSF Project Officer, the support of the school and the good will of the teachers involved (and the students who had to do this as an extra course and make up time in missed subjects), this program could not operate. It was amazing what was done with \$1000 - the only 'official' funding.

Participants withdrawing from programs are always a concern. Unrealistic expectations on the part of both students and mentors may have contributed to some unsuccessful pairings last year, as could the matching of more than one student with a mentor. This year mentors will have more extensive training, but finding enough mentors for the students wanting to be involved seems still to be difficult.

A unique aspect of the program is the way it links different community groups and is able to meet the needs of both. The independent role of the DSF Project Officer is crucial in this and she is planning to develop, with the assistance of community members, further mentoring programs in the area which will continue to address the particular needs of this region.

## **Enterprise Education: A School Business Club**

### ***One School using Business Mentors***

#### The Program and The Case Study

Enterprise Education consists of learning activities designed to help an individual “develop into a more active and self-reliant adult in a rapidly changing world” (Idczak & Shea, 1995, p. 2). The program selected for this case study originated and operates within a coeducational private school in the Sydney central business district. The school’s location prompted the formation in 1995 of a School Business Club (SBC) as part of the school’s Enterprise Education program. Both boys and girls from years 7-12 participate in the SBC as an extra curricular activity involving in-school time as well as weekends and holidays. The SBC aims to give students an understanding of business and to develop networks between the students and members of the business community. Facilitated by the school’s Director of Enterprise Education, students initiate various projects with the support of appropriate business and community mentors. As one of the school’s information leaflets says, enterprise education “is about training and providing the entrepreneurs of the future”.

For the case study, the school’s Director of Enterprise Education (Robert), the Enterprise Education Consultant (Diane) and five students from years 11 and 12 were interviewed. The students were interviewed in two groups during their lunch time. Once again, the researchers were welcomed and participants happily shared their experiences of the program. Diane was a mentor for a previous project, and this year is a professional consultant for the current project.

The current SBC project was only one of a number of initiatives, which the participants wanted to discuss. Their enthusiasm for past and future activities was very evident. In 1997 the SBC successfully tendered for three Federal Government projects. One of these was to launch the Federal Government’s Enterprise Education Awareness Raising package – “Making it Happen”. Plans are already underway for next year’s ventures.

This year’s project involves raising funds and awareness for the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games and all were busy preparing for two large scale fundraising events. Staff from the Sydney Paralympics Organising Committee (SPOC) and other organisations acted as mentors to the students to assist with the events. All students in the SBC are involved in different aspects of the events and older students coordinate each committee. Students are also involved in activities such as making presentations to service groups (eg Rotary) in order to develop business links and sponsorship.

#### Resourcing

Robert’s role as Director of Enterprise Education in the school is only one of his responsibilities - he is also head of Economics and Geography. He is allocated three periods a week to the SBC but says it “really fills the whole timetable”. Diane also puts in many more hours than she is actually paid for and works for a lower rate than a consultant would normally

expect. Mentors volunteer their time and the students seek out sponsors for goods and services. The whole ethos of the school supports Enterprise Education and the SBC.

### The Mentors

Each committee has one paralympics mentor and other mentors as needed – for example to assist with graphic design and advertisements. Students were paired with SPOC members and spent time one-to-one brainstorming ideas and issues for the project. They mostly now use phone or email contact. One boy said finding a regular time to call his mentor was difficult and most seemed to need help from a variety of sources. However, one boy said his mentor spoke to him on the phone at home and they discussed ideas. Another said he was able to run his ideas “past his mentor” and the mentor would then “mould them”.

Robert and Diane have many connections and experience with community and business organisations. They generally meet the mentors in advance and approach well-known people who may be on government committees, in organisations such as Rotary or the Chamber of Commerce, or parents from the school. It seemed to the researchers that the business community mentors were supportive and helpful but sometimes very busy or difficult to contact and it was often Robert and Diane who were the primary mentors, assisting and supporting the students in their networking. The boys’ comments confirmed this.

### The Students

Any students can join the SBC – there are no selection criteria. However, they are not allowed to use SBC activities as an excuse for not doing school work or for being late, and it does require enthusiasm and time commitment. Many, but not all, students are taking economics type subjects and there are plans to extend the club to primary students. The five boys interviewed for this project were all committee coordinators and were thoughtful, articulate young men who had joined the SBC for various reasons such as wanting to learn about setting up their own business.

Contact with mentors varied and appeared to be very task focused from the boys’ perspective. One boy said he knew his mentor fairly well as he had helped him develop a web page and the technology for a fundraising auction. One of the coordinators of a large one-day event, with Robert’s help, had spoken to several people who had organised similar days and another said his main mentor now was Diane. Another said it had been important for him that his mentor had been willing to give up his time to train and motivate him and a relationship had developed which allowed him to draw upon the mentor’s knowledge and experience.

The SBC took up quite an amount of the boys’ time. One said “Easter didn’t exist” and that although they were timetabled in to have free periods, “there were no such things”. One boy said it was difficult to juggle everything because as well as his major role in SBC, he was in his final year of school, a prefect, involved in sport and in the school drama production! The boys planned to use the forthcoming holidays to work on the project and hoped things would be quieter after July.

## Outcomes

Robert and Diane were very enthusiastic about the SBC and clearly enjoyed their involvement with it. Diane said she enjoyed “the vitality” of the students and it helped fuel her own creativity. Robert also expressed his personal satisfaction and felt that the SBC helped students create their own futures through understanding career paths and developing a variety of skills. In particular he could see students grow in self-esteem, confidence and public speaking skills. Diane also gave the example of the students learning how to put a large event together - from the broad structure to the fine details. One mentor, living in the ACT, met with the students every time he came to Sydney on business and said to Robert that it was important to “help these kids - the next generation”. Enterprise Education in the school, including the SBC, is continuing to expand with organisations approaching the SBC for fundraising assistance, and new students wanting to join.

The students interviewed were able to see numerous benefits from their involvement with the SBC and their mentors. One said he had learnt “things you can’t learn in a classroom” and another boy agreed with this - “the text book is so narrow”. One said his public speaking had improved every time he went to a company or spoke at a meeting. Other outcomes stated were; developing interacting and negotiating skills, making contacts for when you leave school, finding out what the employers want, learning how to adapt your ideas through talking to your mentor, learning “business conversation” which is “different from ordinary conversation”, and dealing with problems which arise. They had “real world” experience. The boys said their families were proud of them and also offered time and support.

## Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

For the enterprising people interviewed for this case study, impediments were seen as problems to be overcome through creativity and seeking out of resources. Finding enough time to follow through all the exciting ideas coming from the participants was something of an issue. They all put a great deal of their own time into ensuring the success of the projects. Robert said that you could multiply the time you expected anything to take by six to find out how much was actually needed.

The boys (and the staff) did not seem to mind the time commitment required. As Robert said, the only tangible “credit” the boys get out of it is networking and a certificate. The idea of the SBC being extra-curricular instead of something for which they received academic credit did not seem to be an issue for the boys when raised by the researchers. They said it could be incorporated into the Business Studies subject, but they were not taking this. Robert said a couple of parents had not wanted their kids to lose any school time so they were not allowed to join the SBC. Mostly however, people were willing to devote their time. It was important not to “tread on the toes of other teachers” - some were flexible whereas others expected students to be in classrooms all the time.

One important issue for all participants was that the ideas came from the students themselves. It was then up to them to find out if they would work and modify them if necessary. Both the staff and students spoke of the idea of trust. The students appreciated that they were trusted to go out and meet high-profile community and business people, and Robert and Diane

endeavoured to show the students that they were trusted and to give them the opportunity to make real decisions. One example of this was when Robert was showing the researchers around the school. A young man politely interrupted to check out an idea he had just had for one of the events to see if he had permission to adapt an entertainment item. He was encouraged to do so.

Changing the image of Vocational Education was seen by Robert to be important as it assisted students to gain key competencies for lifelong learning. Many see it as second rate. He felt the basic concepts of the SBC could work anywhere at any level.

## Summary

The School Business Club uses mentoring as a tool to assist the students to develop in a number of ways. Students are asked to make real decisions about real events and do so with information and support provided by mentors in the community and in the school. As with all other case studies, as well as gaining skills and knowledge particular to the program's goals, they also gained in self-esteem and confidence. The success of this program was evident from the successful gaining of tenders and their completion and the continuing interest of the community and of the school students. From the perspectives of the participants and the researchers this program was characterised by the words "creativity", "trust" and "passion".

The program also has a number of features of successful mentoring programs in general. The program's goals were compatible with those of the school (in fact the SBC students had compiled a business plan for the school). Those coordinating the program were enthusiastic and supportive. They got to know the students as individuals and were able to encourage their interests and abilities as well as assist with weaknesses. Mentors were selected carefully and willingly gave of their time and expertise and developed appropriate relationships with the students (in this instance that of business colleagues). Because of the nature of this program and the individuals participating, funding was not such an issue, but finding time to put ideas into place certainly was.

## **One School and a Bank**

### ***Mentoring for Underachievers through a School-Business Partnership***

#### **The Program and The Case Study**

This mentoring program was a partnership between a small inner city high school in New South Wales and a bank. The development of the 1998 pilot program, and the thoughts and experiences of some of its participants were documented by ABC Inside Story as *Two Tribes* and shown on national television on 18 May 1999. The documentary portrays the program as a means of bringing together two worlds that never meet and beginning the process of breaking down the stereotypes. It introduces the program as “a story about trust, or the lack of it, in a divided city”. The two worlds are rich and poor, adult and child, bankers and difficult kids, with “nothing in common except a bad reputation”. Background gained from this documentary was supplemented by a telephone interview with the Deputy Principal of the school who was also the school coordinator of the program.

The program appears to have had a serendipitous beginning. The school was developing ideas for a program to assist underachieving students, when the bank approached the school with some similar ideas. The program was planned and implemented jointly by the school and the bank with one coordinator from each site. Both saw they had something to gain from the partnership: the school wanted to extend the life goals of the students, improve their self-esteem and social skills, and school attendance; and the bank wanted to help, and in so doing gain a better understanding of people in the community. There were three phases in the program; training, team building, and working together on projects.

#### **Resourcing**

The coordinator from the school was released for three periods per week to run two different programs in the school. The coordinator from the bank, and the mentors, were salaried bank employees who participated in their working time. On many occasions they went back to work after activities with the students. The school coordinator in 1999 is not given any time release, except for the hour per fortnight for the mentoring activities, which fits into his teaching timetable. In effect, the program costs the school very little. The bank paid for the incidentals, a canoe trip and dinner at a restaurant.

#### **The Mentors and The Students**

The bankers were volunteers from the nearby financial market division of the bank. A police check was carried out on all the mentors for child protection purposes. The students were nominated by school staff. From the school’s point of view the program caters for students who come from a disadvantaged background and are underachieving. They don’t have particular behaviour problems, just need a boost. Year 10 and 11 students were targeted because it is an important time for them in making decisions about what they want to do in life. Each of the participants had to agree to commit six months to the program.

The mentors and students attended separate training sessions at the beginning of the school year. The mentors spent a day learning about their new role, aspects of child development, and about the education system and school routines and procedures. The students learned communication skills and goal setting. There were 14 students and 18 mentors. The extra mentors were trained to allow continuous relationships for the students in case any of the bankers withdrew due to business commitments. The two coordinators met and worked on matching each student with a banker. The first meeting occurred at the school and it was an opportunity for each pair to have a general chat about themselves and for the bankers and parents to meet. Afterwards, the school principal was astonished with the success of the first meeting and remarked that all the students turned up, some hadn't stopped talking all afternoon, and everyone was very positive.

The team building phase began with a canoeing expedition on a weekend. The canoes were two people canoes so that the pairs had to work together. A trainer first showed everyone how to handle the canoe and then they all trekked down river. Activities in the team building phase were not all one-to-one, and many group activities were organised to enable relationships across the group to develop. Another aim was to give students the opportunity of being 'expert' sometimes and mentors at other times, so resisting the idea that the mentors had come to fix all the problems. The 'meetings' alternated between the school and the bank and occurred every second Thursday afternoon. This time was less busy for the bankers and was at a time when the year 11s didn't miss any school. The year 10 students missed one school period. Other activities included a tour of the school, followed two weeks later by a tour of the bank. This enabled each pair to enter each other's world and ask questions. Over the next weeks the group participated in a range of team building activities, including role plays (one called "two tribes"), bridge building with limited materials, and trivia quizzes.

The third phase involved projects, which the mentor and student chose and worked on together. The documentary shows the ups and downs of four pairs as they worked on a remote control boat, a photographic history of the area, a rocket, and an outfit for each of them. During this time mentors and students talked about a range of issues such as expectations, different careers, what going to university was like and using particular talents. It was explained to the mentors that they didn't have to finish the project, it was a medium through which the relationship could be fostered. Apparently the mentors were "driven", and being used to meeting timelines most projects were completed. Many pairs arranged meetings out of school, and in some cases visited each other's homes in order to complete their projects.

The culmination of the program was a presentation night held in an "impressive room" upstairs at the bank, when each mentor and student stood up together and said what they had done. It was followed by a meal in a nearby restaurant. Invitations were issued and it was explained to students that they needed to wear something nice. At the dinner, mentors continued the mentoring role by explaining some of the items on the menu. Pairs had been asked if they wanted to meet again and continue the relationship. Those featured in the documentary all thought they would, but not before reflecting on what their role would be.

## Outcomes

The program was evaluated in a number of ways in terms of its expressed aims (the written report was not available at the time of writing). The mentors and students completed self-evaluation questionnaires on several occasions, the supervisors of the mentors and the parents of students completed survey questionnaires and the school analysed attendance and other schools records. As each of the coordinators kept informal contact with their charges, they also had anecdotal information from their informal discussions. Evidence indicates that the students improved their school attendance, thought they would recommend the program to others, felt better able to achieve, rated higher on the self-esteem items in the questionnaire, had less in-school referrals (in comparison with others in previous years), and anecdotal information from teachers suggested the students had improved their approaches to study. The bankers also reported improved morale in the bank, and after the showing of the documentary, received positive feedback from customers that they supported the bank doing something worthwhile in the community.

The school coordinator thought one of the elements that contributed to the success of the program was the big social difference between the mentors and the students. He thought that the mentors had to work hard to make the relationship work, they were committed and had to change their perspectives. He believed the impact wouldn't have been as great if the students had been used to people in business. The documentary portrayal focused on some of the social differences and the changing views of the participants.

## Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

The parents were invited to a meeting early in the program and asked for consent for their son or daughter to participate and attend the activities at the bank on specific dates. However, every time the pairs decided to have an extra meeting, parent permission had to be obtained. To enable this to happen quickly, the bank was given a generic permission note, which was completed with the details of the outing and faxed to the school. Parent permission was then obtained (by phone if time was short) and a copy faxed back to the bank, usually within a day.

Matching of mentors and mentees is always difficult, but when social distance is built in particular care needs to be taken. Thus, the matching was carried out after the students and mentors had been to the training sessions and the coordinators had been able to observe them and talk with them about the program. The group activities early in the program were also an opportunity to observe the pairs and it was thought evidence of them not getting on would come out during that time.

In 1999, the program is running again with a different group of students and mentors and a different school coordinator. It is proving more difficult, reportedly because of the particular group of students. It may also be that everyone has high expectations, given the success of the program in 1998.

The making of the documentary was an added element in this program and caused some angst initially. It appears to have originated from a chance meeting between the film maker and someone from the bank. There were apparently some horrified reactions that the bank

wanted it filmed, and there was some concern about motives. However, the two people who carried out the filming were very low key and over the time became members of the group. They also made a promotional video for the school with some of the extra footage. Although the documentary was a one-off, it is likely that a business (and a school for that matter), may want to use its involvement in a program of this kind for promotional purposes. This would need to be negotiated up front so that all participants are informed and protected.

## Summary

This program illustrates the way a school and a local business can link together with mutual benefits. The target group of students, although disadvantaged, was not seen to be highly at risk - and these students may normally miss out on special programs. There were several features evident which are common to successful programs. The program clearly articulated the outcomes wanted from the mentoring and set out to structure the experience so that the outcomes were achieved. Although pairs were formed, the group activities ensured students and mentors had opportunities to make multiple friendships. Parents were also involved at several points in the program and were also enabled to make contact with the “other world”. In the words of one of the students, “it was fun learning about another person’s environment”.

## **Sports Challenge Australia**

### ***An Externally Organised Mentoring Program available to Schools for Students at Risk***

#### **The Program**

Sports Challenge differs from other mentoring programs in the case studies in several ways. The program is managed outside the school system by an independent organisation that trains a group of mentors to deliver a sports-based program to schools. The coach/mentors are paid, and work with small groups of at risk students rather than on a one-to-one basis.

