A Fresh Start: an Evaluation of the Impact of Mentoring Programs on Young People

DIONE WASHINGTON

Student ID: 35135530

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
SOCIOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA
IN THE
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTER: PROF JAN PRETORIUS

JULY 2010 PRETORIA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Any endeavor is always fulfilled not as the result of one person's work, but as the result of the support of an entire community of people who want to propel an individual toward the fulfillment of her goal. Such was the case with the research study documented in this dissertation. Many people deserve my gratitude, including my mother, Barbara McDaniel, the first person to instill the importance of education as one of my core values and who remains my most loyal supporter today. In addition to her support, I wish to thank the staff and students of the Fresh Start Program who participated in the research study, the sponsors of the Fresh Start Program and the Los Angeles educational system.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: An Overview of Young People and Mentoring Programs

1.1 Introduction 10

1.2 Background to the Study 14

1.3 Statement of the Problem 19

1.4 Site of the Study 20

1.5 Objectives of the Study 21

1.6 Research Hypotheses 22

1.7 Significance of the Study 22

1.8 Conclusion 22

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction 24

2.2 Characteristics of Youth and Causes of Risk 24

2.3 Characteristics of At-Risk Youth 32

2.3.1 School Issues and Incarceration 33

2.3.2 Incarcerated Youth and Gang Membership 33

2.3.3 Demographic Characteristics and Skills 35

2.3.3.1 Gender and Age 36

2.4 Positive Reinforcement 37

2.4.1 Positive Reinforcement and Parents 37

2.5 Community Level Initiatives 38

2.5.1 Mentoring 41

2.5.2 Non-Violent Conflict Resolution 42

2.5.3 Strength-based Approaches 43

2.5.4 Life-Skills Training 44

2.5.5 Youth Initiative 45

2.6 Reasons Why Some Programs Fail 46

2.6.1 Absence of Strategy 46

2.6.2 Evidence-based Practice 48

2.6.3 Strategic Plans 49

2.7 Mentoring 50

2.7.1 Traditional Mentoring 51

2.7.2 Planned Mentoring 52

2.8 Evaluating the Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs 53

2.9 Rationale for Evaluating Mentoring Programs 54

2.10 Recruitment 55

2.11 Mentoring Curriculum 55

2.12 Matching Mentors/Mentees 56

2.13 Purpose of Mentoring Programs 56

2.14 Different Types of Mentoring Programs 57

2.14.1 Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America 57

2.14.2 Help One Student to Succeed 58

2.14.3 One Hundred Black Men, Inc. 59

2.14.4 The National One-to-One Mentoring Partnership 59

2.15 Mentor and Mentee Relationships: Historical Context 60

2.16 Effects of Mentoring on At-Risk Youth 63

2.17 Evaluating Program Effectiveness 69

2.18 Fresh Start 81

2.19 Conclusion 84

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1. Evaluating Efficacy in Mentoring Programs 86

3.2. Aims of the Study 87

3.3. Challenges for Mentoring Program Evaluation 91

3.4 Methodological Approach for Quantitative Research 96

3.5 Researcher’s Key Assumptions 100

3.6 Unit of Analysis, Locating and Selecting Research Participants 101

3.7 Data Collection 103

3.8 Capturing, Storing, Retrieving and Safeguarding Data 106

3.9 Data Analysis 106

3.10 Data Presentation 108

3.11 Ethical Considerations 108

Chapter Four: Analysis

4.1 Introduction 111

4.2 Pre-intervention Child Behavior Checklist Results 116

4.2.1 Youth 118

4.2.2 Parents 120

4.2.3 Teachers 122

4.3 Post-intervention Results 127

4.3.1 Youth 129

4.3.2 Parents 133

4.3.3 Teachers 136

4.4 Comparison of Pre- and Post-Intervention Results:
Analysis and Discussion 138

4.4.1 Youth 140

4.4.2 Parents 142

4.4.3 Teachers 144

4.5 Coefficient of Variation Analysis 145

4.6 Summary and Conclusion 149

Chapter Five: Discussion and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction 151

5.2 Discussion of the Results 152

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research 160

5.3.1 Longitudinal Study of Mentoring Programs
and Their Outcomes 161

5.3.2 Program Satisfaction and Key Variables

Producing Change 161

5.3.3 Determine the Influence of the Variable of Time on Short-and Long-Term Measures of Successful Outcomes 162

5.4 Suggestions for Methodological Constructs and Considerations 163

5.4.1 Consider the Confounding Variable of the Halo Effect 163

5.4.2 Corroborate Self-Report Data Sets with Other Types of Data 164

5.4.3 Incorporate Baseline, Periodic, and Post-Intervention Evaluations and Outcome Measures 165

5.5 Recommendations for Mentoring Programs 166

5.5.1 Keep Abreast of Research Literature 166

5.5.2 Maintain Thorough Records and Engage in Your Own Research 167

5.6 Conclusion 168

References 171

Figures

Figure 4.1 Marital Status of Participating Parents 113

Figure 4.2 Distribution of Foster Parents Among Parent Participants 114

Figure 4.3 Mentor to Student Ratio 115

Figure 4.4 Youth Perception of Academic Success (Girls and Boys) 132

Figure 4.5 Youth Perception of Academic Success (Younger Kids and Older Kids) 132

Figure 4.6 Parent Perception of Academic Success (Younger and Older Kids) 135

Figure 4.7 Parent Perception of Academic Success (Girls and Boys) 136

Figure 4.8 Teachers' Perceptions of Academic Performance 138

Tables

Table 3.1 Weighted Scale for Pre-Intervention Data from the Child Behavior Checklist 107

Table 4.1 Starting and Final Number of Student Participants 112

Table 4.2 Gender of Participants 112

Table 4.3 Additional Sources Contributing to the Study 112

Table 4.4 Pre-Intervention Perceptions of Youth Behavior 117

Table 4.5 Pre-Intervention Students' and Parents' Perceptions of Students' Academic Performance 117

Table 4.6 Pre-Intervention Teachers' Perceptions of

Students’ Academic Performance 118

Table 4.7 Teachers’ Perceptions of Students’ Behavior Paired Samples Test Results 125

Table 4.8 Paired Samples Test Comparing Pre- and Post-Intervention Results 126

Table 4.9 Post-Intervention Perceptions of Youth Behavior 128

Table 4.10 Post-Intervention Students’ and Parents’ Perceptions of Students’ Academic Performance 129

Table 4.11 Post-Intervention Teachers’ Perceptions of Students’ Academic Performance 129

Table 4.12 Summary of Means (Youth Perceptions) 140

Table 4.13 Samples Statistics (Youth) 141

Table 4.14 Samples T-Test (Youth) 141

Table 4.15 Summary of Means (Parent Perceptions) 142

Table 4.16 Samples Statistics (Parent) 142

Table 4.17 Samples Test (Parent) 143

Table 4.18 Summary of Means (Teachers’ Perceptions) 144

Table 4.19 Samples Statistics (Teachers) 144

Table 4.20 Samples Test (Teachers) 144

Table 4.21 Coefficient of Variation of Youth

Perceptions 146

Table 4.22 Coefficient of Variation of Parents’ Perceptions 148

Table 4.23 Coefficient of Variation of Teachers’ Perceptions 149

Appendices

Child Behavior Checklist 189

Teachers Report Form for Ages 6-18 193

Youth Self-Report for Ages 11-18 197

CHAPTER ONE

AN OVERVIEW OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND MENTORING PROGRAMS

1.1 Introduction

Problems of social integration are pressing for many young people, especially those defined as at-risk for academic and social failure (Walker, 2005). Young people are defined as at-risk if they demonstrate signs of potential impairment in one or more diverse areas of functioning, including academic performance, cognition, and emotional and social adjustment (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). As DuBois and Karcher (2005) observed, students who demonstrate problems in one of these domains are ultimately likely to experience difficulties in the other domains as a result. Outcomes for at-risk children may include school failure or drop-out, social deviance, and developmental delays in the areas of cognitive, psychological, and social development (DuBois & Karcher, 2005).

Problems related to coping with society are usually reflected in the behaviors and personalities of people. Due to these challenges, at-risk youth often encounter difficulty in interacting with others. Such youth are susceptible to becoming the victims of racism, bullying, divorce, and other related problems. Because children and young people are still undergoing the continuous process of

building their character and their personalities, the guidance that they receive should also be based on their backgrounds and personality attributes (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Early support for young people to overcome problems has been demonstrated to have a statistically significant effect with respect to improving their developmental outcomes in all domains (Portwood, Ayers, Kinnison, Waris, & Wise, 2005).

Challenges in school, social, and family life, and in one's own emotions are typical of adolescent development, according to developmental theorists (Erikson, 1994). As physiological changes occur, many adolescents encounter problems, particularly in coping with their environment and the people who surround them. Other related problems can emerge, which can affect young people's behavior and ability to socialize. Social responses and reactions to young people's behaviors can have a significant impact on their developmental outcomes, including the characteristics that develop during adolescence (Pajares & Urdan, 2006). Some adolescents, however, have other difficulties, such as structural problems of poverty, exposure to violence, or a minority status, which makes adolescence even more difficult. These factors may contribute to an adolescent's being categorized as at-risk (Pajares & Urdan, 2006).

The significance of adolescence for social and psychological development and the problems related to peer pressure faced by many young people has led to the creation of various intervention programs provided by social service and volunteer organizations. The main purpose of these programs is to help those who are unable to cope with social norms and expectations learn how to manage both more effectively. These coping programs usually have a monitoring system in which those with identified problems are guided by someone typically referred to as a "mentor." Mentoring programs are one of the ways in which the problems faced by young people, such as school dropout, violence and lack of self-esteem, may be addressed.

One meta-analytic study of mentoring programs for children (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine & Cooper, 2002) observed that youth mentoring has increased substantially over the past ten years. DuBois et al. cited evidence such as the growth of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (there are over 500 agencies) and the emergence of new mentoring agencies as an indication that the value of youth mentoring is increasingly being recognized as crucial to young people's short and long-term academic success and quality of life. This is affirmed by Jekielek et al. (2002), whose study indicated that mentoring enhances children's

cognitive development, self-reliance, social and emotional development, and judgment and decision-making capacities. As of 2004, the National Mentoring Center reported that there are more than 5,000 youth mentoring programs in the United States.

Interest in mentoring programs has been fueled in significant part by research, which suggests that positive relationships with extra-familial adults promote resiliency among youth from at-risk backgrounds (Zand, Thomson, Cervantes, Espiritu, Klagholz, Lablanc et al., 2009). With the sheer number of youth mentoring programs that exist and the varying agencies and individuals that sponsor them, it is obvious that there are a wide variety of approaches to the youth mentoring process. Some programs are formal while others are informal. Some utilize specified curricula while others do not. What is common to all mentoring programs, however, is a matched relationship between an at-risk or in-need child and an adult who has the skills, time, and ability to relate to the child as a positive adult role model (Jekielek et al., 2002).

The effects of mentoring programs are advantageous for both the mentor and for young people as they foster one-to-one relationships and social connection (Keating et al., 2002). Moreover, these programs are likely to be the

product of school or community efforts to protect, support and integrate members of their own communities. Mentors are typically teachers, parents or social workers. All of them are trained to handle the possible lapses of behavior that young people may exhibit.

1.2 Background to the Study

Previous studies (such as DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005; Larson, 2006) have been conducted in relation to mentoring programs in general and youth development in particular. Mentoring - understood broadly as interactions conducive to the creation of a "meaningful, supportive relationship" (Dawes & Dawes, 2005, p. 45) that provide guidance towards development - is viewed as a positive intervention in business contexts and organizations (Bryant, 2005); in higher education (Galbraith, 2003); and for at-risk young people for whom a mentor becomes a mixture of parent figure and peer (Spencer, 2006).

Mentoring has become an increasingly popular strategy for addressing the needs of young people who are considered at-risk. A number of schools and social service agencies now offer mentoring programs to help children and young people. Mentoring is seen as a viable approach to target the needs of students with academic and behavior problems (Spencer, 2006). In order to facilitate effective learning,

adults assume a parental/advisor role in mentoring programs and are paired with young people to create a trusting and supportive relationship. Mentorship programs enable cooperation and community involvement and can also be tailored to the learning style and personality of students with mild disabilities (Daughtry, Gibson, & Abels, 2009).

In the United States, the increasing awareness of the availability of various mentoring programs has led to their rapid growth. Although the specific tools, techniques, and expectations of youth mentoring programs vary widely depending on the sponsor and the needs of the community, mentoring programs share at least one characteristic: that of matching an at-risk or in-need child with a caring and competent adult who can provide encouragement, advice, and opportunities to excel, both in the child's academic life, as well as the family and social life.

The term at-risk is generally used to describe young people who are in danger of disengaging from formal education or of becoming involved in criminal activities (Dawes & Dawes, 2005). Such children are often living in a home headed by a single parent or otherwise lack the support and structure that are predictors of academic and social success. At-risk children may also display early signs of behavioral or emotional disturbances, either at

home or at school. They may, in fact, have undiagnosed learning difficulties.

What are such children at-risk for? Research substantiates that at-risk children are more likely to develop significant social, economic, behavioral, and relationship problems as adults than their peers with more stable environments. Children who are classified as at-risk are far more likely to experience divorce, unemployment, substance abuse, criminal or legal involvement, and domestic violence (Fergusson, Horwood, & Ridder, 2005).

The individual impact is obvious, but such problems that emerge in adulthood have social costs as well. Unemployment, substance abuse, and criminal activity all place unnecessary economic burdens on the country as a whole. It is clear, then, that any mentoring program that could disrupt the cycle of social problems would be of benefit to individuals and to society at large (Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008).

The beneficial impact of mentoring programs on the development of children and young people is influenced by a number of factors, such as an agency's capacity, the existence of proven program design, and the establishment of effective community partnerships (Allen & Eby, 2007). The relation between mentoring programs and social support

frameworks is also significant in addressing the academic and behavioral functioning of at-risk youth. Children who have minimal support are more likely to be withdrawn, distractible, aggressive towards others, and hopeless about their future when compared to peers with greater structure and support (Wight, Botticello, & Aneshensel, 2006).

In addition, the presence of appropriate role models and sources of positive identification in young people's environments may reduce the likelihood of their involvement in criminal behavior (e.g. Lipschitz-Elhawi & Itzhaky, 2005) and contribute to resiliency (Barrow, Armstrong, Vargo, & Boothroyd, 2007). Commenting on juvenile delinquency, Dannerbeck (2005) suggested that its development may be attributable to the lack of appropriate role models within a youth's environment. Consequently, mentors can provide at-risk youth with positive role models in an effort to develop socially appropriate behavior and reduce delinquent behavior. Moreover, children and young people are likely to overcome the effects of abusive and neglectful upbringings if they seek healthier relationships outside their home (e.g. Brown, 2004).

Nonetheless, there are factors that may reduce the effectiveness of mentoring programs, such as lack of resources and support. Many programs that focus on helping

at-risk youths are dependent on government aid and are inhibited from taking risks in program design and implementation (Rathgeb Smith, 2007). Moreover, mentoring at-risk students and managing their psychological disabilities can cause stress and difficulties among mentors (Arnold et al., 2003). This, in turn, can produce negative personal and social outcomes for mentors and mentees.

Although there have been many studies that have focused on the effects of mentoring programs on at-risk young people, it is important to evaluate the impact of each individual program on its target in terms of its own goals because the programs that work in one area or with one population of at-risk adolescents may not be successful under other circumstances (Armitage, 2003). Many mentoring programs are designed to be responsive to the specific needs of the population being served and may offer services in conjunction with other partners in the community, such as schools.

Mentoring programs that enrich the lives of children and young people and address problems concerning their behavioral and academic development have developed rapidly in the last 20 years. Though the benefits of mentoring programs in general have been recognized, ongoing

evaluation of the efficacy and quality of individual programs should be a priority in order to ensure that outcomes are consistent with a program’s goals. In addition, new academic and behavioral mentoring processes are being developed and should be integrated with traditional practices. Evaluation can contribute to the process of enhancing mentoring programs.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The problem is that despite the extensive body of literature on mentoring, little is understood about how specific mentoring programs set, achieve, and evaluate outcomes. Published studies evaluating the benefits of mentoring programs for youth are relatively recent. Prior research has been limited by a lack of available data upon which to base conclusions. Furthermore, because of multidisciplinary and applied interest in mentoring, reports have appeared in the literature of diverse disciplines and foundations and other organizations have published privately. As Philip notes (2003), not only is there a general absence of a critical literature on mentoring programs, but also there is little consensus concerning the definition and meaning of the concept of mentoring.

1.4 Site of the Study

Fresh Start, developed by Quantum Leap Consulting Agency, where the writer volunteers as a mentor, is a mentoring program that provides mentors from local universities and the wider community for young people ages 13 to 17. The Fresh Start Youth Program promotes the concept of one-on-one mentoring as a success strategy to provide young people with the skills and relationships that will help them avoid gang involvement and other criminal activities.

Fresh Start participants are at-risk or in-need youth who are referred to the program by a professional in the community. Usually, that professional is a teacher or school counselor who has the experience of observing the child and who is aware of Fresh Start as a supportive resource for the child.

This study contributes to the process of improving mentoring programs by evaluating an example of such a program - Fresh Start. This particular program was selected because of the writer's familiarity and involvement with the program.

Key research questions include:

1. What is the current status of Fresh Start?
2. What are the variables that significantly affect the delivery of Fresh Start?
3. What impact on academic and behavioral development has Fresh Start had on a selected group of participants?
4. Has Fresh Start enhanced academic performance or behavior?
5. In what ways can Fresh Start be improved to ensure the program meets its goals?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Evaluation research of the efficacy of mentoring programs suggests that mentoring offers general benefits to participants (Karcher, Kuperminc, Portwood, Sipe, & Taylor, 2006). However, each mentoring program is unique and addresses a particular set of circumstances and issues. Thus, the aim of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of a particular mentoring program – Fresh Start – in contributing to the academic and behavioral development of at-risk youth. The study will focus on the factors that affect the mentoring program and results from the study will be used to identify areas for improvement.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions, the following general hypotheses are formulated:

- The Fresh Start mentoring program is effective in the behavioral development of young people.
- The Fresh Start mentoring program is effective in the academic development of young people.
- The Fresh Start mentoring program has a number of defective areas that need improvement.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study will provide information for parents, educators, and stakeholders involved in mentoring programs for at-risk youth and in particular, Fresh Start. Learning how mentoring and mentoring programs affect behavior will assist parents, educators, and school departments to establish better programs, policies, and approaches for the academic and behavioral development of at-risk youth. The identification of what contributes to and/or compromises effective mentoring programs will promote effective mentoring to at-risk youth.

1.8 Conclusion

At-risk youth encounter a number of problems, such as meeting social expectations, achieving in school, and establishing relationships with other people. Through

mentoring programs, mentors are able to support the behavioral and academic development of these young people. Although previous studies have concluded that mentoring programs are generally beneficial for at-risk youth, the absence of consensus concerning the meaning and definition of the concept of mentoring (Philip, 2003) and the range of programs that exist (from small to large scale) make evaluation of these programs essential as a contribution to understanding the meaning, processes, and consequences of mentoring. Hence, this study aims to assess the efficacy of Fresh Start, particularly its impact on young people's behavioral and academic development. By doing so, this study may enable the improvement of strategies applied by current mentoring programs in general.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter Two reviews the literature in relation to the social position of young people and the circumstances that have contributed to the creation of categories of young people defined as being at-risk. In addition, the chapter reviews a range of studies that have addressed mentoring programs in general and programs for at-risk youth in particular. The chapter outlines different approaches to the evaluation of mentoring programs, develops key concepts essential to adequate evaluation, and points to emerging operational definitions for the purpose of the study presented here.

2.2 Characteristics of Youth and Causes of Risk

Many of today's youth face conflicts that challenge their nascent coping abilities. Social changes, including globalization, changing demographic patterns, and transformations in family organization have led to problems of social integration and fueled concerns about violence, academic failure, single parent households, an increase in the number of children in day care, and lack of self-esteem amongst young people. Peer pressure may also contribute to feelings of inferiority amongst this age cohort.

