Youth Mentoring P&Ps - Table of Contents

Introduction

Youth Mentoring at Lower Lights Ministries (LLM)

The best practice definition of youth mentoring is an ongoing, structured relationship with a trusted individual aimed at developing the competence and potential of the youth mentee.

At LLM this mentor relationship exists within the context of our family strengthening programs, Project AIM and Light the Way Home. Each of our existing programs seeks to walk with a family moving from poverty and vulnerability to economic self-sufficiency within the framework of healthy, interdependent relationships. LLM case managers assess families in eight domain areas[1]. Assessments indicate whether the family is in crisis, vulnerable, safe/stable, or thriving. Case managers then work with families to define goals that can assist the family in moving to safe/stable and thriving in all areas. LLM programs include a support group, or family mentor team, of adult mentors, including specialized mentors for financial, employment, and educational coaching. The youth mentor is one more person added to the family mentoring team. All mentors exist within our strategy of providing families with a strong, positive, Christ-honoring support system to help them achieve their goals toward breaking the cycle of generational poverty.

We will encourage families already involved in Project AIM and Light the Way Home to talk with their children about having a youth mentor. LLM will provide applications and interviews for any of these families who are interested and have children in the age range served by our program. Because involved families already meet together at a specified time each week at LLM, the children are available, and often need care, during this time.

As the program expands, LLM will recruit additional families. The youth mentoring component provides an additional incentive for families to become involved with LLM. If youth approach LLM independently, or other agencies contact us about the needs of a specific youth, we will reach out to the family to gain commitment from the family unit as a whole to engage in services with LLM. It is our intent to mentor only youth with whom we have this holistic family relationship.

LLM youth mentoring is primarily an on-site mentoring program that pairs one adult mentor with one youth. Mentors will meet with mentees under supervision of Lower Lights Ministries' staff. Regular activities will occur in the LLM facilities and the facilities of Lower Lights Church of the Nazarene. Additionally, trips to community resources (such as the Franklinton Library) which are in walking distance may be approved while still requiring the mentor/mentee to check-in and check-out with LLM staff. LLM will also plan special events and field trips for groups of mentors and mentees, and some events will include families.

This program includes evidence-based best practices in the field of youth mentoring to help ensure that we provide the most effective program possible for our families and youth.

[1] Domain areas are: Basic Health & Safety, Community Involvement/Citizenship, Educational Success & Achievement, Employment, Financial Management, Recovery, Relationship Skills, Spiritual Maturity.

Domain-specific Goals

The overall goals of the youth mentoring program are to develop the competence and potential of the youth and to empower the youth and family to become thriving, interdependent participants of the community. Within the context of LLM's eight domains, we expect that youth mentoring will have a positive effect in the following three domains for both the youth and the family:

- Relationship Skills
- Community Involvement/Citizenship
- Educational Success & Achievement

The youth mentoring program has additional goals and objectives relating to program enrollment, retention, and completion. The comprehensive list of goals can be found in Section 2.

Relationship Skills

Lower Lights Domain Definition

This domain focuses on the development and maintenance of healthy relationships. This domain considers family relationships, including relationships with parents and siblings, absence of parents, history of family abuse, marital/dating history, dependants, and parenting skills, and involvement in child abuse. In addition, this domain focuses on the characteristics and qualities of interactions with others, particularly peer group(s).

Youth Mentoring Component

The following targeted goals exist for the youth mentoring program:

- 85% of program youth will have a better perception of social support
- 75% of program youth will report improved family relationships

Community Involvement/Citizenship

Lower Lights Domain Definition

This domain focuses on the capacity of individuals and families for healthy interaction in the community, including serving neighbors, keeping laws, voting and advocacy, and cultural competence. This domain considers the individual's/family's capacity for interacting with neighbors, policymakers and stakeholders, and the community-at-large in healthy and ethical ways that promote the general well-being and dignity of self and others.

Youth Mentoring Component

The following targeted goals exist for the youth mentoring program:

- Decrease anti-social behavior of 75% of program youth
- Reduce incidence among program youth of being rearrested or seen at juvenile court for new delinquent offenses

Educational Success & Achievement

Lower Lights Domain Definition

This domain focuses on age appropriate academic ability and success, study skills, and a value of life-long learning. This domain considers the individual's academic ability and success, basic study skills and understanding of learning, and the ability and value to obtain continuing education.

Youth Mentoring Component

In the first years of the program, LLM will not set formal targets for increases in school attendance or GPA, though the potential exists for these types of improvements. However, through the on-site mentoring curriculum, training for parents/guardian and mentees, and advocacy by the mentor, the family's educational domain will be positively effected.

Standards for Youth Mentoring

Minimum Length of Relationship

Mentors working with LLM Youth Mentoring must make a commitment to participate in their mentoring relationship for a minimum of one year.

Minimum Frequency of Meetings

Mentors are expected to meet with their mentees weekly for a minimum of four times per month. We understand the importance of family and time away, so exceptions to this requirement may include personal vacation and holidays such as Thanksgiving or Christmas. In the event of a scheduled absence, arrangements should be made in advance with the LLM program staff and mentees.

Duration of Meetings

Mentors are expected to meet with their mentees for a minimum of one hour per meeting.

Mentor/Mentee Ratio Standards

Our intent is for each mentee to meet one-on-one with a mentor. However, if we face a significant need for mentors, we may consider group mentoring in which each mentor should have no more than three similarly-aged mentees at any given time. In this case, parent/guardian preferences and the youths' needs will be used as criteria to guide the selection of children for one-to-one mentoring.

Recruiting

LLM incorporates recruitment of youth mentors into the general strategies of volunteer recruitment. Recruitment of youth mentors will occur primarily within the context of recruiting for family mentors for Project AIM and Light the Way Home.

2.1 Mentor Recruiting Policy

This recruitment policy addresses the practices and timelines specific to youth mentoring.

The Lower Lights Ministries Youth Mentoring Program will have ongoing recruitment activities for new mentors. As such, an Annual Recruitment and Retention Plan will be developed and will include recruitment goals, marketing strategies to achieve those goals, and an annual timeline. Recruitment will target individuals that meet the eligibility criteria outlined in the program policies. The annual plan will highlight if the goals and strategies for the year should be focused on individuals that meet a specific need, such as targeting marketing toward male mentors. LLM will review and evaluate the Mentor/Mentee Recruitment Plan on an annual basis and include this plan review as a part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Youth Mentoring Program.

LLM will have a volunteer position profile for youth mentors.

The program director and volunteer director share the responsibility for the recruitment of new mentors. Other program staff will support the program director in these activities.

2.2 Comprehensive Program Goals & Objectives

LLM will define program goals and objectives on an annual basis, and review and evaluate on a semi-annual basis to determine needs/progress. This review will be documented and kept on file.

2.2.1 Mentee Goals & Objectives

The following targets are best practices within mentoring practice and should be applied to the specific recruitment goals and objectives defined by LLM:

- 85% of program youth will successfully complete the program requirements
- 75% of mentor-mentee relationships will meet minimum standards of evidence-based mentoring programs
- 100% of youth enrolled in the mentoring program will have and an Individual Growth Plan that is monitored
- 85% of program youth will report being satisfied with the program
- 85% of program youth will have a better perception of social support

2.2.2 Mentor Goals & Objectives

The following targets are best practices within mentoring practice and should be applied to the specific recruitment goals and objectives defined by LLM:

- Train 100% of the mentors to provide evidence-based mentoring to at-risk youth in accordance with program model guidelines
- 100% of mentors that complete training will demonstrate increased knowledge of the program model for mentoring
- Match 95% of trained program mentors with at-risk youth in a mentoring relationship within 2 months of completing training
- Retain 85% of the mentors for one year
- Retain 75% of trained mentors beyond one year commitment

- 80% of trained mentors will report being satisfied with the program

2.2.3 Mentee Targeted Behavior Goals

The following are targeted behavior goals or outcomes for mentees in the program. Additional targeted behavior goals may be added as the program develops:

- Decrease anti-social behavior of 75% of program youth
- 75% of program youth will report improved family relationships
- Reduced incidence among program youth of being rearrested or seen at juvenile court for new delinquent offenses

2.3 Timeline Policies for Application, Interview, & Match

The Youth Mentoring program will follow standard timelines to ensure that new applicants receive appropriate follow-up so as to remain engaged and likely to follow through in volunteering or enrolling in the program. LLM will monitor and manage timelines via documentation in the mentor and mentee files. (See the *Mentor Orientation & Training Log* and the *Mentee Application and Orientation Checklist* – see Section 3).

2.3.1 Mentor Timeline

From initial inquiry to follow-up	Two weeks
From receipt of completed application to face-to-face interview	One month
From face-to-face training to invitation to training	One month
From completion of required training to match with mentee	Two months

2.3.2 Mentee Timeline

From receipt of completed application to follow-up	One week
From completed eligibility screening (includes face-to-face interview) to match with mentor	One month

If match timeline cannot be made, then LLM will place the youth on the *Match Wait List*.

