

IGNITION

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Rationale and Results:

The Effectiveness of School-Based Mentoring on Academic Performance

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Over the last two decades, mentoring has become one of the most popular interventions for disadvantaged and at-risk youth (Walker, 2007). School-based mentoring (SBM) has demonstrated statistically significant improvement in students across a range of metrics including academic attitudes, performance, and behavior (Herrera et al., 2007). These improvements correlate to the length of the mentoring relationship (Herrera et al., 2007) and, as with all youth programs, rely on continued interaction (Walker and Vilella-Vellez, 1992; Aseltine, Dupre and Lamlein, 2000; finding that short-term programs for youth do not induce long-term change).

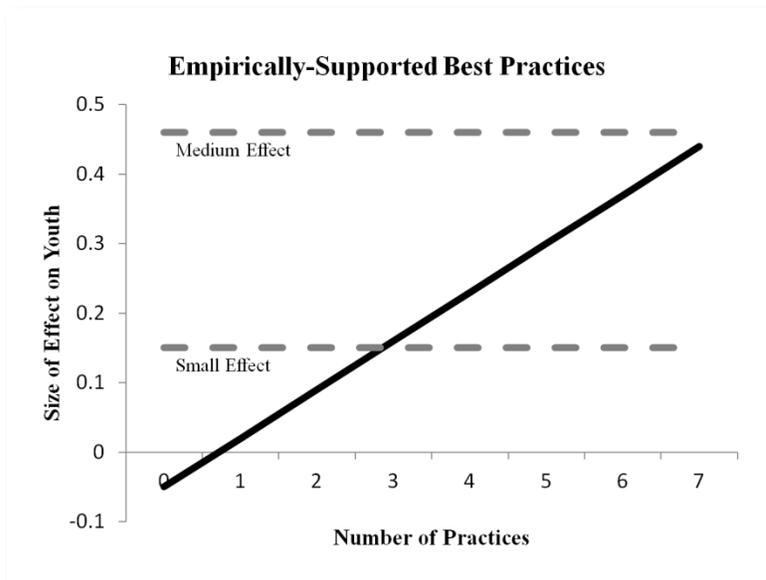
Among the many benefits of school-based mentoring, SBM has proven particularly effective in improving academic performance. SBM's impact on improving academic performance is enhanced when properly conducted following best practices. The following treatment reviews and summarizes the relevant literature on best practices to improve academic performance.

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School-based mentoring has consistently been found to improve academic performance in a range of areas (Wheeler, Keller, DuBois, 2010). Significantly stronger results, however, are reported for mentoring programs that incorporate a range of different best practices (Rhodes, DuBois, 2008). These practices are consistently those that "would be expected to promote the types of close, enduring, and developmentally enriching relationships" that are highlighted throughout the general research (*ibid.*) Included as best practices are training and ongoing supervision of mentors, expectations of relatively frequent meetings and long-lasting relationships between mentors and youth, program-sponsored activities to enhance the development of mentoring relationships, parent support and involvement, and the addition of other programs and services to supplement mentoring (DuBois et al., 2002; Herrera et al., 2007; Jolliffe & Farington, 2007).

Expected effects for programs utilizing the full complement of best-practices have been shown to be as much as 300% greater as the benefits found for youth in typical programs (DuBois et al., 2002). Which best practices are to be included varies with the unique

Figure 1. Synthesis of impact of introduction of best-practices to efficacy of school-based mentoring (Karcher, 2010).



exigencies of the youth in the program and the goals of the program (Rhodes, DuBois, 2008). This relationship has been generalized into the relationship shown in Figure 1 (Karcher, 2010).

By following Rhodes' model of youth mentoring (Figure 2; Rhodes, 2005), Ignition incorporates the right set of best-practices for the specific needs of each group. For example... *[flesh out the following section by commenting on various actions in*

the Ignition program and how they address the best-practices identified

(training and ongoing supervision of mentors, expectations of relatively frequent meetings and long-lasting relationships between mentors and youth, program-sponsored activities to enhance the development of mentoring relationships, parent support and involvement, and the addition of other programs and services to supplement mentoring)].

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Properly structured school-based mentoring has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on academic performance (DuBois, Silverthron, 2005). This is done in part by aiding students in developing proper coping skills to increase academic performance (Black, Grenard, Rohrbach, & Sussman, 2010). The degree to which academic performance is enhanced by SBM is more susceptible to the inclusion of best practices than other metrics of study (Wheeler, Keller, DuBois, 2010). SBM's impact on academic performance tends to be multiplicative rather than additive (Zarychta, 2011, describing a five year study that found significant relationship between SBM participation and college admission, but non-significant relationship between SBM and high school graduation rates).

Numerous studies have demonstrated significant academic results. A 2013 study by Nunez et al found mentoring dramatically improved academic performance across a range of learning styles in as little as six-months for middle-school students in Spain (Nunez, Rosario, Vallego, Gonzalex-Pienda, 2013; see also Figure 3). A 2010 study by Choi and Lemberger found statistically significant improvement for a group of South Korean at risk youth in the areas of reading and math (Choi, Lemberger, 2010). The students both scored at a higher level and improved at a faster rate than peers in the control group (ibid.). Finally, a 2009 study by Callaman et al found mentoring resulted in higher grade point averages and improved reporting of behavior (Callaman, Carswell, Hanlon, O'Grady, & Simon, 2009).