Youth may seek ways to express themselves and unfortunately, this search for self-expression has often led to deviant practices such as drug addiction, joining gangs, or engaging in pre-marital sex. Stephen (1997) wrote that "growing numbers of children are being neglected, abused, and ignored. Without change, the dark specter of generational warfare could become all too real" (p. 1). Stephen (1997) further noted that child-care advocates report that as many as 15% of 16-19 year-olds are at risk of never reaching their potential and simply becoming "lost" in society. Children may be at-risk at any age of not becoming self-supporting adults, headed for a life in institutions for delinquency, crime, mental illness, addiction, and dependency.

Another significant change is the number of North American children who are living with only one of their parents. According to Amato (2005), there are multiple reasons for this increase in single-parent headed homes, and the absence of one of the parental figures may put children at-risk. These reasons include premarital childbearing, separation, and divorce. Along with the increase in prevalence, there has been an increase in the general acceptance of such a shift in the concept of the American family. Page and Stevens (2005) further pointed

out that in a span of 30 years the United States has seen a jump from one out of every ten families run by a single parent to the current statistic of three out of every ten. These societal changes have led to American children living in increasingly varied and complex arrangements (Walsh, 2003). Moreover, divorce has a strong long-term effect on children and youth (Mechoulan, 2006).

One of the main causes of at-risk behavior is poverty; indeed, there is a position held by policy makers that a vicious cycle exists between at-risk behavior and poverty (Garris, 1998). Poverty has a reputation of mutating family structures. The negative effects of poverty lead youths to engage in practices and activities – such as drug abuse and pre-marital sex (that results in pregnancy and abortion) - in order to forget their conditions in life (Booth & Crouter, 2001).

The increase in children living in poverty in urban areas leads many social scientists to link poverty to at-risk behavior as most delinquent youths have come from an urban environment. Barth, Wildfire, and Green (2006) observed that young children are the most likely cohorts to be living in poverty. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty (2006), 29 million children in the United States are growing up in homes that can be

classified as living in low-income families, and an additional 13.5 million live in families that are officially impoverished according to federal guidelines that define poverty. In all, then, this accounts for 58% of American children, a shocking majority of the childhood population (National Center for Children in Poverty, 2006).

Poverty and other factors can result in poor self-esteem (Blanchard, Gurka, & Blackman, 2006). However, even in families with two co-present parents there can be problems associated with low self-esteem, school phobia, and experimentation with drugs and alcohol. It is also important to acknowledge that family structures can change quickly, thus exerting shifting influences that dramatically impact children’s behavior (Aughinbaugh, Pierret, & Rothstein, 2005). Moreover, there are some cases where the reasons for being considered at-risk include intimidation from other youths or feelings of inferiority because of social and psychological factors (Markstrom, Li, Blackshire, & Wilfong, 2005). At times, hunger, spiritual pain, low self-esteem, and a lack of confidence in their future can easily lead such youth to gang life (Thornberry et al., 2003). Hundreds of youth have no other adults besides their parents or primary caregivers or place to turn to for support.

At-risk behavior can affect academic performance and lead to low grades and even juvenile detention. Kennedy and Norton (1999) observed that at-risk students lack social values and a sense of responsibility as illustrated by their poor attendance records at school, their lack of preparedness for classroom learning, and their unwillingness to learn. A young person’s feelings of hatred towards the school that he or she attends are one of the social, as well as psychological, factors that stem from conflicts in the family. Kennedy and Norton (1999) noted that the key events that triggered the beginning of school hatred and students’ alienation from school were: relocation; illegal drug use and violence in the home; perceived racism; or the divorce and subsequent remarriage of a parent. While drug use is likely to impact students’ educational performance negatively, it is not accurate to suggest that students are initially exposed to drugs in the school setting (Kennedy & Norton, 1999).

Although the White House’s Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) (2006) has noted a general decrease in the use of drugs among children and adolescents, the prevalence of use is still cause for concern. Another reason to be alarmed is the rate of arrests for drug-

related incidents among children and teenagers. According to the ONDCP (2006):

> There were 138,375 juveniles (under the age of 18) arrested by state and local law enforcement agencies for drug abuse violations during 2004, representing 11.1% of the drug arrests in which the offender's age was reported. (n.p.)

The ONDCP (2006) further reported that drug arrests among teens “more than doubled” from the beginning of the 1990s to the end of that decade (n.p.).

Relocation or a home move may be disruptive to a student because school systems change dramatically from one system to another and even between schools in the same district. Feeling like an outsider to a social group, such as a school classroom, can nudge teenagers to join an anti-school group or worse, gangs. As these groups are known to harbor trouble, it is most likely that students joining these groups would learn violence. Yet teachers may be unable to handle such cases, identifying, as they often do, with middle to upper middle class socioeconomic groups (LeBlanc, Swisher, Vitaro, & Tremblay, 2007).

Delinquency behaviors are quite common but often misunderstood or ignored by parents and teachers alike (Kierkus & Hewitt, 2009). On the average school day, as

many as 15% of junior and senior high school students are not in school (Christie, 2006). This pattern usually leads to dropout. Absentees represent a large portion of those arrested for daytime break-ins and thefts, and dropouts are over-represented in jails and prisons. Census Bureau reports show how the earnings of students without a high school diploma on average fall below the poverty line (in Berlin, 2007).

There are a vast number of students who are becoming alienated from society and from school. For instance, in one study (Cassel, 2003), it was reported that there was a significant difference in attitudes regarding the academic aspects of school between sophomores who remained in school and those who dropped out of school. Of course, other reasons for school dropout include low self-esteem and increased school standards (Azzam, 2007). The other significant factors attributed to high dropout rates are social class position, truancy, and high absenteeism (Azzam, 2007). If the at-risk youth leave the educational system, they lose the academic benefits teachers try to provide. By extension, they then lose the societal benefits, such as jobs, an opportunity to rise in the socioeconomic hierarchy, and a place in the future that is void of poverty, failure, and crime (Azzam, 2007).

A major contribution to academic absenteeism is that students bring all their past experiences, including family issues such as parental abuse of children, with them into the classroom (Azzam, 2007). Kennedy and Norton (1999) concluded that:

> Two major points emerge from that study concerning patterns of early school leaving. The first point is that no student made a decision to drop out of school. Instead, it was a gradual process of increasing truancy, causing a student to get too far behind in academic work. The second point is that the parents of dropouts did not support the truancy of their child, nor did they support the student's dropping out of school. Parents are often unaware of the student's truancy and declining grades until it is too late. The student drops out rather than repeat the grade. (p. 59)

The number of adolescents being jailed and detained in the criminal justice system in the United States has continued to climb over the past two decades (Franklin, 2007). The incarceration and criminal activity of youth are currently major problems in the United States, with more and more youth being placed in state correctional, county jail, and juvenile delinquency facilities each year.

According to the 2009 national report on juvenile offenders by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP, 2009), the overall juvenile arrest rate remains unacceptably high. The continuous increase of at-risk youth has led the government, and several non-governmental organizations to contain this increase and help the youth in trouble.

2.3 Characteristics of At-Risk Youth

There are several ways to determine if a youth is at-risk. A number of demographic and behavioral characteristics of youth contribute to their risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system (e.g. Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). These include ethnic minority status; aggressive, antisocial behavior; difficulties in school and school failure (including educational disabilities); family stresses, including poverty, a single parent home, inadequate parental supervision, and lax or inconsistent parental discipline; coercive family interactions; physical abuse; substance abuse (self or family); living in a high crime community; and criminal or delinquent relatives or peers. These risk factors are common denominators in the backgrounds of youth who require a variety of human services, including special education, mental health interventions and child welfare services, in addition to

intervention by juvenile courts (Prothrow-Stith & Spivak, 2004).

2.3.1 School Issues and Incarceration

As with many issues, there is an overlap between school performance concerns and incarceration among at-risk youth. Shufelt and Cocozza (2006) found many similarities in the characteristics of youth served by the mental health and juvenile justice systems. Persons in both systems were predominantly males who were behind in school, involved in property or status offenses, and displayed traits associated with conduct disorders (e.g., association with delinquent peers, lack of a sense of conscience, poor insight into personal problems, and poor school attendance). Many incarcerated adolescents have behavioral and emotional problems that would qualify them for special education or residential treatment programs (Granallo & Hanna, 2003). As many as 70% of juveniles in the juvenile justice system also have mental health problems (Shufelt & Cocozza, 2006). The link between behavioral and emotional problems and delinquency has been reported in the literature for decades (Shufelt & Cocozza, 2006).

2.3.2 Incarcerated Youth and Gang Membership

Gang membership is a primary cause of youth imprisonment and there are more than 100,000 youth per year

who are sent to prison or confinement in the United States. Eighty six percent of this population is male; a high proportion is of ethnic minority status; and between 12% and 70% are labeled as special education students (Bullis, Yovahoof, Mueller & Havel, 2002). Moreover, more than half (n = 194) of the male youth and almost half of the female youth (n = 29) reported being involved in a gang. This high percentage of youth involvement in gangs undoubtedly leads to more adolescents being incarcerated and thus suffering from the behavioral and emotional problems that accompany the incarceration experience.

Beliefs of youth about power and safety have also been correlated with violent behavior (Chapin & Coleman, 2006). Youths who are gang members may carry a gun as an instrumental expression of beliefs about power and safety and as a way of ensuring self-protection (Black & Hausman, 2008). Moreover, similar to research on criminal victimization, studies have begun to explore how violent home environments are internalized by youth and expressed in external or conduct problems. Violent home environments not only have deleterious effects on children's development but also have been identified as a risk marker for future violent behavior (Slovak, Carlson, & Helm, 2007).

There is wide agreement among scholars that the rate of violent crime among gang members is much higher than the rate of violent crime among other delinquent youth. There is also general agreement that the level of gang violence has escalated dramatically in recent decades. Furthermore, the rate at which gang-related violent crime results in fatalities has also risen in recent years — a fact that gang researchers attribute to the increasing availability of high-powered handguns. The rising level of gang violence, of course, has had a dramatic impact on the character of gang-infested communities.

Historically, juvenile justice has been the default system with regard to youth who require long-term care; yet, rehabilitation following incarceration has a poor prognosis and incarceration should be considered the service alternative of last resort with regard to providing effective educational and mental health services.

2.3.3 Demographic Characteristics and Skills

The Youth Research and Technical Assistance Project (YRTAP) (1993) offered a compelling framework for evaluating at-risk youth. Besides looking at general demographic characteristics that tend to be associated with at-risk youth, the YRTAP also employed a skills-based approach. YRTAP (1993) acknowledged that at-risk youth are

likely to be non-competitive players for future jobs; as such, they applied a set of skills-based criteria to their evaluation of youth, looking at competencies such as activities of daily living (e.g. bathing, grooming), vocational skills (e.g. performing basic mathematical computations and being able to read and write), and social skills (e.g. being able to initiate, sustain, and terminate a conversation). The YRTAP approach, then, allowed for individualized assessments, which, as a result, permit customized intervention and mentoring approaches that specifically address the areas of need for a particular youth. This "hybrid definition approach" (YRTAP, 1993, p. 4) is a useful framework because it allows for group and individual assessments to be considered in planning potential interventions.

2.3.3.1 Gender and Age

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (1999), there are two demographic characteristics that are most predictive of future risk: gender and age. Males in mid to late adolescence are at the greatest risk of becoming aggressors in the future (Chaiken, 1998, cited in OJJDP, 1999, n.p.). Race is also a significant predictive factor of risk (Chapman, Desai, Falzer, & Borum, 2006). African-Americans have higher rates

of aggressive criminal episodes than Whites; however, this writer cautions that this statistic must be understood within the context of historical and contemporary socioeconomic factors that may be underlying such behavior. Many African-Americans live in depressed communities that certainly do not support their individual growth or active, positive participation in society (Chapman et al., 2006).

2.4 Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement is one of the approaches that work well with at-risk youth on the grounds that one extinguishes unacceptable behavior by ignoring it and eliminating the child's ability to gain attention (Dishion & Dodge, 2005). Positive reinforcements can take many forms, and require little, if any, money. Verbal acknowledgment and recognition of an accomplishment, small rewards and incentives, and ceremonies or rituals that celebrate progress are all easily implemented reinforcement techniques. Dishion and Dodge (2005) contended that such forms of reinforcement, while seemingly small, can make a positive difference in the lives of children and adolescents, particularly when they are offered genuinely and when they accumulate over time.

2.4.1 Positive Reinforcement and Parents

For parents, especially those who were at-risk children themselves, positive reinforcement may not come naturally. Positive reinforcement can be taught, however. Educating parents about the skills and benefits of positive reinforcement is a useful tool for improving their children's lives, as well as their own. Parenting skills classes should consider the inclusion of curricular material that will provide parents with instruction regarding when and how to offer positive reinforcement in support of their children.

2.5 Community Level Initiatives

The Justice Department and Health and Human Services each operate Healthy Start programs. The Justice Department's program was designed to reduce neglect and abuse, while the Health and Human Services program was designed to reduce infant mortality by strengthening the maternal and infant care systems at the community level (Leventhal, 2005). According to Leventhal (2005), the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse launched a service initiative called Healthy Families America in 1992. The goal of the initiative was to provide adults with the knowledge and support that they need to be successful parents. The goal was intended to be achieved by means of home visits and support networks; Healthy Families America

also advocated for funding that would help them achieve this goal. All of the programs described, the Justice Department and Health and Human Services' Healthy Start and the Healthy Families America are programs which focus on enhancing the relationship between the parent and the child, particularly for those low-income families in different states of America. The approaches and strategies are also the same, particularly those that are related on establishing and strengthening public policies and regulations which will help to support families – specifically the young parents. Above all, all of these three programs also focus on increasing awareness and knowledge for its members by mentoring. Mentor Programs are being implemented by offering home visits to the parents, particularly the young and first-time parents which enables the mentor to offer encouragement and support before a family may encounter some difficulties in life. The primary reasons of these programs in applying mentoring approach is because of its advantages. Several studies showed that mentoring can offer social support, which is considered as the key factor in positive adaptational outcomes. For instance, in the issue of teen pregnancy in the US, several studies showed that mentoring had helped to alter many bio-psychosocial risk factors that are connected with early

pregnancy and child maltreatment (Buchholz & Korn-Bursztyn, 1993): maintain good nutrition and regular pre-natal care (Combs-Orme, 1993; Hayes, 1987); healthy birth outcomes (Nuckolls, Cassell & Kaplan 1972; Turner, Grindstaff & Phillips, 1990); encouragement to continue with education to stop poverty. Furthermore, mentoring can help to offer emotional support which can help in order to reduce stress level in young mother (Coletta & Hunter Gregg 1981); and knowledge and education about child development and parenting skills help to lessen cases of child maltreatment (Buchholz & Korn-Bursztyn, 1993; Haskett, Johnson & Miller, 1994; Phipps-Yonas, 1980; Rickel, 1989) (cited in Clutterbuck & Ragins 2002). Furthermore, the study of DuBois & Silverthorn (2005) showed that those who reported to have had a mentoring relationship during their adolescence showed vitally better outcomes within the domains of education and work, mental health, problem behavior and health. With these factors, it shows that mentoring is an effective method or approach to be used in increasing community level awareness, because it can help in order to build individual knowledge and skills because of direct or personal relationship of mentors towards the parents, which help to improve social and emotional support.

2.5.1 Mentoring

Mentoring programs are increasingly viewed as one of the effective ways to prevent or stop a youth’s at-risk behavior. Young people often attribute their safe passage through the tumultuous years of adolescence to the influence of significant non-parental adults such as teachers, extended family members, or neighbors, and "natural" mentors may play a vital role in adolescent development (Zimmerman et al., 2002).

Zimmerman et al. (2002) examined the effects that natural mentors have on the lives of urban adolescents. The researchers concluded that of the 770 adolescents participating in their study, 414 (53.8%) reported having a natural mentor. The most commonly reported type of natural mentor in their sample was an extended family member, such as an aunt, uncle, cousin, or grandparent (n = 171, 35.7%).

The researchers found that youths with natural mentors reported more positive school attitudes than did youth without natural mentors. They also found that having a natural mentor was associated with lower levels of problem behaviors, and youth with natural mentors had more positive attitudes toward school across the range of friends' negative school behaviors. However, natural mentors had somewhat larger direct effects on school attitudes than they did on problem behaviors. Nevertheless, having a

natural mentor may play a vital role in the lives of adolescents. Therefore, programs that create settings that provide opportunities for youth to interact with non-parental adults may help adolescents foster the development of natural mentoring relationships.

2.5.2 Non-Violent Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution has become increasingly visible in primary and secondary schools' curricula; it also appears in community-based organizations and the trainings and programs that they offer to the public (Lane, 2007). Like mentoring, the processes of conflict resolution may differ from program to program; however, the goal of any conflict resolution program is the same: to teach children how to address disagreements and disputes in a respectful manner that permits the parties involved to come to a successful and amicable resolution (Lane, 2007).

Many schools and community-based organizations have capitalized on the time that students have available by providing after school programs, whether academic, athletic, or social. Many such programs include conflict resolution as a component of their programming (Lane, 2007).

2.5.3 Strength-based Approaches

The strength-based approach is considered one of the most effective approaches to working with at-risk youth

(Laursen, 2000). This approach encourages the support and reinforcement of child and family functioning rather than a focus on individual or family deficits, and it places the helping practitioners in the role of a partner, rather than an expert. The job of a strength-based practitioner is to look for the youth’s particular strengths. They are particularly interested in a youth’s story. The personal narratives of a youth help them detect exceptions to their problems. They are genuinely interested when the problems do not occur, because, according to practitioners, it is often in these exceptions that possibilities for solution construction lie and the leverage to bounce back from life's hardships can be found. Laursen (2000) concluded that:

> The core of strength-based practice is paying attention to what works and identifying strengths rather than deficits in the children and families with whom we work. As a result, strength-based practitioners team with children and families at all levels of service planning and implementation because one of our goals is to create less dependency on professionals. Strength-based values and principles place practitioners in a partnership with children and families to help them identify and use their strengths

> and resources to overcome obstacles and thus live empowered lives. (p. 75)

2.5.4 Life-Skills Training

Another program that is effective in developing the resilience of at-risk youth is life-skills training, which is defined as "the formalized teaching of requisite skills for surviving, living with others, and succeeding in a complex society" (Moote Jr. & Wodarski, 1997, p. 125). Life-skills training is viewed as appropriate for prevention programs with adolescents (Cho, Hallfors, & Sanchez, 2005). Life skills, which assist in the development of an adolescent's self-efficacy, "include the ability to solve problems, to communicate honestly and directly, to gain and maintain social support, and to control emotions and personal feelings" (Gilchrist, Schinke & Maxwell, 1987, p. 73-84). Life-skills programs vary in the types and quality of services they provide, though they commonly emphasize the development of core, general interpersonal skills (Cho et al., 2005). Successful life-skills programs appear to have similar core elements (Cho et al., 2005), and effective programs address developmental needs, health promotion/problem prevention, and high-risk groups.

For instance, several programs involve adventure as a self-esteem enhancer. The overall goal of adventure-based activities and programming appears to be the enhancement of participants' self-esteem or self-concept (Thurber, Scanlin, Scheuler, & Henderson, 2007). According to Thurber et al. (2007), adventure programming activities and experiences include excitement, risk taking, cooperation and competition, trust, communication, physical, mental, and emotional challenges, physical activity, problem-solving and creativity, group and individual skill development, and fun.

2.5.5 Youth Initiative

Regardless of a mentoring program's specific tools, techniques, and approaches, youth initiative is considered to be a critical factor for avoiding risk. Because the popular media tend to focus on stories about deviance, many adults may be surprised to learn just how socially engaged teens really are. Williams (2005), citing statistics from a government study, reported that a majority of teenagers volunteer, though they may do so with less regularity and consistency than adults who volunteer. Still, the volunteer rate is higher than that of adults, and students report that they have more opportunities and support for volunteering (Williams, 2005). While schools and churches

provide such opportunities, only 5% of the teen volunteers in the government study cited by Williams (2005) reported that they volunteer because they are required to do so for school. In 2004 alone, teens conducted more than 1.3 billion hours of service to their communities, organizing relief drives, helping in soup kitchens, participating in community beautification processes, and similar projects (The Foundation Center, 2005). Such data suggest that teens are motivated to contribute positively in their communities; they simply need the opportunities and guidance to engage in such positive projects.

2.6 Reasons Why Some Programs Fail

At-risk youth programs are only as effective as an organization's application of the right strategies and policies to convince a youth of his or her at-risk situation and to accept resilience.