2.3.3 Match Wait List Policy

Any youth placed on the *Match Wait List* shall be contacted weekly by phone until a match is made or an alternative resource has been arranged.

The Program Director/Youth Coordinator will maintain the *Match Wait List*. Documentation of the weekly contacts with mentee or referral to alternative resource will be maintained in the *Match Wait List*.

2.4 Annual Recruitment Plan & Timeline

See the document titled Annual Recruitment Plan FY##.doc

2.5 Recruiting Procedures

- Any inquiries involving family or youth mentoring should be forwarded to the Volunteer Director who will document them on the *Volunteer Inquiry Log*. (Or do we put another spreadsheet in Dave's excel – just for inquiries?)

- The Project AIM Program Director will take the lead in developing the Overview section of the *Annual Recruitment Plan* with input from mentoring program staff and the executive director. Planning should be finalized, including any necessary board approvals, one month prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year.

- The Program Director and Volunteer Director will complete the Timeline section of the *Annual Recruitment Plan* that includes specific activities, and roles and responsibilities. This effort will incorporate other staff, the executive director, and leadership team members to implement specific recruitment activities.

- Efforts will be made to hold a review of the *Annual Recruitment Plan* annually, prior to development of the next year's plan. This process will include the program director, volunteer director, executive director, and other program staff, board members, or others of concern. Ideally a similar meeting will be held semi-annually to review progress on the annual plan.

- The Volunteer Director will summarize the *Volunteer Inquiry Log* and provide the results to the program director on a monthly basis.

- The Program Director will summarize match information and provide the results, along with the results of the *Volunteer Inquiry Log*, to the executive director on a quarterly basis.

- The Executive Director will provide the yearly budget for recruitment and marketing activities. The Program Director (volunteer director?) is responsible for tracking and monitoring expenditures.

- Based on tracking data and the overall effectiveness of the recruiting efforts, staff will revise the strategy as needed.

- Annually, the program director and volunteer director will review the *Position Description – Youth Mentor* document and update as needed.

2.6 Required Forms & Documentation

- Match Wait List
- Position Description – Youth Mentor
- Volunteer Inquiry Log
- Annual Recruitment Plan (Overview and Timeline)

Eligibility Screening

General Screening Policy

Lower Lights Ministries requires that each potential mentor and mentee complete a screening procedure to help evaluate their eligibility and suitability for the youth mentoring program. The mentee's parents/guardians have required tasks in the screening procedure as well.

The decision to accept an applicant into the program will be based upon a final assessment done by program staff at the completion of the mentor or mentee screening procedure. The Program Director has final approval for an applicant's acceptance into the program. No reason will be provided to mentor applicants rejected from participation in the program.

All mentors/mentees are expected to meet the eligibility criteria. However, extenuating circumstances may be reviewed at the discretion of the Program Director and acceptance may then be allowed with written approval when all eligibility requirements are not clearly met. These instances are expected to be rare.

Documentation of the screening process must be maintained for each applicant and placed in confidential files.

Mentee Policies & Procedures

Screening Requirements

At minimum, the following screening procedures are required for mentee applicants. Program staff must ensure that each applicant completes these established minimum screening procedures:

- Parent/Guardian completes and submits written application–*Mentee Application Form*.
- Parent/Guardian grants permission for a youth to participate in the mentoring program by signing *Mentee Application Form* which contains permission section.
- Parent/Guardian completes the Lower Lights *Student Medical and Liability Release*
- Program Director/Youth Coordinator reviews application.
- Program Director/Youth Coordinator conducts a face-to-face interview with mentee.
- Program Director/Youth Coordinator read the *Mentee Agreement* form to the youth while having them check off the agreements.
- Youth signs *Mentee Agreement.*
- Match Team proposes match for mentee.
- Parent/Guardian and youth approve match and sign *Match Agreement.*

Eligibility Criteria

It is the policy of the LLM Youth Mentoring Program that each mentee must meet the defined eligibility criteria:

1. 6 to 14 years old and in grades 1 through 8
2. Resides in the Franklinton neighborhood or vicinity
3. Has parents/guardians participating in other LLM programs.
4. Demonstrates a desire to participate in the program
5. Willing to abide by all LLM Youth Mentoring Program policies and procedures
6. Has parent/guardian permission and ongoing support for participation in the program
7. Agrees to a one-year commitment to the program

8. Commits to spending a minimum of 1 hour weekly with the mentor
9. Completes application and screening procedures
10. Agrees to attend mentee orientation
11. Willing to communicate regularly with the program coordinator and discuss monthly meeting and activity information

Eligibility Checklist

Mentoring program staff must document an applicant's eligibility in the Eligibility Criteria Checklist section of the *Mentee Application & Orientation Checklist* form. Additional approval by the Program Director are needed to enroll a participant in the program when an eligibility criterion is not met.

This form remains in the mentee's confidential file.

Mentee Program Requirements & Expectations

It is the policy of the LLM Youth Mentoring Program to define program requirements for mentees. Program requirements are:

1. Attend mentee orientation
2. Follow all rules and guidelines as outlined by the program director, mentee orientation and training, and program policies.
3. Make a one-year commitment to being matched with the mentor
4. Meet weekly for at least one hour for one year
5. Have a positive attitude and be respectful of the mentor
6. Put forth best effort to develop a friendship with the mentor
7. Be on time for scheduled meetings or call the Program Director or mentor at least 24 hours beforehand if unable to make a meeting
8. Create an individual growth plan with the mentor
9. Demonstrate progress in meeting goals
10. Regularly and openly communicate with the match supervisor, at least monthly
11. Inform the match supervisor of any difficulties or areas of concern that may arise in the relationship
12. Participate in a closure process when that time comes
13. Notify the match supervisor if there are changes in address or phone number
14. Attend mentee orientation sessions once per year
15. Participate in required outings and community service
16. Cooperate with program evaluation

Mentee Screening Procedures

Because, LLM will only accept youth mentees when their families are engaged in other LLM programs, the mentee recruiting and follow-up processes are abbreviated. New families interested in Project AIM begin by participating in an introductory class (currently the Getting Ahead class). At the conclusion of this class, families are assessed for their appropriateness for the full AIM program. When a family is accepted into Project AIM (and matched with family mentors), then any youth in the family within the age range of the mentoring program will be considered for a youth mentor.

LLM will complete the steps below, according the stated timeframes, in order to determine if a youth qualifies to become a mentee:

1. If a youth indicates interest in having a mentor, or another agency/individual refers the youth to LLM, and the family is not involved in programming, a Project Director will speak to the family about LLM programs and philosophy of family and youth mentoring. If interested, the family will be given an application to an appropriate program or given an invitation to the next available introductory class.
2. When a family is accepted into an LLM program, the Case Manager, Project Director or Youth Coordinator will provide the parent/guardian with a *Mentee Application* and *Mentee Application Form and Student Medical and Liability Release* (need to update to not just mention camp. Sent email to DS 9/24) to complete and return.
3. A mentee file will be created for all prospective mentees who return a completed application. The *Mentee Application & Orientation Checklist* should be kept on top of one side of each file to track distribution and receipt of materials. The file should also contain all other application materials and interview notes. As each component of the screening process is completed, continue to update the *Checklist*.
    a. The mentee file will be kept with the family's Universal Case Management file.
4. Within 1 week of receiving the complete *Mentee Application*, LLM staff will contact the family/youth to schedule an interview.
5. The LLM staff member will conduct an interview designed at learning about the youth and his/her personalities and interests in order to create an effective match. The LLM staff member will use the *Mentee Interest Survey* to guide and document the interview
    a. At the conclusion of the interview, the LLM staff member will read the *Mentee Agreement* to the youth, and have the youth check off the agreements and sign his/her name.
    b. LLM will only match a youth with a mentor if the youth indicates willingness or interest.
6. LLM Program Staff will make a decision regarding the youth's involvement in the program and indicate this decision on the *Mentee Application & Orientation Checklist*.
    a. If the mentee applicant fails eligibility criteria, but there are extenuating circumstances, those must be document on the *Mentee Application & Orientation Checklist* and the Executive Director must sign off.
7. LLM will notify the parent/guardian based on the overall assessment of appropriateness.
    a. If the applicant is accepted, the LLM Staff Member will provide the parent/guardian with the date of the next Mentee Orientation.
8. The accepted applicant must complete an initial Mentee Orientation session prior to being matched with a mentor.
9. Within 1 month of the acceptance decision, LLM Program Staff will match the mentee with a mentor and introduce the mentor to the mentee and family.
    a. If a match cannot be made in 30 days, the mentee will be placed on the *Match Wait List* Program staff will contact the family weekly, by phone, until a match is made and document the follow-up contact on the Match Wait List.

