EVIDENCE REVIEW:

Mentoring and Lived Experience Mentoring

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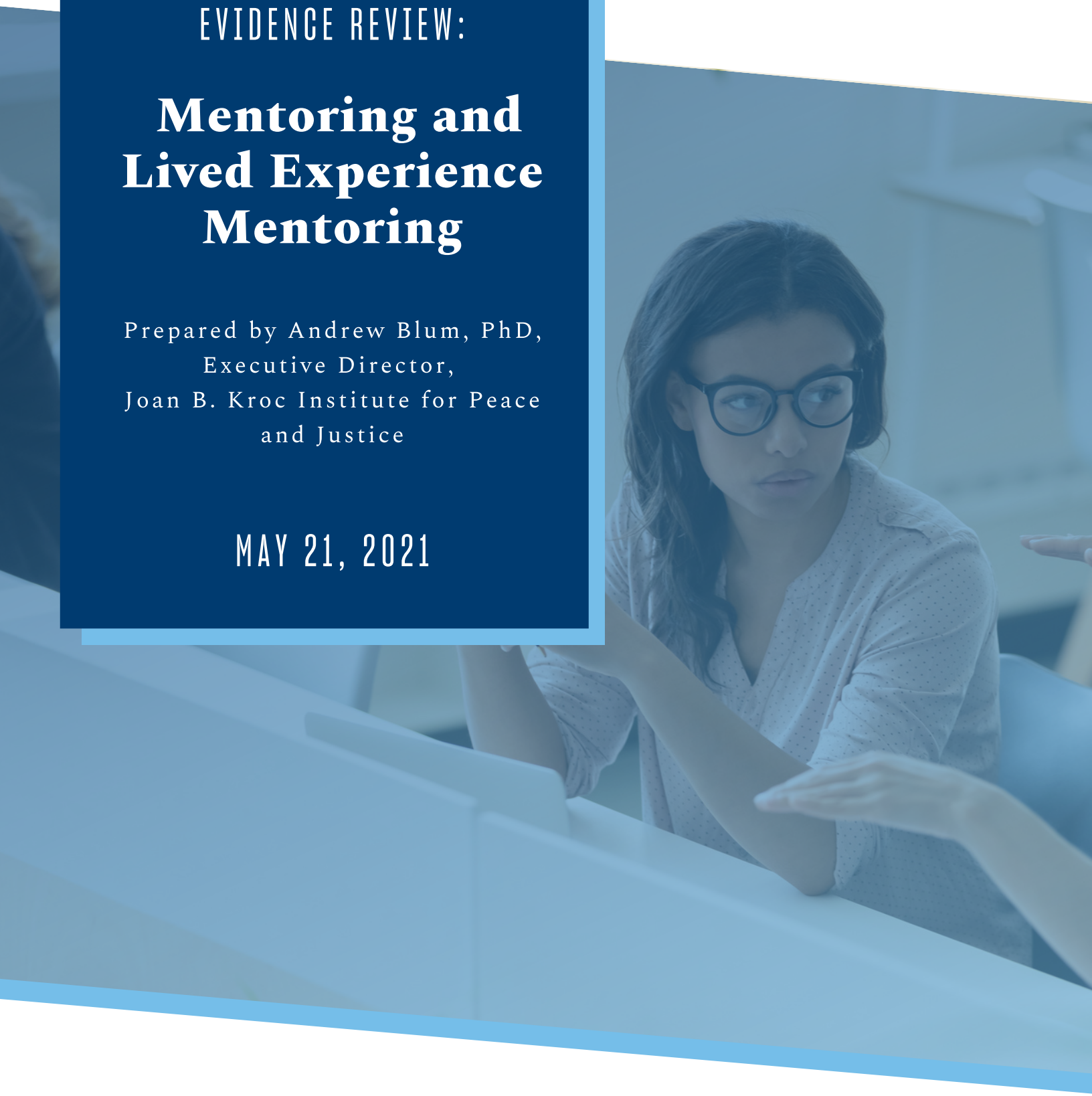

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I. Introduction

Lived experience mentoring is a community-based, youth development approach where mentors with relevant life experience work with and provide support to youth in their own community. In this review, we will summarize the state of the evidence base on lived experience mentoring (or, as it is sometimes called, credible messenger mentoring). To do this, the review asks:

Based on the evidence regarding mentoring in general and lived experience mentoring specifically, should we expect lived experience mentoring programs to be successful in producing key youth development outcomes, and why?