2.6.1 Absence of Strategy

Some programs fail because of the lack of strategy and ignorance on how to approach an at-risk youth properly. For instance, former drug czar Barry McCaffrey announced that drug education and prevention would never succeed as long as D.A.R.E. - the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program - is ensconced in 70% of schools (Wright, 1999). Various studies, both government-sponsored and

independently initiated, have indicated that D.A.R.E and other anti-drug programs fail to reach teenagers most at risk for drug abuse (see, for example, Brocato & Wagner, 2003; Werch & Owen, 2002). In fact, Werch and Owen (2002) indicated that such anti-drug initiatives aimed at preventing and curbing childhood and adolescent drug use may not only be ineffective, but they may actually be counter-productive. Weinstein (1999) pointed out that while "moral admonition and secular propaganda," which D.A.R.E. and similar programs employ as their anti-drug weapons, are "neither new nor unique… efforts to prevent drug abuse… have little, if any, effect on [preventing or decreasing] drug use." The problem with such strategies is that they simply refuse to acknowledge that some teenagers do experiment with drugs, seeking prevention as the only acceptable outcome of program participation. Government surveys show that at least half of high school students try at least one kind of illegal drug before graduation (ONDCP, 2006).

2.6.2 Evidence-based Practice

According to Fetsch and Silliman (2002), one of the limitations of violence prevention and similar at-risk youth intervention initiatives is that the vast majority of such programs are not evidence-based. While many claim to

meet their objectives and goals, often such objectives and goals are not operationalized in a way that allows the organizations or outside observers to actually measure outcomes. This limitation is cited widely throughout the literature. In a study by Wilson-Brewer et al. (1991), researchers reported that fewer than half of the risk intervention programs in their study substantiated their claims of success with empirical data. There are several possible explanations for this lack of empirical evidence. First of all, limited funding for evaluation often impacts research methodologies and the assessment of outcomes. Methodological shortcomings in the phases of planning and execution of research must also be considered. For instance, programs may fail to even incorporate an evaluation mechanism into their project plans (Posner, 1994). The implications of an absence of an efficacy assessment instrument cannot be underestimated. Fetsch and Silliman (2002) claimed that of the nearly 400 violence prevention programs they identified, only seven made a consistent, empirically measurable impact on violence risk factors. Such alarming findings beg the questions: How many programs are actually effective in their interventions with at-risk youth? What are best practices for determining efficacy, even in resource and funding-deficient contexts?

2.6.3 Strategic Plans

Analysis of some of the strategic plans required by the Government Performance and Results Act (1993) suggests that although the Act may facilitate an integrated approach to program implementation and management, the strategic plans are not specific enough for their committee to determine whether an integrated approach is operating with respect to services for a particular target group, such as at-risk and delinquent youth (Blanchette, 1997). Blanchette’s (1997) testimony to the Subcommittee on Youth Violence noted that most at-risk and delinquent youth programs lack coordinated federal effort. She further observed that although the federal government has invested billions of dollars in these programs, uncertainty exists as to whether the multitude of these federal programs offers the most efficient service delivery and are achieving the desired results. The federal system clearly creates the potential for program overlap and duplication of funding in the provision of services to at-risk and delinquent youth. This may decrease efficiency because of the diversified numbers of programs being funded by the government. Efficiencies may be gained by having a smaller number of consolidated programs for at-risk or delinquent youth. Blanchette (1997) also noted that there is a

distinction between intervention and prevention, and she stressed that while these programs were created to serve the youth at-risk, not all programs explicitly include prevention among their programs. Consequently, mentoring programs have increasingly been viewed as a critical intervention that has the potential to reduce academic failure or participation in criminal activity by developing self-esteem through one-on-one relationships with concerned adults.

2.7 Mentoring

Mentoring is derived from a Greek word that means "enduring," and is defined as a sustained relationship between two people; typically, one of the people in the relationship is more experienced than the other (Natters, 1998, cited in Dawes & Dawes, 2005) or between a youth and an adult (Patterson et al., 1989). In the traditional approach to mentoring, the nature of the relationship is one of guidance, support, and role modeling. The more experienced person, in this case, the adult, offers direct support to the less experienced person, the youth. This may be particularly important for at-risk students whose parents are either not present or are not mentally or emotionally equipped to provide such guidance (Greenberger et al., 1998). Also, the mentor may have access to or

connections with resources that can help the youth attain opportunities that might not otherwise be available. There are two main types of mentoring: traditional and planned. In summary, the traditional mentoring occurs via friendship, collegiality, teaching, coaching and counseling, thus it occur without planning and pre-established timeline, while the planned mentoring occurs via structured programs where in mentors and participants are selected and matched through formal processes and stages (Steuart Watson & Skinner, 234). Each of these programs will be discussed in turn in the next two sections.

2.7.1 Traditional Mentoring

The traditional approach of mentoring is believed to have evolved in the United States. It is characterized by its direct, hands-on approach, and involves the use of specific resources to help the mentee achieve clear and specific goals; such goals are often academic or professional in nature (Roche, 1979). Traditional mentoring is also referred to by the term natural mentoring, which implies that the mentoring relationship evolves organically through existing contacts. The number of traditional mentoring programs in the United States is quite high, and has grown exponentially in recent years. With the history and success of organizations such as Big Brothers/Big

Sisters of America, traditional mentoring has become a valued way of making important contacts with people who can support one’s goals and growth.

2.7.2 Planned Mentoring

In contrast to traditional mentoring, planned mentoring, also known as the developmental approach, is much more of a two-way learning partnership and owes its origins more to European experience (e.g. see Philip, 2003). The expectation of this approach is that the mentee will do things for him or herself. Planned mentoring is distinct from traditional mentoring in that the relationship between mentor and mentee does not usually develop organically; instead, it is deliberate, usually involving a formal matching process in which mentor and mentee are matched based on the compatibility of the mentee’s needs and goals with the mentor’s expertise and abilities. As issues of race and ethnicity have become increasingly important in business and professional development, so too have they influenced new directions in applied and theoretical academic research on the topic of this kind of mentoring. Mentoring programs have become a popular strategy for managing the needs of young people who are considered at-risk by a set of distinct criteria. Thus, a number of schools and social service agencies are presently

conducting programs for mentoring local youth, such as Fresh Start, as discussed in this chapter and in Section 2.18 on page 79. The research proposed here is twofold. First, using a descriptive approach that primarily draws on quantitative data, the study seeks to examine the impact of a specific mentoring program – Fresh Start. Second, the study aims to examine the context and focus of the Fresh Start mentoring program on at-risk youth. This chapter presents the aims of the study, study design, and methods for the collection, storage, retrieval, analysis and presentation of data.

2.8 Evaluating the Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs

In a mentoring arrangement, adults usually take the role of a parent or advisor and are paired with young people to establish supportive and trusting relationships. Aside from the fact that mentoring programs enable community development and cooperation, they can be customized based on the students' personality and learning capabilities (Campbell-Whatley, Algozzine, & Obakor, 1997). The development of an effective mentoring program for at-risk youth requires explicit attention to the primary needs and concerns related to today's disadvantaged youth population.

2.9 Rationale for Evaluating Mentoring Programs

In the United States, the increased awareness of the availability of various mentoring programs has led to their rapid growth and popularity. These mentoring programs are focused on the establishment of a relationship between a troubled youngster and a caring adult. This relationship is nurtured by means of spending quality time together and providing substantial support and guidance. In general, the primary objective of these mentoring programs is to help young individuals overcome the difficulties of life (Keating et al., 2002). Since so many children and young adults experience tremendous challenges in their efforts to maintain some sense of stability in their lives, it is not surprising that they are likely to respond positively to mentoring relationships, especially when they are carefully planned and executed. The development of these mentoring associations is of critical importance, and an element of engagement on both sides must be present in order to reap benefits from them. Evaluation is an important component in measuring social impact and in identifying challenges to successful implementation.

2.10 Recruitment

The recruitment of prospective mentors is a process that draws from a wide variety of sources. Mentors can be identified in corporate and other organizational contexts,

as well as social and religious organizations in the community. The techniques used to recruit potential mentors may include word-of-mouth, posted advertisements, and announcements.

A number of schools and social service agencies now offer mentoring programs to help children. Basically, mentoring targets the needs of students with academic and behavior problems. In community and/or school-based programs, adults assume a parental/advisor role and are paired with young people to create a trusting and supportive relationship. Mentorship programs facilitate cooperation and community involvement and can be tailored to the learning style and personality of students with mild disabilities.

2.11 Mentoring Curriculum

While the components of youth mentoring curricula vary from one program to another, virtually all mentoring programs share at least one factor in common, and that is the importance of the relationship between a youth in need and an adult mentor. The relationship between mentor and mentee is forged by spending time together (usually a specific amount of time each week or each month), which may or may not include structured and formal support and goal-oriented activities.

2.12 Matching Mentors/Mentees

Alessandri et al. (2002) emphasize that it is vital to match mentors and mentees well, which means that there should be a basic personal compatibility, as well as a concordance of resources and need. Matching can be done informally, but is increasingly done with formal structures and processes, such as interviews, personality matching, and skills and need inventories. Nelson and Valliant (1993) indicate that another way to match is to allow for natural connections to develop during meet-and-greet sessions; in such contexts, characteristics of both planned and traditional mentoring are evident.

2.13 Purpose of Mentoring Programs

There are three distinct types of mentoring programs in the United States at present; the goals of each type are as follow:

1) Educational/academic mentoring: This form of mentoring is intended to boost students' academic performance and interest in school.
2) Career/professional mentoring: This form of mentoring prepares young people to consider and begin planning for a specific career. It may involve shadowing, apprenticeships, or similar hands-on opportunities for students to try out careers.

3) Personal development mentoring: This form of mentoring helps students boost social and coping skills that will help them in their personal lives, as well as their academic and professional pursuits (DuBois et al., 2002).

2.14 Different Types of Mentoring Programs

Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the United States' traditional youth mentoring program, was once one of the only providers of mentoring to at-risk youth. Over the years, however, a number of community-based and religious organizations have joined the youth mentoring movement. Many schools have also begun offering their own mentoring programs, as have corporations and non-profit organizations (Royse, 1998). Both mentors and mentees are responsible for initiating these new sources of the mentoring relationship.

2.14.1 Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America is one of the United States' oldest and best known mentoring programs (BBSA, 2006). At present it has more than 495 offices providing direct mentoring services to at-risk youth. According to the organization's website, the mission of Big Brothers/Big Sisters is to provide children between the ages of six and 18 with the support that they need to achieve their academic and life goals. It does this by

matching professional adult volunteers with students and requiring frequent, structure contact with the mentee (BBSA, 2006). As a non-profit organization, Big Brothers/Big Sisters also has professional staff that oversees all aspects of the mentor-mentee match.

2.14.2 Help One Student to Succeed

Help One Student to Succeed (HOSTS) is another U.S.-based mentoring program that relies upon structured relationships to improve students' academic performance, specifically in the area of language arts. HOSTS combines computer database skills inventories and academic support with person-to-person mentoring with mentors from the community. These are matched with mentees, the students in academic need, who meet together at a HOSTS center for formal mentoring sessions. In a sense, these are primarily tutoring sessions and as such, constitute academic mentoring. According to HOSTS, their program is empirically effective; on average, students who participate in their program improve two grade levels in a single academic year (HOSTS, 2006).

2.14.3 One Hundred Black Men, Inc.

One Hundred Black Men, Inc. is a non-profit organization that was founded in New York in 1963 with the mission of improving quality of life in members' local

communities (100 Black Men of America, 2006). One of the principal projects of the organization is mentoring youth (100 Black Men of America, 2006). Members of the organization are professional African-American men; those who participate in the mentoring program are paired in one-to-one mentoring relationships with African-American students who are identified as in-need of support, both academic and personal (Rich & Merchant, 2003: vii). According to the organization, members interested in the mentoring programs offered must complete training prior to offering their support to students in one-on-one, group, and "tag-team" mentoring relationships (100 Black Men of America, 2006).

2.14.4 The National One-to-One Mentoring Partnership

The National One-to-One Mentoring Partnership was formed in 1989 as a joint venture between the private business industry and the volunteer service sector (Office of Research Consumer Guide, 1993). The goal of the partnership is to engage more adults in the mentoring process, and to provide direct support for them to do so. The adults, in turn, are then expected to create local mentoring opportunities in their communities that will serve at-risk youth.

2.15 Mentor and Mentee Relationships: Historical Context

In Homer’s epic poem “The Odyssey,” the character Mentor embodies many of the qualities associated with modern mentors. Odysseus entrusts his only child’s education and guidance to his close friend Mentor before leaving for Troy. His confidence in Mentor is well placed; during Odysseus's decade-long adventure after the Trojan War, Mentor tutors and instructs the son so well that he is able to help his father regain the throne upon his return. Thus, in the English language, mentor has come to mean a trusted counselor or guide.

References to mentoring are now used in all professions and walks of life to suggest a wiser person who guides another member of the community toward personal growth and development. There are community-based mentoring programs for teenagers, mentoring programs for accountants and lawyers, and formal mentors known as preceptors – a word that originates from the Latin root for "instruct” - for medical and nursing students.

In order for mentoring programs to yield effective outcomes for individuals and organizations, they should be tailored to need. However, available resources, organizational traditions, and the quality of potential mentors may limit this. For instance, senior people within a professional organization might more readily act as an

instrumental sponsor than as a psychosocial confidant for a junior colleague, especially where they differ in terms of gender or ethnicity. Similarly, junior people may feel more suspicious of and behave more awkwardly around senior people in organizations (Ragin, 1989). Those in managerial positions and in positions of power within organizations continue to be predominantly Caucasian men. Insisting on a close emotional bond between a mentor and a protégé as the only vehicle for career advancement may unwittingly serve to reinforce the old (White) boys' network.

In order to improve academic attainment or reduce young people's participation in criminal activity, it may be necessary for programs to establish mentoring relationships between youth and adults that involve patterns of regular interaction over a significant period of time. However, realization of this aim can be constrained in practice by difficulties encountered in the recruitment of needed mentors, inadequate levels of mentor-mentee involvement, and premature termination of relationships prior to fulfillment of program expectations and sustained patterns of variation in outcomes (DuBois et al., 2002).

Mentoring is a human relationship that involves guidance and motivation for personal growth and development.

The role of mentor is different from that of a friend, whose relationship is more reciprocal, a teacher who imparts specific skills, or a counselor who offers personal guidance, although mentoring may contain some elements of all these. The goal of a mentoring relationship is to open lines of communication and assist the student in developing competence and character (Miller, 2002). For a mentorship to be successful, both the mentor and the mentee should derive benefits from the relationship (Miller, 2002). The student will learn to relate to others and develop an increased positive self-concept, whereas the mentor will derive the benefits of being useful. In human services, however, the concept has come to have a more structured meaning.

Mentors should not expect immediate or dramatic changes in attitude, attendance, or academic success (Miller, 2002). As the relationship develops, changes in the student's behavior may evolve. The mentor is not expected to try to solve all problems identified by the student; however, genuine encouragement and support may be provided (Miller, 2002). It is essential that the mentor be dependable and prompt for visits with the student. The mentoring organization should be notified immediately in case of a cancellation. If needed, mentors may ask for

assistance from teachers, school counselors, media specialists, or the principal. The mentor should always uphold organization policies and procedures and cooperate with program staff.

In sum, the mentor's role is typically to provide guidance, support, and encouragement for the youth while helping convey significant skills, such as effective communication, demonstration of empathy and concern for others, honesty and openness (Miller, 2002). As the mentor models these characteristics, a trusting relationship begins to develop with the youth (Miller, 2002). Mentoring programs also require teamwork between the community and the school, yielding favorable results for students as well as professionals.

2.16 Effects of Mentoring on At-Risk Youth

Mentorship is one form of intentional social support. Such social support is vital for at-risk youth. Youth who have minimal support are more likely to be withdrawn, hopeless, inattentive, and aggressive than youth who receive greater support (Cho et al., 2005). Moreover, the form of social support that is provided by role modeling through the mentoring relationship is likely to prevent youth delinquency (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Youth who develop positive relationships with mentors often want to

impress their mentors in order to retain them; as a result, delinquent behavior tends to decrease and socially appropriate behavior increases. Additionally, children and adolescents are most likely to survive abusive and negligent upbringings if they have opportunities to develop supportive, nurturing relationships outside the home (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Mentoring is also believed to contribute positively to resilience, which is defined as the ability to deal with crisis (DuBois & Karcher, 2005).

However, studies that report on the positive effects of mentoring need to be interpreted with caution (Royse, 1998), as the mentoring movement is still really in its infancy and research in the field is not yet methodologically sound (Frecknall & Luks, 1992). For instance, most recent research on mentoring in the United States relies almost exclusively upon self-report data or instruments that have not been tested for reliability and validity. As has already been substantiated, many mentoring programs do not even conduct evaluations because they depend upon volunteers and donations, and their budgets cannot support the funding demands of research. Finally, as mentoring programs differ substantially in how they are executed, the results of one study may not be generalized to another program. For example, the success of a program

that relies upon weekly meetings between mentor and mentee will not likely reflect predictors of success for a program that requires meetings once a month.

There are some mentoring programs that have undergone or performed formal evaluations to measure the efficacy and impact of their work. Big Brothers/Big Sisters is one such organization. Tierney, Grossman and Resch (1995) evaluated this organization, surveying 959 mentees in order to evaluate how mentoring improved their social, academic, and emotional performance. The results of this longitudinal study were as follows:

46% of mentees were less likely to use illegal drugs than non-mentored students;

27% of mentees were less likely to use alcohol than non-mentored students;

52% of mentees were less likely to engage in truant behavior than non-mentored students; and

37% of mentees were less likely to have interpersonal conflicts with their parents than non-mentored students.

Tierney, Grossman and Resch (1995) pointed out that Big Brothers/Big Sisters is a relatively intensive mentoring program, in which 70% of mentees meet with their mentors several times each month, generally for at least three

hours per meeting. The researchers concluded, then, that high-intensity mentoring programs can be effective for mentees in all measured domains (Tierney et al., 1995).

Frecknall and Luks (1992) also conducted an evaluation of Big Brothers/Big Sisters New York City branch. They focused on parents' perceptions of how mentoring helped their at-risk youth. The study surveyed 135 parents about six domains: school attendance, grades, social appropriateness, self-esteem, absence of disciplinary episodes, and responsibility. The vast majority of parents, 63%, indicated that their children had made significant observable improvements as a result of their involvement as a mentee. In all of the measured domains parents reported overwhelming positive change, with the best domain improvements reported to be in the areas of self-esteem and interpersonal relationships. Frecknall and Luks (1992) concluded that mentoring makes significant positive impacts on students, and noted that the greater the length of involvement as a mentee, the more positive the results.

Royse's (1998) findings, however, contradict those of Frecknall and Luks (1992). Royse (1998) conducted a study of high-risk African-American adolescents enrolled in a four-year mentoring project. The study used an experimental design, and assessed differences between intervention and

control group participants in the self-report of self-esteem and attitudes towards drugs and alcohol. In addition, the study examined school records of grades, attendance, and disciplinary infractions. A key finding from the study was that there were no statistically significant differences between mentored and non-mentored youth, even though 36 young people were mentored for a period of at least six months (Royse, 1998). It should be pointed out, however, that the sample size of this study was small and may prevent generalizations.

Nelson and Valliant (1993) also offer confounding data. In their study of boys' self-esteem, the researchers considered four distinct study groups: boys whose assignment to a mentor was pending; boys from two-parent middle-class families; boys who had been mentored for at least three years; and boys living in a youth detention facility. They found no statistically significant difference in the self-esteem among the four groups. The author points out, however, that the small study size, the variation of the sample size from one group to the next, and the quasi-experimental format of the methodological design limit the utility of its conclusions, and certainly prevent making generalizations based on their outcomes.

Slicker and Palmer’s work (1993) compared 32 at-risk tenth grade students who were mentored with the same number of at-risk tenth graders who were not mentored. At the six-month mark, there was no significant difference between the number of mentored students who dropped out of school and the number of unmentored drop-outs. There was, however, a significant difference in the measured self-esteem of students from each group.