Parent/Guardian Program Requirements & Expectations

It is the policy of the LLM Youth Mentoring Program to define program requirements for the parents/guardians of mentees. Program requirements are:

1. Attend mentee orientation
2. Follow, and encourage child to follow, all rules and guidelines as outlined by the program director, mentee training, and program policies
3. Support the child being on time for scheduled meetings or have him/her call Lower Lights Ministries or the mentor at least 24 hours beforehand if unable to make a meeting
4. Support the child in attending match meetings four hours per month/one hour per week, for one year
5. Do not keep youth from match meetings as a punishment or disciplinary measure
6. Participate in mentor/parent/mentee activities
7. Regularly and openly communicate with the match supervisor as requested
8. Inform the match supervisor, program director or case manager if there are any difficulties or areas of concern in the match relationship
9. Participate in a closure process when that time comes
10. Notify the match supervisor or case manager of any changes in address or phone number

Mentor Policies and Procedures

Screening Requirements

At minimum, the following screening procedures are required for mentor applicants. Program staff must ensure that each applicant completes these established minimum screening procedures:

- Mentor application completes and submits written applications, both *the Lower Light Volunteer Application* and the *Youth Mentor Application.*
- Applicant completes the Lower Lights *Adult Medical and Liability Release*
- Program Director/Youth Coordinator conducts a face-to-face interview with applicant.
- Applicant submits required documentation for background checks: state criminal history, FBI, sexual offender registry.
- Applicant provides three personal references, one with firsthand knowledge of the applicant's work with youth.
- Program Director/Youth Coordinator follows-up with references
- Applicant provides results of TB screening (test result must be within last 12 months)
- Program Director/Youth Coordinator issues invitation to orientation/training
- Program Director/Youth Coordinator notifies applicant of disqualification at any step in the process

Eligibility Criteria

It is the policy of the LLM Youth Mentoring Program that each mentor must meet the defined eligibility criteria. Mentoring and Volunteer Services staff should be knowledgeable of and understand the following eligibility criteria required for mentor participation in the program:

1. At least 18 years of age
2. Supports Lower Lights Ministries mission and values
3. Willing to adhere to all LLM Mentoring Program and General Volunteer policies and procedures

4. Agrees to a one-year commitment to the program
5. Agrees to weekly contact (1 hour minimum) with mentee
6. Completes the application and screening procedures
7. Agrees to attend required training sessions
8. Willing to communicate regularly with the program coordinator and submit monthly meeting and activity information

Exclusion Policy

The Volunteer or Program Director will review background check results (criminal, sexual offender database, Central Registry of Abuse and Neglect, etc) against the documented Exclusion Criteria to determine the mentor's fitness for mentoring.

An applicant with a criminal conviction who is accepted as a mentor will be asked to sign a release of information so that the Youth Mentoring Program can share the criminal conviction information to the Parent/Guardian of the mentee and the parent/guardian will have the option to reject the prospective mentor or close the existing match.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Have never been accused, arrested, charged, or convicted of child abuse.
2. If the applicant has been convicted of a felony then they may be considered only after a period of two years with demonstrated good behavior and an appropriate and corrective attitude regarding past behaviors. Check with other orgs about length of time after felony. Central Community House doesn't use people with felony conviction. Have message in at the Urban League 9/24.
3. If the applicant has been convicted of a felony for a violent crime then they may be considered only after a period of seven years.
4. Not be a user of illicit drugs.
5. Not use alcohol, tobacco, or other controlled substances in an excessive or inappropriate manner.
6. Not currently in in-patient or out-patient clinical treatment for substance abuse. If a substance abuse problem has occurred in the past the applicant must have completed a non-addictive period of at least two years.
7. Not currently be under treatment for a mental disorder or have been hospitalized for a mental disorder in the past two years.
8. Not have falsified information during the course of the screening process

Eligibility & Exclusion Checklist

Mentoring program staff must document an applicant's eligibility in the Eligibility Criteria Checklist section of the *Youth Mentor Application Checklist* form. Additional approval by Program Director are needed to enroll a participant in the program when an eligibility criterion is not met.

This form remains in the mentor's confidential file.

Program Requirements & Expectations

It is the policy of the LLM Youth Mentoring Program to define program requirements for mentors. Program requirements are:

1. Follow all rules and guidelines as outlined by the program director, mentor orientation and training, and program policies
2. Be flexible and provide the necessary support and advice to help mentee succeed
3. Make a one-year commitment to being matched with mentee
4. Meet at least one hour per week with mentee
5. Be on time for scheduled meetings or call the program director and mentee at least 24 hours beforehand if unable to make a meeting
6. Inform the match supervisor of any difficulties or areas of concern that may arise in the relationship
7. Keep any information that the mentee discloses confidential except as may cause him or others harm
8. Never be in the presence of mentee when consuming, or have recently consumed, alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances
9. Notify the match supervisor of any changes in address, phone number, or employment status
10. Attend mentor orientation and training
11. Attend in-service mentor training sessions once per year, minimum
12. Create an individual growth plan with mentee
13. Teach and coach methods of setting and achieving goals
14. Achieve "good" or better ratings on match health, as evaluated by the mentor and mentee
15. Participate in required outings and community services
16. Communicate regularly with family mentor team
17. Cooperate with timely submission of evaluation tools (monthly supervision, surveys, etc)
18. Participate in a closure process when that time comes

Transportation Policy

The LLM Youth Mentoring Program does not allow mentors to transport mentees in personal vehicles.

Inquiry & Screening Procedures

LLM will complete the steps below, according the stated timeframes, to ensure timely follow-up and connection with potential mentors and to determine if an individual qualifies to become a mentor

1. All inquiries about becoming a youth mentor must be forwarded to the Volunteer Director or Youth Coordinator.

2. The Volunteer Director/Youth Coordinator logs the inquiry in the Volunteer Inquiry Log.

3. The Volunteer Director or Youth Coordinator will follow-up (by phone) with an individual who expressed interest in being a mentor within 2 weeks of the initial contact.

    a. The LLM staff member will record the follow-up phone call on the Volunteer Inquiry Log.

    b. The LLM staff member will provide the following information during the call:

        i. Basic information about LLM

ii. Overview of Project AIM and youth mentoring component
iii. Time commitment requirements (frequency and duration)
iv. Training requirements
v. Next steps (application paperwork and face-to-face interview)

4. If the individual indicates a desire to move forward, the Volunteer Director/Youth Coordinator will send or email the mentor job description, application materials, and upcoming training dates to the individual.

    a. The *Youth Mentor Applicant Checklist* will be used to track the distribution and receipt of materials and information from this point forward.

5. The potential mentor will complete the Youth Mentor Volunteer Application Packet and submit to LLM. A completed packet includes:

    a. LLM Volunteer Application (existing form)
    b. Youth Mentoring Application (new)
    c. Adult Medical and Liability Release form (existing)
    d. Notice to Volunteers Regarding Background Investigation (existing)
    e. Background Check Instructions – for checks done by Mentoring Center of Central Ohio (new).

6. The potential mentor must also submit a request to Ohio's Central Registry on Abuse and Neglect. This should be done immediately as the results can take up to 30 days for processing. The Central Registry will return the results of the request to the individual who must submit a copy to the Volunteer Director. Potential mentors can use the *Request for Central Registry Abuse & Neglect Records* developed by LLM to assist this process.

7. A mentor file will be created for all prospective mentors who return a completed application. The *Youth Mentor Application Checklist* should be kept on top of one side of the file to track distribution and receipt of materials. The file should contain all other application materials and interview notes. As each component of the screening process is completed, LLM staff will continue to update the *Checklist*.

8. After reviewing the application materials, if there is no reason to screen out the applicant, the Volunteer Director, Youth Coordinator, or Program Director will schedule a face-to-face interview with the individual within a month of receiving completed application materials. The interviewer should use the *Mentor Interview Guide*, and must, at minimum, document the interview date and information in the Understanding Youth and Diversity sections.

    a. See step 13b for process for contacting a screened-out applicant.

9. The interview will either result in:

    a. A decision by both parties to move forward. In this case the Volunteer Director/Youth Coordinator will follow-up with references.

    b. LLM screening-out the applicant. See step 13b for screen out process.

    c. The volunteer indicating that they do not want to mentor. In this case, the LLM staff member will indicate on the *Youth Mentor Application Checklist* that the applicant has "Withdrawn" their application.

