



**MENTOR**

## **PEER MENTORING**

Supplement to the

***ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE  
PRACTICE FOR MENTORING***

Summary | 2020

### **Taco Bell Foundation and MENTOR Release Comprehensive New Resource on Peer Mentoring**

A new wave of research is highlighting the effectiveness of “near peer” mentoring relationships in which older youth and young adults offer their support to those coming up behind them. These peer mentoring relationships are especially helpful around educational transitions—such as into high school or for college access and persistence—and effective entry onto a career path. These relationships have also proven to be impactful for the young people serving in the mentoring role as well, such as in boosting their leadership and communication skills.

Because these models hold such promise, the Taco Bell Foundation and MENTOR collaborated to produce a new publication designed to help practitioners and funders plan and deliver strong research-based peer mentoring programs. The resource will also be helpful to those working in K-12 spaces, especially school-based programs in which high school or middle school age youth mentor their younger peers. Much of the content will also be valuable to peer mentoring models focused on the transition into, and persistence in, college.

#### **Key Findings from Research on Peer Mentoring:**

- Benefits for mentees are found in a wide range of developmental, social, and academic outcomes (e.g., connectedness to school, increased social support from peers and adults such as teachers, improved attendance and graduation rates).
- Mentors also experience a wide range of benefits (e.g., improvements in leadership skills, stronger communication skills and peer relationships, sense of identity and purpose).
- There are also benefits to institutions and organizations that facilitate peer mentoring, such as improvements in school climate or retention rates in higher education.
- The clear need for structural supports and adult-led roles that can facilitate the implementation of these programs within their given contexts.





## What the Guide Offers:

- 57 evidence-informed recommendations on the practices that research suggests can lead to stronger peer mentoring relationships and program delivery
- Results from a major literature review of research on peer mentoring, highlighting the strengths and challenges of these models, implementation considerations, and common outcomes and benefits for both mentors and younger mentees in peer mentoring relationships
- A thorough discussion of critical program design decisions that will be useful to anyone building a new program or funders looking to build quality into their future peer mentoring investments

## Topics Covered in the Guide:

- Training peer mentors, who are young people themselves, on how to step into an often unfamiliar mentoring role
- Designing meaningful activities that allow for both relationship building and focused growth opportunities
- Offering adult guidance and match supervision to help troubleshoot mentoring relationships that need it
- Planning solutions to common logistical challenges with delivering a program at a school or other institutional setting

**This publication should be a major asset to any mentoring program looking to improve its services, to funders looking for signs of quality programming, and to newly conceived mentoring programs looking for a road map to designing an effective service that avoids common pitfalls. Learn more and download the resource at MENTOR's website:**

**[www.mentoring.org/peer](http://www.mentoring.org/peer)**