What was perhaps most significant about this study, however, was that mid-way through its execution the researchers decided to consider whether some of the mentored students were being mentored effectively, and it was concluded that 13 of the 32 students were *not* receiving effective mentoring. One hundred percent of the effectively mentored students returned to school the next academic year, with lower rates reported for the poorly mentored and non-mentored students, 69% and 74%, respectively. The researchers concluded that mentoring is not universally effective; it must be determined if the mentor is doing a good job. In other words, there is good mentoring, and there is bad mentoring. Bad mentoring is as bad as not having mentoring, and may be worse.

The above research suggests that mentoring will be more effective with intense contact. However, these studies

also show that it is difficult to study mentoring and its effectiveness because of the range of characteristics of the groups mentoring programs serve. Mentoring programs focus on different populations (delinquents, the mentally ill, children in dysfunctional families, school dropouts) and mentoring programs are initiated with different goals in mind (prevention of delinquent behaviors, prevention of development of mental illness, improvement of school attendance and grades). Often in the context of research, the administration of mentoring programs is based on the use of non-random assignment to treatment groups, and is not intended to obtain data about the intensity of treatment or the mentoring contact that took place. Finally, mentoring programs vary in the training, monitoring, and time commitment they expect from volunteers.

2.17 Evaluating Program Effectiveness

Evaluation of mentoring program effectiveness may also be limited by attrition. During a period of evaluation participants may fail to meet criteria for minimum levels of contact and if they are not excluded from analysis the result may be an unduly positive assessment of the benefits that can be realistically expected for all youth referred to a given mentoring program (Grossman & Tierney, 1998).

Mentoring organizations do not advertise their failures, especially when there is considerable prestige connected with them, and there is little research that identifies and examines unsuccessful mentoring programs or relationships. Both mentoring programs and relationships fail due to a variety of causes and problems that can be categorized as:

- Contextual
- Interpersonal
- Procedural

Contextual and relationship problems for mentoring programs primarily arise when there are issues of clarity of purpose and/or issues concerning the supportiveness of the organizational environment. In addition, relationship issues may emerge in mentoring programs if the style of mentoring to be adopted does not meet the expectations of both mentors and mentees.

The importance of clarity of purpose is illustrated by a case of a US-based multinational organization, which required its operations around the world to set up mentoring relationships between senior executives and hundreds of female employees (Clutterbuck, 2002). Participants were implicitly aware that the program was related to the firm's equal opportunities drive, but nobody

explained how mentoring was to contribute to this goal. The majority of mentoring relationships faltered within a few months, as both mentors and mentees waited for the other party to initiate the relationship and explain its goals and process. Hence, it would seem that clarity of purpose about the program — why mentoring is being initiated, what the expectations are for participants, what the respective roles and responsibilities of mentor and mentee are, and what the desired outcomes are — are directly correlated with clarity of purpose in the individual relationships.

Mentoring also requires discernible support from within the organization introducing the program. There have been examples where mentors and mentees have effectively been penalized for taking working time out for their meetings because there is no specific time allowance under their billable hours procedures (Clutterbuck, 2002). Lack of expressed and explicit interest by top management is also likely to undermine mentoring programs if they are not visible as stakeholders in the mentoring process.

Clarity of purpose within the process of mentoring is critical for energizing the relationship. Most relationships require a clear sense of purpose and a defined transition that the mentee wishes to achieve. The clearer that transition is, the more focused the

discussions and the easier it is to relate day-to-day issues to the larger goal. Even in relationships where the primary objective is for the mentee simply to have an occasional sounding board, one or both parties are likely to feel dissatisfied unless that is explicitly agreed upon (Spencer, 2006).

Mentoring for groups with social, psychological and behavioral problems – such as at-risk youth - requires a different approach than that used for a senior executive. Youth mentees differ in their levels of learning maturity, self-esteem and the alternative resources they can call upon (Miller, 2002). Equally, different cultures demand different approaches to mentoring. It is often assumed that participants in mentoring programs share the same understanding of a program’s goals and processes. In reality, as outlined earlier, there are at least two major schools of mentoring, and the failure to clarify which one is being used can cause confusion, arguments, and major misalignments of expectations among the mentor and mentee participants, as well as between the organization and the participants.

Interpersonal problems within programs arise from the reactions of people who are not included in the pairings. In the case of student mentoring, for example, peers who

are not receiving mentoring may react negatively towards peers who are receiving mentoring. Within the mentor-mentee relationship there is also potential for trouble, particularly if the matching process has not been conducted well. Problems between mentor and mentee include the incompatibility of personalities and personal values, as well as different expectations and understanding about each person's role, needs, and responsibilities in the mentoring relationship. Failure to engage line managers and promote the program's benefits to them is a common omission. It is not surprising that many of them fear being exposed by discussions between their subordinates and other, possibly more senior managers. Involving line managers in the design and overall management of a mentoring program may help, as may briefing sessions that explain to managers the advantages to them of having a mentor with whom their subordinates can discuss in confidence ways of improving his or her key working relationships (and especially how he or she manages their boss) (Spencer, 2006).

In very informal programs, or programs with poor clarity of purpose, resentment from people not included is common. So, too, is gossip, especially with regard to cross-gender pairs. Openness about the program and why it

targets particular groups of people helps to overcome such problems.

Procedural problems arise from the way the programs or the relationship is managed. In one case, (Clutterbuck, 2002) presented by the company concerned as best practice, mentors and mentees were given discussion sheets to create uniformity in what they talked about. The spontaneity and individual focus of effective mentoring were smothered by this over-attention. In another case (Clutterbuck, 2002), the opposite occurred. An enthusiastic human resources employee told people they were to be mentor and mentee and left them to forge a relationship. When relationships ran into difficulty, or participants needed advice, there was no provision to support them and the human resources professionals were too busy running the next initiative.

At a relationship level, mentors sometimes fail to establish an appropriate balance between being directive and exercising a laissez faire approach. Indeed, a core skill for a mentor is to recognize when to lead and when to enable the mentee to lead discussions (Fitzpatrick et al., 2006). One of the most common complaints by mentees is that the mentor talks at them, rather than engages them in reflective dialogue. Less common, but equally dysfunctional,

is the mentor who never gives advice and is unable to adapt his or her style to the mentee's needs at the time.

According to a mentoring resource manual (University of Alaska Distance Early Childhood Education), the following are potential problems in mentoring:

- Relationships may become too protective and controlling.
- Mentors who become advocates for protégées may ignore limitations on the part of their partners.
- Mentoring organizers may assume, erroneously, that good leaders make good mentors.
- Protégées may develop too great a reliance on a mentor.
- Expectations established for mentoring may be unrealistically high.
- Mentor and protégée may not be clear about boundaries.
- The mentor relationship may intersect with areas more appropriately handled by other support services or faculty, such as tutor, academic advisor and instructor.

- The mentor relationship may intersect with a dual, more dominant relationship such as evaluator or supervisor.
- The mentor may be too close or too removed from the student's work and educational environment.

Evaluations of mentoring programs have not generally identified any single feature or characteristic responsible for positive outcomes. However, they do emphasize how theory and empirically based best practices and specific strategies may be especially important for achieving desired results (Brudney, 1999). These features include ongoing training for mentors, structured activities for mentors and youth, as well as expectations for frequency of contact, mechanisms for support and involvement of parents, and monitoring of overall program implementation (Rhodes et al., 2004). In multivariate analyses, such practices are consistently among the strongest predictors of reported positive effects for mentoring programs. Evaluation research points to the provision of adequate support and structures for mentoring relationships throughout the formative strategies of their development (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1992).

However, it is noteworthy that efforts directed toward this goal have been relatively neglected in youth mentoring programs to date in lieu of a greater focus on preparatory procedures such as screening, initial training and orientation, and matching of youth and mentors. Whereas initial training or orientation is routinely provided to mentors, efforts to provide ongoing training once relationships have begun have been much less common. Factors such as increased cost and reluctance to make excessive demands on volunteer mentors represent potentially formidable obstacles to providing a more sustained infrastructure in programs (DuBois et al., 2002). Nevertheless, in view of these findings, it seems clear that at a minimum there is a need for decision-making in this area to consider the possible implications for program outcomes.

The intensity and quality of relationships established between mentors and youth has been linked with beneficial outcomes for mentoring programs. Among several studies in which comparisons have been made on the basis of relevant criteria within the intervention group, a substantial difference on criterion measures is apparent, favoring those youth identified as having relatively strong relationships with their mentors (e.g. Spencer, 2006). It

appears that multiple features of relationships, such as frequency of contact, emotional closeness, and longevity may each make important and distinctive contributions to positive youth outcomes (Spencer, 2006). Unfortunately, measures of specific relationship characteristics are rarely included in controlled evaluations of mentoring programs and therefore it has been difficult to discern how these features contribute to positive youth outcomes.

While mentoring programs offer the greatest potential benefits to youth who can be considered to be at-risk, benefits seem greater for youth experiencing conditions of environmental risk or disadvantage, either alone or in combination with factors constituting individual level risk (Spencer, 2006). A similar trend is apparent when considering low family socioeconomic status as a specific indicator of environmental disadvantage. Within the context of frameworks for classifying prevention efforts, these findings are consistent with greater effectiveness for mentoring programs characterized by a situation-focused or selective orientation. Interventions of this type focus on individuals who can be considered vulnerable by virtue of their present life circumstances, but who are not yet demonstrating significant dysfunction. Youth experiencing environmental risk may be especially suitable candidates

for mentoring as a preventive intervention because of a lack of positive adult support figures or role models in their daily lives (Spencer, 2006). With respect to this possibility, available findings do not indicate reliably greater effects of mentoring for youth from single-parent households.

Enhanced benefits of mentoring have been apparent in the context of low levels of perceived family support (DuBois et al., 2002); however, this suggests a need for more refined measures of risk associated with the existing support networks of youth to be included in future research. Exposure of youth to aspects of environmental adversity not assessed in evaluations could have additional significance as a factor contributing to the positive effect of mentoring. This was evident to a limited degree even among those studies for which it was not possible to infer experience of any conditions of risk on the basis of the information made available.

By contrast, evidence of an overall favorable effect of mentoring is notably lacking under circumstances in which participating youth have been identified as being at risk solely on the basis of individual-level characteristics (e.g. academic failure). Mentoring is an inherently interpersonal endeavor. As a result, it may be

especially susceptible to obstacles and difficulties that can arise when youth targeted for intervention are already demonstrating significant personal problems (DuBois et al., 2002). Many of these youth are likely to be in need of relatively extensive amounts of specialized assistance rather than the primarily volunteer and nonprofessional status of most mentors. Considerations of this nature suggest a need for training and other appropriate forms of program support when attempting to provide effective mentoring to youth who are exhibiting individual-level risk. In accordance with this view, a more refined analysis might reveal that such youth could benefit significantly from participation in mentoring programs that adhere to a majority of recommended practices.

Of further note are the substantial positive effects of mentoring reported for programs in which youth targeted for participation could be regarded as at-risk from both an individual and environmental perspectives. Colley (2003) signals that interpretations of studies about mentoring, though, must be thoughtful and cautious. There are numerous methodological limitations, many of which were identified earlier in this chapter. Because of the relatively small number of evaluations involved, for instance, enthusiastic findings, however well substantiated, should not

necessarily be expected to be able to be generalized to all programs. Numerous other variables are often not accounted for by existing research on mentoring. It may be that environmental as opposed to individual risk simply has greater salience as a determining factor in likely responsiveness to mentoring. It is also possible, however, that circumstances of contextual adversity tend to reduce the likelihood of certain obstacles interfering with efforts to mentor youth who are demonstrating individual-level risk. In the presence of indications of environmental risk, for example, mentors may be less prone to accept negative labels assigned to such youth or inappropriately attribute problems they exhibit solely to personal deficits or limitations (e.g., lack of motivation).

2.18 Fresh Start

Developed by Quantum Leap Consulting Agency, the Fresh Start Youth Program provides mentors from the local universities and community for young people between the ages of 13 and 17. Fresh Start was chosen for use in this study because the program is well established and is known for close attention to detail and great follow-through. Since this program was developed with at-risk youth and foster youth in mind, it was the logical choice. Also the headquarters is centrally located to where the youth live

and attend school, so it was not hard for the youth or the parents to access services. The youth participants are defined as at-risk; while they have not been involved in the juvenile justice system, they have been identified by school staff or community professionals as at-risk because of observed emotional disturbances, academic difficulties, truancy, or petty crime in the community. Youth with more severe problems are referred to programs with a higher level of support and a different intervention focus.

The goal of Fresh Start is to provide young people with the skills and relationships that will help them avoid gang involvement and other criminal activities. This is achieved through one-on-one mentoring relationships. Quantum Leap Consulting Agency staff interview the students who are referred and then match each of them with a mentor who volunteers to serve as a mentor at a designated high school near the student's home.

Once placed in the program, Fresh Start students participate in a variety of activities designed to help them develop positive self development, positive mentor and student relationships and to promote the importance of regular school attendance. Specifically, through one-on-one communication, interaction, and the learning of practical skills, mentors help students develop qualities and

abilities that are often in short supply in their lives: self-esteem, self-discipline, problem-solving skills, teamwork, and goal development.

Improving social interaction skills is stressed during group activities, which also help to build effective relations between the youth and adults. The emphasis on social interaction skills is accompanied by life skills training. A monthly seminar is conducted by local professionals on topics such as self-esteem, self-development, drug and alcohol abuse, cross-cultural awareness, health, nutrition, and school issues. Thus, this program offers services above and beyond the mentoring relationship.

Adult mentors are members of the community who are 18 years or older. They want to volunteer their time and resources to work one-on-one with the at-risk youth; however, they are first screened by Fresh Start staff to determine the level of commitment and their ability to relate with an at-risk student appropriately. Once a potential mentor has cleared the screening process, he or she must complete an orientation session that provides training about child and adolescent development and typical adolescent challenges, child abuse, and effective interpersonal skills. The orientation is a four hour

workshop covering the rules, guidelines, and timelines for the Fresh Start Program. After successfully completing the orientation, each mentor receives a certificate from Quantum Leap Consulting Agency that is submitted at the start of his or her mentorship.

2.19 Conclusion

Most at-risk youth come from an urban background. Many become at-risk because of the challenging or non-supporting factors within family and school. At-risk behaviors lead to deviant acts, such as drug use, early pregnancy, dropping out of school, and resorting to violence as a means of attempting to resolve problems. Certain programs have been established to contain and prevent the increase of at-risk youth cases, but they are only as effective as the practices and strategies of the organization leaders. Systematic evaluation of mentoring programs is constrained because there is little consensus concerning the meaning and definition of the concept of mentoring (Philip, 2003) and because mentoring programs differ considerably in their focus and impact. Indeed, lack of knowledge about the strategies regarding the prevention of at-risk youth cases is one of the main reasons why some programs fail. Nonetheless, research is an important factor in the improvement of youth at-risk programs by reducing the

potential for program and policy overlap. Consequently, this dissertation presents findings from an evaluation of the mentoring program Fresh Start. Chapter Three will outline the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLGY

3.1 Evaluating Efficacy in Mentoring Programs

While mentoring programs may have clear objectives and established approaches regarding youth concerns, the efficacy of these programs remains in question. Although some research emphasizes the positive effects of mentoring programs on at-risk youth (e.g. Grossman & Garry, 1997; Tierney, Grossman & Resch, 1995; Slicker & Palmer, 1993), a comprehensive meta-analysis of a range of programs suggests that knowledge about the effects of mentoring programs is still in its infancy stage (Keating, et al., 2002). In addition, such programs may accrue only modest benefits to participants (DuBois et al., 2002). The greatest benefits for at-risk youth are observed where “best practices” are theoretically and empirically derived and where there are established relationships between mentors and mentees (Miller, 2002, p. 3).

There are considerable advantages in conducting a quantitative research study that provides a statistical basis for examination and analysis of mentoring programs for at-risk youth. With the appropriate research instrument in place, there are many opportunities to identify the benefits of at-risk mentoring programs, as well as their

disadvantages, and to determine the level of improvement that is required in developing these programs and their long-term outcomes.

3.2 Aims of the Study

The aims of the research were twofold. First, using a descriptive approach that primarily drew on quantitative data, the study sought to examine the impact of a specific mentoring program – Fresh Start. Second, the study aimed to examine the context and focus of the Fresh Start mentoring program on at-risk youth. Within this program, the majority of at-risk youth came from single-parent homes. Typically, they manifested behavioral or emotional problems and lacked the support necessary to handle developmental tasks successfully.

As discussed in Chapter Two, once at-risk youth grow into adults, they are likely to be involved in chronic unemployment, divorce, substance abuse, physical and psychiatric problems, divorce as well as other forms of criminal activity (DuBois & Silverthorn, 2005). There are considerable challenges involved in developing an effective mentoring program that will effectively reach and infiltrate the minds of at-risk youth, who are particularly vulnerable to difficult circumstances and have likely constructed defenses to manage the problems that they have

experienced. The Fresh Start program is designed to provide specific mentoring activities as needed for at-risk youth who experience various behavioral and academic problems. The mentoring relationship offers participants the opportunity to get to know another individual who provides much-needed leadership and guidance in managing the complexities of participants’ daily lives.

The study contributed to the evaluation literature in relation to mentoring programs by examining the efficacy of a particular mentoring program and the effect it has on the academic and behavioral development of at-risk participants. Most importantly, the study identified areas of strength and weakness within the Fresh Start program by identifying key variables for consideration and application in promoting advanced outcomes for at-risk youth. Specifically, the study examined the quality and efficacy of Fresh Start by asking the following:

1. Which factors significantly affect the impact of Fresh Start on at-risk youth, and how are these factors incorporated into the key programmatic elements?

2. What are the key changes in the behaviors of at-risk youth participants in the Fresh Start program as based upon its key objectives? How will it be determined that these

objectives are operating successfully in order to improve the lives of participating at-risk youth?

3. How does Fresh Start provide a measurable impact on the academic and behavioral development of its at-risk participants? What measures will be created to determine the degree of significance of the Fresh Start program in the lives of its participants? Will these measures be evaluated on a continuous basis over a longer period of time, or will they be considered during a single evaluation?

4. Are there ways in which the delivery and impact of Fresh Start can be improved? Most importantly, what type of impact does this program represent for at-risk youth, and will criteria be developed that will evaluate the importance of this program over the long term? Is it possible that these measurements could be duplicated and applied to other programs for at-risk youth, and how will they be utilized?

The researcher chose to implement quantitative methodology because quantitative approaches are considered to be more rigorous than qualitative methodologies. A quantitative research study permits the researcher to conduct a study with a larger sample size than would be possible with a qualitative study. Furthermore, more sources of data can be considered.

Based on these research questions, the project was undertaken with the following null hypotheses:

- Fresh Start has no significant impact on at-risk youth's academic development.
- Fresh Start has no significant impact on at-risk youth's behavior.

The objectives of the research included the following:

1. To determine if Fresh Start has a significant impact on at-risk youth in terms of their academic and behavioral development;
2. To determine which factors are most significant in Fresh Start's impact, and;
3. To formulate ways of enhancing the delivery and impact of Fresh Start.

Based upon these key principles, it is important to note that quantifiable analyses were necessary to conduct by evaluating key variables and their significance in effectively promoting advanced outcomes for at-risk youth. For example, it is possible that some aspects of the Fresh Start program are more effective than others in promoting change and progress for at-risk youth, and therefore, those areas of weakness that have been defined must be reduced or eliminated altogether in favor of advancing the positive

aspects of this program. Without identification of quantifiable measures, it is difficult to justify the program's success for its participants, thereby making its existence futile.

3.3 Challenges for Mentoring Program Evaluation

While research suggests that youth participating in mentoring programs tend to have higher self-esteem, higher grade point averages, better attendance, and fewer suspensions, it is often difficult to gauge the overall impact of mentoring programs on at-risk youth because the focus of mentoring programs is diverse and the methodologies used to evaluate efficacy and effectiveness vary (Keating et al., 2002). The cost of funding fully operational research usually exceeds the limited budget of a mentoring program; thus, many evaluations have relied exclusively on self-report information rather than on research instruments that offer validity and reliability.

There are other problems. Many mentoring programs that do conduct evaluative research to determine the efficacy of their services do not employ methodologically sound techniques. For instance, many either fail to use control groups or do not utilize non-random assignment. They fail to account for issues such as the intensity of treatment and the quality of the mentoring contact, and the

variations that both factors can create in the observed variables. These inconsistencies within the research lead to many weaknesses in program evaluation for at-risk youth, and by solely evaluating programs based upon self-report information, there is likelihood that those individuals requiring the greatest level of support and guidance will not necessarily gain the most from the program itself. Therefore, it is important for research to account for the potential long-term advantages of comprehensive evaluations that do not solely utilize the self-report mechanism.