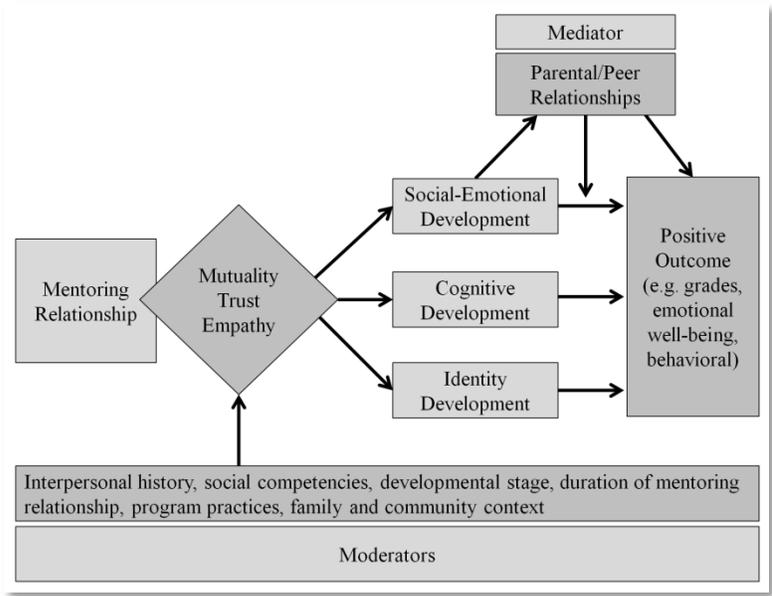


Figure 2. Model of youth mentoring (Rhodes, 2005).

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(Sample resource list; not representative of resources cited within)

Campobasso, Kathy. "E3:OSSI - Personalized Environment." E3:OSSI - Personalized Environment. Oregon Small Schools Initiative, n.d. Web. 12 Oct. 2012.
<<http://www.e3smallschools.org/pe.html>>.

Choi, Sumi & Lemberger, Matthew. (2010). Influence of a Supervised Mentoring Program on the Achievement of Low-Income South Korean Students. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, Aug 2009, Vol. 18, No. 3, p233-248.

Dappen, L & Iserhagen, J. C. (2006). Urban and nonurban schools: Examination of a statewide student mentoring program. *Urban Education*, 41, 151 -168.

Epstein, J. L. (1994). Theory to practice: Schools and family partnerships lead to school improvement and student success. In C. L. Fagnano & B. Z. Werber (Eds.), *School, family, and community interaction: A view from the firing lines* (pp. 39–52). Boulder, CO: Westview

Johnson, A. (1999). *Sponsor-A-Scholar: Long-term Impacts of a youth mentoring program on student performance*. Princeton: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Lambert, Mary Beth and Louise Lowry. (2004). *Knowing and Being Known: Personalization as a Foundation for Student Learning*. Seattle, WA: Small Schools Project.

Wyatt, Shelby. (2009). *The Brotherhood: Empowering Adolescent African-American Males Toward Excellence*.

Professional School Counseling, Aug 2009, Vol. 12 Issue 6, p463-470.

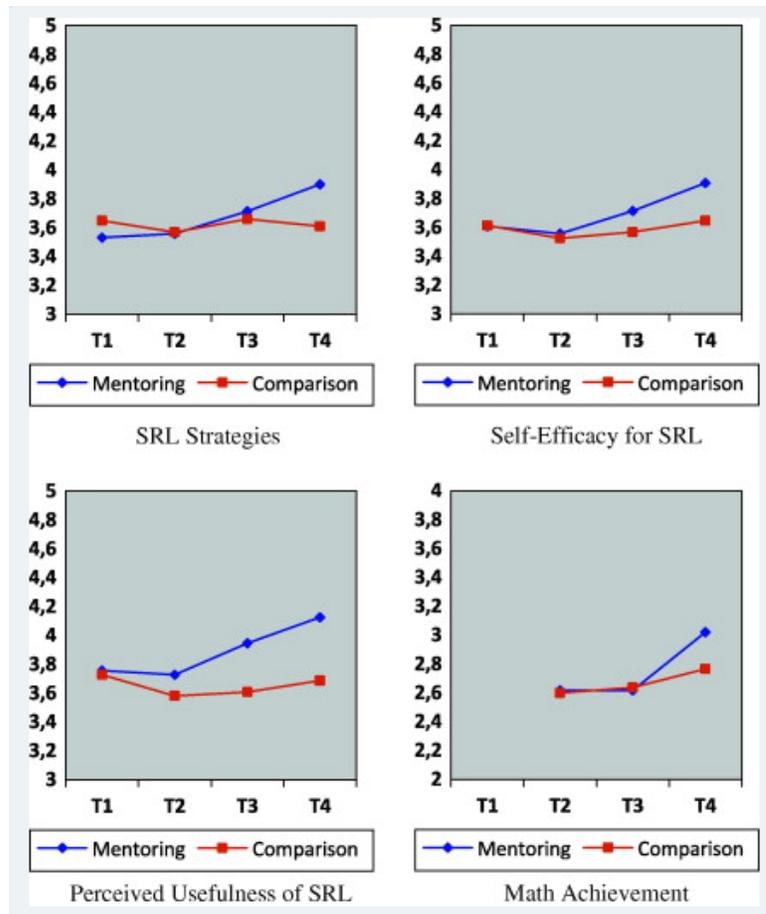


Figure 3. Impact of school-based mentoring on a range of teaching and learning methodologies (Nunez et al, 2013).