Drawing on the answers to this question, the review concludes with several key takeaways for lived experience practitioners as they work to build and expand the lived experience mentoring community.

Definitions

Mentoring

Mentoring is normally defined as a relationship, either ongoing or for a particular period of time, between a young person or young persons and an adult or older peer acting in a nonprofessional capacity that is designed to provide support that benefits the mentee's development.[1]

[1] The author would like to thank Andrew Haden, Rachel Locke, Kristin Lord and Arthur Soriano for reviewing and providing helpful comments on an earlier draft.

This definition encompasses individual and group mentoring, as well as formal mentoring (mentoring as part of a program or structured process) and informal mentoring (mentoring that emerges organically outside of a structured setting). It also includes cross-age, near-peer, and peer-to-peer mentoring as long as the mentor is older than the mentee. The definition excludes relationships between youth and social workers, therapists or educators if they are working in their professional capacity. Overall, it is estimated that roughly 2.5 million youth participate in mentoring programs each year in the United States.[2]

Lived Experience or Credible Messenger Mentoring[3]

Lived experience mentoring is distinguished from mentoring primarily by the type of mentors used. These programs use mentors that have lived through the same experience as the mentees. So, for instance, Credible Messenger Justice Center (CMJC) matches "justice involved/at-risk young people who have a higher risk of re-offending…with specially trained adults with relevant life experiences (often previously incarcerated, Returned Citizens) called Credible Messengers."[4] The Young Adult Peer Mentoring program uses mentors that share "lived experience of mental health challenges with purpose and intent to inspire hope and motivation in a young adult who is struggling with similar concerns."[5] The basic premise of the model is summed up here by CMJC: "From the same background and speaking the same language, Credible Messengers are able to break through to these individuals [the mentees] and form powerful, transformative, personal relationships."[6]

In practice, lived experience mentoring programs are also distinguished to some extent by the type of mentees in the program. The terms "lived experience" and "credible messenger" are mostly used for programs that work with higher-risk youth or youth experiencing more significant problems in their lives. In many ways, this is a semantics issue, as similar programs that work with less at-risk youth tend to use the term peer-to-peer or near-peer mentoring.

Using mentors with similar lived experience is a relatively simple idea and one that has been used quite frequently in other fields — think of the classic Alcoholics Anonymous "sponsor." In the field of youth development and youth delinquency, however, it breaks from a longstanding cultural idea that mentors should be successful members of the community with an impeccable background. Traditionally, for instance, mentoring programs would screen out any mentor applicants with a criminal background.

Review Strategy

The academic literature on mentoring in general is quite robust. The literature focused directly on lived experience mentoring is more limited. It is telling, for instance, that the *Handbook of Youth Mentoring*, published in 2014, does not have a single entry for lived experience mentoring or credible messenger mentoring in its index.[7] Therefore, this review will take a two-fold approach. It will first leverage the broader evidence base on mentoring in general and then

assess the more limited evidence focused directly on lived experience mentoring. This strategy is summarized in the following four questions, which form the outline of the review:

1) To what extent are mentoring programs effective at producing important youth development outcomes?

2) What factors make mentoring programs more or less effective?

3) What is the direct evidence of the effectiveness of lived experience mentoring?

4) What is the indirect evidence of the effectiveness of lived experience mentoring?

Indirect evidence of effectiveness will be assessed based on the extent to which lived experience mentoring programs normally have the success factors identified in question #2 – that is, success factors identified as important to the effectiveness of mentoring programs in general.

Scope of Review

The review will focus on mentoring programs designed to promote youth development outcomes. This scope is dictated in part by the needs of the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) initiative and in part by the nature of the literature on mentoring.

First, given that PSN supports concrete initiatives, the review will focus on mentoring *programs*, what is called formal mentoring, and exclude informal mentoring. Also, given the focus of PSN, it will exclude mentoring programs that take place for purely professional purposes, such as programs focused on supporting early-career lawyers.