In general, self-reporting mechanisms do not necessarily provide the most optimal level of results that are desired, due in part to potential bias against providing the most accurate responses to the questions being asked of them. Furthermore, there are other problems with utilizing self-reporting as the sole means of evaluation, including the lack of perspective that is offered by other individuals involved in these specific circumstances. By incorporating the perspectives provided by teachers and other individuals in the lives of at-risk youth, the potential exists to improve feedback and to advance the effectiveness of these programs in future years.

There are other challenges in researching the effectiveness of mentoring programs. It must be remembered

that while different mentoring programs may have similar goals, their structures and procedures may be dramatically different. For instance, some mentoring programs offer services to specific student sub-groups. Recall, for example, that the organization 100 Black Men works specifically with African-American young men. Similarly, mentoring may be used to promote academic success, as in the case of HOSTS; to prevent delinquency; or to prepare students for professional success. Finally, mentoring programs vary in what they require of the volunteer mentors.

While some programs, such as 100 Black Men and Fresh Start, require training, other organizations do not. Similarly, there are varying degrees of oversight of volunteer mentors, and different requirements about the frequency, intensity, and duration of mentor-mentee meetings. Problems with the delivery and impact of mentoring programs may be due to their dependency on donations and volunteers (Keating et al., 2002). Specifically, mentoring programs that do not designate a specific sector of the population may experience problems in attempting to convey the real needs and significance of these programs to their participants and other supporters. In general, attempts to effectively conduct and promote these programs without a specific focus will lead to

disaster, thereby potentially reducing the advancement of at-risk youth to the desired level. By developing a specific focus for mentoring, there is a greater likelihood for success in terms of youth outcomes and personal development.

The effectiveness of programs can also be compromised by the frequency of face-to-face contact between mentors and mentees. Some programs require meetings only once or twice a month, which may be insufficient to provide all the help and support at-risk youth need. For many at-risk youth, there is a greater need for relationship building on a more frequent basis, as participants must feel that their mentors are indeed committed to their advancement. Evaluation needs to account for these differences in meeting frequency.

The research conducted for this dissertation addresses specific concerns regarding mentoring program efficacy by conducting a quasi-experimental study of an existing intensive mentoring program, Fresh Start. Fresh Start has been selected as an appropriate mentoring program because it works specifically with an at-risk population; it has a well-implemented training program for mentors; and it has a well-developed focus on community involvement. The goals of Fresh Start are to develop self-esteem and self-discipline;

increase school attendance; and prevent the onset of a delinquent lifestyle. These are the factors that were the main focus of the study operationalized in the following ways:

- Data related to several of the predictor variables that are correlated to future delinquency will be obtained;
- Indices of self-esteem as obtained through self-reported, structured questionnaires;
- Comparison of pre-and post mentoring program participation questions as presented via Child Behavior Checklist instruments;
- This study also incorporated parent, teacher, and peer report data about participants' self-esteem, self-discipline, school attendance and number of delinquent acts. This study assessed youth involvement in the mentoring program over the course of a six-month period. The program lasted for six months because that timeframe was most convenient and unobtrusive to those participating in the study. More specifically, this was the time range during which most youth were available and to which parents were comfortable committing. Furthermore, the Fresh Start program was developed to have six month

mentorship periods because it was viewed by the program administration to be an appropriate length of time to properly execute the program based upon past experiences.

3.4 Methodological Approach for Quantitative Research

All primary data were collected using the "Child Behavior Checklists" in the form of pre and post intervention interviews. The checklists were devised by Achenbach (1991), and are routinely used to study a range of behaviors and academic achievement among young people. As such, they were selected for this study because they have been tested repeatedly for validity and reliability.

Three standardized checklists were utilized for the purposes of this research study, and they will be described in the following paragraphs. The Child Behavior Checklist for Children aged 6-18 (Appendix One) consists of a general set of questions regarding such topics as child personal interests, group activities, chores in the home environment, friendships, the degree of ability to get along well with others, academic performance, special educational requirements, academic problems, and specific concerns regarding the child. Most importantly, the questionnaire addresses a series of 113 items regarding various behaviors and/or physical ailments/habits that the child possesses

from a parental perspective, all of which could contribute to the current circumstances that the child faces in their daily activities. This questionnaire is comprehensive, as it emphasizes behavioral aspects of a child’s current state, and it was anticipated that these responses would lead to new questions regarding the importance and overall effectiveness of mentoring programs.

The second questionnaire, the Youth Self-Report for Ages 11-18 (Appendix Two), asks similar questions as the previous questionnaire, with the significant difference that these responses are generated from the youth perspective, which may be significantly different from the responses generated on the Child Behavior Checklist. It was anticipated that responses from the youth perspective would be unique and distinct from all others in some respects, although some revelations provided through this questionnaire could be utilized for identifying areas of strength and weakness within mentoring programs. Youth responses are particularly important in providing the most accurate assessments of mentoring programs, although they only serve as one of the many perspectives that are sought in advancing these programs to a higher level.

Finally, the Teacher’s Report Form for Ages 6-18 (Appendix Three) provides another assessment of various

behavioral aspects of at-risk youth, as well as their academic performance. Teachers are questioned about their knowledge of the students' history and their personality, their aptitude test scores, any known disabilities or problems, and other related issues. Teachers play a critical role in identifying areas of strength and weakness, as well as opportunities for improvement over a period of time. Teachers are important determinants of the best course of actions for their students, and they possess the knowledge of individual student behaviors that is necessary to improve their performance on both a personal and an academic level. Finally, teachers offer the best assessment of the necessity for participation in youth mentoring programs, and suggest the frequency of meetings and the severity of the problems that might exist for students.

Survey questionnaires, generated from secondary data, comprised of recent literature related to mentoring, mentoring programs and at-risk youth, were used to supplement data from the pre-post questionnaires and were distributed to the children's parents or primary caregivers. Specifically, the questionnaire instruments offered a greater understanding of the challenges that at-risk youth face in their daily activities. With a comparison across the three questionnaires, it was possible to obtain a well-

rounded perspective of the current needs of at-risk students, including personality traits, behavioral characteristics, academic performance, educational motivations, and family history, amongst others. Although the perceptions of individuals might be diverse, this approach offered a greater understanding of the problems that are faced by youth in attempting to cope with the external environment and their disadvantaged backgrounds.

Using quantitative analysis, each of the questionnaires was evaluated based upon the responses given. The questionnaires were scored based upon the category of the individual completing the form (e.g. parent, teacher). In addition, a cross-examination of questionnaires was conducted for each student, with all three questionnaires evaluated for their significance in comparison to each other. It was important for this cross-examination to take place as a means of identifying areas of weakness and decline within student morale and performance, so that the appropriate level of intervention could be identified and implemented whenever possible.

There is an important distinction to be made regarding the differences amongst the three questionnaires. Although each questionnaire was designed to ask a similar set of questions, the diversity in responses for the same

individuals could indicate that there were significant perceptual differences amongst individuals completing these surveys, which could reduce the level of support and intervention that is provided for at-risk youth. It is possible that mentoring programs may hold a different level of significance for each individual, and that some will experience significant success with these programs, while others will not gain any benefits. However, gaining a well-rounded perspective regarding mentoring programs is the only method for confirming that these programs are effective for students in need.

3.5 Researcher's Key Assumptions

In this research report, the researcher aims to contribute to the current literature on mentoring programs for at-risk youth by means of determining the impact of one particular program on the academic and behavioral development of participants. Establishing effective interventions such as mentoring programs that strengthen and support young people is essential to their overall development and academic performance. Evaluating a current program provides feedback to those involved and affected by it and promotes constant development of the program so as to better serve the youngsters considered at-risk. Helping children to develop and discover themselves through

mentoring programs may also enable them to live better lives, become more confident and productive.

Hence, the benefits of this study are not only short term but also contribute to the long-term development of mentoring program evaluation. It is anticipated that mentoring activities that are conducted at this stage of life will be beneficial to students on a long-term basis, and that as they experience other areas of need throughout their lives, they will gain insights into the benefits of establishing effective relationships with mentors and other individuals in situations as they grow older. Therefore, the benefits of such programs are highly significant not only during the phase in which they are conducted, but throughout the entire life cycle.

3.6 Unit of Analysis, Locating and Selecting Research Participants

The primary unit of sampling and analysis was youth within the age range of 13 to 17 years who were considered at-risk. For the selected youth, their parents and mentors were also recruited and their questionnaires were analyzed. A random sample was selected from enrollees of a mentoring school located within Los Angeles County, California by the method of simple random sampling, in which each subject of the population had an equal probability of being selected.

The school draws participants from three geographic areas that are characterized by socio-economic disadvantage. Census data (Census, 2000) indicate that these ethnically diverse counties have a higher than national average percentage of families living below the poverty threshold, lower than national average median income, and high unemployment.

A list of potential participants - all new mentees - was provided by mentors associated with the Fresh Start program, which is run by the Quantum Leap Consulting Agency. Each new mentee was assigned an identification number. Typically there were 175-200 mentees in a new cohort. There were generally more females than males (approximately 4:1) in a cohort, which has an age range of 13-18 years. Two hundred or more mentees were randomly selected from the list using a random number table. Then, the Quantum Leap Staff contacted the selected mentees and their parents for an initial orientation that addresses the program details (meeting, dates, times locations). The mentoring process lasted for six months. In order to assess the significant changes that took place after the mentoring process, parents of youth participants who attended the mentoring program were given a survey questionnaire for evaluation.

The study was conducted in this manner as a means of promoting the likelihood of change and advanced support for improving total outcomes, from academic performance to personal agendas. At-risk youth face many precarious circumstances during these years, and their confusion and frustration with school and other activities plays a significant role in their personal and academic advancement. Therefore, new alternatives must be utilized in order to provide them with even greater opportunities for obtaining positive outcomes.

3.7 Data Collection

The data that were gathered for this study were primarily derived from the three Child Behavior Checklists and a supplementary questionnaire. These structured questionnaires generated responses from three groups: parents, youth and teachers. The information contained in these checklists served as the basis for comparison of any significant changes acquired by the children after attending the six-month mentoring program. As mentioned previously, that data resulting from the three separate questionnaires were compared in order to determine the effectiveness of mentoring programs for at-risk youth versus those that have not participated in such programs.

In developing the statistical analyses of the completed questionnaires, patterns were recognized as critical to the overall success of the program and its outcomes. Some of these patterns included poor academic performance, a variety of behavioral problems, and family issues, amongst others. It is highly likely that one or more of these problems has served as the primary contributing factor in the lives of at-risk youth, and that as mentoring programs get underway, they will ultimately provide additional sources of support, guidance, and knowledge for disadvantaged students in need. Therefore, mentoring programs are designed with these specific needs in mind, as students will experience the benefits of such programs through relationship development and effective outcomes over a period of time.

These questionnaires contained questions pertaining to the significant academic and behavioral developments that the youth acquired after attending the six-month mentoring program. The respondents graded each statement in the survey-questionnaire using a defined measurement scale. For the behavioral section of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to answer in one of the following ways:

0 = Not True; 1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True; and 2 = Very True or Often True.

Other sections of the questionnaire required specific written responses as well as individual information regarding such criteria as grades and test scores. The results of the study offer some general insights into the specific behaviors that lead to disadvantaged circumstances.

A five-item Likert Scale was used (Barnett, 1991), following the model proposed by Anderson and Bourke (2000) and provided respondents a forced choice format for answers. The researcher opted to use the questionnaire as a tool since the rules of construction were easy to follow. Moreover, copies of the questionnaire could reach a considerable number of respondents either by mail or by personal distribution. Generally, responses to a questionnaire are objectified and standardized and these make tabulation easy. Finally, the questionnaire instrument serves as a strong method of identifying areas of strength and weakness amongst the participant population, as well as typical and atypical patterns of behavior that might exist. It is important to note that these questionnaires also serve as indicators of the program's influence on at-risk participants, as based upon the responses that are generated.

3.8 Capturing, Storing, Retrieving and Safeguarding Data

The data gathered from the pre and post intervention interviews were placed in the Child Behavior Checklist form, which was administered by the staff members of the mentoring agency. After the six-month mentoring program, the structured questionnaire was then personally distributed by the researcher to the parents of participating youth. In order to safeguard the data contained in the survey form, the researcher personally retrieved the completed questionnaires. Maintaining confidentiality regarding all personal information and questionnaire data was of the utmost importance in obtaining positive and accurate responses to the questionnaires. Therefore, by ensuring that all responses remained confidential, it was possible that all information was reliable for testing and evaluation purposes, and that the potential effectiveness of the mentoring program could not be questioned by falsified data or a weak research instrument.

3.9 Data Analysis

The pre-intervention data from the Child Behavior Checklist were analyzed first. The post-intervention data gathered from the children and parents were then compared to the data from their pre-intervention data. The analysis

of this data enabled the researcher to determine the effectiveness of the mentoring program. The questionnaire, on the other hand, was analyzed by assigning values to participants' responses. The equivalent weights used for the answers are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. Weighted scale for pre-intervention data from the Child Behavior Checklist

Range	Interpretation
4.50 – 5.00	Strongly Agree
3.50 – 4.00	Agree
2.50 – 3.49	Uncertain
1.50 – 2.49	Disagree
0.00 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree

A detailed analysis was conducted using the Assessment Data Manager Windows Software, which is aligned with the Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment that frames the behavior checklists used to gather data. This particular program is desirable because it enables rapid data entry and the ability to score and compare data streams obtained from parent, teacher, or peer reports. Comparison of responses and scores was possible for up to eight forms per individual. For the purposes of this research study, since there were only three questionnaires

scored per individual, it was possible to obtain the desired results with fewer opportunities for errors in the scoring process. These findings were then evaluated for their contribution and value in promoting effective outcomes for current and future mentoring programs.

3.10 Data Presentation

The quantitative findings derived from the questionnaire are presented in text and graphic formats for easier analysis, comprehension, and for the identification of patterns and unique circumstances that might lead to complex results. It was important for discussion and dissemination purposes to develop results that are easily quantifiable, easy to read, and that can be evaluated without considerable difficulty. The results as presented in a report format allow other experts as well as novices to better understand how mentoring programs provide considerable support in advancing the overall outcomes of at-risk youth.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

As the research required the participation of children, parents and teachers there were a number of ethical and conduct considerations worth mentioning. According to Mouton (2001), beyond approval from an IRB at the researcher's institution—which was secured for this study--

the researcher should ensure his or her compliance to four main rules relevant to the rights of the respondents or participants. First, the researcher should recognize the respondents’ right to privacy, which covers their right to refuse to partake in the research process. Consequently, participants were entitled to withdraw at any point in the study.

A second aspect to consider is participants’ right to confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher should also ensure that the participants are able to receive the full disclosure of the research outcomes. More importantly, the respondents should not be placed in situations that can possibly harm them physically, psychologically or emotionally. Specifically, confidentiality is of critical importance in any research study, particularly when specific identifiers of personal information are included, such as name and address. For this research study, names as well as academic performance are discussed at length, and therefore, these items were protected by limiting access to the data in order to safeguard the integrity of participants and their families. When minors are involved in a research study, it is particularly important that the identities of all study participants are protected. Furthermore, when academic information is involved such as

grades or test scores, a school’s integrity and confidentiality must also be protected.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings based on the collected data from the surveyed youth, parents, and teachers. The main objective of this study is directed towards understanding the impact of mentoring programs on at-risk youth with respect to their academic performance and social behavior by means of analyzing the collected empirical data.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the data were gathered by means of a pre- and post- intervention questionnaire; the specific instruments used were the three Child Behavior Checklists. The Child Behavior Checklist forms were administered by the staff members of the Fresh Start mentoring program. When the 200 students who participated in the mentoring program completed the six-month Fresh Start intervention, the structured questionnaire was then distributed by the researcher to the parents of participating youth. Of the 200 participants who agreed to participate in the study, 23 dropped out of the Fresh Start mentoring intervention program after having completed the pre-intervention Child Behavior Checklist form, resulting in an attrition rate of slightly more than

10%. This chapter presents the minor findings of the study, which primarily pertains on the background and details of the sample before, during and after the study. The main findings will be discussed in the next chapter (chapter 5).

Initial and final numbers of student participants can be found in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Starting and final number of student participants

Participants	Starting # of Students	Final # of Students
Boys	103	80
Girls	97	97

The number of male and female youth teachers and parents responding to the questionnaire can be found in Table 4.2 Additional sources for this study can be found in Table 4.3.

Table 4.2 Gender of Participants

Participants	Male(%)	Female(%)	N
Parents	42(24)	135(76)	177
Teachers	42(36)	75(64)	117
Mentees	80(45)	97(55)	177

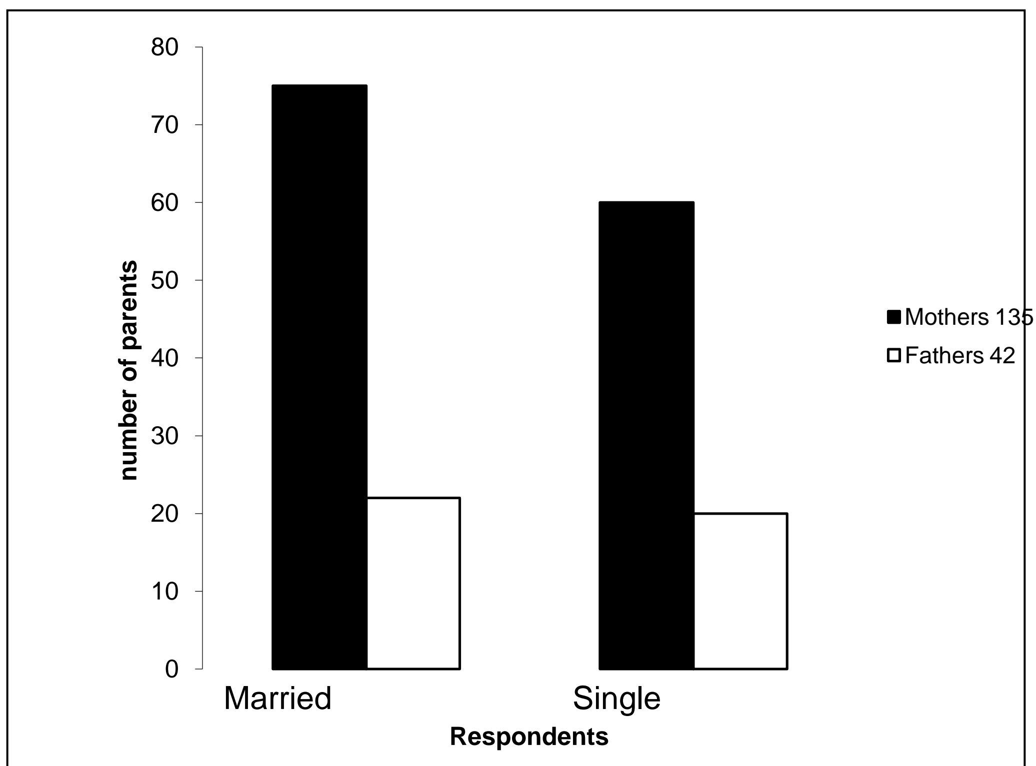
Table 4.3 Additional sources contributing to the study

Additional Sources	Male(%)	Female(%)	N

Mentors	42(46)	50(54)	92
Program Director	0(0)	1(100)	1
Program Coordinators	2(40)	3(60)	5

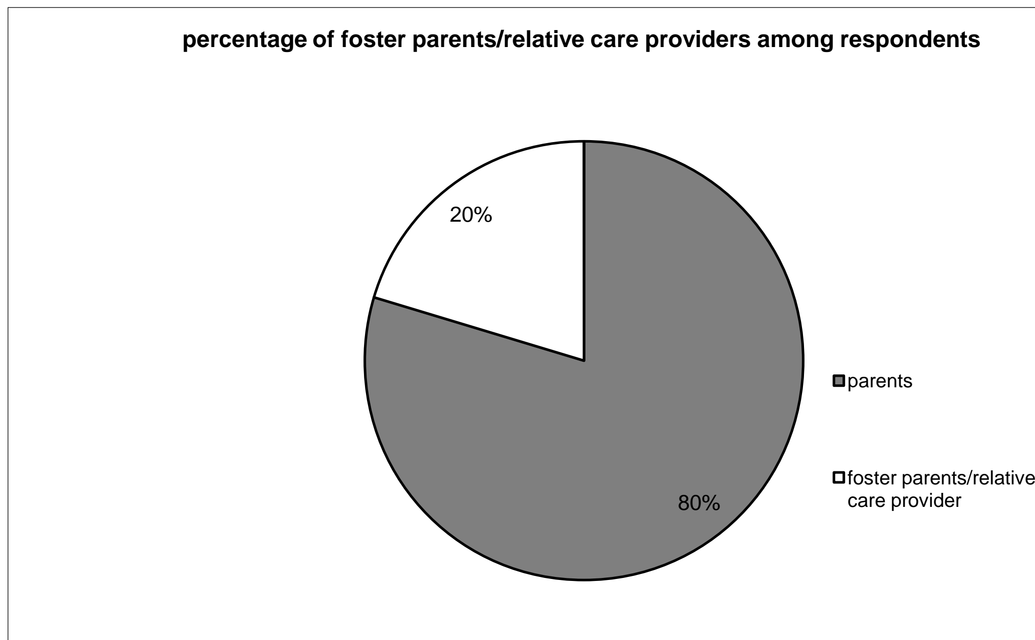
Of the 177 parents who participated, 135 were mothers and 42 were fathers. Figure 4.1 illustrates marital status of the participating parents.