The Sports Challenge Australia Program began in 1990 in Western Australia as a response by its director, Dr Garry Tester and others, to concerns about increasing youth suicide and the lack of preventative programs giving young people access to long term relationships with trusted adults. Initially the focus was on basketball for reasons of popularity and accessibility. There was great admiration among young people for American basketball stars and the associated clothes and music. Basketball can be played by both girls and boys, and does not need special clothing or extensive equipment. Furthermore, almost all schools had a basketball court of some kind.

Since its beginnings, the program has continually grown and developed (see Delaney & Woods, 1998, for details). In 1998, the program had 68 coach/mentors, who made contact with 10,000 students and operated in a range of locations from remote communities to detention centres. In 1999 the program has expanded interstate and overseas, and it is expected that this growth will continue. Depending on the location and the particular needs of the participants, the program can offer several models that vary in content and delivery. There are some features common to all versions of this program:

- students are selected using the Song & Hattie Self-Concept questionnaire - the lowest scoring students are identified and offered the program;
- the reason given to students and parents for selection is that the students are “not reaching their full potential” - never that they have low self-esteem;
- school staff are briefed as to the purposes of the program and play a part in the final selection of students and the nature of the activities;
- one coach/mentor works with a group of 12 students, and two groups generally combine (where possible with a male and female coach);
- the coach/mentors are paid and have all played sport at an elite level and have received training and materials for this program;
- the program has a sport focus and does aim to encourage students to develop their physical skills, but its main focus is to develop self-esteem and life skills and so it also includes other activities such as goal setting, problem solving, and conflict resolution;
- the coach/mentors contact the school after the program’s conclusion through postcards and telephone contact, students are encouraged to contact the coach/mentors by mail or email and such contacts are always followed up (setting up an email chat line is currently being investigated);

- a return visit by coach/mentors at the end of the year occurs to renew contacts and follow up on goal setting activities.

### The Case Study

The researchers visited a primary school, which had recently participated in the program in an intensive delivery mode. It was located in a very disadvantaged outer metropolitan area of Sydney and was one of four neighbouring primary schools jointly hosting the program. The Principal, a teacher, the Aboriginal Education Assistant, and three students were interviewed at the school. Interviews were also conducted in Western Australia with the Director of Sports Challenge Australia (Dr Garry Tester) and four coach/mentors who had worked at the NSW school.

The particular model of the program used in the New South Wales schools involved a group of four coach/mentors running the program 'on location' over four weeks at four primary schools. Visits to the schools were rotated and the target group (a total of 52 students from years 4-6 at the school visited) received 4 sessions per week. All year 6 students had two goal setting sessions. The program concluded with a Gala Day where students from all contributing schools played sport with the coach/mentors and local high profile athletes. Prominent people from the local community also attended.

### Resourcing

The program has received funding from a number of sources over the years and acquiring it is an ongoing task for the Director. At present some government funding (17% of the program's costs) comes from the Education Department of Western Australia and from the Ministry of Sports and Recreation. In addition about 20 sponsors provide financial or in kind resources. For example gifts of basketballs to schools and clothing for the coach/mentors are provided by sponsors as is free internet access.

Participating schools also pay for the program. An average primary school pays \$2250 and a secondary school \$4200. The total cost to the New South Wales group of schools was \$5000, and this represented a large amount for them to find. The Principal at the school visited had to apply for funding from different sources and also received support from the local community. For example a local company provided a car for the athletes and the local butcher and baker supplied sausages and buns for the Gala Day barbecue. The principals of the schools coordinated the local implementation of the program, which involved meeting to organise the timetabling of the program and planning the related activities. The Principal of the school visited assumed the major coordinating function, which involved a range of additional jobs such as booking motel rooms and collecting the athletes from the airport. She agreed that she had put a lot of extra time and effort into organising it, but said a lot also came out of it.

### Program Staff

The Sports Challenge Program itself currently has a number of paid and unpaid staff. Paid staff include the Director (full time), a part-time Coordinator who runs training and develops materials (paid for 3 days but usually works for 5), a full-time administrative officer and two part-time data processors who are actually full-time students. Coach/mentors are paid according to the hours they work - the program cannot afford to pay them regular salaries. A

core group of about twenty coaches does most of the work and another thirty are also available. They receive about \$100 a day when away on visits so the money provided by schools is not sufficient to meet all the costs of the program.

A volunteer financial controller provides services such as costing and financial planning. In the interview, Garry Tester also mentioned the work done by his parents, especially in the formative years of the program. His mother would make all the singlets worn by students on Gala Days and then make hot dogs on the day. His father renovated the transportable buildings provided for the program at a local school. He also makes any games required, maintains all the program's materials and buildings, and packs and transports all the gear required for a trip to and from the airport so everything is ready for the coaches. None of this assistance has ever been costed into the program but it could not survive without it.

### The Mentors

Coach/mentors in this program have all played sport at an elite level - according to Garry Tester they have therefore demonstrated that they can show commitment. As well as being prepared to make a commitment, they are also seen to need to have a passion for the job, to be able to manage their time and to have had some life experiences. A variety of staff is seen to be desirable as coaches need to be compatible with each other, especially in intensive interstate or overseas programs. Coaches are also matched with the needs of the target group of students. Males and females are paired (there are only about six female coaches so they are offered more work), and sometimes Aboriginality is desirable for a particular community. Coach/mentors are ideally not too old (ie not parent figures) as the aim is for the kids to think they're "cool". The coach/mentors interviewed also thought being outgoing, positive, patient, level headed, even-tempered, generous with time and having a good sense of humour were desirable characteristics.

Many people (about five a week) apply to join the program so a selection process occurs where the Director and Coordinator interview them about why they want to be involved and what they hope to achieve. Prospective coach/mentors must also have a police check and sign a legal contract which includes issues such as drug testing, confidentiality and professional conduct. Duty of Care is seen to be important. Parental permission must be obtained for students to participate in the program. Coach/mentors are trained how to handle any serious issues arising, and after initial training, begin by working with a more experienced person. There is ongoing assessment and feedback by program staff and coach/mentors are encouraged to self-evaluate.

Ongoing formal and informal training and support by the Director and Coordinator are features of this program. Regular meetings occur which aim to improve program delivery and to support staff. Materials are constantly being updated and the coordinator is able to assist coaches with strategies. The Director sees his role more now (apart from promoting the program and obtaining funding) as providing personal support for coaches. This could vary from taking them for coffee, going for a run with them, talking about their personal issues or loaning them money! The Director also retains some 'hands-on' work in the program. He visits schools, negotiates the program structure and speaks to the school staff. On the day of

the interview he was going to play touch football with program participants in a detention centre.

The coach/mentors interviewed all felt they had support and that an effort was made to fit their work around other commitments such as family and sporting competitions. This was more difficult in the intensive distant programs, and solutions to this problem were currently being discussed. All were participating in sport in some capacity, were studying and/or had other part-time jobs. One coach/mentor commented that the Director does many extra things for them and is “like everyone’s Dad”. Other coach/mentors were a support for another when she was recovering from sporting injuries.

Staff and students interviewed at the school spoke favourably of the coach/mentors. The students remembered the names and associated sports of the coaches. The Aboriginal Education Assistant noticed that the coaches were really positive and friendly and took the time to talk to people. The Principal made strong comments about the professional presence of the coaches who were young, well dressed, enthusiastic, positive, punctual, attended assemblies and social functions, and “changed the dynamics of the school”. She said they appeared well trained and the teacher interviewed said they were able to develop a “real rapport” with the students. It was important to the students that people had come from a long way away to visit them.

### The Students

The students interviewed gave fairly limited responses but this was understandable given that they were in a room with two unknown visitors and the Principal who remained throughout most of the interviews. Students in the school also typically had poor language skills. However, they all indicated their enjoyment of the program and were able to rate it as 8-9 out of 10 for things learned and as 10 out of 10 for fun and enjoyment. Some only remembered the outdoor activities and others the indoor ones, but all remembered the coaches’ names and said their friends or siblings had wanted to be in the program too.

### Outcomes

Recognition for the program has come from the 1997 Victorian Task Force on Suicide Prevention which was impressed with its effectiveness in building self-esteem, in dealing with adolescent males, and in benefiting isolated rural communities lacking other infrastructure. In 1998 Garry Tester and Sports Challenge won the Queens Trust Award for their services to disadvantaged children and youth in Western Australia.

Formal evaluations of the Sports Challenge Program (Delaney & Woods, 1998; Tester, 1997) have indicated positive general outcomes of the program, such as providing better planning data for schools and the identification of at risk children who may have been overlooked. For students, the program has been shown to impact positively on

- self-concept and self-confidence;
- fitness levels and willingness to try sports at school;
- classroom and playground behaviour and interaction with other students;
- negotiation and communication skills;
- attitudes to school; and

- participation in sport outside school.

Comments by the teacher interviewed illustrated some of these points. He gained information about the dynamics of his class both in and out of the classroom, and the survey results identified one student 'at risk' of whom he had not been aware. The teacher was delighted that the program reinforced a point he was trying to make in his class of students with mild intellectual disabilities - that it is OK to make mistakes. In particular his students often are unwilling to try to do something because they have experienced so much failure, but he could see changes in the students who participated in Sports Challenge. One boy who used to refuse to participate now takes part in class activities. He felt it was unlikely that the students would forget about the mentors - they looked forward to seeing them during the program and communicating with them since. Sharing one postcard sent by a coach/mentor around the students and the school proved to be very problematic. "They tend to have very long memories about some things".

The principal could also see broader benefits of the program such as raising the profile of the school in the community. High profile local and visiting athletes ensured the interest of the media and the program was mentioned frequently in the local press - in a positive manner which had not always been the case in the past. The local police apparently noticed a reduction in crime while the program was on although no details were obtained. Discussions amongst teaching staff about the survey results and which students to include in the program had been useful. The principal rated the program as 8 out of 10 for learning outcomes and 10 out of 10 for fun and self-esteem and said positive relationships were crucial in such a disadvantaged school. The girls involved appeared to have gained in confidence and, although large gains were not made for all students, the program did have a huge impact on others. The focus on sports acted as a motivator for the students even though the program was actually about 'student welfare'.

The Aboriginal Education Assistant made some interesting points. This was the first time Aboriginal parents had returned permission slips for participation in a school activity without her having to follow them up. This was attributed to the focus on sport. Her rating of the program was 8 out of 10 for classroom learning outcomes and 9 out of 10 for social outcomes. Parents were interested in the program and supportive of it. One Aboriginal student who had chronic attendance problems became involved, got to know some of the other students and formed friendships and his attendance has since improved. The coach/mentors reiterated that by focusing on team-building and cooperative activities, the students do make new friends and learn to get along with each other. In Aboriginal communities and detention centres where they had run the program they felt that positive links were also made between the participants and their families. One of the key features of this program seems to be its adaptability to different groups with differing characteristics and to different settings.

Delaney & Woods (1998) also report benefits for the coach/mentors in Sports Challenge such as increased leadership and people skills, access to resources and training, training with children and improved employment prospects. The Director did not necessarily see this latter point as a benefit! Unable to employ staff on a full-time basis, a concern for him was that

coaches were trained, supported and given skills and confidence only for other organisations to “snap them up” for a full-time job. From the perspective of the coaches, however, he could see that over about three years they developed communication and life skills and were able to work independently and as part of a team. They were encouraged to study to further their academic skills and it seemed a perfect job for elite sports people. After this experience they were able to move on with confidence. It seems to the researchers that perhaps there was a similarity in outcomes for some staff working in the program and for the students - when they have developed skills and confidence they can move on to greater independence and achievement.

The coach/mentors interviewed reported similar benefits to those indicated above. One person said that he had learnt to speak in front of other people and had learnt more about himself and how to relate to other cultures. He loved the job and felt good if he could make a “quiet kid noisy” or help turn someone’s life around. Unsolicited letters and emails from students were important although more follow up would be needed before he could know if the program was “life-changing or moment-changing”.

Other coach/mentors appreciated feedback from teachers showing improvements in students’ work, and that children would come up and say “hello”. Seeing children change in such a short period of time is also rewarding. As the Director said, “seeing their faces on fire is what drives us on”. One coach/mentor, a trained teacher, felt she lacked the confidence to take on a classroom when graduating from University, but the training and support received in the program had developed her confidence and skills. This was “the perfect job” but for financial reasons she was taking on a full-time relief position as a physical education teacher at a school next term.

### Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

The “weaknesses of the program” according to Delaney & Woods (1998), relate to funding issues. Lack of regular funding to keep pace with increasing demands for the program means that extra staff cannot be employed, time is required for fund-raising and marketing, and forward planning is difficult. The program relies on the enthusiasm of its staff to undertake extra activities and work. It is also “vulnerable to the ‘fortunes’ of the sponsoring organisation” (p. 38).

Funding was certainly an issue for the Director. Other issues for him were also linked to funding - for example the inability to offer coach/mentors long-term employment. He felt that greater staff retention would be possible if the funding were available. The coaches’ comments confirmed this. Marketing the program and keeping sponsors happy was time consuming - there was never any “down time”. More publication of results was needed but again time was a factor. In order to go forward and expand the program it would be necessary to relinquish some ownership of it, and this would be difficult. It was also important for the Director to be able to share ideas and concerns with an independent professional who also has a passion for the program. During the interview it was evident to the researcher that he has great enthusiasm for the program and a vision for its future - as soon as one goal was achieved he was already moving on to the next.

In contrast to other programs, more female coach/mentors are needed to maintain a balance at each school. An issue for the coach/mentors was the attitude of some teachers to the program. It appeared some resented the admiration students showed for the athletes, others believed the money could be better spent on their subject area, and others thought they could obtain the same results as the program. School support was crucial to the program's success and teachers needed to be supportive and enthusiastic. One coach could see the benefit in additional training, such as a TAFE course in lesson programming, or workshops on racial vilification.

From the perspective of the students and staff at the school where the interviews were held, there were few ideas about how to improve the program. The students thought it was fine as it was and that other schools should do it. The teacher interviewed would have liked his whole class to have been involved and found the difficulties in establishing follow up with the coaches frustrating for the children. The principal said that for another time she would try and get the teachers more involved in the activities - this time it was really ad hoc. For some teachers the disruption to their classrooms was an issue. Organising the timetable was a logistical problem but one with no easy solution. The distance of the school from home base of the program (WA) was a difficulty as she would have liked to have been able to tap into it more often. Because of the low literacy levels of the students in the school, completing the survey was difficult for some. For example there were a few double negatives in the survey items but teachers helped their classes with reading and comprehending them. Obtaining funding and sponsorship to support future visits will remain a difficulty for the school.

## Summary

The Sports Challenge Australia program displays many of the key features of successful programs highlighted in the literature. It has clear goals and clear expectations of its staff who are rigorously selected, well trained and well supported. Mentors support each other and help in training new staff. Its Director has enthusiasm and commitment and is able to respond to the needs of communities and individuals wanting assistance. The program is flexible and adaptable and all staff are continuously engaged in monitoring and improving its implementation. Formal evaluation data is collected and used to provide information to sponsors and prospective clients. The program has a unique identity and is proud of its name - it operates from a clearly marked site and staff wear identifying uniforms. Each program concludes with a 'Gala Day' which is a celebratory event for all participants and interested parties.

Issues and concerns for this program are also those raised in the literature. Maintaining and expanding a program is difficult with spasmodic funding and a reliance on the continuing generosity of staff, sponsors and volunteers. Retaining staff is a difficulty - not because they do not enjoy their work but because they need more financial security and have developed skills they can use elsewhere. Maintaining contact with students sometimes involved technical difficulties (for example responding to emails when working at another distant location). The program works less effectively if not supported by teachers. Time for thorough evaluation and reporting is difficult to find.

Nevertheless, positive outcomes for participants in the program have been reported in formal evaluations and by those interviewed. The focus on sport and use of talented sports people is attractive and interesting to students from a variety of at risk backgrounds. However, as with other programs, the obvious focus of developing sporting skills is not the area in which the greatest benefits are seen to occur. Students (and coach/mentors) gain in life skills and self-confidence during the program and these benefits flow into other areas of their lives. Demand for this program continues to grow both locally, nationally and now internationally. Schools are able to tap into a professionally run organisation which can assist with at risk students.

