

# Peer Mentoring

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# Mentoring

Mentoring is when experienced DSPs, regardless of age or current job function, assist new or less experienced DSPs to:

- Develop specific competencies
- Reflect on current practices, culture, and values
- Learn about all aspects of their job
- Feel supported and welcome



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# Goals for Today

- 1) Understand the benefits of mentoring
- 2) Learn the general framework of the Peer Empowerment Program
- 3) Identify strategies to select, prepare, and support mentors and mentees

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# Mentoring is an effective way to:

- Increase retention and reduce turnover
- Transfer complex knowledge and skills to new DSPs
- Assure new DSPs feel supported and welcomed
- Break down cultural and racial barriers
- Strengthen employee commitment
- Develop future leaders

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# Benefits to New Hires

- Safe opportunity for feedback
- Place to bring anxieties and concerns
- Decrease feelings of isolation
- Gain access to information
- Receive guidance on norms



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# Benefits to Mentors

- Recognition of skills and abilities
- Opportunities to develop new skills
- Renewed interest in job
- Advancement
- Raises, bonuses, and reward



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# Benefits to People Served

- Less turnover
- Better quality services
- Positive long-term relationships



# Mentoring Dos

- View mentors as leaders
- Provide incentives to mentors
- Offer frequent opportunities for celebration and recognition
- Create time-limited partnerships with specific goals
- Provide ongoing support to mentors
- Designate a coordinator





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# Mentoring Don'ts

- Expect the program to run on its own
- Use mentoring to replace orientation or supervision
- Ask people to mentor without preparation
- Force people to become mentors
- Expect mentors to do this extra work without an incentive





# The Peer Empowerment Program

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# What is PEP?

The Peer Empowerment Program (PEP) is a toolkit that provides guidance on planning and customizing your own peer-to-peer mentoring program following a recommended framework.

The toolkit includes:

- Guidance about how to select, train, and sustain mentors
- Instructions for preparing and supporting mentees
- Content, worksheets, and other tools you will need

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# The PEP Toolkit

- Program Coordinator Guide
  - Understanding, Planning, and Launching the PEP
- The PEP Curriculum – Facilitator & Learner Guides
  - The PEP Orientation Session
  - The PEP Mentor Development Workshop

# Main Components of PEP

- Customized planning
- Marketing and selection
- Orientation & training
- Partnership agreements
- Activities to support mentors and monitor the program



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# PEP Planning & Implementation Framework

1. Select Coordinator & Planning Team
2. Complete Self-Assessment & Plan
3. Design Evaluation
4. Market Program
5. Select Mentors & Mentees
6. Conduct PEP Orientation
7. Train Mentors
8. Arrange Matches
9. Develop Agreements
10. Monitor/Support Activities
11. Conclude Partnerships
12. Conduct Exit Interviews
13. Use Feedback to Improve Program
14. Continue Program Cycle

# Customized Planning



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# Select a Coordinator & Planning Team

- PEP Coordinator:
  - Coordinate planning group and toolkit customization
  - Implement and evaluate the program
  - Advocate for ongoing program support
- Planning Team:
  - Initial role: assist with program development
  - Ongoing role: advisory committee



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# Complete the Self-Assessment & Planning Worksheet

Review & revise program elements to meet your needs

- The PEP Agency Self-Assessment Discussion Guide
  - Questions are linked to sections of the toolkit and targeted resources for planning
- The PEP Planning Worksheet
  - Record decisions to customize the core program activities

# Design Program Evaluation Components

- Track turnover before and after implementation
- Exit interviews and focus groups
- Surveys to determine how mentees applied their learning
- Customer satisfaction with PEP graduates vs. other DSPs



Program  
Implementation



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# Market the Program

- Recruit mentors through effective marketing strategies
- Communicate the purpose, benefits, and requirements of the program
- Publicize clear standards for mentor eligibility

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# Select Mentors and Mentees

- Potential mentors complete an application
- Mentees complete a profile to facilitate matching
- Will all newly hired staff be required to participate or will mentoring be an option for all new and recently hired employees?

# Orientation

- Attendees are prospective mentors and mentees
- Information:
  - Purpose, benefits, and characteristics of the program
  - Required elements of the program:
    - Frequency of meetings
    - Duration of the experience
    - The Partnership Agreement



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# Train Mentors

- PEP Mentor Development Workshop Topics:
  - Roles and activities
  - Effective coaching and teaching strategies
  - Practical cultural competence
  - Communicating vision, values, and mission

# Arrange Matches

- Factors to consider when assigning partners:  
culture, primary  
language, background,  
age, and work  
hours/locations





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# Develop Partnership Agreements

- Mentor and mentee discuss the mentee's support needs using the PEP Professional Development Plan
- Partners negotiate an agreement regarding:
  - Mutual responsibilities
  - Developmental goals
  - Frequency of meetings
  - Length of mentorship
  - Activities that will help the mentee achieve goals

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# Support Mentors

- Schedule quarterly or bi-monthly gatherings for mentors
- Facilitate discussions to help mentors:
  - Receive advice on challenges
  - Reflect on the overall experience of mentoring
  - Celebrate the successes they are having with their mentees
  - Strengthen and improve the program

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# Conclude Partnerships

- Partnership agreements are time-limited
- Partners should evaluate their outcomes
- Partners may:
  - Conclude their partnership by reflecting on mutual benefits
  - Renew their partnership by creating a new agreement

# Use Feedback to Improve Program

- Exit interviews
- Mentor meetings
- Assess mentor skills after training and in annual performance reviews
- Collect input on a regular basis to identify needed program modifications or mentor training needs



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# Resources

- Taylor, M., Sauer, J., Hewitt, A., O'Neill, S., & Larson, S. (2001). *The peer empowerment program (PEP): A complete toolkit for planning and implementing a mentoring program within community-based human service organizations*. Research and Training Center on Community Living, Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota.
- Larson, S. A., & Hewitt, A. S. (2005). *Staff recruitment, retention, and training strategies for community human services organizations*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Research and Training Center on Community Living.

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# Questions?

To receive the slides from today's webinar or to further discuss this strategy:

- Contact your U of M consultant
- Go to: [tenncare.ici.umn.edu](http://tenncare.ici.umn.edu)
- Email us at: [dsp-tn@umn.edu](mailto:dsp-tn@umn.edu)