Second, the research literature on mentoring focuses almost entirely on mentoring for youth and/or mentoring programs in which the mentee is younger than the mentor. Lived experience mentoring programs, however, often entail mentoring relationships where the mentee is an older adult and/or where the mentor and mentee are the same age. So, although these types of relationships are of potential interest here, the paucity of relevant research means this review will not discuss research on them; rather, future mentoring research should focus more on these types of relationships.

A review of the literature on mentoring reveals a relatively common set of youth development outcomes that mentoring programs focus on and researchers assess. These include:

- Reduced delinquency.
- Violence prevented or reduced, including interpersonal violence, bullying and aggression, sexual violence, etc.
- Reduced drug and alcohol use.

- Improved mental health.
- Improved educational achievement.
- Improved employment prospects.

Thus, the review will assess the extent to which lived experience mentoring programs can produce these and related youth development outcomes and what factors are important in determining whether they do so or not. The next section will begin this review by assessing whether mentoring programs, *in general*, are effective at producing these outcomes.

II. Are Mentoring Programs Effective?

Overall Impact

There have been several rigorous, systematic reviews on mentoring conducted over the past 10-15 years. These reviews have been remarkably consistent in their findings regarding the overall impact of mentoring programs. Across many different kinds or programs and outcomes, they have found that mentoring programs can produce small to medium-sized improvements in youth development outcomes. The most recent such review, by Raposa et al., reviewed 70 studies of youth mentoring programs. Across all programs and outcomes, it found a mean effect of mentoring to be .21, which is considered a moderate effect.[8] Earlier systematic reviews by Dubois et al., which looked at 73 studies, and Tolan et al., which looked at 46 studies — both focused on mentoring in the context of juvenile delinquency — found very similar results, namely a moderate impact across a range of programs and desired outcomes.[9]

Impact by Outcome

These systematic reviews also looked at impact for a range of specific outcomes or outcome categories. Raposa et al. found that the effect of mentoring did not vary across five categories of outcomes — school, social, health, cognitive and psychological.[10] Tolan et al. found stronger effects on delinquency and aggression and weaker, but still significant, effects on drug use and academic achievement.[11] Dubois et al. found similar consistency across five categories — attitudinal, social, psychological, behavioral and academic — but found no significant impact on physical health.[12]

Key Takeaways

The good news here is that although mentoring programs are quite diverse, there have been multiple, rigorous systematic reviews of the evidence that have found that mentoring does have a small to moderate positive impact. The further good news is that mentoring is a relatively low-cost intervention, so even though effect sizes are not large, they should normally represent a good return on investment.[13]

The less good news is that despite a great deal of research on mentoring and a widespread commitment to evidence-based practice, the impact of mentoring programs does not seem to be increasing over time. More recent systematic reviews are finding the same degree of impact as earlier ones. This raises important questions about how mentoring programs can leverage evidence to improve programming moving forward.[14]

Finally, to say that mentoring programs overall are effective of course does not mean there is no variation in the effectiveness of individual mentoring programs. In the next section, we will analyze in more detail the factors that make mentoring programs more or less successful, in order to derive lessons applicable to lived experience mentoring.

III. What Makes Mentoring Programs Successful?

It is important to understand what factors make mentoring programs successful for two reasons. First, since lived experience mentoring is mentoring, understanding what factors are important for mentoring in general can provide guidance on how to make lived experience mentoring programs more effective. Second, it is useful to understand what factors are important for mentoring in general in order to ask whether these factors are generally present or not in lived experience mentoring programs. If these features are generally present in the lived experience mentoring model, this can serve as indirect evidence of the effectiveness, or at least potential effectiveness, of lived experience mentoring programs. This indirect evidence will be analyzed in Section V below.

It needs to be said at the outset that, compared to research on the overall effectiveness of mentoring programs, findings on the factors that make mentoring programs successful are messier and more contradictory. Tolan et al, for instance, note that their findings "support viewing mentoring as a useful approach" but go on to say that "limited description of content of mentoring programs…detracts from a better understanding about what might account for the benefits."[15] Therefore, it is only possible to draw tentative conclusions. To draw those tentative conclusions, we will analyze the research across key features of mentoring programs.