## **STARnet**

### ***School – University Mentoring using Technology***

#### The Program and The Case Study

STAR and STARnet are tutoring and mentoring programs that involve university students working with students in secondary schools in Western Australia. When STAR began in 1994, it was hailed as the first cross-age, cross-institutional program of its type in Australia. The original aims of STAR (Science and Technology Awareness Raising) were to raise the aspirations for science and technology of secondary school students and in the process, develop the communication skills of university science students. It also aimed to address issues of equity, by including a focus on girls and students from educationally-disadvantaged backgrounds, and better prepare students for the transition to further study. The STAR program is described more fully in Elsegood, MacCallum, Hickey and Jeffreys (1998). In recent years STAR has ventured into primary schools, and widened its discipline focus to include LOTE and will soon add business studies.

In the face-to-face version of STAR, students in second and third year science volunteer to work in a school one afternoon or morning per week for at least one semester. Following the success of the tutoring and mentoring in metropolitan schools, and in order to extend mentoring to students in areas outside the metropolitan area, STAR launched an email-mentoring program, STARnet, in 1997. That year it enabled email contact between 12 STAR tutors and 50 students in four rural schools on a small group or one-to-one basis. Several other rural schools asked to join the program in 1998 and 1999, but not all have had the technology to enable this to happen.

An advantage of email mentoring is that contact doesn't have to be at the same time, so that university students can access their email anytime and school students can access their email at times set aside in class time or in lunch breaks or after school. The asynchronous nature of this form of mentoring, however, has not suited everyone and several methods of providing face-to-face contact have been introduced. The STARtrek Science Show takes a team of tutors on the road to present three-hour hands-on sessions in chemistry, physics and biology to year 10 students in the rural areas. The response from teachers and students has been very positive and has provided a first contact between the school students and university students who may become their mentors. In order to provide more direct contact in each mentor relationship, STARnet is trialing audio and video conferencing in 1999.

The STAR director, coordinator, a science teacher from a rural school and a mentor were interviewed in person and by email. Information was also obtained from STAR materials and the STAR website.

#### Resourcing

The STAR program has received funding from a number of sources over the years. STAR was backed initially by a three-year sponsorship agreement with BP Australia and two

\$100,000 National Priority Reserve Fund grants, which enabled the appointment of a full-time coordinator. Over the years, STAR has established links between the university, schools and a number of local industry groups.

In building a case for the extension of STAR into rural and remote schools, the Director consulted a wide range of people and organisations. These included principals and teachers (of state and Catholic schools in the relevant areas of WA), university students from rural areas, government, employment and industry groups representing these regions, and IT people with knowledge of the use of computer-based technology for learning. As a result of this consultation and the identified need of rural students for peer support, STARnet has received support for its development and implementation from the host university and a number of government and industry science-related groups. These include the WA Department of Commerce and Trade (Science and Technology Division), National Science Week Grant Scheme (Science and Technology Awareness Program - Federal Department of Industry, Science and Resources), WA Chamber of Minerals and Energy and several individual companies.

The Director is responsible for securing sponsorship and funding, and liaising with all the partners. He recruits schools to the program, liaises with tutor/mentors and coordinating teachers, and places the university students in schools. For some of the years STAR has also had the services of a coordinator, who has been involved in training, and the day-to-day communication with and support of tutors. He established and maintains the STAR website and provides assistance to schools in setting up the technology needed for the 'virtual' mentoring.

Because of the technology necessary to support email access and video links, the schools have also needed access to financial and technical support. All schools involved have had a school technology policy and have been keen to get their students on-line. Many have had specific funding for the purpose but that has not been enough in many cases. It is also necessary to have reliable local internet providers and for schools to have the technical expertise to configure and maintain the computers. Some schools have had long delays in putting in phone lines (up to two years in one case) and others have contracts that limit internet usage to a few hours per day (usually on library or administration computers). According to the coordinator, the technology chosen for the program is simple, cheap and easy to deploy if the teacher is literate in using computers. For the video conferencing, the university has loaned \$110 miniature cameras to the schools and helped them to set them up.

### The Mentors and The Students

The university student mentors are recruited through word of mouth contacts, mailouts to re-enrolling students and the STAR website. All STAR tutors attend a half-day training seminar which covers their role and responsibilities (including what they can and can't do as peer tutors in a classroom), communication skills, their expectations and discussions with others about their experiences as peer tutor/mentors. There are also training refresher days and informal gatherings. Tutors, who want to understand more about the tutoring and mentoring process, can enrol for credit in a university unit designed for the purpose. Although any STAR tutor can become a STARnet tutor, preference has been given to students from rural areas.

Tutor/mentors who become involved in STARnet are also given instruction, if necessary, on emailing and retrieving information from the internet, and are encouraged to set up their own web page to introduce themselves to their students.

In the face-to-face version of STAR, the tutor/mentors work with small groups of students in regular science classrooms. The students who are mentored as part of STARnet are rural students considered by their teachers to have the potential to achieve well in science. Thus they would benefit from interaction with science students with similar interests who could encourage them in their school studies and answer their questions about further studies in science and university life. The teacher from the rural school had already thought about which of his students would benefit from the mentoring. One was a female student who should do really well in chemistry. He believed having another student to talk to about her work would build up her confidence. He thought it would be best to start using the video link in class time as “everyone would be pretty nervous about it”, and there were a few other girls who may want to be involved as well. After a while he thought the students may want to also use email from home. Also, there was a capable male student he thought would benefit, as he was doing little at school. This teacher saw the program as one way for giving teacher recognition to the students.

The mentor interviewed has been involved in mentoring students in both face-to-face and email formats for several years. She sees her role as “fostering in high school students an interest in science with the hope that they will pursue tertiary study and/or opt for a science-related career”. Students have opportunities to find out about uni life as well as see a side of science they do not normally experience at school. She believes the balance of tutoring and mentoring is different in the two versions of STAR, with the email version having more of a mentoring focus. In the classroom situation she has a strong tutoring role, bouncing ideas for projects, refining them, helping students clarify methods, and then if necessary contacting people at uni for information.

At present the mentor has two email mentoring relationships with upper school students in rural schools and also mentors year 10 students in the top science classes at a metropolitan high school. In the latter situation she attends the local school one morning per week, and communicates between times with the teacher and students via email. Often the students contact her with questions, on average about twice per week, and she is able to make suggestions for an experiment or pass on any interesting information she has found related to one of the project topics. She checks her email daily and tries to respond within a day or two. Sometimes a question requires a trip to the library, a chat with a lecturer on campus or a bit extra thought.

One mentoring relationship with a girl in rural high school has been going for three months. The mentor made the first contact after receiving the student’s details from the Director. The interaction is different from that with the metropolitan students and the frequency varies from once per week to once per month. The early discussion was about interests and weekend activities. In response to the mentor’s encouragement for the student to ask questions, they have discussed what it’s like to be at uni and what it’s like to study and work. The mentor remembers a “frantic email about how to prepare for exams, time management and allied

exam related things”, but most of the student’s questions have related to tertiary study and not “school stuff”. The student’s email are usually short, “a few questions or just a line to say hi, how was your weekend?” The mentor explained that her student’s access to email was quite limited as she could only access her email at school in either recess or lunch breaks.

The other mentoring relationship, with an upper school student in another rural school, has yet to take off. The student has been given the mentor’s contact details and was expected to make contact, but “the system there has been down for a few months and any contact has been impossible”.

The mentor explained that she has considerable support at the university, from the director and coordinator, lecturers and from other tutors. As well as discussing their mentoring experiences, the tutors have been able to call on each other’s subject expertise to help their students. She said that the STARnet mentors have had fairly common experiences, in that the communication with school students tends to be quite intermittent, often because of the students’ limited access to email.

Although her email interactions are not explicitly monitored, the mentor sends a copy of her responses to the teacher as well as the students, if the students have their own email addresses. In most cases the students use the school’s email address so the teacher gets the message first anyway.

### The University and The Schools

The coordinator considered an additional aim of STARnet was “upskilling” of university students, school teachers and school students. He believed there has been institution to institution mentoring (rather than individual to individual) with regard to the development of expertise in using the technology as a communication tool. It was clear that he was anxious to move towards video conferencing where possible and in 1999 six schools were at various stages in the implementation process. Email mentoring was still in operation in a number of schools. In two of the six schools it had been possible to work through the science department to set up the technology, but in other schools technical support had needed to be negotiated with staff from other departments within the schools. At the time of the interview a video link had been launched with one of the schools closer to the metropolitan area, and a one-to-one mentoring relationship established between a year 12 student and a biology students from the university. It was reported as operating successfully for a few weeks. More recently video links have been established with two more schools, including one of the more remote schools. The latter required much persistence and time on the part of the coordinator and the science teacher at the school to overcome the larger technical issues caused by lack of regional IT experience and basic infrastructure.

Another method being tried was to use telephone links. It had been too expensive previously, but a new arrangement between the university and a telecommunications provider meant half hour phone calls could be made to the far north of the state for under \$3. It was also possible to use split channels, with video for visual and phone lines for audio. In this arrangement, email works as a messaging system to support the video and audio links.

A science teacher at one of the rural schools keen to join the program said that the STAR Director had visited the school and discussed the possible options. They were investigating a video link and were not considering email at that stage. As the school was not set up for video conferencing, the school was in the process of deciding the most appropriate type of link to install, as well as ensuring someone at the school site had the technical knowledge to make it happen. Since the interview the school has decided on a satellite link (rather than an ISDN line) which enables the school to receive images but not to transmit them. The computer science teacher at the school was able to provide the technical assistance after discussions with the coordinator as to what was needed and what had to be done.

## Outcomes

In this type of mentoring arrangement, there are potential benefits for the individuals involved, the institutions and for industry. The mentor believed the outcomes of the program matched the aims. She believed it was a valuable experience and a “two-way street”. She said that it was an ideal opportunity for both students and tutor/mentors to build confidence, develop workplace skills, meet more people, learn new interesting things, and “best of all its in a non-threatening situation because of the informal nature of the situation”. One of the perceived benefits for the university is in encouraging students to consider attending university and further, to consider science as a career option. The STAR face-to-face mentoring has demonstrated positive outcomes in all these areas, but STARnet is yet to deliver the expected outcomes.

All the participants are encouraged to provide feedback for improving and “fine-tuning” the program. Tutor/mentors are surveyed by questionnaire annually, and teachers are invited to half-yearly workshops to exchange points of view. The recent move to trial video conferencing is in response to feedback from mentors and schools about the mentoring relationships via email. The coordinator said the feedback was that students at schools didn’t have sufficient regular access and the text-based medium was pretty bland. The students were shy and most found it difficult to establish empathy with people they hadn’t met.

On a recent visit to rural schools, the Director was able to speak with some of the students and teachers involved in email mentoring to obtain their feedback. He was surprised by the rural students’ apparent lack of vision, real choices and knowledge of possible career opportunities. Also, some of the school students didn’t know why they had been chosen to be involved in the program, and others didn’t want to be seen as different from their classmates. The teachers saw the use of STARnet as one way of helping their students academically and in becoming more aware of the capabilities of information technology. Many had found it difficult to keep their students motivated and provide easy email access for students. In many cases the local servers have been unable to maintain reliable connections.

In the metropolitan mentoring (STAR), the most successful mentoring relationships have formed when students have been assigned to specific class groups during laboratory periods, or to a group of students working on a specific long-term project. One project is currently being trialed in a rural school close enough to the metropolitan area for occasional face-to-face contact. A peer tutor/mentor and academic mentor have visited the school and the school students have visited the university on a fieldtrip. Although it is much harder to set up projects

through STARnet, this kind of joint activity may be necessary to assist in focusing the long distance communication.

### Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

Email-mentoring may appear to be a logical mechanism for involving rural students, but it appears rural areas are still developing the technologies and culture necessary to support this concept of mentoring.

Although a number of successful mentoring relationships have formed through the email contact, these appear to have been in the minority. The initial four schools were keen to be involved in the program and had a school technology policy. On travelling to schools to assist in setting up the technology, the director and coordinator found that teachers weren't as familiar with email use as initially indicated. Also, many schools had difficulties providing regular computer and email access for students. These initial technical problems and lack of student access to email contributed to a slow start. Many tutors found text a difficult medium in which to establish a rapport with their students, many of whom were not as motivated to use computers as a communication tool as expected. The impersonal nature of the medium appeared to be part of the problem. There was a noticeable 'culture difference' between the university and the rural schools, which had not been apparent in the face-to-face mentoring in the metropolitan area, and the associated email mentoring. A visit to one of the towns by a group of mentors on tour with STARtrek provided an opportunity for some of the mentors and school students to get to know each other. This has become an annual event and an important means of developing relationships between the mentors and the high school students.

The move to video conferencing was seen as a way of overcoming some of these problems, but again technical difficulties have dogged the setting up and implementation. Firstly, many country towns and/or schools have low bandwidth reception, and secondly, the attempts have highlighted that only a few teachers have the expertise for setting up the systems in the schools. In some cases, these teachers are located in specific learning areas within the school, eg business or enterprise areas, and may not be in a position to spend time assisting teachers in other learning areas to set up computer hardware and software. Some schools have satellite access, which allows them to receive video images but not transmit them. Others have the access but are restricted to a few hours per day and video transmission uses up a high proportion of the available access. As the network is very busy during school hours, it is not always possible to make a connection in class time and video conferencing may have to be held after school. Splitting audio and visual has allowed some connections to be made and mentoring relationships to begin.

In terms of preparations for mentoring, the university students are well prepared and have a range of sources of support. There appears to be less support in the schools, both for the teachers and the students in terms of how to make the most out of the mentoring experience. The teacher from the rural school thought the program was really about training the university students to be tutors – a kind of structured workplace learning opportunity. He still believed that his students would benefit from the experience. In order to ensure this the mentoring activities may need to be more structured, and the teachers and students may need more guidelines in how to make best use of the mentoring relationships.

## Summary

STARnet is an example of a technology-based mentoring scheme that has the potential to connect rural students with university students, and to benefit a range of people. The program is capable of broadening the options of rural students through the provision of access to peer support, just as STAR has been able to for metropolitan students. Although technology works well in the cities, it is still being developed as a communication tool in rural areas. While recent reports identify rural students as 'disadvantaged', it appears from the difficulties of implementing STARnet, that the lack of reliable, state-of-the-art IT services and support in WA rural regions is limiting one avenue of addressing this disadvantage. In fact, it is highlighting one of the ways in which rural students are disadvantaged. Experience thus far suggests that long distance mentoring requires not only commitment by all parties, but considerable patience and a motivation to persist that exceeds that necessary in face-to-face settings. Some face-to-face contact may assist in establishing and maintaining email-mentoring relationships, but this is yet to be fully assessed.

This case study clearly demonstrates the range and level of resources and time commitment necessary to plan and establish an innovative mentoring program. The program exhibits a number of features common to successful programs. A wide consultation process accompanied the development of the program and adequate funding was sought to resource the program. The tutor/ mentors are well trained and supported, and a process is in place to provide feedback for improving the program. Although there are currently limitations in terms of expertise and technical resources, mentoring using technology (or telementoring) is a model of mentoring that is likely to gain in importance in the future with increasing use of computers in business, education and everyday living.

## **Mentoring of Gifted Students**

### ***A Class-based Program***

#### **The Program and The Case Study**

This case study describes how one teacher in a suburban primary school in the ACT has implemented a program of mentoring for a small group of students in her multiage class of gifted and talented students. It is not connected with any other mentoring program, but grew out of the needs of a small cohort of children whose maths ability was well above that of most students in primary school. Two years ago the teacher approached the Australian Maths Trust at the University of Canberra about entering two students in the Year 7/8 Maths Challenge program for high ability maths students and in the Singapore Mathematical Olympiad, an extremely difficult and gruelling maths competition. Preparing these students for the competitions and at the same time teaching the rest of her class of year 4, 5 and 6 students presented a problem. About this time, a new student entered her class in Year 4. His mother had a degree in computing and maths and agreed to prepare these two students for the events. This year there are two mentors, both parents from the school community, who prepare students for maths and science competitions that the students enter. The teacher and the maths mentor were interviewed by email.

#### **Resourcing**

The teacher ('Teresa') receives no funding for the mentoring, and uses her own resources (such as problem solving resources and secondary maths texts), various internet sites and the materials supplied as part of the competitions. The maths mentor ('Helene') said that Teresa is extremely supportive and "just seems to make things work". She has supplied any resources Helene has requested. Helene feels that the whole school would go out of their way to help her. People like the librarian and the teachers' assistants have offered help when needed. "At this school I'm treated as one of the family, with the staff and especially with the kids." The science mentor works off the school site with the student and provides all the resources required.