10. For reference checks, the LLM staff member will call and conduct an interview with the reference using the *Reference Interview Guide* to guide and document the discussion.
    a. References can result in the application being screened out (see Step 13b) or the applicant moving forward. If all references are acceptable, the LLM staff member will call the applicant to tell them to proceed with the background check.
11. For background checks, the following will occur:
    a. The applicant will do use the Mentoring Center of Central OH to obtain a criminal background check.
        i. LLM will review criminal records will be against the Exclusion Criteria.
    b. The LL staff member will use demographic information from the Volunteer application to conduct a search of the National Sex Offender Registry: http://www.nsopr.gov/
12. Applicants must obtain a TB screening and submit results to LLM. The results will be placed in the file and the *Youth Mentor Application Checklist* updated to indicate their receipt.
13. Within one month of the face-to-face interview (but dependent on the receipt of background check and TB results), the Volunteer Director/Youth Coordinator/Program Director will make a decision regarding the applicant's involvement in the program and will notify the applicant of the decision.
    a. The *Youth Mentor Application Checklist* must be completed to document acceptance or rejection of the volunteer.
    b. If the applicant fails eligibility criteria, but there are extenuating circumstances, those must be documented on the *Youth Mentor Application Checklist* and the Program Director must sign off.
14. The Volunteer Director/Program Director will notify the application of the decision.
    a. Accepted applicants will receive the *Mentor Acceptance Letter* that also provides information about required and upcoming training.
    b. Declined or screening out applicants will receive either a phone call or request for in-person meeting. LLM will attempt to find another volunteer position more suitable to the individuals

Required Forms & Documentation

- Mentee Application Form
- Student Medical and Liability Release
- Mentee Application & Orientation Checklist
- Mentee Interview & Interest Survey
- Mentee Agreement Form
- Youth Mentor Application Checklist
- LLM Volunteer Application
- Youth Mentor Application
- Adult Medical and Liability Release

- Mentor Interview Guide
- Notice to Volunteers Regarding Background Investigation (Consent form)
- Background Check Instructions
- Request for Child Registry Abuse & Neglect Records
- Reference Interview Guide
- Mentor Acceptance Letter

Orientation & Training

General Policy

The LLM Youth Mentoring Program will develop and implement an annual calendar for mentor orientation and training. This calendar may be combined with the *Annual Recruitment Plan*. (See section 2.) The calendar should include the following:

- Multiple sessions per year for Basic Mentor Training
- Multiple sessions per year for Ongoing Mentor Training, with at least two different topics per year.
- At least one Mentee/Parent Guardian Orientation
- Participation in multiple LLM General Volunteer Orientation sessions.

Each attendee will sign-in on the orientation or training session sign-in sheet. From this information, an LLM staff member will document the individual's attendance on the *Mentee Application & Orientation Checklist* or the *Mentor Orientation & Training Log* kept in the respective files. The Volunteer Director or Program Director will track and monitor that mentees and mentors are meeting requirement by reviewing these logs on a regular basis.

The Program Director will develop pre- and post-tests to measure the effectiveness of training and trainers and to demonstrate learning of training material. Evaluation forms will be collected from each training session. The *Training Evaluation Template* includes generic questions to ask of each session. Additional session-specific questions must be added for the pre- and post-tests.

The Volunteer Director, Program Director and/or Youth Coordinator must plan, develop, and deliver training sessions with assistance from other agency staff, board members, and volunteers. Additionally, the Volunteer or Program Director may identify training sessions available in the community which cover required or suggested topics and which will be counted toward in-service requirements.

Mentee Orientation Policy

All mentees and a parent/guardian must attend a Mentee Orientation prior to the mentor-mentee match. Trained staff or volunteers will conduct the orientation. Topics must include:

- Program Overview – What is Mentoring?
- Why Lower Lights has a mentoring program
    - Benefits
    - Relationship to family mentoring programs
- Eligibility Requirements
- Program Description
- Expectations of Mentors, Mentees, Parent/Guardian, Program Staff
- Time Commitment
- Overview of mentoring screening process
- What a mentoring session looks like

See the *Mentee Orientation Outline* for more details about content.

Each youth will be given a Mentoring Program Handbook.

Mentees who continue for additional years of mentoring must attend the mentee orientation each year with their parent/guardian.

Mentor Orientation Policy

All mentors must attend the Lower Lights Ministries Volunteer Orientation prior to the mentor-mentee match. This Orientation covers the agencies vision, mission, goals, programs, and activities. Trained staff or volunteers will conduct the orientation. This orientation will contain a break-out session for potential mentors. Mentoring topics will include

- Mentoring program overview
- Mentoring program's role in supporting the agency's strategic plan and goals
- Eligibility Requirements
- Program Description
- Time Commitments
- Expectations and responsibilities of Mentors, Mentees, Parent/Guardian and Program Staff
- Realistic Expectations for the Relationships
- Program Benefits and Rewards

Lower Lights Ministries will adopt, or create, a curriculum that will be utilized for the orientation break-out session. See the *Mentor Orientation Outline* for more details.

Mentor Training Policy

The Volunteer Director or Program Director will track, monitor, and record mentor attendance at the training each training attended (required and on-going) via the *Mentor Orientation & Training Log* contained in each mentor's file.

Each mentor will be given a Mentoring Program Handbook.

Pre-match Training

All mentors must attend a minimum of two hours of mentor training prior to the mentor-mentee match. Pre-match training will address youth mentoring basics including the following topics:

- Definition and discussion of "healthy" match development and relationship
- Strengths-based approach
- Tools in setting goals
- Youth development stages
- Communication strategies (parents, mentoring staff, mentees)
- Risk management and policies: confidentiality, abuse and neglect, transportation of mentee, liability issues
- Community resources
- Problem-solving strategies
- Resolving match conflicts and match closure
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Program

This training may be offered in-house at LLM or mentors may attend the Making of a Mentor session through the Mentoring Center of Central Ohio. Because of the option of off-site training, any LLM specific policies and details will be communicated in the LLM Volunteer

Orientation mentor break-out sessions, as well as through the written Mentor Program Handbook

Ongoing Training

Effective mentor training is not restricted to a one-time activity; it is an ongoing process. Learning is best supported by a continual process of action, reflection and evaluation. In response, mentors must complete, at minimum, one two-hour training session per year of involvement in the mentoring program.

LLM will offer in-service trainings at least once per quarter either in-house or directing mentors to appropriate training offered by other community agencies. Mentoring plans will adapt continuously to best reflect the strengths, needs, opportunities and resources that affect program participants.

Potential topics for in-service training include:

- Cross-cultural and socio-economic class rules (Bridge to Poverty concepts)
- Understanding ADD/ADHD and development delays
- Building trust and self-esteem
- Mandated reporting
- Advanced youth development training
- Overview of Franklin County Court and Children Services systems
- Recognizing and responding to youth trauma
- Youth depression and mental health
- Connecting youth with community resources and activities
- Establishing appropriate boundaries
- Referral and support services
- Developing an Individual Growth Plan (goal-setting)
- Developing and nurturing a trusting relationship
- First Aid/CPR

Cross-Cultural and Socio-Economic Class Rules

The culture of Franklinton differs from the culture that the majority of volunteers will have experienced. Being aware of cultural differences and understanding Franklinton culture is important for mentors to be able to build relationships with youth and relate to parents and guardians. This class will address additional areas relevant to our mentee population that may not be covered in Mentoring Basics.

LLM will encourage mentors to take a Cross-Cultural and Socio-Economic Class Rules class during their first year of service. This class will be offered twice a year either by LLM or through other community agencies offering training based on concepts in Bridges to Poverty.

This training will include information, case scenarios, and role plays related to:

- Cultural diversity
- Cultural sensitivity
- Hidden rules of socio-economic classes (taken from Ruby Payne)

Required Forms & Documentation

- Training Evaluation Template
- Mentee Orientation Outline
- Mentee Orientation Pre-test/Post Test
- Mentor Orientation Outline
- Mentor Orientation Pre-test/Post Test
- Basic Mentor Training Pre-test/Post test
- Mentor Orientation & Training Log

Match Strategy

Match Policy

LLM will match the mentor with a mentee within two months after the mentor completes the orientation and training requirements, and within one month after the mentee completes all screening requirements.

The Lower Lights Youth Mentoring Program will take a team approach to matching mentors and mentees. Project AIM and other programs have case managers that know the participant families and have likely interacted with the youth. Likewise, the Volunteer Director may have the best knowledge of the mentor applicants. When making matches, the Project AIM Program Director will assemble the appropriate Match Team from among these individuals and the team will discuss the match possibilities.

The team should follow the documented Match Procedures and Match Criteria Section.

When no consensus is found regarding particular matches, the Project AIM Program will make the final decision of all mentor/mentee matches.

At the time a match is made, an LLM staff member or trained volunteer will be designated as the Match Supervisor. This could be the Project AIM program director, Youth Coordinator, family case manager, or volunteer.

The *Match Worksheet* may be used to document match rationale, but it is not required.

An annual match-kickoff event will occur to facilitate the introduction of mentors to youth mentees and parents/guardians.