Location of Program: School-Based versus Community-Based

Research studies often compare community-based mentoring programs to school-based mentoring programs. Although some earlier research found community-based programs were slightly more effective that school-based programs,[16] more recent and more rigorous research has found that whether a mentoring program was offered in the community or in school did not have an impact on its effectiveness.[17]

Mentors

Research has examined several characteristics of mentors and how these characteristics impact a program's effectiveness.

- *Age:* There is no strong evidence showing that a mentor's age, or the age difference between a mentor and their mentee, has an impact.

- *Profession:* Some researchers have found that if mentors have a background in "helping professions" — for instance, nursing, social work or counseling — they are more effective. Research has also shown that a strong fit between the educational/occupational background of a mentor and the goals of the mentoring program is important.[18]

- *Motivation:* Some research has shown that when mentors are motivated by opportunities for professional development programs are more effective than when the primary motivation is civic duty.[19]

Mentees

Researchers have also looked at the characteristics of mentees in a program.

- *Age:* Although research has found that mentorships can work at all ages,[20] some more recent research has found mentorship is more effective if the mentee is younger than high-school age.[21]

- *Race/Ethnicity:* Across the research we reviewed, there were no studies that found that the race or ethnicity of mentees has an impact on the effectiveness of mentoring programs.

- *Risk Profile:* Researchers have looked at the impact of the risk profile of youth on the effectiveness of mentoring. The risk profile includes both individual and environmental risk.[22] The findings around the risk profile of youth are somewhat complicated. Based on a number of studies that have looked at this, the takeaway seems to be that there is a curvilinear relationship between risk and effectiveness. Youth with a moderate degree of risk gain the most from mentoring relationships, while youth with low risk and those with the highest levels of risk gain less. Intuitively this makes sense, as high-performing youth may not need a mentoring relationship to excel, while youth experiencing trauma or severe behavioral problems, for instance, may need more professional support than mentoring can provide. It is important to note that many high-risk mentees do benefit from mentoring relationships and that benefits only fall off for youth at the very highest levels of risk.

Mentoring Relationship

Another set of factors that researchers have looked at concerns the features of the relationship between mentor and mentee.

- *Connection between Mentor and Mentee:* Studies have shown that when mentors and mentees have strong shared interests the mentoring relationship is more effective. More generally, research has shown that the "intensity and quality of the mentor-mentee bond" is crucial.[23] Because this connection is so important, researchers have looked at whether matching mentor and mentee on race and/or gender is important. At this time, there is no consensus in the research on this question.

- *Length of Mentoring Relationship:* Research indicates that mentoring relationships that last longer and create regular patterns of contact create more benefits.[24] It is equally important to set and meet clear expectations regarding the length of the mentoring relationship.[25]

- *Purpose of the Relationship:* One systematic review found that when the purpose of the mentoring relationship was emotional support and advocacy, the mentoring relationship produced more benefits on average. Mentoring relationships focused on role modeling or teaching did not produce more benefits on average.[26] The finding in regard to advocacy is consistent with other research that found a key success factor was whether the mentoring relationship helped create access to other services.[27]

Best Practices for Implementation

Assessing established best practices for implementation is a final way of looking at what makes a mentoring program successful. The flagship guide in the field regarding implementation best practice is *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring,* published by MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership.[28] The guide provides 48 benchmarks, backed by research, that programs must meet in order to adhere to six "standards" — for recruitment, screening, training, matching and initiation, monitoring and support, and closure. It is not possible to summarize these benchmarks from the report in this review, but below we analyze them in order to assess the alignment between the lived experience mentoring model and established best practices for implementation.

IV. Are Lived Experience Mentoring Programs Effective? The Direct Evidence

We were not able to find any systematic reviews of evidence on lived experience mentoring, research that compared mentoring and lived experience mentoring programs, or research that assessed and compared multiple lived experience mentoring programs. Instead, the evidence on lived experience mentoring comes primarily from individual program evaluations.