#### **The Mentors and The Students**

As parents of the school community, both mentors were known to the teacher or another member of the school community, and became involved because their specific expertise matched the individual needs of the students. Both the parents talked to the class and worked with small groups of students before becoming involved as mentors. This allowed the teacher to observe them with the students.

Helene has continued with the program to prepare students for the maths competitions. It has gradually extended to now involve nine students (3 girls and 6 boys) in the Singapore competition and three in the Secondary Challenge program. Three students form the regular group and Helene takes these students for one or two lessons a week (about three hours) while the teacher continues working with rest of the class. There is a flexible arrangement so that the other students can join the group for activities the teacher feels they can handle, and to

prepare them for probable inclusion in the group next year. As the class operates in an open area designed for two classes, the parent is able to work in the adjoining unit, allowing easy supervision. Her own son is a highly gifted student, and is one of the three students currently being tutored by her.

Helene said that her main role was to prepare the kids for all kinds of maths competitions. “The main objective is to give them enough encouragement, so that they are prepared to have a go at anything that comes their way.” Initially, the mentor was really worried that she wouldn’t be able to communicate what she knew to them. Now she realises that the kids don’t expect the perfect answer, but know she is there to help them work out the answer. She added “in fact, they get great pleasure showing me how to do things sometimes... I’m not their teacher, but they know that I care about them all.” The mentor has received no formal training. Initially she used her experience of working with her own child, but has learnt a great deal from the teacher and maintains she has learnt most from the students.

The mentor goes into the classroom at times to suit her and varies the amount of time to suit the student’s needs. They can also contact her at home, but not many do. Helene said that she used to spend something like five to eight hours per week preparing the lessons, but now spends about one to two hours. She believes the kids don’t need someone that always has the right answer. She tries to get a good feel for the problems, including how she would approach the problem, so she can start the kids off if needed. Then they can work on the problem together. She added, “they like that approach”.

The activities are dictated by the competition the students are working on. When they have 'spare' time, the mentor talks to the students and finds out what they are interested in, then finds some challenging problems to suit.

The new mentor for this year has a PhD in Science and is mentoring one of the three students, who is currently working on a project to be submitted to the BHP Science Awards. The mentoring is planned only for the duration of the project. This parent does not have a child in the class, but was recommended by another parent, because she specialises in this student's area of study. The mentor has permission from the student's parents to take him to a laboratory to undertake his experiments, and has been able to provide him with the guidance and resources he requires. She has also presented lessons to the class on cells, the topic being studied by the class and the student's area of research. This project came about because the student had presented an excellent assignment on cells and DNA as his individualised enrichment investigation last year and was very keen to extend his study and try out for the award.

The teacher believes that mentoring is an ideal arrangement for highly gifted students, especially when specialised knowledge is required. It ensures the students are receiving the challenge and learning they need. Also, having another person in the classroom frees the teacher to spend more individual time with other students. Teresa maintains that mentoring programs should only be used where there is a need. In her class this is when she can’t provide the specialised knowledge or skills a student or group of students need to pursue an

individualised investigation in an area that interests them, due to lack of specific expertise or lack of time for individualised attention.

## Outcomes

In terms of outcomes, the mentor said that what she would like to see the kids start to take risks, “they need to try new challenges, be prepared to have a go, and maybe make mistakes, but know that this is alright - this is part of learning. So many kids seem to be scared of failure.” She said that as she works with the kids she finds that they learn to trust her more and more. They tell her what they do outside school as well. When they are comfortable with her, they ask more questions, and they start to interact more. She sees this as evidence of the kids starting to try new challenges. “I have some kids that are attempting year 7/8 extension challenge competitions and getting High Distinctions, just because they are learning to apply themselves.”

Teresa says there has been an increase in all the participants’ level of achievement, and working in a group has meant they have had the opportunity to learn from each other and see the importance of team work in solving problems. It has also helped to generate an enthusiasm for maths. This has spread across most of the class who are keen to be in the group.

According to the teacher, the students are thoroughly enjoying the maths mentoring and look forward to each session, expressing great disappointment if the mentor can’t come in. They also work very enthusiastically for her.

## Impediments, Constraints, Issues, Solutions and Improvements

One of the potential constraints on this mentoring is that the mentor’s own child is one of the group of three students being mentored. The teacher did not see this had been problematic, but the parent had been conscious of the possible change in dynamics. The boy knew that his mother’s presence wasn’t his ticket into the group. She realised she didn’t give as much assistance to her son and had discussed this with him and her being in the classroom. She believed some students at the school had tried to tease him about it, but he had chosen to ignore them. It could be a problem but they had approached it cautiously and discussed any issues that arose.

Helene’s comments showed that the teacher was pivotal to the success of the mentoring. She said that teachers need to be supportive and lead the mentor, at least initially. When she started she felt very alone and didn’t know how to ‘teach’. The teacher made her feel welcome and the kids saw that the teacher saw her work as valuable. Also, the teacher gave her plenty of books to get started and made suggestions on what she could do with certain kids. She reflected that her work at this school has been successful because of the teacher’s dedication to her work and her students. She had not had quite the same experience at another school where she had tutored students. In that school there was less support from the staff and the teacher was less enthusiastic and supportive. The result was that the students came less frequently and were sometimes not well behaved. She would, however, recommend anyone with time to become a mentor, “I have found it very rewarding, the more I work with the kids, the more happiness they return to me.” The mentor said that one great

thing about mentoring was getting to know the kids, how they think, showing them new and exciting things and watching them use that knowledge.

Keeping contact with the mentors is critical. Teresa has found that to be relatively easy in the case of the mentoring in the classroom, but more difficult for off-site situations. Although the teacher was in contact with the off-site mentor weekly or fortnightly, depending on the needs of the project the student was undertaking, she didn't feel she was continuously up to date with what the student was doing or how he was progressing. There was the added problem that the student was doing the project in lieu of homework research assignments, so the teacher was unable to monitor his homework progress or his time management (a skill the teacher is developing in preparation for secondary school). One solution has been for the teacher and parents to keep in close contact, which Teresa admitted "is probably a good thing anyway". Despite these difficulties, Teresa thought each of the programs had a different objective and each method of mentoring suited the particular project.

For the one-to-one situation, Teresa had been very careful to talk through potential problems with the parents and the mentor before the mentoring began. In this case the parents were acquainted with the mentor and maintained contact throughout the project with each other. Teresa felt having mentors from the school community, and maintaining contact between all three parties eliminated the risks of unsuitable mentors.

Another constraint is related to gender. Teresa is considering a computer expert for a small group of highly skilled computer students. She is having difficulties getting the girls enthusiastic, and believes it may be because the possible mentors she has found are male.

Teresa echoed the sentiments expressed in the literature about developing mentoring programs to meet the needs of specific students or student groups. Her word of advice for teachers thinking about setting up a class-based program, "only use a mentor program where there is a need, don't contrive a situation to please a parent who wants to work in the classroom as a mentor".

## Summary

This small mentoring program illustrates that not all successful mentoring programs operate on a formal, large scale basis. In fact, all the large programs examined had their origins in small beginnings. The program exhibits a number of features common to successful programs. The teacher has responded to specific needs of the students in her class, and provided ongoing training and support to the mentors as required. She has kept issues of screening and supervision manageable by only using mentors from the school community and fully involving parents in decision making.

## Chapter Four

### Issues to be Considered in the Implementation of Mentoring in Schools

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The issues raised in this chapter are generated from the literature and the case studies conducted for this project. Many of the issues are inter-related and quite complex. The importance of each may differ somewhat from program to program, and what is a constraint in one setting may not be in another. The issues are discussed under the four main areas of organisation, the people involved, research and evaluation, and support networks. Constraints and impediments to mentoring are discussed throughout, and where possible alternative approaches and solutions are suggested. Then the recommendations from this project are detailed for consideration by Australian schools and education systems.

#### ***Organisation***

##### Models of Mentoring

There is a diverse range of models of mentoring already operating successfully in Australian schools. The case studies describe a range of ways mentoring programs have been developed in Australian schools in terms of the different organisational structures, the focus of the mentoring activity, the student groups targeted and the characteristics of the mentors. Each of the four organisational models described in Chapter Two is represented, as well as more complex organisational arrangements involving more than two partners. LAP, VET and the Mentoring of Gifted Students are essentially school-organised programs, with a range of coverage within the school system (system wide to individual school). Sports Challenge is designed and managed by a community organisation, One School and a Bank is a business-education partnership, and STARnet is sponsored by a higher educational institution. The School-to-Work program is a more complex partnership involving a school, a community organisation and a TAFE College. LAP, SVP and the School-to-Work program involve predominantly one-to-one mentoring, while Sports Challenge is group mentoring. The School-to-Work program and One School and a Bank involve elements of team mentoring and STARnet is technology based.

Although each of the programs differ in the focus of the mentoring activity, they each demonstrate the three components of mentoring – social and emotional support, direct assistance with learning and role modelling. The balance varies between programs and amongst mentoring relationships within the same program.

The programs described in this report are sufficiently diverse and flexible that they could be adapted to suit the mentoring needs of most educational systems, groups of schools or individual schools. As reiterated by Bernard (1992, cited in Farmer, 1999), programs must

grow out of local contexts, be based on local needs and resources and be developed collaboratively by representative participants - there is no 'ideal' model.

### Planning a Mentoring Program

To maximise success, programs need careful planning before implementation is commenced. Mentoring is largely a grassroots movement in Australia, with some support from educational systems, government and community groups. Due to the scarcity of official guidelines, those involved in mentoring have developed their own frameworks, often using available information from overseas. Many have developed creative solutions to obstacles as they arise. Although some mentoring programs have evolved almost by serendipity, schools considering embarking on the development of a mentoring program need to clearly articulate their goals and expectations before putting together their mentoring plan. The case studies presented in this report should inform this process. Access to others who have been involved in programs is also advantageous.

As the concept of mentoring is built on trust and respect, the program development, implementation and evaluation needs to reflect these qualities. In order to foster commitment to a program, all stakeholders could be encouraged to be involved in determining the program's goals and structure. Stakeholders may include potential mentees and their families, possible mentors, schools, partner organisations who may contribute volunteers or resources, and the community in general. Points to consider are for example, what specific problems/needs are to be addressed? (eg school drop-out rate, extension in a learning area or participation in further education), which particular student group would take part, and what type of mentors would be required? (Lauland, 1998).

Information obtained from this process can then be used to set realistic goals for the program, which reflect its purpose. Lauland (1998) distinguishes between broad goals and specific measurable outcomes. Goals need to be clear and in writing. For example: 'To enrich the educational experience of youth at risk of academic failure by giving them one-on-one tutoring'. If clear, specific, measurable objectives are determined at the outset, these can form the basis of the evaluation plan. For example, 'After seven weeks of participating in the program, students will submit at least three of their five homework assignments each week'. Involving all program staff in planning the evaluation will help focus the evaluation as an opportunity to further the goals of the program rather than be viewed as a threat (Miller, 1998).

The full support of the administrative authorities in schools and in any community organisations involved needs to be obtained in order for sufficient time and resources to be allocated to the program. There needs to be coherent links between the mentoring program and any other intervention strategies or support services used by the school. The roles of the different people involved in the program need to be clear, and methods of monitoring the everyday workings of the program need to be planned. Flaxman (1992, cited in Struchen & Porta, 1997) suggests that programs which have a good design can fail for any number of reasons. They cannot exist on fervour and enthusiasm alone and need a vision, a service delivery system and a distinct identity.

### *Scope*

Mentoring has positive outcomes for a range of students, but mentoring is not a panacea for all. Withers & Batten (1995) discuss some myths and realities of mentoring - it is not an answer to all our social ills. Some young people have a variety of needs and it may be unrealistic to expect a mentoring program to address all of them or to be effective in the face of major problems experienced by many at-risk children. As Withers & Batten (1996) say, mentoring does address real and profound needs, but these are often so profound that mentoring can seem like a drop in the bucket.

Struchen & Porta (1997) say that program developers must recognise the needs of at-risk youth where these are the target group. They may have various levels of needs and the question should be asked as to whether a mentoring program alone can meet these needs, or whether other services are also required. How the program will fit with other services provided in the school and community also needs to be considered. It should complement, not compete with regular school activities and school work, and should build upon and enhance what students have already learnt in school.

### *The Development of Guidelines*

Several of the case study programs had developed comprehensive guidelines, so that everyone knew their roles, responsibilities and limitations, and how they fitted into the overall program. For example, the VET 'Guidelines for Mentoring Programs in Schools' lists the responsibilities of the schools, program managers, mentors and students. This is a crucial part of the planning process and the ongoing development of a mentoring program. It is suggested that all parties receive written information, perhaps in the form of a handbook.

Written role descriptions for the mentors should address the following issues:

- the age and type of students in the program
- the number of hours per week or month they should meet with their student
- the length of time they are expected to participate in the program
- places where the mentor and child may meet
- details of any funding if available for transport and incidentals
- what skills are to be shared, or activities undertaken
- who is in charge of the program and who is the mentor's supervisor
- when the mentor is required to report to the supervisor
- the person(s) to whom the mentor should go to for guidance during the relationship
- what to do if serious issues arise during the mentoring sessions
- the need for confidentiality.

With respect to payments, mentors are typically unpaid volunteers. The case study exception is Sports Challenge, which pays the coach/mentors. In other programs, there is some provision for reimbursement of travel expenses (eg STAR), office expenses (eg SVP area coordinators) and costs of police checks. In the USA, stipends are often available for senior

volunteers and companies may provide employees with paid leave or flexibility in working hours (as in One School and a Bank).

One area in which guidelines are urgently need is in the area of management of volunteers in schools. Several Volunteering organisations (eg Volunteering SA) around Australia noted that schools are more frequently requesting guidance in this area. As well as the development of job descriptions and contracts, this includes procedures for the screening of volunteers and supervision in schools. The development of policies to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students while engaged in school-community activities such as mentoring programs is discussed in the next section under Risk Management.

### *Risk Management*

There are a number of issues surrounding risk management, which revolve around supervision and duty of care for students, and the screening of mentors. Schools urgently need guidelines as to how to proceed in this area. Whereas there are specific mandatory guidelines and codes of conduct for employees and often for pre-service teachers in schools, the situation with regard to volunteers is not clearly laid out. State educational systems are currently discussing issues surrounding parents and volunteers in schools, but all agree it is a complex issue with no easy solutions.

Duty of care is expressed in common law, and is the same protection a caring parent would extend to his or her children. Duty of care is vested in the principal of the school and teachers, and they "cannot be transferred to a parent, volunteer, community member or paid employee of a community organisation" (NSW Department of School Education, 1997, p. 2). There is a need to ensure duty of care, and at the same time not discourage the involvement of parents and other volunteers in schools. Parents, as the primary caregivers of the children, need to be involved in the development of risk management strategies.

The LAP coordinators' booklet (Penhall, Brown & Carmody, 1992) points out the areas of risk management that need to be addressed in program planning:

- "School, departmental regulations and legal responsibilities must be followed in regard to insurance cover for volunteers, supervision and transportation of students and consent for the proposed excursion or activity." (p. 23)
- "Volunteers must be provided with information regarding their legal responsibilities and the policies of the school regarding their role as mandatory notifiers of child abuse. This information must be provided by the school, ideally at a training and development session for all volunteers." (p. 31)

The issue of parental consent is further detailed (p. 23). Parental consent in writing must be obtained before placing a student with a volunteer, and the school must have permission from parents before any photographs are displayed or included in media publicity. For out of school activities permission must be obtained from the principal and parents.

The Department of Education in South Australia estimates that there may be as many as 100,000 volunteers working in schools in the state. In the wake of the Wood Royal

Commission, a committee was formed in 1997 to discuss the management of volunteers. Similarly, after the deliberations of the NSW Police Royal Commission, the NSW Department of School Education sought to “to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Department of School Education staff when activities are conducted in collaboration with other community organisations, but under the auspices of the school” (NSW Dept of School Education, 1997, p. 1). The Memorandum to Principals sets out certain conditions, which include the development of guidelines to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, and the checking of bona fides and qualifications of community members.

In most cases memos have reminded principals of their responsibility for the duty of care for students in their schools and offered advice on parent and volunteer screening (such as obtaining police checks, statutory declarations and consulting referees). For example, the WA Department of Education recommends that when parents or volunteers are involved in assisting in the classroom, “the Principal, after consultation with the P & C, is advised to arrange for the parents concerned to complete Confidential Declaration form” (WA Department of Education, 1999). If, however, a ‘lone charge’ situation is inevitable, then the procedures for employees should be used.