Match Criteria

The following should be used to guide the discussion on potential matches:

1. Preferences. Mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian preferences should be taken into consideration, but not used as sole criteria
2. Gender. LLM will primarily make same gender matches. However, in special circumstances and with Program Director approval, it is acceptable for female mentors to be matched with male youth and male mentors to be matched with female youth.
    i. Note that this policy should be revisited if the program begins to allow matches to meet outside of the supervision of LLM staff.
3. Age. A minimum age difference of five years between adult mentor and mentee.
4. Language Requirements. Consider especially when English is not the youth's first language.
5. Common Interests. Use the interests documented on the *Youth Mentor Application* and on the *Mentee Interest Survey*.

6. Race / Ethnicity. Lower Lights Ministries will not make a match decision based solely upon race. However, this agency recognizes that some mentees may need the kind of rapport that comes from same-race matching as indicated and stated within the mentee application, mentee interests and parent/guardian feedback
7. Personality / Temperament. Good judgment and instinct must be exercised to draw information and insight from an array of sources, including: mentor, mentee and parent interviews, mentor reference checks, feedback from mentoring staff, and direct observation. At this time, LLM will not do any personality testing.
8. Life Experiences. Mentors may have experience dealing with certain issues or situations that a mentee is currently facing. This may provide a point of commonality and understanding between the two.
9. Organic Match Gravitation. In some instances, a natural, organic matching process has occurred between a mentor/mentee through other relationship venues, and they seek to develop a formal mentor/mentee relationship. In these cases, organic gravitation matches will be honored

Written Match Agreement

Mentors, mentees, and parent/guardian will sign a *Match Agreement & Contract* stating that all are in agreement with the particular match. The original signed form will be maintained in the Mentee file and a copy in the Mentor File.

The *Match Agreement & Contract* will contain the following components:

- Names of mentee, parent/guardian, mentor
- High-level mentor/mentee expectations, including time commitments
- Signatures (mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, match supervisor)

Match Procedure

1. When a youth has completed the screening process, the Program Director/Youth Coordinator will assemble the Match Team to review the application, interview notes, and interest survey information of both the mentee and mentor to determine match suitability between a mentor and mentee. The greatest weight will be placed on the mentee preferences, parent/guardian preferences, and needs. Match selection will be guided by the match criteria.
   a. The team may complete the *Match Worksheet*. A copy of the *Match Worksheet* will be placed in the mentor and mentee files after a match is made.
   b. A Match Supervisor will be assigned and noted on the *Match Worksheet.* (If the *Match Worksheet* is not used, document the Match Supervisor on the Match Agreement and Contract).
2. When a potential match is identified, and prior to contacting any of the prospective participants, the Program Director/Youth Coordinator will review the files of the potential mentor and mentee to ensure all screening procedures have been completed and both have met all the eligibility criteria.
3. The Program Director/Youth Coordinator then first contacts the prospective mentor and without using last names, describes and provides information about the mentee to determine if there is interest by the mentor.

4. Given initial interest by the mentor, the Program Director/Youth Coordinator then provides the mentee's parent/guardian with a description and information about the prospective mentor. If the mentor has a criminal history, this will be disclosed at this point.
5. If both the mentor and the parent/guardian agree, the Program Director/Youth Coordinator will then contact the mentee and describe the prospective mentor to them. The mentee is informed last so as to minimize disappointment if either the mentor or parent/guardian does not approve of the suggested match.
6. When all parties tentatively agree to the match, they are notified of the next match kick-off or match session.
    a. The match kick-off will happen, at minimum, annually at the beginning of each match year. The Program Director/Youth Coordinator will plan and facilitate this event used primarily to introduce mentors to their mentee matches and the parents/guardians.
    b. If a new match starts and there is no upcoming match kick-off, the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian will be invited to a regularly scheduled match sessions and the Match Supervisor will facilitate this introductory meeting of the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian. The Match Supervisor should conduct the meeting by:
        - Facilitating introductions
        - Having the mentor take the lead in talking about his/her interests, hobbies, and why he/she wants to be a mentor, followed by the mentee doing the same
        - Asking each party if they are interested in moving forward with the match
7. If anyone is uncertain, the parties may be given time to consider the match further.
8. If all agree to move forward with the match, the parties will sign the *Match Agreement & Contract*. Copies will be made and given to each party.
9. The Match Supervisor will notify the Program Director/Youth Coordinator of the match.
10. The Program Director/Youth Coordinator will print out a *Match Activity Sign-in* sheet for the match and place it in the central Match Activity file.
11. Once the match is made, the Match Supervisor will add the mentor/mentee name to the *Contact Logs* in the mentee/mentor files and schedule the first follow-up call to each person within the first two weeks following their first meeting date.

Required Forms & Documentation

- Volunteer Position Description – Match Supervisor
- Match Worksheet
- Match Agreement & Contract
- Match Activity Sign-in

Match Support & Supervision

Match Activity Tracking

Policy

LLM will maintain a log of the times that mentors and mentees met together. Mentees and mentors will sign in at each match meeting on the *Match Activity Sign-in* form.

The *Match Activity Sign-in* form will be kept in a central Match File available to LLM staff who are in attendance at the match meeting times.

LLM staff may also access the forms and indicate when a mentor/mentee was not present for a match meeting.

Procedure

1. At each match activity, the LLM supervisor for the activity will bring the *Match Activity Sign-in* forms to the meeting location. As mentees and mentors arrive, they will obtain their form from the file and sign the form. When both parties have signed the form, it will be returned to the file.
2. The LLM supervisor will ensure that all *Match Activity Sign in* forms have been completed and returned to the file at the end of the meeting.
   a. LLM staff may also access the forms and indicate when a mentor/mentee was not present for a match meeting.
3. The LLM supervisor will place the file in the designated location.
4. The LLM supervisor will email a list of absent mentors and mentees to Match Supervisors.
5. Prior to the next match session, Match Supervisors will contact the absent party to determine the cause of the absence and to troubleshoot any issues. (This will be recorded in the *Contact Log*.)

Absence Follow-up Steps

If no prior notice was given, the Match Supervisor will contact the absent party to determine the reason for the absence. This interaction must be noted in the *Contact Log*.

- If a mentor or mentee has two absences without prior notice, or four absences (within a year), the Match Supervisor will request a face-to-face meeting with the mentor or mentee and the Program Director.
- If the issue cannot be resolved, formally closing the match may be necessary. At that time, it would be determined if either or both parties are suitable for matching with other partners.

Match Supervision and Communication

Policy

Once a match occurs, the assigned LLM Match Supervisor must maintain consistent communication with mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians to ensure that new matches receive support to succeed.

Because the Youth Mentoring Program is an onsite program, LLM will know the dates and times of match meetings which will be documented on the *Match Activity Sign-in* forms. The purpose of regular contact is to assess the health of the match and to proactively take action to avoid early termination of the match.

The Youth Mentoring Program will have a *Contact Log* to record any contact between the program staff and mentors, mentees, and parent/guardians. Failed attempts to contact a party will also be recorded on the *Contact Log.* The Match Supervisor will also document any follow-up plans to address areas of concern.

The following time standards will be followed:

Match Supervision Time Standards

During first month of match	Biweekly
For the remainder of the first year of the match	Monthly
After the first year of service (and match continues)	Quarterly

Procedures

1. Within two weeks of the initial match meeting, Match Supervisor will have face-to-face or telephone contact with each party in the match (mentor, mentee, parent/guardian).
   a. The Match Supervisor will record this first contact in the *Contact Log*. All subsequent contacts will also be recorded in the *Contact Log.*
   b. The *Contact Log* will be filed in the Mentee file. Should there be separate contact logs for each party or all together? Right now have them all together and kept in mentee file for ease of access by Match Supervisor. Maybe keep in mentee file but have separate paper for Mentor. At end of match it can go in mentor's volunteer file.
2. The Match Supervisor will contact all parties a second time within the first month of the match and record the contacts. This check-in and all other may occur by means of face-to-face meetings, telephone calls, or email, depending on the party's preference.
3. After this initial month, the Match Supervisor will then follow up monthly by phone, email or face-to-face with each party to gather information regarding how the meetings are going. Any contact outside of the standard on-site meeting times should be recorded as well.
4. If there are three unsuccessful attempts to contact a party in a given month, the Match Supervisor will send a written letter requesting that the party call the Match Supervisor or Program Director/Youth Coordinator. (Develop Request for Contact template)
5. In order to assess how the match is proceeding, program staff may inquire about the following:
   a. Are they enjoying participating in the match?
   b. How do they feel it is going?
   c. Is the relationship developing as they would like??
   d. Are there any concerns or issues that should be addressed by program staff?
   e. Do they need more support or any intervention?
6. The Program Director/Youth Coordinator will review the Contact Logs every other month to ensure compliance with the contact timeline standards and to gauge health of the matches.
7. Do Mentors have to fill something out about each contact with the kid or parent/guardian? Is the answer to this different if there is no contact outside of the meeting times on site? Family mentors/specialty mentors will need to submit stuff but that is generally off-site.