Evaluations

- *Evaluation of the Arches Transformative Mentoring Program*: Arches is a credible messenger mentoring program in New York City focused on reducing youth recidivism. A quasi-experimental evaluation of the program conducted in 2018 found that the program significantly reduced felony reconviction rates at 12 months and 24 months. For instance, 6.5 percent of participants were reconvicted of a felony within 24 months compared to 10.7 percent of participants in the comparison group. Interestingly, *arrest rates* were higher among program participants than among those in the comparison group.[29]

- *Evaluation of the Advocate, Intervene, Mentor (AIM) Program:* The AIM program is an "alternative-to-placement" program serving 13-18-year-old youth in New York City. It uses an intensive credible messenger model, involving individuals called advocate-mentors, combined with family outreach and partnership with probation officers. A 2018 evaluation assessed the outcomes of 229 participants. According to the evaluation, AIM "achieved its main goal of keeping participants out of placement [e.g., being moved to a juvenile detention center]; two-thirds of participants remained in the community after enrolling in AIM." Furthermore, "recidivism rates…were relatively low compared with NYC youth in placement before the implementation of AIM." The evaluation also noted, however, that "since the evaluation did not use a comparison group, it is not possible to say that the levels of recidivism are lower than they would have been without the program."[30]

- *Assessment of Youth Advocate Program:* Youth Advocate Program (YAP) is a nationwide program that uses credible messengers, known as advocate-mentors, to support high-risk youth and provide an alternative to incarceration.[31] An assessment conducted in 2014, by John Jay College, found that 86 percent of YAP participants avoided arrest and 93 percent remained in the community upon completing the program. No comparison group was assessed as part of this evaluation, but the assessment concluded that YAP has a positive impact based on the prior justice involvement and out-of-home placements of the participants.[32]

- *Assessment of Roca, Boston:* Roca is a Boston-based organization focused on serving high-risk youth. At the core of their model is what they describe as "transformational relationships" between "youth workers" and the youth they are serving. These youth workers can be seen as lived experience mentors, although the program does not use that term. An assessment by John Jay College noted that "ninety-six percent of program graduates maintain pro-social relationships with adults, ninety-eight percent avoid recidivism, and eighty-four percent continue their education or are employed."[33] A joint Harvard Kennedy School/National Institute of Justice Report concluded that Roca's outcomes "demonstrate that reducing recidivism and improving employment retention is possible even for the highest risk young people."[34] Interestingly, Roca works under a "pay-for-success" partnership with the State of Massachusetts in which they do not get paid unless they are able to document positive outcomes for the youth they serve.[35]

Success Factors for Lived Experience Mentoring

The research on lived experience mentoring is not at a stage where it is possible to draw generalized conclusions about what factors make a program more or less successful. This is partly the case because almost all of the research is focused on single programs. More research that compares multiple lived experience programs is needed to identify which factors create success. Where research has sought to identify important success factors, these factors have largely been consistent with success factors for the mentoring of higher-risk youth in general.[36]

Key Takeaways

There are a few key takeaways from the summary of research above:

- There is growing evidence that lived experience mentoring has a positive impact, but the scope and rigor of the evidence base is still well below that of the more general mentoring evidence base.

- Lived experience mentoring is mentoring, so we know from the broader research that it should have an effect. Future research should seek to compare the effectiveness of lived experience mentoring with other forms of mentoring in order to understand if, broadly speaking, it has more or less impact than mentoring in general.

- Not surprisingly, lived experience mentoring is often used as part of a more holistic strategy of youth development. Therefore, it is difficult to identify the specific impact of lived experience mentoring vis-à-vis the other aspects of youth-serving programs.

- Much of the more rigorous research on lived experience mentoring has focused on New York City. More research in other cities and in non-urban contexts needs to be undertaken before broader generalizations can be made with confidence.

As noted above, the lived experience mentoring model is relatively new. It is clear, however, that there is already a strong commitment to evidence-based practice within the lived experience and credible messenger community. Roca's innovative "pay-for-success" model is one illustration of this, as Roca does not receive funding unless they can show evidence of impact. Therefore, we can expect the evidence base on these programs to grow in the future.

V. Are Lived Experience Mentoring Programs Effective? The Indirect Evidence

The evidence base on mentoring is much more robust than the evidence base on lived experience mentoring in particular. This provides an opportunity to leverage the evidence on mentoring to learn lessons regarding the possible effectiveness of lived experience mentoring.

Success Factors

In Section III above, we analyzed what the research says about the factors that make mentoring programs successful, i.e., success factors. To the extent that lived experience mentoring programs, by their nature, include these success factors as part of their design, we can be more confident about the effectiveness of lived experience mentoring programs. Conversely, to the extent that it is difficult for lived experience mentoring programs to include those success factors as part of their design, we would have less confidence in the effectiveness of these programs.