Figure 4.1 Marital status of participating parents



In addition, 36 of the 177 parents were either foster or relative care providers. Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of foster parents versus biological parents.

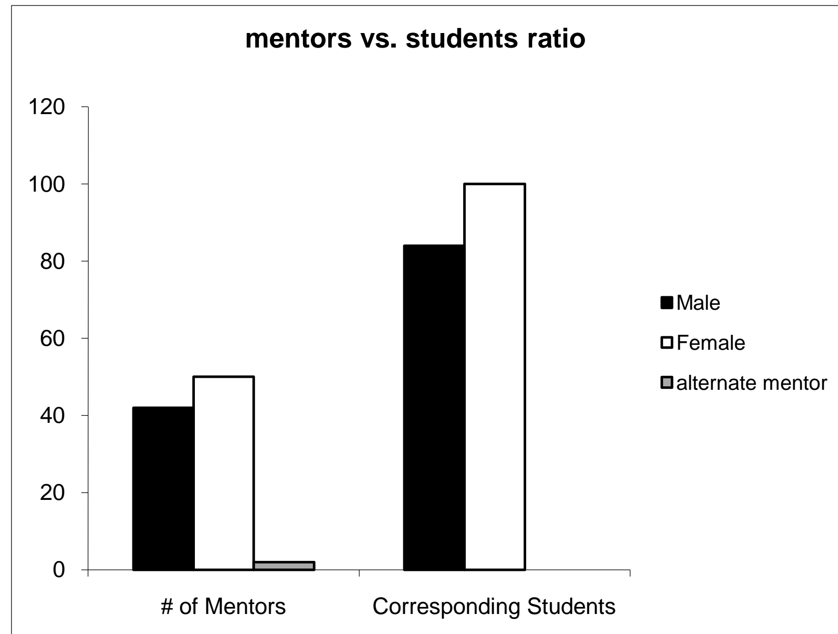
Figure 4.2 Distribution of foster parents among parent participants



Of the 92 mentors, 42 were male and 50 were female. The mentors had approximately two youth each of the same gender. For example, one male mentor would have two boys. There were a couple of alternate mentors in case of an emergency where a mentor could not make a function and the alternate filled in for them. Figure 4.3 illustrates the mentor to student ratio. The mentor to student ratio is important because it suggests how much individualized attention was provided to students. The two student per one mentor ratio meant that students had more individualized

attention than would otherwise be the case. Program success rates are higher when the students get more individualized attention from their mentor.

Figure 4.3 Mentor to student ratio



In order to maintain the security of the data gathered using the survey form, the researcher personally reclaimed the completed questionnaires. Maintaining the confidentiality of all personal information and questionnaire data is of the utmost importance in obtaining positive and accurate responses to the questionnaires, as well as upholding ethical research standards. Therefore, ensuring that all responses remained confidential also ensured that all information was reliable for testing and evaluation purposes, and that the potential effectiveness

of the mentoring program was not compromised by falsified data or a weak research instrument.

The results of the data analysis performed by the researcher are presented in three distinct sections. The first part provides the results of the pre-intervention questionnaire data. The pre-intervention data are further sorted into three categories: data from the youth surveys, data collected from the parents' surveys, and data collected from the teachers' surveys. The second section reports post-intervention questionnaire results, sorted into the same categories indicated in part one. The third and final section identifies and discusses the differences between the pre- and post- intervention questionnaires. The differences were identified by conducting a paired samples t-test.

4.2 Pre-intervention Child Behavior Checklist Results

The following tables summarize the results from the pre-intervention child behavior results. Discussions of the results from each group (students, parents, and teachers) are included separately in the following subsections. All tables have been placed up front to make visual comparisons across groups easier.

Table 4.4 Pre-intervention perceptions of youth behavior

Statements	Worse(%)	Average(%)	Better(%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Youth perceptions of their own behaviors Compared to others of your age, how well do you:					
Get along with your brothers and sisters?	70(35)	117(58)	13(7)	2.285	0.58
Get along with other kids?	70(35)	118(59)	12(6)	2.29	0.57
Get along with your parents?	88(44)	104(52)	8(4)	2.4	0.57
Do things by yourself?	105(53)	85(42)	10(5)	2.475	0.59
Parents' perceptions of their child's behavior Compared to others of his/her age, how well does your child:					
Get along with your brothers and sisters?	78(39)	108(54)	14(7)	2.32	0.60
Get along with other kids?	101(50)	87(44)	12(6)	2.445	0.61
Behave with his/her parents?	90(45)	102(51)	8(4)	2.41	0.57
Play and work alone?	99(49)	92(46)	9(5)	2.45	0.58

Notice that Tables 4.5 and 4.6 contain analogous information for the three groups. The results contained in Table 4.6 are displayed in a separate table because the survey categories for teachers were not the same as those for students and parents.

Table 4.5 Pre-intervention students' and parents' perceptions of students' academic performance

Performance in Academic Subjects	Failing(%)	Below Average(%)	Average(%)	Above Average(%)	Mean	Standard Deviation
Students' perceptions						
English	18(9)	48(24)	134(67)	0(0)	2.42	0.65
Mathematics	72(36)	69(34)	53(27)	6(3)	3.035	0.86
Science	48(24)	40(20)	94(47)	18(9)	2.59	0.95
History	105(52)	37(18)	47(24)	11(6)	3.18	0.98
Computer	41(20)	69(34)	61(31)	29(15)	2.61	0.97
Parents' perceptions						
English	10(5)	47(23)	143(72)	0(0)	2.335	0.57

Mathematics	76(38)	53(26)	64(32)	7(4)	2.99	0.92
Science	36(18)	47(23)	104(52)	13(7)	2.53	0.86
History	95(47)	20(10)	80(40)	5(3)	3.025	0.99
Computer	58(29)	48(24)	67(34)	27(13)	2.685	1.03

Table 4.6 Pre-intervention teachers' perceptions of students' academic performance

Performance in Academic Subjects	**Far below grade(%)**	**Somewhat below grade(%)**	**At grade level(%)**	**Somewhat above grade(%)**	**Far above grade(%)**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
English	5(2)	10(5)	47(24)	138(69)	0(0)	2.41	0.70
Mathematics	5(2)	76(38)	49(25)	63(31)	7(4)	3.045	0.97
Science	5(2)	34(17)	44(22)	104(52)	13(7)	2.57	0.93
History	8(4)	94(47)	20(10)	73(37)	5(2)	3.135	1.04
Computer	1(0)	58(29)	48(24)	66(33)	27(14)	2.7	1.05

4.2.1 Youth

Effective at-risk youth programs begin with determining the population that is going to be served. Once the target population has been identified, program staff begins to determine the kinds of programmatic designs that are most appropriate for at-risk youth, and they begin implementing the policies needed to support an effective high performance youth mentoring system. The top half of Table 4.4 illustrates the pre-intervention perceptions of the 200 youth respondents regarding their behavior towards other people, the respondents themselves, and their perceptions of their own performance in academic subjects. The first three columns represent the number of respondents for each category. The data presented in the table indicate

that the majority of students perceive themselves as average with respect to their interpersonal behavior skills. One hundred seventeen of the youth respondents consider themselves average in comparison to others of the same age when it comes to the quality of their relationship with their brothers and sisters.

The results were almost identical for the second item presented in this table, which assessed students' perceptions of their ability to get along well with other kids their age.

Again, in the third item, a similar response pattern is noted, although the student respondents' responses indicate that they did acknowledge experiencing greater difficulty relating with their parents than with siblings or peers from their age cohort.

The results for the final item presented in the top half of Table 4.4 were quite different from the preceding items, and allude to an interesting gap in student respondents' perceptions. While they perceive themselves as average with respect to relating to others, the majority of respondents view themselves as significantly worse than their peers with respect to performing tasks independently. This gap in perception will be discussed at greater length in the analysis section of this chapter.

With respect to the perception of the respondents regarding their academic performance (top half of Table 4.5), it can be seen that the mean of their responses only ranged from 2.42 to 3.18, which signifies that a majority of the respondents believe that their academic performance is either below average or failing. Students felt that they performed best in English and worst in history. With respect to the “Above Average” response field, the academic category in which students felt most competence was computer studies.

4.2.2 Parents

Parents play an important role in setting expectations about what actions constitute appropriate social behavior; parents also help their children to establish values and norms that define acceptable academic performance. Some mentoring programs recognize that effective interventions might also involve strategies for maximizing both the quality and the quantity of positive interactions between parents and their children. Although teachers are capable of producing profound and positive changes in student behaviors and learning by effectively modeling the positive processes, skills, and attitudes that students need to succeed, parents are still the first teachers of a child. Thus, parents are an important source of information when

it comes to the behavior and academic performance of a child.

As illustrated in the bottom half of Table 4.4, the majority of the parent respondents agreed that their children are average when it comes to interpersonal interactions, though there is a noticeable difference between the responses regarding in-family interactions and extra-familial exchanges. Again, the first three columns represent the number of parents in each category. In general, intra-family relationships were perceived by parents to be stronger than extra-familial relationships. The majority of parent respondents also indicated that they perceive their children as worse than their children's peers with respect to performing tasks independently, a response which is congruent with the youth respondents' perceptions of themselves. The limited responses in the "better" category, irrespective of the item requiring a response, suggests that parents might believe that there would be possible positive changes if the child became involved in an intervention program, especially one involving youth mentoring.

While the results regarding parents' perceptions of children's academic performance (bottom half of Table 4.5) seem to suggest that most parents consider their children

to be average in all categories except mathematics and history, the fewer “Above Average” responses indicate that parents realize their children are academically at-risk. Like their children, though, parents reported that their perceptions about their child’s competence in computer skills were higher than their competence in the other academic subjects. In this regard, the use of targeted interventions, such as the Fresh Start mentoring program, might increase the capabilities of their children to perform well in their academic subjects.

4.2.3 Teachers

One of the responsibilities of the teacher is to maintain a high standard of personal and professional conduct. Considering that teaching involves varied roles, it has become important to have specific rules of conduct that govern the teacher’s behavior in these relationships. In traditional schooling, the teacher is an important figure in the classroom and is the source of knowledge and information. Because of this role, the teacher must be a subject matter expert who actively facilitates the achievement of desired academic and behavioral results in students.

Teachers are also aware of the academic capacities of their students. Although parents’ and students’ perceptions

are valuable sources of information, assessments of a child's academic performance relies heavily upon the findings and perceptions of a teacher. These are presented in Table 4.6.

It is important to note that the teachers' questionnaire was different in one other way. The Child Behavior Checklist form that was administered to teachers did not capture information about teachers' impressions and perceptions regarding students' interpersonal behavior and skills. Although teachers do have valuable information about students' interactions with peers in the classroom, and despite the fact that they may be able to render an assessment about a child's degree of engagement in autonomous tasks, in most cases it is unlikely that teachers have the information or experience necessary to make a fair evaluation of a child's interactions with siblings or parents. Nonetheless, teachers are an important source of information about children's academic performance. As seen in Table 4.6, teachers perceive their students to be far more capable than both parents and students perceive them to be with respect to academic performance. Teachers reported that most of the students perform well in their classes. In contrast to the parent and student data, most of the teachers reported that their students are somewhat

above their chronological grade level in most subjects, with the exception of mathematics and history.

Most of the teachers seem to be optimistic in regards to the capabilities of their students. It is important to note, however, that the teacher response data are somewhat different in their assumptions than both the parent and student data, as are the response options that were presented to the teachers. While student respondents evaluated themselves and parents evaluated their own child, the teacher respondents in this study were, in most instances, considering all of their students who were participating in the study. The majority of teacher respondents filled out more than one checklist, as they had more than one student participating in the study. Teachers completed a checklist for each of his or her students participating in the study; the student's name was provided on the checklist form and teachers were directed to complete the 112 item checklist specific to the pupil whose name was indicated on the form. Although the instructions on the form did not indicate that students were at-risk, the teacher respondents were aware that the subject of the study was the effects of mentoring on at-risk students.

While teachers filled out a checklist for each of his or her students in the study, it is possible that one

explanation for the elevated scores reflected in teachers' responses when compared to parents' and students' responses might reflect a global set of perceptions. In other words, the teacher respondent was probably not thinking solely of the student being evaluated, but could have been comparing that student—albeit unconsciously—against his or her other students, including those who were not identified as at-risk and who were not participating in the study. Teachers' positive impressions of higher performing students might have skewed the data in ways that the researcher cannot interpret or confirm with certainty.

Teachers also provided data about their perceptions of students' behavior, and the results of these data are presented in the tables below.

Table 4.7 Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Behavior: Paired Samples Test Results

	Mean	**N**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Pre	1.6726	113	1.11	0.10
Post	0.4336	113	0.61	0.06

Table 4.7 describes the pre- and post-intervention perceptions of teacher respondents pertaining to the behavior of the students. This table displays the number of items in the survey questionnaire (N=113), the mean value

of the responses of teachers, standard deviation, and standard error for the pairs of variables compared in the paired samples t-test procedure. Since the paired samples t-test compares the means for the two variables, it is useful to know what the mean values are. The paired samples statistics table shows that the computed mean for pre-intervention for child's behavior is 1.67. This result signifies that most of the responses by teachers in the 113-item questionnaire are "Very True or Often True." Basically, the questionnaire was constructed negatively, which means that the mean value closer to 2.0 shows negative perception on behavior.

On the other hand, the post-intervention results for the behavior of students as perceived by the teachers show positive results. Taking into account the 23 students who withdrew from the study prior to its completion, the computed mean for post-intervention results (0.43) shows positive effect of the intervention.

Table 4.8 Paired Samples Test Comparing Pre- and Post-Intervention Results

	Paired Differences					**T**	**Df**	**Sig. (2-tailed)**	
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**95% Confidence Interval of the Difference**					
				Lower	**Upper**				

Pre-/Post-intervention	1.2389	1.24	0.12	1.0076	1.4703	10.611	112	.000	

From the paired samples statistics table, it is obvious that pre- and post intervention results pertaining to the perception of teachers about the behavior of at-risk youth is different to each other. However, to verify this claim statistically, the use of a paired-sample t-test was initiated. The paired-samples t-test procedure compares the means of two variables that represent the same group at different times (e.g. before and after intervention). The mean values for the two variables are displayed in the paired samples statistics table. Basically, the table shows a low significance value for the t-test (typically less than 0.05) that indicates significant difference between the two variables (i.e. pre- and post-intervention). In addition, the confidence interval for the mean difference does not contain zero: this also indicates that the difference is significant.

4.3 Post-intervention Results

Of the 200 participants who agreed to participate in the study, 23 dropped out of the Fresh Start mentoring intervention program after having completed the pre-intervention Child Behavior Checklist form, resulting in an attrition rate of slightly more than 10%. Given the number of participants who did not complete the study, the post-

intervention questionnaire data represent the responses of 177 participants. Since 23 participants did not complete the intervention, there are differences between the pre- and post-intervention questionnaire results, and the overall integrity of the data may be affected slightly. Specifically, the confidence level with respect to accuracy may have been affected negatively, though the degree to which this is a threat to the study's outcomes is minimal.

In the following tables, the data collected in the post-intervention questionnaires will be presented in the same order in which they were presented in the preceding section, where pre-intervention data were presented.

Table 4.9 Post-intervention perceptions of youth behavior

	Worse(%)	**Average(%)**	**Better(%)**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Youth perceptions of their own behavior **Compared to others of your age, how well do you:**					
Get along with your brothers and sisters?	11(6)	59(33)	107(61)	1.4576	0.61
Get along with other kids?	14(8)	49(28)	114(64)	1.4350	0.64
Get along with your parents?	13(7)	69(39)	95(54)	1.5367	0.63
Do things by yourself?	10(6)	79(44)	88(50)	1.5593	0.60
Parents' perceptions of their child's behavior Compared **to others of his/her age, how well does your child:**					
Get along with his/her brothers and sisters?	87(49)	79(45)	11(6)	1.5706	0.61
Get along with other kids?	4(2)	87(49)	86(49)	1.5367	0.54
Behave with his/her parents?	3(2)	91(51)	83(47)	1.548	0.53
Play and work alone?	7(4)	133(75)	37(21)	1.8305	0.47

Table 4.10 Post-intervention students' and parents' perceptions of students' academic performance

Performance in Academic Subjects	**Failing(%)**	**Below Average(%)**	**Average(%)**	**Above Average(%)**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Youth perceptions						
English	5(3)	7(4)	48(27)	117(66)	1.4350	0.71
Mathematics	6(3)	2(1)	116(66)	53(30)	1.7797	0.63
Science	3(2)	2(1)	75(42)	97(55)	1.4972	0.61
History	3(2)	4(2)	121(68)	49(28)	1.7797	0.57
Computer	3(2)	3(2)	92(52)	79(44)	1.6045	0.61
Parents' perceptions						
English	11(6)	19(11)	105(59)	42(24)	1.9944	0.77
Mathematics	15(8)	13(7)	110(62)	39(22)	2.0226	0.80
Science	19(11)	19(11)	117(66)	22(12)	2.1977	0.79
History	17(10)	32(18)	81(46)	47(26)	2.1073	0.91
Computer	40(23)	20(11)	77(43)	40(23)	2.0452	0.81

Table 4.11 Post-intervention teachers' perceptions of students' academic performance

Performance in Academic Subjects	**Far below grade(%)**	**Somewhat below grade(%)**	**At grade level(%)**	**Somewhat above grade(%)**	**Far above grade(%)**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
English	5(3)	8(5)	37(21)	4(2)	123(69)	1.6893	1.12
Mathematics	3(2)	6(3)	44(25)	60(34)	64(36)	2.0056	0.95
Science	4(2)	5(3)	33(19)	32(18)	103(58)	1.7288	1.01
History	8(5)	6(3)	18(10)	83(47)	62(35)	1.9548	1.00
Computer	1(0)	9(5)	45(25)	38(22)	84(48)	1.8983	0.99

4.3.1 Youth

In the post-intervention questionnaire, student respondents exhibited improved perceptions of themselves overall when compared to the pre-intervention data (top half of Table 4.9). In each of the categories assessed, the majority of the students who had completed the mentoring program

intervention reported that they perceived themselves as average or better than their peers in all four response categories. In fact, what is particularly noteworthy is that in three of the four categories, students perceived themselves as *better* than their peers, a dramatic difference when compared to the pre-intervention response data. Significant gains were still observed in the category of autonomous actions, though one more student viewed himself or herself as worse or average when compared to the respondents who indicated better. Still, the fact that the response to this item in the pre-intervention questionnaire was so overwhelmingly negative in terms of students' perceptions of their own ability to do things independently suggests that the mentoring program had significant positive benefits for the students who completed the program.

The changes that are observed in this particular response category (top half of Table 4.10) are strikingly different from the results in the same category that were obtained in the pre-intervention survey. After participating in the mentoring program intervention, the minority of students perceived themselves as failing or below average in all academic categories; there was a dramatic shift in self-perception to average or above

average academic performance and academic status. Even in subjects in which students perceived themselves as "Average," especially mathematics, the post-intervention results witnessed a significant shift to the "Above Average" category.