Other Match Supports

Beyond monitoring the match relationship and activities, program staff will undertake other efforts that support participants, such as:

- Special group activities for matches (including admission to community events/activities for match participants)
- Ongoing training events (see Section 4)
- Quarterly peer support groups for mentors. (Coordinated with the Volunteer Director. Peer support groups for mentors will be available for mentors from other program as well.)

Interrelationship with Project AIM

Within three months of matching a youth mentee and mentor, the youth mentor will meet one representative, at minimum, from the family mentoring team.

The Program Director or Case Manager will provide introductions and facilitate the meeting, if needed.

Confidentiality Policy

Volunteers and employees must sign the Confidentiality Agreement prior to meeting working with the Youth Mentoring Program in any capacity (mentor or other position).

The LLM Youth Mentoring Program will maintain a confidential file for each mentee and each mentor. Parent/guardian information (such as emergency contact information) will be stored with the mentee file.

Mentor File

Information regarding the mentor will be kept in the mentor's volunteer file. The volunteer file is kept in a locked cabinet in the Volunteer Director's office.

The Volunteer Director, Program Director, Youth Coordinator, Match Supervisor, and Executive Director will have access to the Mentor's confidential volunteer file.

The file will contain the following information

- Youth Mentor Application Checklist
- LLM Volunteer Application
- Adult Medical and Liability Release Form
- Youth Mentor Applicant Questionnaire
- Mentor Interview Guide or other interview notes
- Reference Interview Guide or other reference check notes
- Background check results
- TB screening results
- Mentor Orientation & Training Log
- Should we keep pre- and post tests (Training Evaluation Forms) here or can they go somewhere together in a file for evaluation? – that would be preferable.
- Match Agreement (copy)
- Grievances, etc.

Mentee File

The Program Director, Youth Coordinator, Family Case Manager, Match Supervisor, and Executive Director will have access to the Mentee's confidential file. The Mentee File is kept in a locked file cabinet designated for use by the Youth Mentoring program.

The mentor may not access the mentee's file.

The file will contain the following information

- Mentee Application Checklist
- Mentee Application
- Student Medical and Liability Release Form
- Mentee Agreement
- Mentee Interest Survey or other interview notes
- Training Evaluation Forms (see question above under Mentor file)
- Match Worksheet
- Match Agreement (original signed copy)
- Contact Log

Impact of Youth Mentoring Program Revise this after development of M&E Plan

LLM will assess the program impact on the mentee's life, family life, and mentor's life. LLM will accomplish this by surveying the mentee and the parent/guardian.

Any contacts with the mentee or parent/guardian for the purposes of assessment and evaluation should be added to the *Contact Log.*

The following assessment tools and timelines will be used:

	Mentee	**Parent/Guardian**
Tool	NCMU Behavioral Outcomes Assessment	Mentoring Outcomes Assessment (parent)
Initial Assessment	2 months after match	1st dynamic assessment* after match
Ongoing assessments	6 month interval (or at match closure)	Each dynamic assessment
Follow-up after match closure?	Yes – 6 months after match closure	No

In addition, verbal input over the course of the program will also be documented by the mentor and program staff

Program Impact Assessment Procedures

Mentee

1. The Program Director/Youth Coordinator will monitor times of needed assessments and communicate this to the Match Supervisor.

2. The Program Director and Match Supervisor will determine if the mentee is capable of completing the Behavioral Outcomes Assessment independently or if a staff member should verbally walk-through the form with the mentee.
    a. If the mentee requires assistance, a staff member will be appointed to perform the interview. The interviewer should be someone who does not have significant interaction with the child so as to minimize bias (youth may try to give the "right" answer that they think the staff/mentor wants to hear.)
3. Two weeks prior to the assessment the Match Supervisor will contact the parent/guardian and mentee about the need for an assessment and schedule a time for the assessment.
4. Assessments should occur in a location where the youth will few distractions. If there is no interviewer, the Program Director or Match Supervisor will be able to answer any questions the youth has.
5. After completion, the LLM staff member will place the completed assessment in the mentee's confidential file, add the date to the *Mentee Evaluation Checklist*, and let the Program Director know the Assessment is complete.
    a. If an interviewer does not have access to the mentee's file, the interviewer must give the assessment to the Program Director or Match Supervisor.
6. How are agencies handling assessment with group programs since they all need to happen at/around the same time?? Note: It is expected that groups of mentees will begin the program on the same date, thus requiring multiple youth to have assessments completed on the same date. Giving assessment during a group meeting is an option, however, if many youth require assistance this method should be avoided so as to now make youth appear conspicuous because of their need for help.

Parent/Guardian

1. The Program Director/Youth Coordinator will monitor times of needed assessments and communicate this to the Family Case Manager.
2. The Program Director and Family Case Manager will determine if the parent/guardian will require assistance in completing the *Mentoring Outcomes Assessment (Parent/Guardian)* independently or if a staff member should verbally walk-through the form with the parent/guardian
3. If the next dynamic assessment is scheduled within a month of the assessment deadline, the case manager will administer the mentoring assessment at the family dynamic assessment update. If the next assessment not within the month, the Family Case Manager will contact the parent/guardian to complete the mentoring assessment.
    a. The Family Case Manager can schedule a time with the parent/guardian or distribute a paper copy of the assessment for the parent/guardian to complete within 2 weeks.
4. If the mentor assessment was distributed to the parent/guardian, the Family Case Manager will contact the parent/guardian prior to the two week deadline with a reminder
5. If the assessment in not returned within two weeks, the Family Case Manager will contact (face-to-face or phone) the parent/guardian to request the assessment.
6. The completed assessment will be added to the mentee's confidential file and the date of receipt noted on the *Mentee Evaluation Checklist.*

a. If an interviewer/case manager does not have access to the mentee's file, the interviewer must give the assessment to the Program Director or Match Supervisor.

Managing Grievances, Boundary Issues, & Premature Match Closure

Boundaries Management

All interaction between mentors and mentees is supervised on-site or off-site at special activities.

Formalized instructions for type of contact between mentor and mentee are addressed in Section 10.1 General Risk Management Policy and Section 10.2 Offsite Risk Management. Key pieces of this policy include the policy that mentors and mentees agree not to contact each other outside of standard match meetings or family mentor meetings.

Mentor Orientation and Training addresses what mentors are and are not, and discusses topics, behaviors, and actions that are considered inappropriate.

If any party feels, or identifies, that boundaries have been violated, then this should be addresses as specified in the Grievance/Dispute Policy and Procedures.

Grievance/Dispute Policy

Grievances involving general volunteer issues (not issues between mentor and mentee) should follow the Dispute Resolution policies outline in the Volunteer Handbook.

Issues noticed by mentors or mentees should be discussed with the other party before raising to an LLM staff member.

If the issue is between mentor and mentee, initial attempts will be made to resolve the problem before involving the parent/guardian.

Attempts will be made to avoid prematurely closing a match as research indicates that, especially if the relationship ends within three months of the match, the youth can experience negative outcomes.

The Match Supervisor or Program Director will follow the general match closure policies and procedures (See section 8) even when a match terminates early. However, depending on the circumstance, LLM staff will eliminate the match exit interview in which mentor and mentee are interviewed together.

All support and supervision must be recorded on the *Contact Log*.

Grievances/Dispute Procedures

1. A concern may be raised by a youth, mentor, parent/guardian, or the Match Supervisor.
    a. If a youth or mentor has a concern, he/she should first raise that concern with the other party.
    b. If a parent/guardian has concerns, she/he should discuss with the Match Supervisor.
2. If a youth/mentor concern is not resolved by discussion between the match participants, then the youth or mentor should discuss the issue with the Match Supervisor. The Match Supervisor will complete the *Report of Discussion* form. This will also occur if the concern is first noted by the Match Supervisor or other LLM staff or volunteer.

3. If the issue is not resolved with this discussion, the Match Supervisor will schedule and facilitate a meeting with the relevant person(s). Again a *Report of Discussion* form will be completed and signed.
4. If the issue is still not resolved, the Match Supervisor will alert the Program Director and all relevant parties will meet with the Program Director. The *Report of Discussion* form will again be used to document the discussion and any planned corrective actions.
    a. The Match Supervisor or Program Director will discuss with the parent/guardian before making a decision to terminate a match.
5. If the issue remains unresolved, the match will be closed.

See Section 8 for additional information about Match Closure and Re-matching.

Required Forms & Documentation

Contact Log
Request for Contact Letter Template
NCMI Behavioral Outcomes Assessment
Mentoring Outcome Assessment (Parent/Guardian)
Mentee Evaluation Checklist
Mentor Evaluation Checklist
Report of Discussion

Mentor Recognition & Retention

Policy

The Lower Lights Youth Mentoring Program recognizes that all participants—mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians—are important to the success of the mentoring program. Particular emphasis will be placed upon recognizing the program's volunteer mentors.