The success factors that provide support for the effectiveness of lived experience mentoring center primarily on the nature of the relationship between mentor and mentee. The research shows that mentoring relationships are more effective when:

- There are shared interests between mentor and mentee.
- There is a strong emotional bond between mentor and mentee.
- The purpose of the mentoring relationship is emotional support and advocacy, not role modeling.

All three of these characteristics align well with the lived experience mentoring model. The model is defined by mentors who have shared experience with their mentees and thus are able to create an emotional bond and provide emotional support with them around that shared experience. Moreover, many of the lived experience mentorship programs reviewed above explicitly use the term "advocate" in describing their mentors.

The question of role modeling is more complicated. While lived experience mentors can be seen as role models, they are role models because they have experienced the same hardships and maybe made some of the same mistakes as the mentees but at some point made a decision to change course. They are not role models in the more traditional sense of those who "exhibit achievement in wealth, fame, status, beauty or by having climbed to the top of some professional ladder."[37] So, on the whole, there is good reason to expect lived experience mentoring to be effective due to the relative prominence of success factors related to the mentoring relationship.

The primary success factor identified in the analysis above that does not align with the lived experience mentoring model is the finding that mentors in the "helping professions" tend to be more effective as mentors. It is not impossible that lived experience mentors would be in these

professions, but it is likely that traditional mentorship programs would have a higher percentage of mentors from these professions than lived experience mentorship programs.

The question of mentor motivation is a complicated one as well. The research summarized above indicates that mentors motivated by professional development and advancement are more effective than those motivated by civic-mindedness. While lived experience mentors are from the same community and therefore may be expected to have civic-mindedness as a motivation, it is also the case that lived experience mentors often use their role as a stepping stone back into the workplace. Therefore, it is difficult to draw general conclusions regarding motivations, but motivations are something lived experience practitioners should pay attention to when designing their programs — for instance, by building professional development opportunities into their programs.

Finally, the question of the risk profile of mentees is important. As discussed above, lived experience mentoring programs tend to work with higher-risk individuals. Research has found that mentoring programs are most effective for mentees who might be considered high-risk but are not at the highest level of risk. To the extent that lived experience mentoring programs target high-risk individuals, they will be more effective. To the extent that they attempt to serve the highest-risk individuals, they may be less effective.

Best Practices for Implementation

In addition to looking at success factors identified by the research, it is also useful to look at established best practices for the implementation of mentoring programs to understand how these best practices align with the lived experience mentoring model. To do this, we reviewed all 48 benchmarks from *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*.[38] For the great majority of the benchmarks, there is no difference in the likelihood that lived experience mentoring programs will meet a given benchmark as compared to other forms of mentoring programs.

There are two benchmarks, however, that lived experience programs, by their nature, are particularly well suited to meet:

- Recruitment Benchmark 1.3: Program recruits mentors whose skills, motivations, and backgrounds best match the goals and structure of the program.

- Matching and Initiating Benchmark 4.1: Program considers the characteristics of the mentor and mentee (e.g., interests; proximity; availability; age; gender; race; ethnicity; personality; expressed preferences of mentor, mentee, and parent or guardian; goals; strengths; previous experiences) when making matches.

There is just one benchmark that lived experience programs, by their nature, are **not** well suited to meet:

- Mentor Screening 2.4: Program conducts a comprehensive criminal background check on prospective adult mentors, including searching a national criminal records database, along with sex offender and child abuse registries, and when relevant driving records.

Interestingly, the guide indicates it is up to each individual program to decide what to do with the results of the background check, so this standard does not in and of itself preclude lived experience mentoring with, for instance, formerly incarcerated mentors. Nonetheless, a stricter interpretation of this benchmark that excludes such mentors from participation would clearly create an obstacle for some lived experience mentoring programs [39]

In sum, with the exception of those benchmarks mentioned above, there is very little in the best practices for the implementation of mentoring programs that favors or disfavors lived experience mentoring programs. As with other types of mentoring programs, the quality of implementation is determined by how well the project team designs and manages the program, not the nature of the lived experience model in and of itself.