When comparing boys and girls (Figure 4.4), it can be seen that boys and girls both benefitted from the intervention. Post-intervention, the mean academic perception of both genders improved by approximately 50%. While there is no significant difference between the gender groups, this does show a significant difference in academic perception (how they felt they were doing in five subjects) pre- and post-intervention (* is significant at $P<0.05$, paired t-test).

Similarly, looking at the younger (13-14 year olds) and older (16-17 year olds) groups (Figure 4.5), there is a comparable trend. While there does not appear to be a significant difference among the age groups, Figure 4.5 shows that the intervention improved the academic perception of both groups by about 50%. This was, again, as significant change at $P<0.05$ using the paired t-test.

From the results of the post-intervention questionnaire, it is logical to interpret the results as indicative of the fact that the intervening mentoring

program provided a positive impact on the academic outcomes of students who participated in the intervention.

Figure 4.4 Youth perception of academic success (girls and boys)

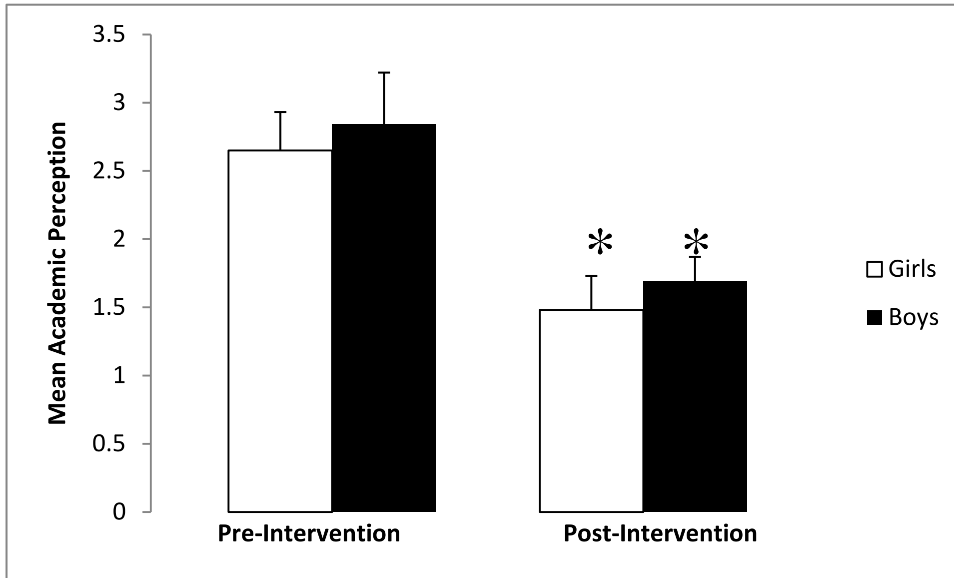
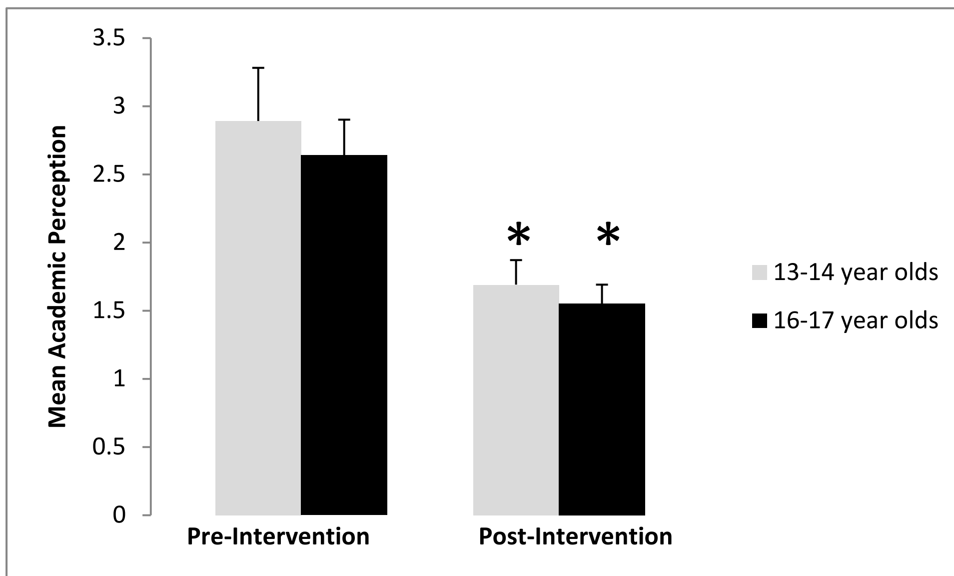


Figure 4.5 Youth perception of academic success (younger kids and older kids)



4.3.2 Parents

The results presented in the bottom half of Table 4.9 represent a dramatic and statistically significant shift when considered in comparison to the pre-intervention responses of parents in this same category. Overall, parents seemed to view their child, who participated in the mentoring intervention, as performing at least in the "Average" range in three of the response categories (peer interactions, parental interactions, and autonomous play and work), if not "Better."

The one exception to this observation is the item that questions parent respondents about their perceptions regarding their child's relationships with siblings. Curiously, the response array pattern in the post-intervention questionnaire points to a worsening in the sibling relationship, rather than an improvement. Recall that in the pre-intervention questionnaire, parents perceived their child's relationship with siblings as better than any relationships or behaviors outside of the family environment. In the post-intervention data, however, more parents viewed their child's sibling relationships as "Worse" than those of their child's peers, fewer parents viewed their child's sibling relationships as "Average" when compared to the sibling relationships of their child's

peers, and the minority of parents viewed their child's sibling relationships as "Better" than those of their child's peers. The psychological and familial dynamics that may explain such a response will be discussed at greater length later in Chapter Five.

With respect to the post-intervention results of the perception of the parents regarding their child's academic performance (bottom half of Table 4.10), the data indicate a positive trend of improvement. The parents shared perceptions of substantial improvement in all five of the academic areas measured. In addition, the differences in the "Above Average" reports when compared to pre-intervention data are remarkable. Whereas the pre-intervention questionnaire data revealed single digit responses in the "Above Average" response for three out of the five subjects assessed, in the post-intervention data, all five academic categories registered double digit responses in the "Above Average" range.

Looking at the younger group (13-14 year olds) versus the older group (16-17 year olds)(Figure 4.6), mean academic perception by parents significantly improved post-intervention for both groups (*, $P<0.05$, paired t-test) even though there was no significant difference between the

groups. This same trend was also evident for parent perception of academics among boys and girls (Figure 4.7).

The researcher's conclusion, based on the post-intervention data and their comparison with the pre-intervention responses, is that the majority of the parent respondents might attribute improved academic performance to the Fresh Start mentoring program in which the child participated, an interpretation which seems particularly solid when considered alongside the student response data. In the tables below, we shall determine whether teacher data further affirm this interpretation.

Figure 4.6 Parent perception of academic success (younger and older kids)

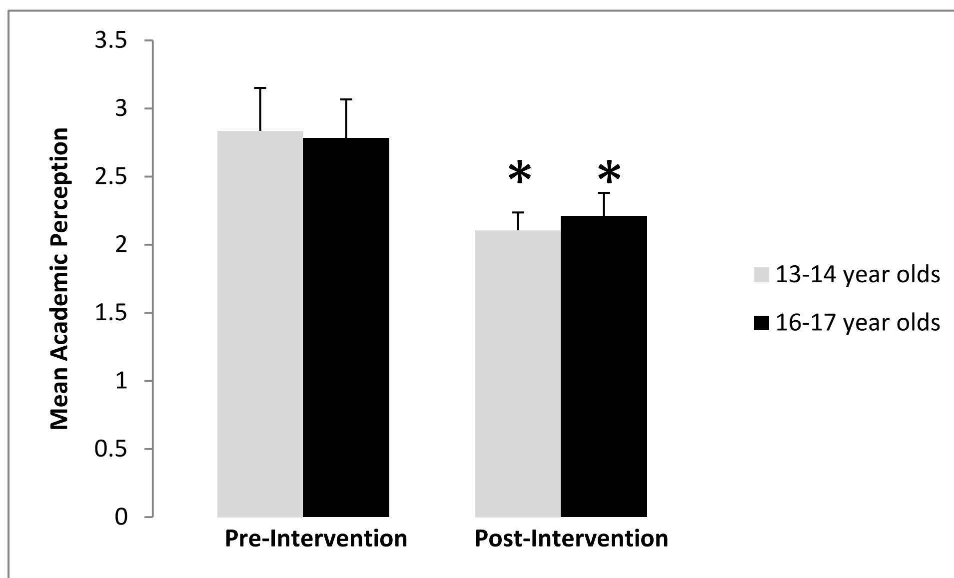
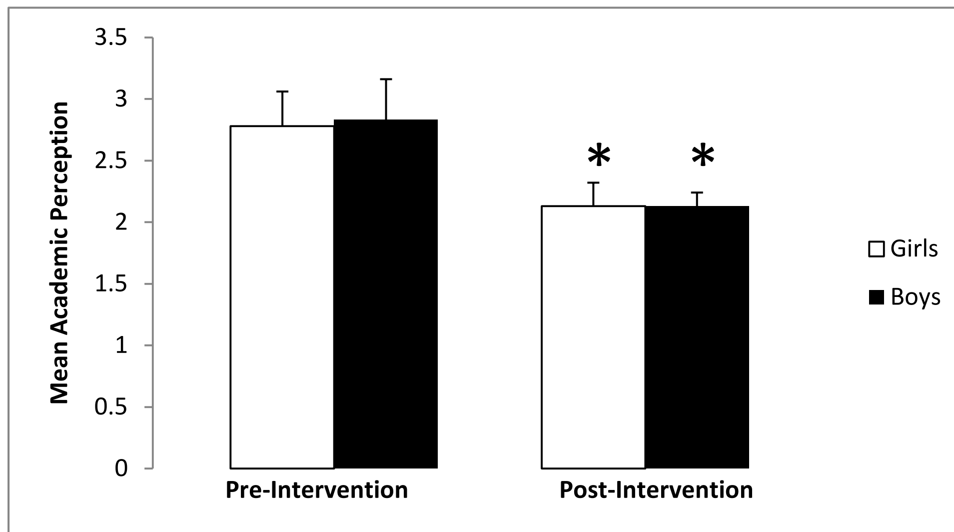


Figure 4.7. Parent perception of academic success (girls and boys)



4.3.3 Teachers

In regards to the academic performance of the students as perceived by their teachers (Table 4.11), the results of the post-intervention questionnaire also indicate a perception that the students' academic achievement and competency improved after the intervention of the mentoring program was provided. While the responses for "Far below grade" remained relatively consistent compared to the pre-intervention data, there was a significant decline in the number of "Somewhat below grade" responses, and a concurrent increase in the "Somewhat above grade" and "Far above grade categories." With respect to "At grade level," the number of responses in this category remained fairly

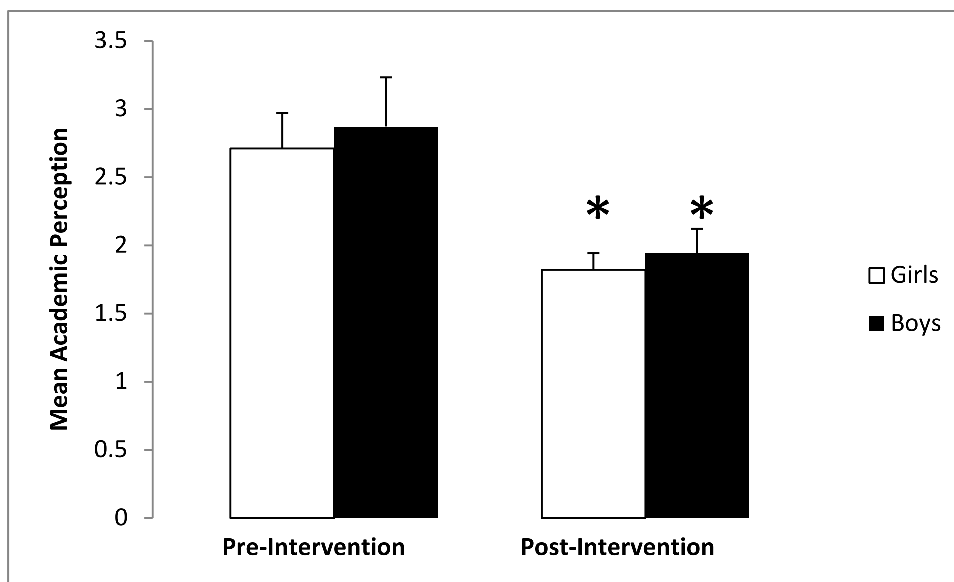
consistent, though nominal declines were observed in all five subject areas; it seems that students who were perceived by teachers as performing at grade level during the pre-intervention phase were re-assessed and viewed as "Above" or "Far above" their grade level expectations after the mentoring intervention had been introduced and completed.

Although the teacher results in the pre-intervention questionnaire were far more positive than the results in similar categories when compared to the response sets of both students and their parents—an outcome which was attributed to the fact that teacher respondents are evaluating their entire classes and not just at-risk students—the results of the post-intervention questionnaire surpassed the researcher's expectations for anticipated improvements in this particular response category.

As shown in Table 4.11, teacher respondents report that the majority of their students who had received the intervention now perform far above average. Again, comparing boys and girls (Figure 4.8), the teachers' perceptions of the academic performances of both groups improved significantly after the intervention (* is significant, $P<0.05$, paired t-test), but there was no significant difference in perception between the boy and

girl groups pre- or post-intervention. While the researcher acknowledges that there may be other confounding variables which produced positive improvements in the students' academic achievements as perceived by their teachers, the researcher believes it is safe to assume that at least some of the improvement is attributable to the Fresh Start mentoring program.

Figure 4.8 Teachers' perceptions of academic performance



4.4 Comparison of Pre- and Post- Intervention Results: Analysis and Discussion

To verify and validate the data presented in the preceding tables, a t-test was performed. To evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention program and determine the statistical significance of the differences between the

pre- and post- intervention questionnaire responses, the use of a paired-sample t-test in the computed mean was employed. The t-test is the most commonly used method to evaluate the differences in means between two groups. For example, the t-test can be used to test for a difference in test scores between a group of patients that was administered a pharmacological intervention and a control group whose members received a placebo. Theoretically, the t-test can be used even if the sample sizes are very small (e.g., as small as 10; some researchers claim that even smaller numbers are possible, see Walliman & Bousmaha, 2001), as long as the variables are normally distributed within each group and the variation of scores in the two groups is not different. As mentioned previously, the normality assumption can be evaluated by looking at the distribution of the data (via histograms) or by performing a normality test. The equality of variances assumption can be verified with the F-test. Alternately, the Levene's test, which is considered more robust, can be used. In this regard, the researcher can evaluate the differences in means between two groups using one of the nonparametric alternatives to the t-test (Walliman & Bousmaha, 2001).

The p-level reported with a t-test represents the probability of error involved in accepting the research

hypothesis about the existence of a difference. Technically speaking, the p-level represents the probability of error associated with rejecting the hypothesis of no difference between the two categories of observations (corresponding to the groups) in the population when, in fact, the hypothesis is supported (Walliman & Bousmaha, 2001).

Walliman and Bousmaha (2001) suggest that if the difference is in the predicted direction, the researcher can consider only one half (one "tail") of the probability distribution and thus divide the standard p-level reported with a t-test (a "two-tailed" probability) by two. However, Creswell (1994) suggests that the researcher should always report the standard, two-tailed t-test probability. When testing for a relationship between two variables, sometimes there is a third variable, which can also influence results.

4.4.1 Youth

Table 4.12 Summary of Means (Youth Perceptions)

	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention
Get along with your brothers and sisters?	2.28	1.4576
Get along with other kids?	2.29	1.4350
Get along with your parents?	2.40	1.5367
Do things by yourself?	2.48	1.5593
English	2.42	1.4350
Mathematics	3.04	1.7797
Science	2.59	1.4972
History	3.18	1.7797
Computer	2.61	1.6045

Overall Mean	2.5872223	1.5649667

Table 4.13 Samples statistics (youth)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE	2.5872	200	0.32	0.11
POST	1.5650	177	0.13	0.04

Tables 4.12 and 4.13 display the number of cases, mean value, standard deviation, and standard error for the pair(s) of variables compared in the samples t-test procedure. Since the samples t-test compares the means for the two variables, it is useful to know what the mean values are. Based on the data included in the presentations above, the overall computed means for pre- and post-intervention questionnaires are 2.5872 and 1.5650, respectively.

Table 4.14 Samples t-test (youth)

Mean (pre- and post-)		1.0223
Std. Deviation		0.20
Std. Error Mean		0.07
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	**Lower**	0.8718
	Upper	1.1727
t-value		15.67
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000

As previously discussed, the paired-samples t-test procedure compares the means of two variables that represent the same group at different times (e.g. before

and after an event, such as the mentoring intervention used in the present study) or related groups. The mean values for the two variables are displayed in the paired samples statistics table. Since there is a low significance value for the t-test (typically less than 0.05), which is 0.000, this indicates that there is a significant difference between the two variables (pre- and post- intervention results as reported by survey respondents). In addition, if the confidence interval for the mean difference does not contain zero, this also indicates that the difference is significant.

4.4.2 Parents

Table 4.15 Summary of Means (Parent Perceptions)

	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention
Get along with his/her brothers and sisters?	2.32	1.5706
Get along with other kids?	2.445	1.5367
Behave with his/her parents?	2.41	1.548
Do things alone?	2.45	1.8305
English	2.335	1.9944
Mathematics	2.99	2.0226
Science	2.53	2.1977
History	3.025	2.1073
Computer	2.685	2.0452
Overall Mean	2.60875	1.9103

Table 4.16 Samples Statistics (Parent)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE	2.5767	200	0.27	0.09
POST	1.8726	177	0.16	0.09

With regards to the overall perceptions reported by the parents who participated in the study, Tables 4.15 and 4.16 display the summary statistics. The computed values for the pre- and post- intervention questionnaire are 2.5767 and 1.8726, respectively. These computed values of mean and standard deviation were used to run the paired samples t-test.

Table 4.17 Samples Test (Parent)

Mean (pre- and post-)		0.7041
Std. Deviation		0.24
Std. Error Mean		0.08
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	**Lower**	0.5187
	Upper	0.8895
t-value		8.759
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000

Table 4.17 illustrates the results of a sample t-test. The computed t-value was 8.759, with a 0.000 significance level. Using these results, the study revealed that there was a significant difference between the perceptions of parents prior to the intervention and after the intervention, as indicated by the comparative analysis of their survey results.

4.4.3 Teachers

Table 4.18 Summary of Means (Teachers' Perceptions)

	Pre-intervention	Post-intervention
English	2.41	1.6893
Mathematics	3.045	2.0056
Science	2.57	1.7288
History	3.135	1.9548
Computer	2.7	1.8983
Overall Mean	2.7720	1.8554

Table 4.19 Samples Statistics (Teachers)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE	2.7720	200	0.31	0.14
POST	1.8554	177	0.14	0.06

The overall perceptions of the teacher respondents in regards to academic performance of their students are displayed in Tables 4.18 and 4.19. The computed values for the pre- and post- intervention questionnaires survey are 2.7720 and 1.8554, respectively. These computed values of mean and standard deviation were used to run the samples t-test.

Table 4.20 Samples Test (Teachers)

Mean (pre- and post-)		0.9166
Std. Deviation		0.19
Std. Error Mean		0.08
95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	**Lower**	0.6828
	Upper	1.1504
t-value		10.885

Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

Table 4.20 indicates the results of a sample t-test based on the perceptions of teachers with regards to the academic performance of their students. The computed t-value was 10.885, with a 0.000 significance level. By analyzing these results, the researcher determined that there is a significant difference between the perceptions of teachers when their pre- and post- intervention questionnaire results are compared. The results thus seem to suggest that mentoring programs among at-risk youth provide positive benefits that improve both behavioral and academic performance.

4.5 Coefficient of Variation Analysis

The previous t-test analysis only indicates if there are relative differences of the results of pre- and post-intervention. Since the previous discussion justified that pre- and post- intervention results vary from each other as perceived by the youth, parents, and teachers, then the coefficient of variation determines which variable (i.e. pre- and post- intervention) performs well with respect to the computed mean and standard deviation.