It is the responsibility of the Volunteer Director and Program Director to plan and implement, at a minimum, the following recognition activities:

- Hold an annual youth mentoring kick-off event
- Host an annual volunteer recognition event
- Establish a mentor recognition award system for length of service
- Feature a mentor profile or mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, or general match success story in at least two newsletters per year. (This may come from the youth mentoring program or other LLM mentoring programs.)
- Schedule and facilitate quarterly training sessions, followed by peer support group time for mentors
- Assist mentees in creating thank you notes/messages

Retention is also enhanced by access to relevant and useful training and information (see Section 4 Orientation & Training for more details) and by special activities for mentor/mentee matches (see Section 6.5 Other Support Activities).

Procedures

12. Matches that continue beyond the first year (where another Match Agreement & Contract has been signed) will be invited to attend subsequent match kick-off events. (See section 5 Match Strategy.)

13. Every year LLM will host a volunteer recognition event such as a picnic, breakfast, dinner, or other activity. This activity will be for all LLM volunteers, and include youth mentoring volunteers. Acknowledgments will be made for length of service, recruitment of other mentors, or other outstanding achievements. The Volunteer Director will lead the planning and implementation efforts with input, assistance, and attendance of other staff, the executive director, and board members.

    a. Do we want to have an annual recognition event that also includes recognizing youth and parents (rather than just mentors)? We will need to have goals set up for kids so we could give awards to all kids that met their goals and/or give attendance awards (to kids and families) that show up consistently. If we just honor mentors, we could have one event for all LLM, if we recognize kids/families, we might need a separate youth mentor event?

14. Recognition for length of volunteer service includes:

    a. At six months, the program director/youth coordinator will send a note of appreciation to the mentor.

    b. After one year of service all mentors will be sent a certificate of appreciation and a handwritten thank-you note or card.

    c. For each subsequent year of service, LLM will send a thank-you note.

   d. At three (five?) years of service, LLM will present a thank-you gift for continuous service.

15. Length of service recognitions (one year and beyond), and any other outstanding service/performance acknowledgments will be acknowledged at the annual recognition event and in a newsletter.
16. The Volunteer Director, with assistance from Program Directors, will implement a schedule of quarterly peer support groups. These groups will allow volunteer mentors to meet and discuss experiences with the program. Groups will be established for volunteers with similar roles. For example, there will be one group for financial specialty mentors (for Project AIM and Light the Way Home), one for youth mentors, one for Rachel's House personal mentors, etc.
    a. This will be an optional activity for youth mentors.
17. The Program Director / Youth Coordinator will establish a way for mentees and parents/guardians to thank volunteer mentors. This could include working with mentees and parents/guardians to create a thank-you note or small gift to provide to the mentor or involving youth and families in organizing and running the volunteer recognition event.
18. The program director may invite outstanding mentors to assist in presenting at new mentor orientation and training sessions

Required Forms & Documentation

None.

Match Closure

Policy

Note that these policies are recommended best practices, but none are required so we figure out what works for us. We definitely want to keep some steps that involve us notifying people that we aren't supervising the match anymore after it ends/closes.

LLM will attempt to engage all mentors and mentees to participate in closure procedures when their match ends.

The Match Supervisor (Program Director?) has primary responsibility for the match closure process. If the Match Supervisor cannot schedule a meeting with the parties, the Program Director will assume responsibility for notifying parties via mail.

Definition of Match Closure

Match closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship regardless of the circumstances or whether the parties intend to have future contact informally beyond the match duration. While no party is expected to continue the relationship beyond the formal end of a match, matches may continue in the program beyond the original contract period and receive ongoing support and supervision.

Closure can occur for any number of reasons including: the contracted match duration has ended, one or both participants do not want to continue the match, there are changes in life circumstances of either the mentor or mentee, or an individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation. The match may end at the discretion of the mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, and/or program director.

Exit Interviews

Whenever possible, LLM Youth Mentoring will conduct exit interviews with all participants, the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian, at match closure. Information will remain confidential and be used for the purposes of improving the services offered by LLM and to determine any future engagement of the mentee, mentor, or parent/guardian.

Parent/Guardian Notification of Match Closure

LLM will notify parents/guardians of match closure in writing using the *Match Closure Notification Letter* template.

Future Contact between Mentor & Mentee

A mentor and mentee may have contact after match closure when all parties, including the parent/guardian are in agreement. If future contact is agreed upon, the LLM Youth Mentoring Program will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended. The Program Director will verbally, and in writing, inform all parties—the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian—that the formal match has ended, and that LLM will not be liable for any incidents that occur after the match has closed.

Follow-up

LLM will contact the mentee six months after exiting the program for the purpose of conducting the final outcomes assessment.

Process to Re-engage Mentor or Mentee

It is left to the discretion of the Program Director (and Volunteer Director for mentor) whether an individual will be reassigned to another match in the future based upon past participation, reason for match closure, and current goals and needs of the program.

The Volunteer Director will work with volunteers not continuing as mentors to identify other service opportunities.

The Program Director and/or Family Case Manager will work with the family and youth to identify other potential programs in the community that can offer support and skills to the former mentee.

Procedures

LLM Youth Mentoring Program staff will follow the closure procedures as closely as possible and will vary them where appropriate based on the reasons for the match ending:

19. At the point it is decided that a match is closing, the Match Supervisor will fill out a *Match Closure Summary* form and supervise and instruct all participants through the closure process. A copy of the *Match Closure Summary* will be placed in both the mentor and mentee files.
20. All closures must be classified as to the reason for the match ending. The major classifications are as follows and the circumstances will dictate the procedure to be followed:

    Planned

    A planned closure is one that has been known about for a period of time such as three months or more. Common reasons for planning a match closure may include the match is reaching the end of the commitment, the youth ages out of the program, and/or the goals of the match have been achieved.

    Extenuating Circumstances

    Extenuating circumstances for match closure are usually more sudden in nature, and beyond the control of the program and/or its participants, i.e., relocation or moving away, or an unexpected personal crisis.

    Difficult

    A difficult match closure is due to relationship or behavioral difficulties such as lack of cooperation or contact, parental disapproval, irreconcilable issues, lack of compatibility, or violations of program policies.
21. In all cases, the Match Supervisor will contact all parties–program staff, the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian–and inform them the match is closing and discuss how best to proceed in closing the match. Individual interviews should be scheduled whenever possible.
    - The Match Supervisor, with input from the Program Director if needed, will determine if all parties should meet together or if exit meetings should occur separately. At this point of contact, the Match Supervisor will communicate the date that the match is considered to officially end.
22. The meeting agenda should cover the following, depending on the circumstances of closure:
    - Open discussion about the relationship ending

- Complete the *Exit Surveys*. These may be completed by participants or the Match Supervisor/Program Director may interview any of the parties. The Match Supervisor should fill in the "Match ended on" date at the top of the form.
    a. The *Mentee Exit Survey*, *Mentor Exit Survey* and *Parent/Guardian Exit Survey* should be used. These also contain statements about future match contact.
- Discuss LLM's policies around future contact (see Match Closure Policy)
- Distribute participant *Closure Letters* to parent/guardian and mentor.
- Complete evaluation documents.

23. In the absence of a meeting, the Match Supervisor will attempt to interview the parties over the phone.
24. If the Match Supervisor is unable to contact the parties, he/she should notify the Program Director. In the absence of a meeting or an individual interview, the Program Director will mail *Closure Letters* and *Exit Surveys* to the mentor, mentee, or parent/guardian and will include self-addressed, stamped envelopes.
    - In all circumstances, the mentor and parent/guardian should all receive a *Closure Letter* stipulating the match has formally ended and any future contact is beyond the scope and responsibility of LLM.
25. Program staff must coordinate closure proceedings with evaluation requirements and assist in any way necessary to gather evaluation data during this process.
26. Copies of the *Closure Letters* and all completed *Exit Surveys* should be placed in the respective mentor or mentee files. (Parent/Guardian documents will be placed in the mentee's file.)

Required Forms & Documentation

Match Closure Notification Letter Template (customizable for parent/guardian and mentor)
Match Closure Summary
Mentee Exit Interview/Survey
Parent/Guardian Exit Interview/Survey
Mentor Exit Interview/Survey

Program Evaluation

1.1. Policy

Evaluation will be a key component in measuring the success of the youth mentoring program and for making continuous improvements in the effectiveness and delivery of mentoring services. LLM will evaluate processes/activities as well as outcomes.

Lower Lights program staff will be responsible for collecting evaluation data, reviewing data, submitting data to NCMI/PIRE for the terms of the NCMI grant, and revising processes and activities to increase effectiveness.

Annually, the Program Director will review the Logic Model and make any changes to reflect improvements made to the program based on evaluation data from the previous year(s).

1.1.1. Evaluating Processes & Activities

The following types of processes and activities will undergo evaluation. Suggested methods for measurement are included, though specifics may vary as the program is implemented.