This raises the issue of supervision, and is complicated by the fact that teachers cannot transfer their duty of care and are responsible for the supervision. Teachers are usually advised not to be alone with students, but in one-to-one mentoring this situation is likely to occur. In order for trust to develop between the pair, it may be necessary. The case study programs handled this issue in a variety of ways. Most organised at-school mentoring locations so that someone was in the vicinity at all times. When direct supervision was not possible, other strategies were used to protect students. For example, in the VET program, students are instructed in grievance procedures and protective behaviours.

The potential risks may be greater when mentors are not personally known to program staff and when meetings do not occur on school premises or in another structured, supervised environment. Farmer (1999) argues that "on the other hand it would be a pity if these risks preclude appropriate learning experiences for students" (p. 1). In order to manage such risks various procedures are suggested:

- where possible seek mentors who are known to staff
- use a variety of screening procedures
- advise students and parents of the nature of the program and whether it operates in a location away from school
- ask parents to complete release and indemnity documents relating to the program
- provide mentors with simple guideline notes
- ask both mentors and students to complete evaluations at the conclusion of activities
- allow either the mentee or mentor to withdraw at any time.

Also, participants are not always fully aware of what is expected of them or aspects such as insurance coverage for individuals and organisations. Insurance is a matter that needs to be raised and taken account of in planning. Everyone needs to know if and in what way they are

covered. As insurance needs vary widely even within the one mentoring program, they need to be negotiated and detailed in job descriptions, which are signed by all parties involved. One aspect concerns the insurance of mentors while carrying out their mentoring function and another the indemnity cover for workplaces when mentees go off the school site. One advantage of mentors belonging to a mentoring organisation is that they can arrange insurance for all the members when carrying out their mentoring role. For example Sports Challenge does this. In some instances schools or educational systems cover students when they leave the school for specific activities. The insurance cover for Workplace Learning is one of these instances, but in general the insurance of children in the workplace is the responsibility of parents. In Mentor Links, a gifted mentoring scheme in NSW, students are mentored in the community out of school hours (Vasilevska, 1998). The program information sheets specifically point out to parents their responsibility in clarifying and determining the necessary insurance cover. This program also insists that parents are present at every meeting of the mentor and their child.

### *Practical Issues*

The literature does not make strong recommendations about the specific practicalities of programs as these depend on the purpose of the program and the availability of personnel and locations. Frequency of meetings in some programs varies from weekly meetings of one to two hours, to less than once a month with mentors asked to be reactive to students' needs. The latter time frame may be more appropriate for extension programs involving talented students, and may not work with students who lack self-esteem or communication skills. Infrequent meetings are not appropriate in the early stages of a program where mentors are advised to show their dependability. Screening of mentors should identify those with too many commitments to meet regularly. This is particularly important as time commitment is one of the few aspects mentioned in the literature as limiting the effectiveness of programs. Hamilton & Hamilton (1980, cited in Songstagen & Lee 1996) make an interesting point relating to the nature of the activities and success of the program. When mentors set out to develop competence (skill development), they meet more regularly, and meet over a longer period than other mentors. When the main intention is simply to get to know and share interests with mentees, participants were less likely to meet regularly and had the highest percentage of terminated relationships.

Location of meetings may be an issue for several reasons and there are no simple solutions. Schools are often short of space for regular activities and may need to juggle spaces to provide for mentoring. The location may need to be suitable for specific activities and near resources, such as art supplies, computers or board games. Depending on the nature of the program, a meeting place might need to be private or quiet for academic work or discussions, or public where students can observe various interactions in a particular setting such as a work place. The case study programs dealt with space in different ways, and how this was managed impacted on other issues. For instance if a specific room can be organised this gives the program an identity, but limits the number of pairs that can meet at any one time and can make contact with and between the mentors more difficult. Unless the room is easily supervised, this situation can create 'lone charge' situations, which raises other issues. Some schools use the library for mentoring and have as many mentors as possible meet with their

students at the one time. This can limit the type of activities that can be used and may inhibit the development of trust.

#### *Activities for Mentors and Mentees*

Clearly the activities carried out in a particular program will depend in part on that program's goals. However, some general findings from the literature are relevant to most program types. Programs with a skills focus are easier to plan than those that aim at friendship and support. It is advised that mentors be given alternative strategies for conducting meetings. Handbooks devised for mentors should contain suggestions of this kind and most of the case study programs provided these.

The stage of the mentoring relationship will also determine what activities are appropriate. Struchen & Porta (1997) suggest that having specific tasks to perform, particularly at the start of a program can be helpful in breaking the ice. Lauland (1998) also suggests many programs find that having a well-defined task at the beginning (eg project for science fair, maths problem) gives the relationships more time to develop naturally and takes pressure off mentors and mentees as they can get to know each other more informally and naturally. It also establishes that the program is part of and integrated with regular school activities. The One School and a Bank program introduced a project in the third stage of the program with great effect after whole group activities, so the placement of specific activities needs to take account of the broader plan. The One School and a Bank partnership and the School-to-Work programs organised combined activities for all the students and mentors to facilitate the early development of relationships.

Saito & Blyth (1992) found that the provision of program-supported social activities and events is often mentioned in feedback from both mentors and mentees. In particular, activities involving the whole group of participants can be helpful for a number of reasons. They can provide a safety net in alleviating the possible loss of a mentor, they can be important in solving problems which have started in groups, and groups have been used widely to effect individual change (Struchen & Porta, 1997). Peer support is a crucial element in group-mentoring programs.

Where one-to-one mentoring is the focus of a program, there are many possible activities. Martin (1997) focuses on mentoring in the workplace, but these ideas are also applicable to mentoring in other settings. He suggests that an individual plan be prepared, implemented and reviewed continuously. Together the mentor and mentee formulate learning goals, decide on strategies and resources and specify and collect evidence of accomplishments. Miller (1998) focuses on business mentors in schools and also suggests reviewing specific targets set together, as well as discussing progress in particular subjects and school in general, general interests, future career, education and training, and homework. Songsthaugen & Lee (1996) discuss out of school mentoring and include activity suggestions such as setting mentoring goals together, making dinner together, going to a movie, talking about your very first job, learning about pop music, doing a pretend job interview, talking about credit cards, and writing thank you notes.

Some of the case study programs explicitly discouraged 'out-of-school' activities as this presented a supervision problem. Others encouraged it and ensured that parents were informed and gave their consent. This is a strong reason to involve parents as much as possible in the program, as they share their duty of care with the school. In at least one of the case studies, and specifically when the program targeted students at-risk, the coordinator found it very difficult to contact some of the parents and impossible to obtain written consent for the program, let alone for other activities. If permission is necessary for the child to participate, one strategy is to accept permission given over the telephone. Otherwise the child may be denied access to the program or a particular component of it. An alternative strategy is for the coordinator to be provided with extra support or time to contact and speak with parents. In the school that held the Sports Challenge program the Aboriginal Education Assistant had provided this kind of support on previous occasions.

### *Size*

Most of the mentoring programs examined involve small numbers of mentor-mentee relationships. Guetzloe (1997) suggests there is a need for better information regarding the number of matches that can be supported with the resources available.

Although no one really wanted to give numbers that can be supported within a school, a few guidelines can be inferred from the case studies. Programs are not self-supporting in that they can not be started and left to run by themselves. The literature from the USA suggests mentoring is a mass movement, but when it comes down to individual schools implementing and maintaining a program, it is more appropriate to think in 'boutique' proportions. When the school initiates and organises the program, the coordinator (and/or others involved) is responsible for a huge range of aspects including promoting the program within the school and elsewhere, recruiting and screening mentors, selecting students, matching mentors and students, initial training, maintaining relationships or ending them, ongoing training and support, evaluation, providing appropriate materials, preparing applications for funding or justifying budgets. A large school employing the equivalent of one person to run a program with no other responsibilities in the school may be able to maintain 50 one-to-one mentor relationships. Some schools with half time coordinators can sustain around 20 or so. Where the coordinator has other roles and responsibilities the number drops to under 10. Where the mentors come from a larger organisation, or are organised through another group, this may free the coordinator from some of the wider promotion, recruiting and training responsibilities, but not those responsibilities that are school specific. The program must still be promoted within the school, the coordinator must deal with school requirements for screening and provide training specific to the students in the school. Also, it adds another level of contacts to maintain.

### **Resourcing**

The largest constraint on the further development of mentoring programs in Australia is the availability of funding, both to initiate mentoring programs and to provide ongoing support over many years. The issue of funding and resourcing frequently arose in the case studies. Applying for funding is also a time-consuming task. Coordinators need to know about potential funding opportunities, and have the time to develop a proposal. Budgets need to take account of funding needs at the various levels of the organisational structures, ie at the whole program and school levels. At the school level there is a wide range of items that need

to be resourced: the coordinator's time, materials for mentoring, evaluation, screening and insurance costs, training, morning teas or other contact meetings, and memberships to associations (if relevant).

If mentoring is to become a viable part of Australian schools it needs to be resourced on top of existing funding. At present, mentoring runs on good will. It thrives now in places where those involved are enthusiastic and dedicated and spend far in excess of their time and energy than their positions require. Some of the large programs or coordinators (such as LAP, SVP and Sports Challenge) have received recognition through awards, but this has not assisted greatly with generating ongoing funding. If mentoring is to take advantage of technology – as a learning tool, to support a face-to-face relationship, or as the sole means of communication (telementoring or video conferencing), then the full range of resources necessary to support the technology must be considered.

One of the roles of the planning team is to assess the resources needed by the program, and to obtain those resources. Resources include money, people, time, materials and facilities and the requirements depend on the needs of the particular program. Lauland (1998) gives suggestions about questions which might be asked.

- who can serve as mentors?: employees, spouses, retired persons, college students, church members, police officers or people from community
- how many mentors can each of partners and/or the community provide?
- what kind of time commitment can mentors make each week? for how long?
- is anyone available who has had previous experience in mentoring programs?
- what financial resources/sponsorship are needed/available? eg release time for employees, transportation, materials, participation stipends, trips and activities, awards, ceremonies or dinners
- what special resources from a business or community partner can be used? eg email or computer facilities, college or university classrooms, tours of campuses or businesses, publicity or printing facilities, meeting places or function rooms

One difficulty facing programs is the absence of adequate resources along with pressures to produce 'miraculous' results (Struchen & Porta, 1997). It has been mentioned previously that when money and resources are put into areas such as recruitment and matching, there may be little left to provide ongoing support, monitoring or evaluation. When miraculous strides are not made, funding for a program may be withdrawn..

### Naming and Promotion

A mentoring program needs to be recognised and celebrated in a school. Some schools participating in the case studies felt that if funding is tied to disadvantaged groups, drawing attention to the program within the school or the community will further disadvantage the students and their families. This is a critical issue, as the programs need to remain true to their funding but also gain support from within the school and the wider community. Some schools and organisations have worked out ways to promote their mentoring programs in positive ways, by focusing on the mentors, the building of partnerships between school and community,

or the expected outcomes. Other programs are seen to be a privilege and students must apply to join them (eg School-to-Work ).

An important suggestion by Lauland (1998) is that organisers need to ensure that any program is not seen to be exclusively for poor or troubled youth, especially in schools where students could be belittled if they participate. Positive program names that don't suggest any particular population are recommended. Sports Challenge has a specific strategy for schools to use when promoting the program within the school and to the community.

### ***The People Involved***

The most powerful impression made on the researchers in conducting the case studies for this project was the commitment, dedication, enthusiasm and generosity of those involved in mentoring. This was the link that was common to all the programs, and the coordinators, mentors and students involved. In the case of the coordinators, there was a 'passion' evident. The coordinators and mentors all seemed to genuinely like other people and enjoyed spending time with others. Issues relating to the selection and preparation of all those involved in mentoring are discussed in this section.

#### **The Coordinators and Teachers**

The coordinator of the program needs to be enthusiastic, organised and have good people skills. All programs need a coordinator in the school, but the person filling this role may vary with the focus of the mentoring program and the size of the school. If the focus is general literacy, numeracy or support, the coordinator is often a person with a support role in the school. In small schools or primary schools, the coordinator may be a regular teacher, deputy principal or principal. If the focus is on a specific learning area, the teacher of that subject area is more likely to be the coordinator. Thus, the involvement of a student's teachers may vary with different mentoring programs. In some programs, due to time constraints or the focus of the program, teachers do not appear to play a significant role in determining the mentoring activities. However, communication between teachers and mentors can provide each with feedback regarding progress, opportunities to discuss concerns and assist future planning. Mentors, in particular, indicate that they appreciate direct feedback from teachers. As much as possible a student's teachers need to be included in planning and involved in evaluating the outcomes of mentoring.

Struchen & Porta (1997) stress the importance of program staff's effort, time, commitment, motivation and support for the success of the program. Lauland (1998, p. 1) maintains that "any mentor program that lacks good leadership and coordination will fail". Successful programs, especially those with a wide scope, have a coordinator, or a team with a leader who

- is well respected in community and has an established base of support
- understands the bureaucratic intricacies of dealing with schools, businesses and civic organisations
- can devote sufficient time to the program
- is sensitive to the needs of the program participants

- has superior organisation and coordinating skills
- has access to and support from top-level decision-makers in any partner organisation
- has the authority to make decisions on behalf of schools, community organisations or corporations involved - including committing funds.

(Otterbourg, 1986; cited in Lauland, 1998)

The role of the team or coordinator then becomes to get support from the school and community; to decide on the purpose of program and to formulate goals and objectives; to allocate funds; to write role descriptions and to appoint program staff; to take responsibility for recruiting, training, retraining and rewarding mentors; and to regularly inform all stakeholders of the program's progress.

### The Students

The target group of possible mentees will probably be clear as their needs usually provided the reason for the program's existence in the first place. The main student groups targeted in the case study programs include students who are underachieving and those who would benefit from specific expertise in a particular academic area, extra social support, or talking through career or life options. The ages ranged from kindergarten to year 12, the only real limitations on age being for business and career focussed mentoring which was more appropriate for year 9-12 students.

### *Selecting Mentees*

It may not be possible, however, to provide mentors for everyone, and some selection process must occur. In several programs, the coordinators asked class teachers to rank the students in order of 'need'.

The suggestion is made in the literature that selection processes should be clear, perhaps with written eligibility requirements (US Department of Education, 1996). The goals of the program will determine the specific selection criteria used. Other 'at risk' factors could be family disruption or psychological problems. For programs involving extension, it is suggested that students have already shown some dedication and commitment to their area of interest, self-motivation, organisational ability and a willingness to be open to ideas, advice and feedback (Farmer, 1999). Students selected in relation to school performance might display falling motivation, underachievement, or misbehaviour. For example the Senior Mentor Outreach program (Songsthaen & Lee, 1996) needed students to meet two of the following four criteria:

- excessively absences (over 15 days per year)
- failing to achieve grade level in reading and or maths
- failing two or more subjects
- retained in one or more grades in school.

Individuals might be referred by the school, their parents, or local authorities/agencies, or they might self-refer. Self-selection could be confirmed by parents and teachers. It is suggested that all mentees should be volunteers, and parental permission is required for school-aged

students. Some students or parents might need persuading by being given an indication of the positive benefits of mentoring (Miller, 1998)!

Participants could be used as recruiters, or the program could be advertised in the media and around schools. One approach to selection suggests that a general invitation be made at an assembly or similar for expressions of interest. Students coming forward are then interviewed (Farmer, 1999). This may not be appropriate for all programs. Lauland (1998) encourages program organisers to try and involve the young people most in need, even though they may not be perceived to be good candidates for success.

### *Preparing Mentees*

There is extensive information available regarding the training of mentors, in print and electronic forms, but very little relating to the preparation of the mentees themselves. Several of the case study programs prepared the mentees by explaining the purpose of the program, how it might benefit the student, and appropriate ways to behave. The VET program also prepared students in grievance procedures and protective behaviours.

Lauland (1998) suggests that students be included in the planning process with their input asked for and used. Before the program, participants should receive an orientation that might include:

- the purpose of the program
- some potential benefits of participating eg improved grades, how to prepare for college, learning about an interest area
- the limits of the relationship -mentors can't do everything and are not surrogate parents
- the students' part in ensuring the success of the relationship eg behave courteously, keep appointments, show respect for mentors
- where and when to meet
- training for students in communication and problem solving.

Struchen & Porta (1997) reinforce the idea that preparation is needed for the mentees. Youth, particularly at risk youth, may never have had a mentor and may have unrealistic expectations. For example mentors are not a source of income, or a solution to all their problems.

A mentor may be a: guide, friend, listener, cheerleader, confidant, coach, tutor. A mentor is not a: saviour, foster parent, therapist, parole officer, cool peer, ATM machine.