VI. Key Takeaways and Avenues for Future Research

Key Takeaways

Based on the preceding review, there are several key takeaways relevant to the growing lived experience mentoring community:

- *The Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs*: The evidence base on mentoring programs is strong compared to many other youth development and social change interventions. That evidence indicates that across a broad range of programs and desired outcomes, mentoring does have a positive effect. Lived experience mentoring *is* mentoring, so we should expect it to have a positive impact.

- *Building the Evidence Base on the Lived Experience Model:* Lived experience mentoring is a relatively new model, but there is growing evidence that the model is an effective one. Additional research is needed, particularly research that compares lived experience mentoring with other forms of mentoring, research that is undertaken in a greater diversity of contexts, and research that can better illuminate what factors make lived experience mentoring successful.

- *Applying Mentoring Research to the Lived Experience Model*: Overall, the research on what factors make mentoring programs successful either lend support to the lived experience mentoring model or, at the very least, do not show there are significant challenges inherent to the lived experience model. In particular, findings around what a successful mentor-

mentee relationship looks like align well with the lived experience model. Conversely, there are few research findings or best practices that cut against the lived experience mentoring model. The issue of vetting mentors in general, and criminal background checks in particular, is one exception.

- *Managing Risk:* Even those within the lived experience and credible messenger community have acknowledged that "[t]here is a level of risk inherent in credible messenger mentoring."[40] To address this, lived experience mentoring programs should continue to be proactive and transparent about their strategies to manage risk. In addition, they should advocate for more nuanced risk management strategies that don't rely as heavily on criminal background checks. Finally, it would be useful to undertake research that compares the frequency of problematic behavior by traditional mentors versus the frequency of that by lived experience mentors. Both minor issues, such as missing meetings, and serious issues, such as criminal or sexual misconduct, should be assessed. As far as we know, such research does not exist.

- *Evidence-Based Culture:* There is a strong evidence-based culture within the mentoring field. This is illustrated by the robust research literature on mentoring as well as the comprehensive and evidence-based guides to best practices in the field. As the lived experience mentoring community evolves, it will need to continue to build a strong culture of evidence-based programming in order to fully establish itself as a credible model of mentoring programming.

Future Research

To date, the research agenda on youth mentoring has largely focused on more traditional mentoring programs and on outcomes related to impact on the mentee. Lived experience mentoring programs raise some interesting research questions that have not received as much attention in the broader research literature on mentoring.[41] As the popularity of lived experience mentoring programs increases, it will be important to research these questions. They include the following:

- *How do we unpack the idea of "credible" when we say "credible messenger"?* Does the lived experience of these kinds of mentors actually make them credible and increase trust between mentor and mentee? If so, why and how? To a large extent, implementers and researchers have adopted these ideas about credibility and trust as working assumptions rather than subjecting them to rigorous analysis.

- *What are the benefits/harms of the lived experience mentoring relationship for the lived experience mentor?* As noted above, research on mentoring traditionally focuses on outcomes related to impact on the mentee. Since lived experience mentors are on their own journey moving forward from the troubles they have had in their own past, it is

important to assess both the benefits and the potential harms of being a lived experience mentor.

- *What are the social impacts of lived experience mentoring programs?* As noted above, research on mentoring has traditionally focused on individual-level outcomes — impact on the mentee. Since lived experience mentoring programs are community-based interventions, often implemented by and for community members, it is important to assess what impact these programs have at the community level as well.

- *Should mentors serve as advocates for mentees? If so, how?* Traditionally, mentors have not been seen as advocates for mentees, but some research, described above, shows this can be an important role for mentors to play. Often, lived experience mentoring programs include an explicit role for mentors to advocate for mentees, help them navigate social service providers, and so on. Research should be conducted to help us better understand this more complex mentorship approach.

- *Is mentoring as effective for adult mentees?* Most of the research on mentoring has focused on youth. Lived experience mentoring often includes formerly incarcerated mentees, which means mentees can be of any age. Research should be conducted to see how this affects mentoring programming. Related to this is the question of "reverse mentoring." Given that lived experience mentees can be older adults, the mentors might be younger than the mentees. Again, research should be conducted to understand the impact of this kind of reverse mentoring relationship.