Category	Description of monitoring	Method of tracking/gathering data
Mentee Recruitment	After each kick-off event, review how youth came to the program - % that that originated from the family first inquiring about other programs at LLM vs. an inquiry or referral about youth mentoring being the entry point.	Program Application – How did you hear about question
Mentor Recruitment	Determine which recruitment efforts led to an inquiry and follow-through as a mentor. Review Inquiry Log each month to determine sources of volunteers. Quarterly look at mentors that have completed training and cross-reference back to how the person heard about program (on inquiry Tracking Log.)	Volunteer Inquiry Log includes "how heard of LLM youth mentoring" Orientation post-test asks what factors affected volunteer's decision to get involved.
Screening	Review semiannually (?) some randomly selected files to determine that mentors/mentees had the appropriate screening performed and all eligibility paperwork is present.	Volunteer Inquiry Log and applications received Youth Mentor Application Eligibility Checklist
Orientation	After each Orientation, review evaluations for effectiveness and impact of the session. Once a year, review schedule of orientations against original plan to determine if number and timing of sessions occurred as planned.	Sign-in sheet. Orientation evaluation/post-test. Training plan & calendar.

Category	Description of monitoring	Method of tracking/gathering data
Training	After each Training session, review evaluations for effectiveness and impact of the session. Once a year, review schedule of orientations against original plan to determine if number and timing of sessions occurred as planned.	Use training sign-in sheets. Training pre and post tests. Training plan & calendar.
Matching Strategy and Process	For match satisfaction, survey instruments for mentees (BOAT) and parents (Mentoring Outcomes Assessment) will be administered 2 months into the match and then every 6 months thereafter. Annually, the program director will review these to adjust match process/strategies as needed. Program staff will also review length of matches and reasons for terminating.	▪ BOAT ▪ Mentoring Outcomes Assessment (Parent/Guardian) ▪ Exit Survey (mentor) ▪ Match Closure Summary
Support	Questions to assess the support provided by staff will be included on exist surveys. Annually, Program Director will review to look for ways to increase support. (If we use a survey with mentors to assess satisfaction with match – we'll include support questions on that as well.)	Exit surveys
Mentor Retention	After each kick-off, review to determine how many new mentors and mentors returning from past years. Semiannually review to determine if recognition events are occurring as planned.	Match Agreements Recruitment and Retention Plan
Demographic Information	Every x time period, the Program Director will review a sample of files (or cases in ETO) to determine that all key demographic data was captured.	Application Forms ETO

1.1.2. Evaluating Outcomes

The Youth Mentoring program will use the NCMI-provided Behavioral Outcomes Assessment Tool (BOAT) to track youth outcomes and attitudes. Additionally, Lower Lights Ministries will develop surveys for use in measuring parent/guardian satisfaction with the program, the mentor match, and any behavioral changes in their child.

Program staff will track data manually in file, in excel documents, and through the ETO software (for the period of the NCMI grant).

Think some of this was addressed in section 6.6 Impact of Youth Mentoring Program.

1.2. Procedures

Will complete as the M&E Plan is developed

1.2.1. Performing Evaluations of Processes & Activities

1.2.2. Performing Evaluations of Outcomes (covered in 6.6?)

1.2.3. Analyzing & Documenting Findings

1.2.4. Making Program Recommendations & Updating Program

1.2.5. Reporting Findings to Stakeholders

1.3. Required Forms & Documentation

Miscellaneous Policies

General Risk Management

Staff and volunteers must follow these guidelines to reduce risk to both youth and the program:

1. In order to protect all paid or volunteer staff and mentees, at no time during the program may a staff person or volunteer be alone with a single mentee where others cannot observe them. As staff supervise youth, they should space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.
2. Paid or volunteer staff should never leave a youth unsupervised.
3. *Mentors and mentees should not participate together on social media sites. For example, mentors and mentees should not be each other's "Friends" on Facebook. See Social Media Statement.
4. *Mentors should not have contact with mentees outside of the on-site mentoring sessions. This means no contact via phone, text, IM, email, social media sites, or other internet contact. The one exception to this is if the mentor attends a family mentoring meeting with the family mentor team and interacts with the youth. At no time should the mentor and mentee be alone together.
5. Staff/mentors will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, responsibility, caring, fairness, citizenship and trustworthiness. Treat all youth fairly regardless of sex, race, religion, culture.
6. Staff/mentors should use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism to manage or change behavior. Staff/mentors will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Praise youth to encourage positive behavior. Create an atmosphere of cooperation and fun.
7. Staff/mentors should not abuse or neglect children including physical, verbal, sexual, or mental abuse or neglect.
8. Staff/mentors will respect youth's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable and respect their right to say "no". Youth should not be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit. Never touch a youth against the youth's will (verbally or nonverbally expressed) unless it is to prevent an accident. Excessive tickling, wrestling with, or teasing a youth is inappropriate.
9. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment or sexual references in the presence of children or parents is prohibited. Do not show favoritism or encourage crushes or romantic fantasies that youth may have about you.
10. Staff should not release youth to anyone other than the authorized parent or guardian or other adults designated by the parent/guardian.
11. Should a mentee be injured and require first aid or medical treatment, the parent/guardian must be notified immediately. If unable to reach by phone, etc., the site coordinator will make arrangements for medical assistance. The LLM staff member should fill out a *Notice of Injury* form and supply a copy to the parent/guardian.
12. First aid supplies must be available at any match activity.

13. At least one LLM staff member or volunteer at each match activity must be certified in CPR and basic First Aid.
14. If staff has evidence or suspicions of abuse or neglect, a report must be filed with the Franklin County Children Services Abuse Hotline at 614-229-7000. See Section 10.3 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Social Media Statement

While social media has the potential to enhance relationships, LLM prohibits youth mentors and mentees from communicating through, or establishing relationships on, social media sites (i.e., Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc). As the adult, the mentor has the responsibility to ignore any contact initiated by the youth and to address the issue with the youth. The mentor should alert the Match Supervisor or other program staff if the youth continues to initiate contact. Mentors and mentees disregarding this rule may be terminated from the program.

We're working on an agency-wide policy around social media. Another option for youth programs is to allow the mentor and mentee to be linked on these sites, but for the mentor to not initiate contact with youth or initiate messages. This may allow the mentor to "watch over" the youth's posting. If we go this way, we need to have some statement for mentor to sign about what they post on their own site. See Social Network Policy for BBYO (bookmarked on CK's computer)

Off-site Risk Management

Staff and volunteers to follow these guidelines to reduce risk to both youth and the program:

1. Public restroom supervision: Staff will monitor the hallway while youth are in restroom for the privacy and protection of youth using the restroom. No underage youth should enter a public restroom alone. Always send the youth in pairs or with staff if under age 12.
2. Transportation: When circumstances require that mentoring staff provide transportation:
   a. No fewer than 2 adults (at least one of them over 25) per transport vehicle.
   b. Seatbelts should be worn at all times by everyone in the transport vehicle.
   c. When transporting youth outside of the immediate neighborhood, staff will take a copy of emergency contact information for the youth.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

Policy Statement

All staff, mentors, and other representatives of the Youth Mentoring Program must report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect of agency clients or program participants immediately. All such suspected reports must be made to appropriate state and/or local authorities. Program staff must follow the mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect procedure.

All employees, volunteers, and mentors of the Youth Mentoring Program are required to undergo training as to what constitutes child abuse and neglect, what the state statutes are, and how to properly report such cases.

Any staff, volunteers, or mentors accused of child abuse or neglect will be investigated by the agency. Contact with program youth will be restricted or constrained and/or the person in question suspended from employment or program participation per the decision of the executive director and board of directors until such investigation is concluded.

Procedures

All staff, agency representatives, and volunteers must adhere to the following mandatory reporting procedures:

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

1. All suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect, recent or otherwise, must be reported to the Program Director immediately, the same day if possible.
2. The Program Director must fill out the *Child Abuse and Neglect Report* form detailing critical information about the alleged incident of abuse or neglect. Once completed and reported, this form will be kept in the mentee's file folder.
3. After consultation with the Program Director, if warranted, the person having knowledge of the abuse/neglect will file a report with Franklin County Children Services.
4. If knowledge of the suspected abuse or neglect occurs during non-business hours, the mentor must first attempt to contact agency/program staff. If unable to do so at the time, the mentor must call Children Services directly and call the Program Director by noon the next business day. The Program Director must follow step 2 above and follow up with Children Services to ensure the report was adequately made by the mentor.

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect by Program Staff or Volunteers

1. The same procedures outlined above will be followed for any suspected child abuse and neglect by any volunteer.
2. In addition, the alleged abuser will be investigated by Lower Lights Ministries' executive staff and board members.
3. During such an investigation, the alleged abuser will be immediately restricted from contact with youth, terminated, or suspended from participation in the program.
4. In the case of suspicion of a mentor, the parent/guardian will be immediately informed of the suspicion.

Required Forms and Documentation

Child Abuse and Neglect Report
Notice of Injury (existing form)