(Mentoring Works, 1999)

### **The Mentors**

Mentors may be seniors and retired people, parents, tertiary students, people with the specific expertise used as the focus of the mentoring, groups of people from a particular business or industry, social or service club members, or friends or contacts of those involved. Mentors are not teachers but augment the teacher (and parent) role and provide additional support to

students on a more individual basis. They could be just about anyone with the patience, time and energy to empathise with and assist a young person. Some programs, particularly those harnessing older persons (eg SVP), highlight the claim that no special expertise is required to become a mentor. In most cases this would be the case, provided mentors receive a basic level of training and know they have access to specific training and support if and when required. Mentor qualities frequently mentioned by participants in the case study programs were the need to be non-judgemental and to have good listening skills.

The literature (eg Carruthers, 1993; Dondero, 1997; Farmer, 1999; Songstagen & Lee, 1996; Withers & Batten, 1995) documents other characteristics that ideal mentors might need, such as the ability to:

- see their mentee as special person and be comfortable with possibly extreme differences in background
- set high standards and instil in their mentee the confidence to meet those expectations
- respect an individual's ability and right to make their own choices in life
- empathise and understand another person's struggles, rather than pity or judge them
- see solutions as well as barriers
- be flexible and open
- serve as friends, listeners, role models, advocates, tutors, negotiators, sounding boards, supporters, critics and networkers
- provide help, support, guidance regarding skills and self-confidence
- link to other values, cultures and viewpoints
- share resources, experience and knowledge
- observe confidentiality
- show interest, mutual respect, affection
- show enthusiasm for particular subject or interest areas and an awareness of related moral issues
- use their communication skills to foster interaction in informal setting.

The actual qualities needed would depend on the purpose of the program and the characteristics of the mentees. Tutoring primary school aged children in reading, giving support and showing interest to a disadvantaged high school student and extending a gifted student's special interest would all require a different emphasis in the mentor's role, although many of the features would remain the same. This was evident in the case studies where for example those working with gifted children (LAP and Mentoring of Gifted Students) shared knowledge and enthusiasm for a subject. Whereas the Sports Challenge coach/mentors helped their at-risk students set goals and have the confidence to meet them. All, however, showed support and interest.

### *Recruiting Mentors*

The focus of the program determines who are recruited as mentors, and how many are needed. Mentoring programs that focus on a specific academic subject areas, such as business or science, will want to recruit mentors with specific expertise in that area (ie 'expert'

mentors). Others may use the expertise of the mentor, eg a high profile in sport, as a medium to concentrate on areas of motivation and self-confidence. These programs have much in common, but the former tends to target students who excel in the area, whereas the latter targets students expressing low self-esteem or other motivational indicators. Programs focussing on general literacy or numeracy, social support or general life skills (including social skills, organisational skills and decision making) tend towards a mentor with broad life experience. This fits more of a 'coping' model where the mentor and mentee work through the student's issues together. In practice, the line between expert and coping seems to blur as the mentoring relationship develops and the 'expert' mentor and student delve into extra-curricula issues, and the 'coping' mentor draws on their expertise in life skills.

Older persons have tended to be used in programs operating more on a coping model. Some declare that their talents are not used as fully as possible. At one level this is essentially an individual matter, and is dependent on coordinators knowing the mentors' areas of interest, expertise and experience, and making use of them. At another level, it is about those developing programs considering older persons as potential mentors who may have the specific expertise required.

There is typically a shortage of mentors and this can determine the size of the program. In overseas programs this is evidenced by the use of students on waiting list for a mentor as the control group for evaluation research. This problem was apparent in the schools visited, and often the problem was attracting the 'right kind' of volunteers to be mentors, in the time the coordinator had available. Male mentors were generally in short supply. The mentoring programs that recruited from tertiary institutions and employees of single business had less difficulty in this regard. As well as the need to find new volunteers to act as mentors, there is also a need to retain them and perhaps convert them to future leaders in the program. Experienced, enthusiastic mentors are seen to be invaluable in recruitment programs (Lauland, 1998). The SVP and LAP programs made use of mentors in this way.

The case study programs use a variety of mechanisms for recruiting mentors that are similar to those used overseas. For example, SVP has made good use of inexpensive media coverage, through radio talks, TV segments, and features in local community newspapers to attract a broad range of seniors and retired volunteers. Similarly, some large USA programs have organised media campaigns, story lines in popular TV series, and community displays to provide success stories and advertise the program. Other programs recruit from specific identified groups of people. The Sports Challenge program recruits from the ranks of high profile athletes, STARnet and School-to-Work programs recruit mentors from those enrolled in relevant tertiary courses, and One School and a Bank from the bank's employees. In these cases good promotion of the program through newsletters and advertising, and word of mouth endorsements are effective. Some of the programs have recruited from the local school community (LAP and Mentoring of Gifted Students) while others have recruited more broadly from relevant local industries and businesses (VET and SBC). Students at the school may also take an active part in recruitment of mentors, for example by producing videos or newsletters about the program (Cabrini Connections, 1999).

Miller (1998) suggests that partnerships be formed to help with recruiting organisations, and a number of the schools visited had partnerships with service clubs and senior citizens organisations. Volunteer organisations, such as the state based Volunteering Australia centres, are able to refer potential mentors to their member groups. Other potential sources of mentors include the school's parent body, teaching staff, older students at the school, ex-students of the school, community arts bodies, professional bodies and associations in special areas of interest, senior citizens associations, retiree communities and nursing homes, and friends of school staff or existing mentors. Mentors may come from every background and every socioeconomic level (Farmer, 1999; Lauland, 1998).

Recruiting may yield volunteers who are not able or suitable to be mentors. They could be asked to assist with other various program tasks such as producing newsletters, fundraising, office help, training and volunteer contact or recruiting. These roles are especially suitable if someone wants to be involved but is unable to commit their time reliably over the period required, or who for some other reason is not suitable to act as a mentor.

Whoever is recruited, there should be a written role description so that there is a clear understanding of the commitment required and the nature of the mentoring role (Lauland, 1998). Mentors need to be recruited for fixed periods of time (eg one school term or one year) depending on the nature of the program (Miller, 1998).

#### *Screening and Selecting Mentors*

However successful the recruitment strategy, not everyone will be suitable to take on the role of mentor, and some screening process for selection will need to occur. Programs that involve mentoring relationships that are unsupervised or occur off a school site have developed extensive screening procedures, often referred to as 'hard' screening (Guetzloe, 1997). This occurs in Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America and Big Sister/Big Brother in Australia. The process occurs over a period of months and includes an application form, police checks, personal references, employment status checks, a series of personal interviews, psychological profiling and a home visit (YWCA, 1999). After selection and matching with a mentee, there is a consistent system of supervision. Although schools may not wish to use a system as 'hard' as this, the nature of one-to-one mentoring means appropriate procedures must be ensured.

This topic has extensive coverage in the literature. All sources agree that mentors should undergo an application process including a face-to-face interview, a reference check of character and previous experience, and careful history checks. The purpose of screening is to protect the child and his or her family. Struchen and Porta (1997) state that the welfare of the child outweighs any increase in the difficulty of recruitment and any potential loss of mentors. This was a real dilemma for some of the schools visited. They were keen to find mentors for students who needed assistance, had difficulty recruiting suitable mentors and did not want to lose them by seemingly lengthy or bureaucratic screening procedures. Schools often found it difficult to decide what to do, especially if the potential mentor was a parent of the school or known to a staff member. An interview to determine the potential mentor's interests and understanding of the mentor role can be easily justified, as can a request to complete a statutory declaration that they have no criminal record. The latter is required in some states and schools for persons who are not employees but require access to a school (eg WA

Department of Education, 1997, 1999). Although not generally required for volunteers in schools, some programs have insisted that mentors obtain police clearance. A Federal Police Clearance costs \$34 and state checks appear to range from \$30-\$40.

Rather than screen in as many mentors as possible, experience of running programs has shown it is better to "screen out" those who may be unsuitable because of lack of time or because they have unrealistic expectations (Freedman, 1995). It has been said that more and better work can be done by a smaller group of committed mentors. Other roles such as those previously described may be available for those wanting to be involved. As Lauland (1998) states, the problem is: "How will security checks be handled in a way that is respectful of the mentors and yet absolutely assures the safety of the students?"

Examples of questions suggested by Lauland (1998) that could be asked at an interview are:

- why do you want to be a mentor?
- what skills and special interests do you have?
- what do you especially like about working with children/young people?
- what type of help would you like to give a young person?
- what benefits do you expect to receive by participating in the program?
- how much time will you be able to devote?
- have you ever worked with this age group before?
- what experience in your background will help you communicate with an at-risk child/youth?
- what expectations do you have for your students?
- what expectations do you have for your experiences in the program?

Mentors need to be informed of their responsibilities in preventing the unsuccessful relationships described in Chapter Two. "...drive-by mentoring can be more detrimental to the youth than never having had a mentor" (Dondero, 1997, p. 22).

### *Preparing and Training Mentors*

How to train, prepare and support mentors is a topic that receives extensive attention in the literature on mentoring. Various suggestions are made about the content of the initial training which mentors should receive. Writers differ according to the most important aspects. Most agree that training in general topics related to mentoring is vital. Such topics might include: the purpose of mentoring, successful characteristics of mentors, stages of child and adolescent development, information on the typical interests of young people and their behaviour and communication styles, and effective communication methods to use with mentees and parents, such as active listening (Lauland, 1998; Songstagen & Lee, 1996; US Department of Education, 1996).

From the case studies it was evident that mentors need initial training in understanding children or adolescents, school culture and procedures, and issues concerning the particular student group or activities to be undertaken. Mentors also need guidelines or suggestions on how to engage the students or suggested activities for the first few meetings. Many mentors adapt

these or develop their own, but many need some guidelines to get them started. Training can then occur on the job as needs arise, as long as contact and open communication is maintained between the mentor and coordinator. This requires mechanisms of feedback from mentor to teacher or coordinator and vice versa. Some generic training is available through organisations such as SVP, LAP or TAFE.

One of the areas lacking in research on mentoring is research into the nature and timing of training. How effective formal training is compared with allowing mentors to use their own resources, and the impact of when training is conducted have not been researched (Little, 1990). As Withers and Batton (1995) explain, mentors must be trained but it is not yet understood how best to do this.

In addition, mentors will need training or preparation with respect to their roles in any particular program. For example when the program's goal is remedial – in terms of academic or social skills, specific training is seen to be very important (Saito & Blyth, 1992). Mentors need a clear understanding of the work required and any deadlines which students must meet. Other types of programs may require different roles for which the mentors need to be prepared. Martin (1997) discusses some different but overlapping roles of mentors, which may be required, depending on the focus of a program:

- coaching: passing on vital information and skills; sharing expertise
- counselling: helping another person work through their own problems and issues by acting as a sounding board and helping them see things from a different perspective
- facilitation: assist a mentee through a particular learning path - offering guidance and support to create favourable conditions for learning to occur
- networking: utilising existing informal channels such as community contacts and access to resources.

Whatever the case, the goals of the program and expectations of the mentors must be made clear. Saito & Blyth (1992) state that successful programs ensure a good match between the mentor expectations and the program goals. As stated in other places in this report, one common reason for failed mentoring relationships is when there is a mis-match between the mentor's expectations of their role and the actual requirements. As well as the nature of their role, mentors also need to be prepared in relation to practical issues such as scheduling meetings, sign-in and sign-out procedures of the school, resources and support materials available, and ideas for activities if these are not provided for them (Dondero, 1997; Miller, 1998).

The literature also suggests that mentors be prepared for the interpersonal relationship which will develop with their mentee. Struchen & Porta (1997) stress two important issues: the expectations for relationship and the realisation that it is the responsibility of the adult in the relationship to make contact with the youth. Lauland (1998) explains that the mentor must be able to make a connection with a young person, gain their trust, foster mutual respect, and be willing to make a sustained, intensive, personal commitment. Therefore a mentor needs training in such issues as ways to develop trust and the communication skills mentioned earlier. The issue of confidentiality is important and needs addressing – both with regard to the content

of mentoring sessions and to other information such as student records to which mentors may have access (Dondero, 1997).

Mentors also need to be alerted to potential problems that may arise, especially where the target group is at-risk students (US Department of Education, 1996). They may need to be prepared to deal with discussions about, or disclosures of, serious issues such as violence, drug use, extreme depression, suicide threats or abuse. In states where there is mandatory reporting, the mentors must be training in the procedures to follow. Mentors may need to be made aware of the limitations of the program and of their role. For example, there may or may not be expectations of parent contact or contact out of school and these need to be addressed. Are there any associated costs for the mentors and who pays? Who should be contacted if there is a concern or if the relationship does not seem to be working? The literature stresses the importance of ongoing networking, support opportunities and feedback for mentors. Some suggest regular individual contact, regular meetings, formal quarterly workshops and newsletters (Lauland, 1998; Miller, 1998; Saito & Blyth, 1992; Struchen & Porta, 1997).

Ideas are also given in the literature with regard to the style of training sessions – an informal, interactive one being suggested (Miller, 1998). Lauland (1998) in particular makes a number of suggestions:

- experienced, enthusiastic mentors make excellent trainers
- an experienced "mentor panel" could share experiences
- use a variety of teaching techniques such as role playing, slides, films, training manuals
- help mentors enhance their current skills as well as develop new ones; include practice of skills such as active listening and provide feedback
- the training site should be pleasant, conducive to learning, centrally located and have refreshments; and ask mentors to complete evaluation forms for training improvement.

SVP takes a bus-load of experienced mentors to assist in the training of new mentors in country areas.

The importance of mentors having realistic expectations is continually stressed in the literature. An important point is that they should be aware that mentoring relationships go through several stages, and that different behaviours might be more prevalent and more appropriate at different times. This is true whether the program has academic or interpersonal skill development as its focus.

### The Mentor – Mentee Relationship

Two aspects of the mentoring relationship are specifically mentioned in the literature as ones which could compromise the success of a program: appropriate matching of mentors and mentees, and the retention of mentors.

#### *Matching Mentors and Mentees*

There are various strategies for making specific matches between mentors and students. The coordinator may decide on the matching, or mechanisms may be put in place for mentors and

mentees to self select. It is suggested that matching is both a science and an art (US Department of Education). School personnel and program coordinators need to work closely and take into account the preferences of the young person and their family (Guetzloe, 1997). As Hamilton & Darling (1989, p. 125) say, "in order for an adult to act as a mentor, he or she must be acknowledged by the protégé as a role model". Mentors cannot make themselves a role model for a young person but they need to behave as if they are – for example by displaying exemplary character and integrity.

Various factors are suggested for consideration as matching criterion, such as shared career interests and hobbies, similar ethnic background or languages spoken, likelihood of personal compatibility, similarities of schedule to allow ease of arranging meeting times, some shared background and same gender (Lauland, 1998; Miller, 1998). Careful matching of mentors and mentees was a feature of all of the case studies described in Chapter Three.

Research is inconclusive regarding matching on the basis of gender, ethnicity, culture and socio-economic status (US Department of Education, 1996), and there are arguments both ways for same or cross matching with respect to these aspects. For instance in several of the schools visited, concerns were expressed about the need to recruit more male mentors, as a good proportion of 'at-risk' students are boys considered to be in need of a supportive relationship with an adult male.

The issue of gender matching has received some consideration in the literature but with no definite conclusions. Gender might relate to the aims of the program for example if the target group is males from a female-led household, or girls interested in non-traditional careers. Carruthers (1993) discusses mentoring in business situations and warns against 'fraudulent mentors' who engage in mentoring in order to gain sexual favours. A related issue is the shortage of suitable female mentors in business. Miller (1998) reports several unsuccessful pairings involving cross-gender matching of male mentors with female students. However, Lauland (1998) says that there is no conclusive evidence relating to matching on gender but the appropriateness of gender as a matching issue needs to be considered.

The issue of ethnic, cultural or socioeconomic matching is also discussed in the literature. Again, matching on these criteria may be important for a program's goals, but the general consensus is that successful outcomes can be obtained regardless of background or race. Mentors can still give psychosocial support and provide resources, and non-similar matches can allow for growth and the experience of sharing from another culture – for both parties (Struchen & Porta, 1997).

What is important, however, is that these issues be acknowledged and considered in the matching (and preparation) process. Mentors need to be prepared for cultural differences and they need to genuinely like and respect their mentees, and be empathic and non-judgemental. Discussing and refining goals in the early stages or inviting both parties to sign a contract making a commitment to follow certain ground rules are also suggested as ways of facilitating matching (Lauland, 1998).