VII. Conclusion

As noted above, this review has a specific purpose: to assess the evidence on how effective lived experience mentoring programs are in producing important youth development outcomes. Based on a review of the evidence on mentoring more generally and lived experience mentoring in particular, we can conclude that there is good reason to believe these programs are effective. To be more certain in that conclusion, more research, particularly comparative research, needs to be conducted directly on lived experience mentoring programs.

[1] See, for instance, MENTOR, *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring,* 4th ed. (Boston, MA: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2015), https://www.mentoring.org/resource/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/; Development Services Group, Inc., "Youth Mentoring and Delinquency Prevention," Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, February 2019, https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/mpg/literature-review/mentoring.pdf.
[2] Elizabeth B. Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs: A Meta-Analysis of Outcome Studies," *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 48, no. 3 (March 2019): 423-443, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-019-00982-8.
[3] These two terms are used largely synonymously by researchers and practitioners. This review used lived experience mentoring, as it's the more frequently used term in San Diego County.
[4] "A Transforming Approach to Justice," Credible Messenger Justice Center, accessed April 26, 2021, https://cmjcenter.org/approach/.
[5] "Young Adult Peer Mentoring (YAPM) Practice Profile: Overview," CBH Knowledge Center, accessed April 26, 2021, https://www.cbhknowledge.center/young-adult-peer-mentoring-overview.
[6] "A Transforming Approach to Justice."
[7] David L. DuBois and Michael J. Karchner, *Handbook of Youth Mentoring,* 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2014).
[8] Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs." Studies like this use average effect sizes calculated using a statistical metric of standarsized mean differences known as Hedgess *g.* This allows one to analyze results from different studies and create a single aggregated measure of impact.
[9] David L. DuBois et al., "How Effective Are Mentoring Programs for Youth? A Systematic Assessment of the Evidence," *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* 12, no. 2 (August 2011): 57-91, https://doi.org/10.1177/1529100611414806; Patrick Tolan et al., "Mentoring Interventions to Affect Juvenile Delinquency and Associated Problems: A Systematic Review," *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 9, no. 1 (January 2013): 1-158, https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2013.10. One exception is a 2012 study that looked at six school-based mentoring programs and found that there was not statistically significant impact on outcomes such as academic performance, attendance, attitudes, and self-esteem. It is not clear why this study's results are different from the others, although it is the case that it looked at a far smaller number of programs than the others. See Sarah Wood and Evan Mayo-Wilson, "School-Based Mentoring for Adolescents: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis," *Research on Social Work Practice* 22, no. 3 (May 2012): 257-269, https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731511430836.
[10] Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs."
[11] Tolan et al., "Mentoring Interventions to Affect Juvenile Delinquency and Associated Problems."
[12] DuBois et al., "How Effective Are Mentoring Programs for Youth?"
[13] Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs."
[14] Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs"; Tolan et al., "Mentoring Interventions to Affect Juvenile Delinquency and Associated Problems," 15.
[15] Tolan et al., "Mentoring Interventions to Affect Juvenile Delinquency and Associated Problems," 9.
[16] Elizabeth K. Lawner, Martha Beltz, and Kristin Anderson Moore, "What Works for Mentoring Programs: Lessons from Experimental Evaluations of Programs and Interventions," *Child Trends* (2013): 12.
[17] Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs." Online mentoring is an additional "location" where mentoring can take place. Additional research is warranted in regard to online mentoring, as we could not find research that systematically compares online mentoring to community-based or school-based mentoring. See Development Services Group, "Youth Mentoring and Delinquency Prevention."
[18] DuBois et al., "How Effective Are Mentoring Programs for Youth?"
[19] Tolan et al., "Mentoring Interventions to Affect Juvenile Delinquency and Associated Problems."
[20] Lawner et al., "What Works for Mentoring Programs: Lessons from Experimental Evaluations of Programs and Interventions."
[21] Raposa et al., "The Effects of Youth Mentoring Programs."
[22] For one good example, see Janis B. Kupersmidt, Kathryn N. Stump, Rebecca L. Stelter, and Jean E. Rhodes, "Predictors of Premature Match Closure in Youth Mentoring Relationships," *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1–2 (2017): 25–35.

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[41] Many of these questions were raised by the individuals who reviewed the draft version of this review.

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