Also, the school system and schools have a particular culture. Mentoring programs can give students insights into the culture within which the mentor works or lives. It can also work the other way and give mentors insights into the lives of students and that of teachers in schools. This can be a positive (as in the school-bank partnership), but can become an impediment if those involved are not made aware of some of the differences that do exist (such as differences in access to technology in telementoring).

Provisions need to be made for instances of unsuccessful matching or where a mentor or student withdraws for other reasons, such as illness, work commitments or travel (Carruthers, 1993). In the first case each party needs to be able to withdraw from the relationship, and may need mediation for this to happen. A failed or truncated relationship may be detrimental to all concerned. Rematching may be a solution in some cases, but no one should be obliged to enter a new mentoring relationship.

### *Retaining Mentors*

Recruiting and retaining mentors seems to be a problem for many programs. Freedman (1995) suggests that underlying tensions such as those caused by one party not turning up to meetings can prevent bonds forming. 'Drive-by' mentoring has already been raised as a concern - where a mentor swoops in from a location unknown to the child, spends a short time with them, then returns to the great unknown, leaving the child behind (Dondero, 1997). Guetzloe (1997) suggests, and this point has also been raised earlier, that the issue of mentors not having enough time to maintain regular contact should be dealt with in the initial screening process.

The US Department of Education (1996) discusses ways of keeping enthusiasm for the program alive. For example, two or more sets of mentoring pairs could meet together for some activities, frequent interaction among the mentors provides support, as do public recognition ceremonies and positive publicity. Many of the case study schools had regular informal morning teas to enable mentors to get together and provide support for one another. In one of the LAP schools, a celebration service is held at the end of each year to publicly recognise the program and thank the mentors.

Songsthaugen & Lee (1996) report mentors feeling abandoned and at a loss as to how to meet the needs of their students. This reinforces the need of support for mentors. Brainstorming or problem-solving in regular mentor support group meetings, training in new techniques or options for meetings, outings for students, providing mentors with each others' phone numbers for informal support, and meetings with parents are suggested. Giving the program a club or organisation format is recommended so participants have greater sense of belonging and more ownership of the program. Further suggestions for supporting mentors are raised in the section on Relationships.

The importance of both mentors and mentees having realistic expectations about the nature and outcomes of mentoring programs has already been raised as an important issue. Another important issue which could arise is what Struchen & Porta (1997) term 'social distance'. When there is a large difference between the backgrounds of the mentor and mentee, it is possible that the mentor's world could seem irrelevant to the mentee. Similarly, the mentee's

goals could seem naive to the mentor. The authors suggest that mentors from the local neighbourhood could make as much or more impact than other, perhaps more 'qualified' mentors. There would also be more opportunities for further interaction when the program was finished. As discussed in the previous section, differences in backgrounds may also create positive influences for both mentors and mentees.

## The Parents

The role of parents in mentoring programs is one which is not raised extensively in the literature but is seen by some (eg US Department of Education, 1996; Saito & Blyth, 1992; Lauland, 1998) to be a very important ingredient in the success of a program. Several suggestions are made to involve parents to the maximum extent possible. Parents need to understand the limitations of the role of the mentor – it is not to usurp the parents' authority or take their place. They need to be aware of the goals and objectives of the program and be informed of events. Early involvement could include signing a consent form and being given the opportunity to disapprove of a mentor they do not think would be good for their child. A training or orientation session would be one way of achieving involvement.

The case study schools varied greatly in the level of parent involvement in the program. For some it was limited to parent consent (and some found this difficult to obtain), while others included parents in advisory roles (eg SBC), in initial meetings and final celebrations (School-to-Work, and One School and a Bank).

Other ways which Lauland (1998) suggests might be appropriate for involving parents could include:

- providing material and handouts similar to those the mentors have
- letting them know their support is needed eg by attending meetings, helping with the program goals
- have mentors attend parent sessions
- give the parents the phone number of the mentor's supervisor or another contact person
- establish a parent advisory council
- schedule parent activities eg dinners, informal workshops on problems common to young people
- encourage or require mentors to meet with parents regularly
- send out newsletters
- have the mentor or staff member call the parents to share their child's accomplishments.

The importance of parental support is also seen as an issue which can affect the success of programs. Struchen & Porta (1997) warn that a lack of parental involvement, and non-supportive or antagonistic home environments may inhibit program success.

## Relationships

This may seem a trivial observation, but mentoring is about relationships. Importantly, it is not just about the mentor-mentee relationship, but about the multiple relationships and support

mechanisms involved in the mentor program as a whole. Even in the simplest model with a teacher, two mentors and a handful of students – there are several relationships to be established, maintained and supported. In the larger programs, relationships occur at many levels. The importance of recognising and supporting different relationships was highlighted by references made, by mentors particularly, to other programs and other schools in which they had helped out, where this appeared not to be the case. Examples given were lack of interest, little support, feedback or contact with others involved. Paying attention to all the relationships is one of the marks of good practice. If this occurs, mentoring programs have the potential to create many opportunities for informal mentoring and enhance the building of school communities, and that of schools with the wider community.

The focus on training is often on the training of the mentor, but all those involved need training and to be clear on their role, responsibilities and restrictions. Schools still need to be aware of specific training to meet the needs of their students and mentors. The students often need training in how to greet/contact mentors and appropriate behaviour as well as specific skills for email mentoring. The schools and coordinators need assistance with managing volunteers.

Various authors (Lauland, 1998; Miller, 1998; Saito & Blyth, 1992; Songsthaugen & Lee, 1996) agree on a number of points relating to ongoing support for mentors. Adequate support and communication structures are essential for program success. Mentors are more confident when they have easy access to program staff. This can be accomplished through regular phone contact or review meetings. Personal contact with the coordinator or others for enables opportunities for asking questions, making comments or expressing concerns. Mid-scheme review sessions for all participants are recommended and mentors need to receive appropriate feedback on their mentees - taking into account the need for confidentiality. Successful programs such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America have a specific monitoring system of monthly phone contact with families and volunteers, to allow for supervision and support so that the mentors, operating alone and in different locations, don't feel isolated (Struchen & Porta, 1997).

The mentors of at-risk students may need specific and on-going training and support. The case study mentors of the students considered to be at-risk were keenly aware of their needs for support, concrete ideas and strategies, and regular feedback and evidence of progress.

### *Concluding the Program*

As outlined earlier, mentoring relationships (and programs) go through a series of stages which include the breakup of the relationship. Ideally this occurs as gaps in knowledge lessen or as the mentee becomes more independent. Concluding the program itself with a celebratory event where achievements are noted and thankyou's expressed is an appropriate closure activity (Mentoring Works, 1999).

To allow a mentoring relationship to develop, the participants usually have to commit to at least a term or semester. Some of the models organise the mentoring on a fixed activity which has a finite beginning and ending (eg School-to-Work, One School and a Bank, Sports Challenge). Others are more indeterminate and may last for many years (LAP and SVP) and may include a series of shorter activities (maths competitions). They generally end when the

student feels they don't need a mentor anymore. In any case, mentors and mentees may decide to stay in touch with each other, but this is more to do with the relationship developed than the model of mentoring set up.

### ***Research and Evaluation***

The importance of research and evaluation of specific mentoring programs cannot be overstressed. For programs to know if they have met their goals - made a difference, and to obtain and retain funding, individual programs need evaluating. From a broader view, research is important to indicate for example what types of programs are more successful for particular age groups or settings, how training is best delivered, and what ways are participants best supported.

Dondero (1997), Pascarelli (1998), Lauand (1998) and Struchen & Porta (1997) suggest the following reasons for evaluating mentoring programs:

- to determine the progress of the program
- to help know if the program has met its objectives and served the needs of the participants
- to see whether the needs of the target students have changed
- to allow for feedback from mentors, mentees, parents, school staff and program coordinators
- to provide critical feedback for program revision and improvement
- to provide information for sponsors about whether the program is meeting its objectives and whether it merits ongoing funding

In order to plan and conduct an evaluation, program organisers need to consider what change is anticipated, the degree of expected change, how long it might take and how any change will be measured (Struchen & Porta). As suggested earlier, these questions need to be considered in the planning stages of a program.

### **Outcomes**

Although the focus of mentoring programs may differ in detail the underlying rationale behind all of them is to enhance the learning outcomes or realise the potential of the students. Whatever the specific learning outcomes might be, there is a strongly held belief amongst program coordinators, mentors and students interviewed for the case studies of substantial increases in self-confidence and a willingness to give learning a go.

Determining the desired outcomes and whether they have been achieved is an important issue, and one that mentoring programs worldwide have not dealt with well. Funding is often dependent on evaluation, and well-designed evaluation is often dependent on good funding. As some writers suggest (US Department of Education, 1996; Struchen & Porta, 1997), with limited resources, organisers are sometimes reluctant to direct those resources into assessing the effectiveness of a program.

Funding agencies need to work more closely with mentoring programs to ensure that these programs do not doom themselves to failure by establishing short-term objectives that sound nice but are unrealistic or by using evaluation tools that the mentoring staff are not trained to administer. (Struchen & Porta, 1997, p. 24)

### *Outcome Data*

Lauland (1998) describes outcome data as that which is directly tied to the program's goals and objectives and lets planners know how well a program has achieved its short and long term objectives. This may be quantitative in nature, but not necessarily. Some programs have used standardised instruments and questionnaires, but these are generally costly, may not tap the most important outcomes, and may be culturally inappropriate or beyond the literacy skills of participants.

Various examples of outcome data are given in the literature, depending on the original goals of the program (eg Dondero, 1997; Lauland, 1998; Struchen & Porta, 1997):

- pre- and post program inventory to measure self-esteem or self-concept (Sports Challenge uses this type of data)
- degree of antisocial activities
- academic performance, attitudes and behaviour
- relationship with families and friends
- social and cultural enrichment
- percentage of homework assignments completed by students in the program
- school attendance
- enrolment in and successful completion of further education programs
- teacher reports of changes in behaviour and attitude
- school drop-out rate
- number of teen pregnancies

### **Evaluation of the Program**

While evaluation of the outcomes for students may be the primary concern, evaluation of the program as a whole needs to be undertaken. There is a need to determine which methods or decisions have been most successful and so can be used to inform practice and assist in designing effective programs (Pascarelli, 1998). Programs need to include evaluation in their planning so that evaluation strategies match the expected program outcomes and processes, and include it in their budgets. Program planners need to ask questions concerning expectations (short and longer term), how they will know if expectations have been met, the kind of data that will provide this information, timing of data gathering, and who will coordinate and carry out the evaluation. Related questions involve what to do with the evaluation information and provide feedback on success to those involved, how to use it for improving the specific program concerned and how to disseminate the information more widely to assist others in the development of mentoring programs.

### *Process Data*

Process data refers to information collected to let organisers know if the program was carried out the way it was intended to be and whether any changes are needed during a particular program's operation or for implementing the next program (Lauland, 1998). It also provides feedback to the participants on their progress towards their goals. Generally, although not always, this data is qualitative and collection is ongoing and continuous.

Lauland (1998) suggests that ongoing records such as a diary, log book or notes be kept by mentors and coordinators and others involved in a program relating to the following questions:

- how many mentors and students were matched?
- for how long were they paired?
- was student attendance adequate? was mentor attendance adequate?
- what was the length of each meeting? where did they meet? were adequate facilities always available for each meeting?
- what kind of activities did mentors and students participate in? what was worked on or discussed at each meeting?
- did anything significant happen during the program?
- were there any changes in student behaviour or attitude?
- were there any indications of progress or improvement?
- how many mentors/students left before the program ended?
- what types of relationships formed between mentors and students?

The LAP program in particular, encourages this kind of data collection.

Other ways suggested of collecting data (Dondero, 1997; Pascarelli, 1998; Struchen & Porta, 1997) are from pre and post-surveys and feedback forms completed by program participants. Teachers, for example, could complete an informal report card for mentees regarding their work habits, academic growth and interpersonal relationships with peers and adults. Open-ended interviews could also be used to identify experiences, expectations, desires, perceptions of needs and the way participants relate to each other. Information collected could be used as ongoing feedback and information for continuous improvement, as well as for end of program evaluation.

### **Other Research Issues**

In the literature there is a general lack of longitudinal data. If the rationale for a mentoring program is a preventative one, how these longer-term outcomes can be measured and the effects separated from those related to the other activities in which students may be involved must be considered. Roberts and Cotton (1994) argue "...it becomes more difficult to attribute any changes in measures solely to students' participation in a mentor program" (p. 1369). Bein (1999) suggests that the unevenness of implementation and evaluation designs, and lack of experimental controls have prevented researchers from offering definitive conclusions about the effectiveness of mentoring as a strategy. These are important issues that will impact on the future place of mentoring as a strategy for schools.

Guetzloe (1997) suggests further specific questions which still need to be addressed. For example there is a lack of precise information about program costs. The Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America program suggests that maintaining one match for one year costs \$1000 (Tierney, Grossman & Resch, 1995). With increasing growth in mentoring programs it is suggested that a set of benchmarks is needed to ensure their quality. Withers & Batten (1996) present the general research questions which need exploration as: how can we better conceptualise which youth can be most helped?, and under what optimum conditions will this help occur?

Miller (1998) suggests that all parties should be involved in the evaluation of a program. Lauland (1998) states that most successful programs use outside persons to conduct evaluations, but that staff can help with interpreting findings as they are most aware of the actual day-to-day operations.

Funding for evaluation is an issue, which is not widely covered in the literature but seems relevant here. As discussed earlier in this literature review, where funding is scarce, sponsors and organisers may be reluctant to put money into evaluation rather than into resources to support the day to day operation of a program. Similarly, if a coordinator's time is scarce, running a program may not allow for its evaluation as well. There certainly is a relative lack of published rigorous research, although in-house evaluations may have been conducted without being published. The case studies illustrated these differences. For example the VET programs had money set aside for evaluation of the programs, but for others, such as LAP and Sports Challenge, it was difficult to find time to collate all the data available.

### Using the Evaluation Data

As well as determining whether a program has met its goals or warrants further funding, there are a number of other uses of evaluation data. For example, Lauland (1998) states that evaluations can alert program staff to any problems relating to the implementation of the program and can provide positive reinforcement for mentors. This last point is not trivial, given the concern expressed in the literature about retaining mentors. Freedman (1995) argues that mentoring is very difficult, and in most cases "a modest intervention" (p. 221). It is difficult for mentors both to "make a connection with young people and to make a difference in their lives" (Freedman, in Withers & Batten, 1995, p. 80).

Miller (1998) suggests that evaluations can reveal benefits to all parties involved and this information can be used to recruit new mentors and involve other organisations. Partnerships and other community links may result which give wider benefits to schools. It is suggested that evaluators produce an end of scheme evaluation report setting out the program's strengths and weaknesses and as well as any action which will be taken to improve the scheme following these reviews and evaluations. The School-to-Work program did publish such a report on the internet and used the evaluation information to modify later versions of the program.

### ***Mentoring Support Networks***

One aspect that follows from this for many of the coordinators and mentors was the desire to learn more about mentoring and the need for mutual support from others, including those involved in mentoring programs elsewhere. There is a need for a network to link them which could facilitate support mechanisms, and help overcome the feelings of isolation. This could provide information, advice and social support. Many websites have been set up in the USA with the purpose of spreading information, but this is only part of the issue.

There is expertise in Australia that has been gained over many years and materials available for those wishing to implement a mentoring program. The development of a network organisation, perhaps via the internet or a newsletter, or regular forums would assist in the effective and efficient use of the available resources and expertise.

## **Recommendations**

The recommendations on mentoring in schools arising from this project are set out below. The recommendations for consideration by Australian education systems and governments are addressed first followed by the recommendations for schools.

### **For Education Systems and Governments**

#### *Encourage and support the development of mentoring programs in schools*

Mentoring is a strategy with the potential to meet the individual learning needs of a wide range of students. It can provide regular individual attention to a student or group of students that is not always possible in the regular classroom. Mentoring can lead to a range of enhanced learning outcomes for students – academic, motivational, social and personal, at the same time providing benefits to the mentors, the school and the community. Also, it can be linked with policy developments in curriculum, and provides a tangible way for schools to realise the development of learning communities.

#### *Utilise the existing expertise in implementing mentoring programs in Australia to assist in the development of new programs in schools*

There is considerable expertise in schools and the community that has been developed over many years of implementing mentoring programs in schools.

#### *Encourage and support the involvement of older persons and other community members in mentoring programs in schools*

Older persons in the community have a valuable role to play in mentoring programs in schools, but their potential has not been fully realised. There is a wide range of older and younger community members, who have shown interest in being involved in mentoring in schools. These include seniors and retirees, parents, tertiary students, and those involved in business, industry, professions, and community-based organisations.

#### *Facilitate the development of general guidelines for risk management and managing volunteers in schools*

As many mentoring programs in schools involve the participation of volunteers, clear guidelines need to be developed to assist schools in managing volunteers. This includes areas of recruiting, screening, articulating roles and responsibilities, duty of care and ongoing supervision, training, providing support and feedback. At present many of these aspects are not clearly articulated and official guidelines are fragmented.

#### *Promote the collaboration of schools with community and business organisations*

Mentoring programs can provide mutual benefits for schools, businesses and community groups and contribute to the development of better understanding of the role of each in society. Business and community organisations can also assist schools with recruiting mentors, provide expertise in some areas of mentoring, and assist with sponsorship.

*Provide realistic funding for the development of mentoring programs in schools and their ongoing implementation and evaluation*

Funding of mentoring in schools needs to reflect the time and resources needed to establish, implement and evaluate a mentoring program, and provide for the ongoing requirement for management of the program and support of the participants.

*Support further research on mentoring in schools*

The implementation of mentoring programs in Australia and overseas has had a pragmatic focus and mainly concentrated on 'what works'. It has developed in essentially a theoretical vacuum and has made little use of existing conceptual knowledge of how people learn and interact. The development of elaborated conceptual models of mentoring will assist in understanding how mentoring works, how it can be improved, and the development of more appropriate evaluation frameworks.

*Facilitate the establishment of a mentoring network to promote mentoring, disseminate information and provide support*

A mentoring support network would facilitate the development of mentoring programs in schools by providing a mechanism for exchanging existing knowledge and ideas, and providing wider support for those involved. It also builds on the nature of mentoring as a means of developing supportive relationships amongst people.

## For Schools

*Seek out as much information as possible about mentoring and mentoring programs*

There is considerable expertise in schools and the community that has been developed over many years of implementing mentoring programs in schools. Make use of this expertise and talk with others who have implemented similar programs. This report should assist in this endeavour.

*Commence with a small mentoring program to meet specific student needs*

Mentoring programs are about relationships, and implementing a program is likely to take more time than expected. New programs are likely to be more effective if schools concentrate on developing a small number of mentor relationships to meet specific student needs.

*Investigate developing a mentoring program collaboratively with a business or community organisation*

Mentoring programs can provide mutual benefits for schools, businesses and community groups and contribute to the development of better understanding of the role of each in society. Business and community organisations can also assist schools with recruiting mentors, provide expertise in some areas of mentoring, and assist with sponsorship.

*Plan the mentoring program carefully, taking into consideration the features that contribute to a successful program (detailed in this report)*

There are numerous factors to be considered in establishing implementing and evaluating a mentoring program. The features of successful programs detailed in this report provide a good starting point. While all factors need to be considered, some of the key factors include: determine clear goals and expectations, allocate sufficient resources to the program (obtain grants where possible), involve all interested people in the development process and keep people informed, develop clear guidelines and procedures for managing volunteers, develop support mechanisms for everyone in the program, develop mechanisms for dealing with mismatches and ending mentoring relationships, and involve all participants in feedback and evaluation.

*Ensure the mentoring program has a positive image and its own identity that links explicitly with the curriculum and/or ethos of the school*

Effective mentoring programs are clearly linked with other aspects of the school, such as the curriculum, and are in concert with the ethos of the school. In order that the participants feel it is a privilege to be a part of the mentoring program, it needs to have a positive image and a specific identity within the school.

*Encourage and support teachers who want to implement a mentoring program at the school*

Effective mentoring programs need enthusiastic coordinators who support the concept of mentoring to develop a mentoring program. Coordinators also need the support of the school as a whole.

*Seek out mentors to match the rationale of the program and the needs of individual students*

There is a wide range of older and younger community members, who have shown interest in being involved in mentoring in schools. These include seniors and retirees, parents, tertiary students, and those involved in business, industry, professions, and community-based organisations. Initial contacts can be made through local businesses, service clubs, community organisations, other educational institutions, parents and citizens groups, word of mouth or local media.

## **Conclusion**

This research has examined the international literature on mentoring and explored questions about what mentoring is and how it is conceptualised, why it is growing in importance, and the perceived benefits for mentors and mentees. Key features of success have been synthesised from the 'how to' guides on mentoring and relate to the four phases of establishing a program, selecting and training program participants, implementing a program and evaluating a program.

A national search identified a range of mentoring programs in Australian school settings. The nine programs selected for the case studies explored different ways mentoring can be developed and implemented and revealed a number of models of good practice. The research showed that members of the community, including older persons, are well suited to act as mentors to young people in schools.

Analysis of the findings revealed that successful implementation of a mentoring program is dependent on a complex set of inter-related factors that cannot be separated from the specific aims of the program and the context in which it operates. Some issues common to mentoring programs in schools have been highlighted and discussed in terms of the program organisation, the people involved, research and evaluation, and support networks.

From the literature reviewed and from the case studies, key recommendations have been developed for consideration by Australian education systems and governments, and by individual schools.

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## **Other Resources**

### Other Useful Internet Sites:

BP Students as Tutors and Mentors – examples of cross-institutional mentoring.

Available: <http://www.bpamoco.com/edu/Tutoring/students/Practice.htm>

Community in Schools of Wake County, Inc. (CIS) - business mentors in schools. Available:

<http://www.businessleader.com/blmar98/cominsch.html>

International Telementor Centre – information and guidelines on telementoring, with links to programs.

Available: <http://www.telementor.org/>

Peer Resources - comprehensive Canadian on-line resource with information and links. related to mentoring.

Available: <http://www.islandnet.com/~rcarr/peer.html>

STAR (Science and Technology Awareness Raising) Programme web page – links to similar international programs.

Available: <http://wwwcomm.murdoch.edu.au/star/>

Volunteer Centres – links to Volunteering Australia in each state and territory.

Available: <http://www.volunteer.org.au/links.htm>.

### School Business Club contact:

Mr Robert Van Houten, Director of Enterprise Education at St Andrew's Cathedral School, has stated that if schools are interested in starting their own SBC, he would be happy to speak with them. Contact details are: Tel/Fax: (02) 9264 3126; email: [rvanhouten@sacs.nsw.edu.au](mailto:rvanhouten@sacs.nsw.edu.au)

### LAP Materials:

*Building Bridges with LAP* [video and two books]

*Building Bridges with LAP: Coordinators handbook*

*The LAP companion: Volunteers guide*

Available from:

Curriculum Resources Australia

Customer Service Centre

PO Box 33

Campbelltown SA 5074

Ph (08) 8373 6077 Fax (08) 8234 5086

## Appendices

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## Appendix 1

### Interview Questions

#### *Introduction*

A separate series of questions was prepared for program coordinators, for teachers of mentees, for mentors and for mentees. The main areas covered related to how the interviewee first became involved in the program, their preparation for being in the program, the program's day to day operation, its effectiveness, and any ways the program could be improved. Program coordinators were also asked further questions relating to areas of funding, constraints on effectiveness, and formal evaluations.

The above areas were covered in each interview but the order, number and exact wording of questions varied according to the particular setting. For example, the person interviewed may have given relevant information when answering an earlier question. Probing questions were asked when responses needed clarification. The intention was to have a discussion and to discover each participant's view of the program.

Questions were also adapted according to the particular interview setting. Interviews were set up by the coordinators and arrangements varied for example from a private one-on-one interview with one researcher and one student or one mentor, to a small group interview of one researcher with four students, to two mentors being interviewed by two researchers. The age and verbal skills of the mentees also determined the wording and number of questions asked. For example, in the LAP program, one interviewee was an able, articulate year 6 boy, and another was a year 2 girl with limited attention span and limited verbal skills, so the questions were adapted accordingly.

All participants were personally thanked at the time of their interview and were sent a certificate of appreciation for their participation in the project.

#### ***Questions for Organisers and Coordinators***

##### Establishing the Program

- How did the program get started?

(probing questions if needed relating to: written goals and specific aims / desired outcomes; funding / resourcing; management and promotion of the program)

##### Mentors

- How are the mentors selected and prepared?
- What are the preferred characteristics for mentors?

(probing questions if needed relating to: recruitment, screening, financial support for mentors, role description, amount and content of training sessions, nature of training materials, who conducts the training, ongoing training/support, issues such as confidentiality or dealing with serious matters arising)

### Mentees

- How did you decide which students should be in the program?
- How are they selected and prepared?

(probing questions if needed relating to: specific selection criteria, any students who are excluded or not considered, voluntary or compulsory involvement, information given to students, parental approval and involvement, and preparation relating to issues of expectations, appropriate conduct, confidentiality etc)

### Matching Mentees and Mentors

- How are mentors and mentees matched?
- Is there provision for mis-matches?

### Implementing the Program

- How does the program operate on a day to day basis?

(probing questions if needed relating to: number of participants, frequency and duration of meetings, organisation of meeting times, location of meetings, direct or indirect supervision nature of activities, decisions about content, available resources, record of activities, available support for mentors / mentees, whole group or mentor / mentor activities, recognition / awards for participants)

### Evaluating the Program

- What benefits / outcomes can you see for the mentees, mentors, yourself, the school, the parents, other students etc?
- What feedback have you had from mentors, mentees, teachers, parents, etc about the program?
- What data is gathered and who collects it?
- Has the program been formally evaluated?
- How successful would you rate this program overall? (1 - 10 scale with 1 lowest + 10 highest)

### Impediments or Barriers to Success

- What problems have you come across and have you found ways of solving them

### Other Comments

- Do you have any further comments about the program, or mentoring in schools programs in general?

## **Questions for Mentors**

### Selection and Training/Preparation

- How did you hear about the program and how long have you been involved?
- Did you have to go through any selection processes?
- What do you see your role to be in this program?
- How were you prepared for your role?
- What do you see as the characteristics of an ideal mentor?

(probing questions if necessary about specific screening, nature, amount and adequacy of training, and training in how to deal with any problems or issues arising during the program)

### The Program

- How does the program actually operate?
- Do you have any contact with the student or other mentors outside the actual meeting times?
- What materials and resources are available to you and are they adequate?

(probing questions if necessary about meeting location, nature and selection of activities, recording of information about meetings, how difficulties are handled, contact with parents etc)

### Evaluating the Program

- What benefits can you see for the mentees, mentors, yourself, the school, the parents, other students etc?
- Have you received any feedback about how your mentee is going? From whom?
- Have you received any feedback about how you are going as a mentor?
- Is the program meeting your expectations? Your mentee's?
- How successful would you rate this program in terms of learning outcomes for your student and in terms of your relationship with your student? (1 - 10 scale with 1 lowest 10 highest)
- Do you have any suggestions about how the program could work better?

### Other Comments

- Do you have any further comments about this program, or mentoring in schools programs in general?

## **Questions for Mentees**

(the general questions about the program were asked first in order to establish rapport with the students; as already stated, the number and wording of questions varied according to the characteristics of the individual students)

## The Program

- I understand you are in the ..... program. What can you tell me about it?
- Who is your mentor?
- Where and when do you meet?
- What do you do and who decides?
- Do you ever see your mentor anywhere else outside the program?

## Selection/Preparation

- How did you come to be in the program?
- What did you expect to get out of it when you began?
- Who would you tell if you weren't happy about being in the program?

## Evaluating the Program

- What do your friends / teachers / family think about you being in the program?
- Is the program helping you in any way? How? How do you know?
- How would you rate the program in terms of helping you with your school work, and in terms of enjoying being in it? (1-10 scale as previously described)

(this question was modified for the Year 2 student by asking how she felt about doing the work in the program and about seeing her mentor; 3 'smiley' faces were offered to indicate sad, neutral and happy and she was asked to point to the best one)

- how could this program be made better for the students?
- is there anything else you'd like to say about this program?

## ***Questions for Teachers of Mentees***

- How are you involved with the program?
- What expectations do you have of the program?
- How does the program operate from your point of view?
- Do you have any input into the selection of students or the activities they do with their mentor?
- What are the benefits of this program? What data / feedback have you had?
- How successful would you rate this program for your students, in terms of academic outcomes and in terms of interpersonal outcomes? (1 - 10 scale with 1 lowest + 10 highest)
- Do you have any suggestions about how this or similar programs could be improved?
- Do you have any further comments?

## Appendix II

Figure: Typologies of mentoring relationships

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
<p><b>ONE-TO-ONE classic</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• older, experienced mentor provides support, advice and challenge, acts as a role model and recognises mentee as a “special” person</li> <li>• commitment might be for three hours per week over one year or more</li> </ul>	<p>Philip &amp; Hendry (1996) (see earlier definitions of classical mentoring)</p>
<p><b>traditional</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participants generally describe relationships as meaningful, substantial and important</li> </ul>	<p>Saito &amp; Blyth (1992)</p>
<p><b>ONE-TO-ONE long-term, focused activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on particular goal or outcome, over and above friendship or role modelling</li> <li>• programs often designed to develop, encourage or promote academic progress or career exploration and /or skills</li> <li>• examples of benefits: attitudinal changes regarding the value of education, new work skills or new employment opportunities.</li> <li>• mentors report enjoying their role</li> </ul>	<p>Saito &amp; Blyth (1992)</p>
<p><b>ONE-TO-ONE short-term, focused activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focus on particular area such as school or career</li> <li>• don't require mentors to make more than perhaps six month commitment</li> <li>• example: school-based tutoring program of two hours per week for ten weeks where one tutor tutors one or two students</li> <li>• even when time limited, mentors, students and teachers all report significant benefits</li> <li>• teachers say individual help invaluable and critical to overall progress of students</li> </ul>	<p>Saito &amp; Blyth (1992)</p>
<p><b>ONE-TO-ONE telementoring</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• probably latest form of mentoring</li> <li>• involves using email and internet technology to provide a variety of mentoring relationships</li> </ul>	<p>Murray (1998) Lauland (1998)</p>
<p><b>ONE-TO-ONE long-term relationship with “risk-taking” adult</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• similar to classic mentoring</li> <li>• often between young person and mentor with history of rebellion and challenging authority</li> <li>• this person seen as a ‘safe’ repository of confidential information</li> <li>• mentor may act as mediator with family in times of crisis</li> <li>• are often adults known from early childhood eg former baby-sitters, family friends, or a ‘trendy’ aunt</li> </ul>	<p>Philip &amp; Hendry (1996)</p>

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
<b>ONE-TO-ONE friend-to-friend</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mentoring between two friends provides a 'safety net' especially for young people distrustful of adults</li> <li>can also provide testing ground for rehearsal of values and beliefs prior to taking action</li> </ul>	Philip & Hendry (1996)
<b>MORE THAN ONE MENTOR - ONE MENTEE team mentoring:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>more than one adult eg a family works with young person</li> <li>expected to meet with mentee once a week for two to four hours</li> <li>generally make year long commitment (may extend beyond this)</li> <li>example of benefits: where children from families with single household head can experience men and women role models in family setting.</li> </ul>	Saito & Blyth (1992)
<b>MORE THAN ONE MENTOR - ONE MENTEE team-mentoring + mentor rich environments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>using several mentors on regular basis</li> <li>gives youth greater access to mentors</li> <li>reduces time commitment and pressure on individual mentors</li> </ul>	Lauland (1998) Freedman (1995)
<b>MORE THAN ONE MENTEE + MENTOR(S) individual-team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>group of young people looks to individual or small number of individuals for support, advice and challenge</li> <li>mentor has respect and understanding for peer group</li> <li>mentor not necessarily much older than young people but recognised as having valid, reliable, relevant experience</li> <li>eg specialised youth work settings, Guides</li> <li>benefits seen to emerge from within group sessions and group processes.</li> </ul>	Philip & Hendry (1996) Saito & Blyth (1992)
<b>group mentoring</b>		
<b>MORE THAN ONE MENTEE + MENTOR(S) family mentoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>whole families, including children matched with one adult or teams of mentors for friendship and other types of support</li> </ul>	Lauland (1998)
<b>MORE THAN ONE MENTEE + MENTORS peer group mentoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ordinary friendships take on mentoring role</li> <li>peer group acts as arbiter or resource re appropriate strategies to adopt in certain social situations such as going to nightclubs or relationships with potential girl-boy friends.</li> </ul>	Philip & Hendry (1996)
<b>OTHER tripartite mentoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>traditional adult-youth relationship</li> <li>mentored youth also serves as mentor to younger child</li> <li>needs monitoring and support</li> <li>can provide benefits to all parties</li> </ul>	Lauland (1998) Freedman (1995)