When the standard deviation is expressed as a percentage of the mean the resulting type of relative dispersion is called coefficient of variation (C.V.)

(Creswell, 1994). The coefficient of variation is always expressed as a percentage.

Formula

$$CV = \frac{S}{\bar{x}}(100\%)\, forSampleData$$

$$V = \frac{\sigma}{m}(100\%)\, forPopulationData$$

where

CV = coefficient of variation

S = sample standard deviation

$\bar{x}$ = sample mean

S = population standard deviation

M = population mean

Table 4.21 Coefficient of Variation of Youth Perceptions
Samples statistics (youth)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE	2.5872	200	0.32	0.11
POST	1.565	177	0.13	0.04

To test the impact of mentoring with respect to the given data of the youth, the use of coefficient of variation comparison was also employed.

As previously stated, coefficient of variation indicates the relative magnitude of the standard deviation as compared with the mean of the distribution of measurement. It allows the comparison of the variability of

data with different measurement units. Since the data provide the standard deviations and sample means, the variability of the data that tests the performance of the variables (i.e. pre- and post- intervention) can be evaluated.

Using the previous formula, the following results were gathered:

For Pre- intervention (youth):

$$CV = \frac{S}{\bar{x}}(100\%)$$

=(0.32/2.5872)(100%)
=12.37%

For Post-intervention (youth):

$$CV = \frac{S}{\bar{x}}(100\%)$$

= (0.13/1.565)(100%)
=8.31%

Based on the computation, the pre- intervention CV is more variable than post- intervention. Actually, a lower degree of variability represents effectiveness since these data become closer to each other. Since the computed coefficient of variation for pre- and post intervention are 12.37% and 8.31%, respectively, then it follows that post-intervention surpasses the results of pre-intervention which signifies improvement as perceived by the youth.

Table 4.22 Coefficient of Variation of Parents' Perceptions

Samples statistics (parents)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE	2.5767	200	0.27	0.09
POST	1.8726	177	0.16	0.09

For Pre-intervention (parents):

$$CV = \frac{S}{x}(100\%)$$

$=(0.27/2.5767)(100\%)$

$=10.48\%$

For Post-intervention (parents):

$$CV = \frac{S}{x}(100\%)$$

$= (0.16/1.8726)(100\%)$

$=8.54\%$

Similar to the previous computation, the pre-intervention CV is more variable than post-intervention as perceived by the parents. Since the computed coefficient of variation for pre- and post intervention are 10.48% and 8.54%, respectively, then it also follows that post-intervention surpasses the results of pre-intervention according to the surveyed parents.

Table 4.23 Coefficient of Variation of Teachers' Perceptions

Samples statistics (Teachers)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE	2.7720	200	0.31	0.14
POST	1.8554	177	0.14	0.06

For Pre-intervention (teachers):

$$CV = \frac{S}{\bar{x}}(100\%)$$

=(0.31/2.7720)(100%)

=11.18%

For Post-intervention (teachers):

$$CV = \frac{S}{\bar{x}}(100\%)$$

= (0.14/1.8554)(100%)

=7.55%

From the above computation, one can determine that pre-intervention CV is greater than post-intervention CV according to teachers. These results confirmed that mentoring programs among at-risk youth provide positive benefits that improve their academic performance.

4.6 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher presented the results of the study in tabular format, supported by narrative that explained the numerical data. Significant improvements were noted when the pre-intervention questionnaire data and the

post-intervention questionnaire data were compared, and this observation held true across all three respondent groups: students, parents, and teachers.

The raw data were then subjected to a variety of tests, formulae, and computations, all of which further substantiated the researcher's interpretation that the mentoring program intervention appeared to yield significant improvements in both areas that were assessed: interpersonal behavior and academic performance. The tests confirmed that the improvements were statistically significant. The researcher can thus claim with confidence that the Fresh Start mentoring program clearly benefited the 177 of the 200 students who completed both the program and the full research study.

In the following chapter, the researcher will discuss the results. The purpose of Chapter Five will be to explain some of the changes between pre-and post-intervention behavior and academics that were noted in the data. In addition, the researcher will discuss the implications of the findings of this study and offer a list of recommendations regarding future research in this area.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the data collected during the course of the research study were presented and were analyzed statistically. The analysis yielded the conclusion that the changes perceived and reported in both students' interpersonal behavior and academic performance were positive when the pre-intervention questionnaires and post-intervention questionnaires were compared. This conclusion held true across all three respondent groups: students, parents, and teachers. The data therefore confirmed the researcher's hypothesis that the Fresh Start mentoring program, which was the intervention introduced to the participating students, would have positive impacts on participating students' behavior and academics.

This chapter discusses the findings. Specifically, it is important to understand what the data and their interpretation signify, not only for the particular population studied, but for students in general who have been deemed at-risk. The results of the study are encouraging with respect to making the claim that mentoring programs can be effective for at-risk youth; however, there are some important caveats that need to be explained, and

potential limitations that are worth exploring before such a generalization can be made safely. Finally, the researcher will conclude with a list of recommendations regarding future research in this subject area.

5.2 Discussion of the Results

While it is accurate to say that the results from students, parents, and teachers indicated that the Fresh Start mentoring program produced positive improvements in students' interpersonal and academic functioning, leaving the claim at that — even if substantiated statistically, as is the case here — is oversimplifying a complex issue. The researcher acknowledges that there are many reasons why students' behavior and scores could have improved, including a host of reasons that she would not have been able to identify given the methodological boundaries of the research design that was selected for the study.

Improvements in the family and, specifically, parents' encouragement and enforcement of certain behavioral and academic standards could be one confounding variable influencing the improvements that were recorded. Similarly, teacher and school emphasis on improved skills and performance could also confound the data, contributing to the positive gains that the students made. The researcher argues, however, that family improvements in particular

would not account for the across-the-board improvements indicated in every category included in the questionnaire because such improvements would be individual, not collective (McLeod & Edwards, 1995). As McLeod and Edwards (1995) explained in their study on the subject of the environmental and sociological determinants of children's responses to poverty, one of the popular explanations offered to describe the etiology of many phenomena affecting children, whether positive or negative, is the family of origin effect. Yet as these researchers point out, children spend most of their time away from the family, and particularly regarding educational outcomes, there are many other influences that shape students' performance and attitudes.

Instead, the one variable that held constant for *all* of the students participating in the study was the introduction of the mentoring intervention. Thus, one can contend that any confounding variables are negligible in their influence on the general trends that were reported in Chapter Four.

How, though, does one explain one deviation from the response categories when the pre- and post-intervention questionnaire data were compared? The researcher is speaking here of the decline in the quality of students'

relationships with their siblings. In the analysis of the post-intervention data, the researcher noticed that there was a significant decrease in parents’ positive perceptions of their child’s healthy interactions with siblings. This finding was particularly compelling because the students, responding to the same item on the Child Behavior Checklist form, reported that they perceived their sibling relationships to have *improved* significantly, achieving a level that they considered to be “Better” than many of their peers.

The researcher contends that both the parents’ negative perceptions, as reflected in the post-intervention questionnaire, and the compelling difference observed between student responses and parent responses to this item may be explained by simple family dynamics. It is likely that parents who had one child receiving an intervention and one who did not, even if the children were different ages, may have experienced some resistance or resentment on the part of the non-participating child. As the sibling noticed improvements in the child participating in the mentoring program, he or she might have desired the same sort of benefit, but might have acted out in a maladaptive way to gain the attention of the parent, who had likely focused on the child receiving the intervention, possibly

offering him or her more praise for improving grades and behavior in the school.

Such a finding is consistent with existing studies on sibling pairs in which one child receives an intervention and one does not. In their 1994 study on the effects of early intervention programs in high-poverty, high-risk communities, Yale researchers Seitz and Apfel (1994) found that the sibling who received the intervention performed significantly better in terms of academics and social situations than a sibling who did not receive the intervention; furthermore, the child who did not receive the intervention experienced deteriorating familial relationships. The researchers attributed the poor outcomes among the control group siblings not just to the absence of the intervention, but to what they termed "indirect maternal effects," which they defined as the mother turning her attention away from the poorer-performing child to the one who was performing better (Seitz & Apfel, 1994: 677). The Seitz and Apfel (1994) study is an important complement to the present study because it may allude to some practical programmatic issues that should be considered by parents, teachers, and mentoring program administrators. In a family where two or more siblings may be deemed at-risk,

it may be indicated — and indeed, ethical — to offer the intervention to all siblings, not just one.

Still, the Seitz and Apfel (1994) study does not explain why the participating students responded that their sibling relationships had improved in the post-intervention questionnaire. The researcher suggests that the positive response array of the students in reporting significant improvements in the sibling relationship may simply have been a sort of halo effect. Holbrook (1983) explained the halo effect and its implications as follows: “Researchers who work with attitude models based on attribute ratings encounter the danger that affective overtones may distort perceptual judgments” (p. 247). In other words, with respect to the present study, students perceived themselves as having improved universally, in general, across all of the measured items. As a result, whether they truly believed that their sibling relationships had improved may have been colored by their general positive feelings about their participation in the mentoring program. The researcher cautions, however, that this is merely a hypothesis on her part. Nonetheless, the halo effect is a pervasive problem with respect to questionnaire, survey, and interview methodologies in which the researcher is attempting to capture perceptions (Holbrook, 1983). The

halo effect has also been noted repeatedly as a potential pitfall in studies related to teachers and students (Boatright, Phelps, & Schmitz, 1986; Coren, 1998; Meltzer, Katzir-Cohen, Miller, & Roditi, 2001). To confirm or deny the influence of the halo effect in the present study would require further research.

Clearly, the Fresh Start mentoring program influenced positive outcomes in all of the target areas. There are many observations that can be made in response to this finding. First, the mentoring program intervention was relatively short in duration, yet produced remarkably positive outcomes in both the behavior and academic performance of students who had been identified formerly as at-risk. If such significant gains can be observed after just six months of intervention, it stands to reason that a longer course of mentoring might be even more beneficial to students. The researcher offers a caveat, however.

As indicated in the literature review, the relationship between the duration of a mentoring program and positive outcomes is one that has confounded researchers and which has produced conflicting claims. Some researchers contend that after an initial period of enthusiasm and demonstrable benefit, mentees, and sometimes mentors, too, reach a plateau beyond which mentoring is

less effective (Campbell, 1995; Hobson, 2002). As Reid (1993) noted, all stakeholders in the mentoring process should be aware of the possibility of plateau, and should plan for plateau in their policy and program development phase so that the significant gains that can be made are not lost or undermined. More research is needed to determine whether there is a threshold past which the positive effects of mentoring may either plateau or enter a reversal phase.

Also, as noted earlier, each mentoring program is designed for a specific population and as such, each emphasizes distinct features and operates according to a distinct format and structure. While the Fresh Start mentoring program was clearly effective for the population of students who participated in this study, it is not safe to say that the positive outcomes of the study could be generalized to any and all student populations. Different populations have distinct needs, and mentoring programs are not — nor should they be — one size fits all.

In particular, the researcher notes that the female to male ratio of participating students who received Fresh Start mentoring and participated in this program was 4:1. The researcher had not planned for this degree of gender difference in the study, and as such, had not included a

means of determining what the significance of the disproportionate gender representation might have on the outcome. Specifically, the researcher is unable to make any generalizations regarding the value of mentoring programs for female mentees; however, she recommends that this topic be addressed by future studies. While there are many existing studies on the subject of the benefits of mentoring for girls, many of the studies were not mixed-gender studies; many report on outcomes of mentoring programs designed specifically for girls (Lucas, 2001; Ryan & Olasov, 2000).

Finally, while the researcher is extremely encouraged by the universally positive results, particularly given that the gains were perceived and reported by all three participant response groups (students, parents, and teachers), there is the question of whether the gains experienced or perceived will be sustainable over the long term. Specifically, the researcher identifies two concerns:

(1) Are the positive effects reported by students, parents, and teachers reflective of actual improvements (which could be measured by academic scores, sibling reports, peer reports, and the like), or are they possibly reflective of students' improved self-esteem and increased engagement, which perhaps influenced positive responses in

the post-intervention questionnaires? We may understand this as another type of halo effect. While the present study cannot answer this question, and although the researcher believes that the inclusion of parent and teacher data helps mitigate this concern, it is a possibility that should be mentioned.

(2) Will positive effects, whether perceived, actual, or some combination of the two, be sustained over the long-term? In other words, while the Fresh Start mentoring program clearly produced positive outcomes, can students retain the benefits over a longitudinal period? This question is particularly critical because its answer may indicate whether ongoing or periodic support is needed once a student completes a mentoring program. Again, the present study cannot answer this question, as it was not longitudinal in nature. However, this is one area that is deserving of future research, an issue that will be explored at greater length below.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Although there is an impressive and expansive body of existing research on the subject of mentoring programs for students, much more research is needed on this subject. As the researcher alluded above, there are a number of areas that warrant further empirical scrutiny if researchers,

educators, parents, and teachers are to understand what makes a mentoring program successful, what kinds of changes it produces, under what circumstances, and for how long. Below, the researcher offers recommendations for future research.

5.3.1 Longitudinal Study of Mentoring Programs and Their Outcomes

There is a great deal of research substantiating the benefits of different types of mentoring programs; however, research is lacking in explaining whether the benefits are sustained at intervals measured after the intervention has been completed. This is particularly true for young, at-risk students. If researchers can substantiate whether certain positive outcomes are maintained over a long period of time, or, conversely, whether certain positive outcomes diminish significantly over time, their findings can result in beneficial policy and program changes in actual mentoring interventions that are offered to students who have been identified as at-risk.

5.3.2 Program Satisfaction & Key Variables Producing Change

The present study did not examine the specific elements of the mentoring program to determine which aspects of the program were responsible — or at least perceived as responsible — for producing positive change.

5.3.3 Determine the Influence of the Variable of Time on Short-and Long-Term Measures of Successful Outcomes

In a compelling study of 1,138 at-risk adolescents who participated in a Big Brothers, Big Sisters mentoring program, researchers Grossman and Rhodes (2004)reported that adolescents who sustained a mentoring relationship for one year or longer experienced the greatest gains, and that positive outcomes diminished incrementally in proportion to the duration of the adolescent's participation in the program. What was particularly compelling about the Grossman and Rhodes (2004) study, however, was the finding that adolescents in the study who terminated the mentoring relationship after a brief period actually experienced academic and behavioral outcomes that were *worse* than academic and behavioral performance as these were recorded prior to entering the mentoring program. Thus, it seems reasonable to think that the duration and perhaps the frequency of the mentoring program are critical variables that must be considered in future research. If the intervention of the mentoring program can actually produce harmful outcomes, then the particular ethical challenges posed by offering this intervention may need to be addressed.

5.4 Suggestions for Methodological Constructs and Considerations

5.4.1 Consider the Confounding Variable of the Halo Effect

The researcher acknowledges that one of the limitations of the present study is that it did not anticipate the possibility of the halo effect and the influence that it could exert, albeit unconsciously, on the participants' responses. Yet the influence of the halo effect may well have confounded the response patterns of all three respondent groups, students in particular. In future studies of mentoring programs, researchers should be aware of the likelihood that the halo effect can occur in methodological frameworks that rely upon questionnaires, surveys, or interviews as the instruments of data collection.

In the case of the present study, there are several measures that could have been taken to mitigate the halo effect, and which the researcher offers as suggestions for future scholars in this area. By collecting information from additional sources that know the children participating in the study, the researcher could have collected another data set that would have served to provide another source of corroboration. This practice is referred to as triangulation, and it is generally believed

that reliability is increased as the number of discrete data sources increases (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Cohen et al. (2000) also suggest that another way to mitigate the influence of the halo effect is to utilize an external observer to corroborate the reports of the respondent groups; however, such an approach may not be feasible or appropriate in school settings.

5.4.2 Corroborate Self-Report Data Sets with Other Types of Data

As the researcher has already noted, the use of research instruments that elicit self-reported responses from participant groups can be limiting in terms of the validity and reliability of the data. As Cohen et al. (2000) remarked, "subjective measures such as self-reports, by their very nature, raise questions about the external validation of respondents' revelations" (p. 354). The researcher attempted to control the negative influence of this possibility by using three distinct self-reporting participant groups — students, parents, and teachers; however, the data could have been further enriched and varied by the incorporation of an entirely different kind of data set. To validate the participants' responses about their academic outcomes, the researcher could have sought permission to review test scores and grade reports and

compared these to the responses for each child. For the behavioral measure, the researcher could have corroborated the participants self-reports about improvement by accessing school records regarding the number of behavioral incidents recorded before, during, and after the intervention period.

5.4.3 Incorporate Baseline, Periodic, and Post-Intervention Evaluations and Outcome Measures

Were the researcher to replicate the present study, she would seek permission from school administrators to examine the other types of data mentioned above — test grades, grade reports, and behavioral incident reports — before, during, and after the application of the intervention. It is impossible to determine the efficacy of an intervention if there is not an understanding of the pre-intervention baseline that describes the state of the study participants before receiving the intervention.

In addition to the recommendations that are offered for future investigators, the researcher offers recommendations for program administrators, which are articulated below.

5.5 Recommendations for Mentoring Programs

5.5.1 Keep Abreast of Research Literature

This recommendation may seem obvious enough, but as Johnson (2002) pointed out, the sad fact of the matter is that many program administrators do not familiarize themselves with the seminal literature in their field of work, nor do they keep abreast of recent and emerging research findings. In this "age of measuring results" (Johnson, 2002, p. 1), it is more important than ever that those who plan and oversee programs such as mentoring services for at-risk youth stay engaged with the research literature.

One benefit of doing so is developing a sense of what features of a program or service are important, why, and how they should be offered to maximize benefit for all involved. Another compelling reason to stay abreast of current developments as they are reported in research studies is that funders — especially those who support or invest in non-profits — are increasingly expecting program administrators to be accountable for outcomes by proving their measurable worth (Cutt & Murray, 2000). By keeping current with research developments, program administrators can begin to develop a vocabulary for accountability, as

well as gain insight into how accountability can be measured and reported.

5.5.2 Maintain Thorough Records and Engage in Your Own Research

Program administrators are in a powerful position to advance the current understanding about what works in mentoring programs, why, how, and under what circumstances and conditions. Mentoring programs have the potential to serve as valuable storehouses of research data, but the value of such data is only assured when thorough record-keeping has been a feature of the program. Accurate and thorough record-keeping will not only benefit the program as it seeks funding and support, but may provide insight into longitudinal outcomes as the program matures.

Finally, program administrators can consider how they and their programs can either participate in or spearhead their own research. Many students pursuing Masters or doctoral degrees would be likely to have an interest in gaining access to mentoring programs for research purposes, and a willing agency could be a valuable partner in the research process, although a significant amount of planning would need to occur in order to ensure logistical and ethical accountability. Alternately, mentoring programs can engage in their own research, whether formal or informal in

nature. With vast stores of data at their immediate disposal, program administrators are in a better position than almost anyone else to access primary source material that can help us understand more about what makes mentoring work as a positive intervention for academic and behavioral success. While they need not publish their findings, a periodic review of records can help mentoring program administrators identify the variables that may be predictive of their program's positive outcomes, as well as areas that may be in need of improvement.

5.6 Conclusion

The increasing popularity of mentoring programs as a service that can be offered to students who have been identified as at-risk has drawn the attention of researchers, who are interested in substantiating whether the programs are effective in achieving their identified goals.

Overall, this study had been able to meet its objectives. The result and findings showed that Fresh Start Mentoring Program had a significant impact to the academic and behavioral development of the students, based on the perceptions of the students, the teachers and the parents before and after undergoing the program. The quantitative or mathematical tests done enable to show the significant

factors involved in the impacts of Fresh Start, which include the connection or relationship of the students or youths, their parents and their teachers. The study enables to show the importance of having an open communications between these three important entities in learning and behavior of any individual. Lastly, the study also enables the author to present ways on how to improve the delivery and impact of Fresh Start, and that is to keep abreast of research literature and maintain thorough records and engage in own research.

Although the Fresh Start Mentoring Program that was the subject of the present study was deemed to produce positive and statistically significant outcomes in academic and behavioral measures among students who received a six-month course of mentoring, the findings should be interpreted with caution. Despite the fact that the researcher used three sources of data to corroborate findings, which were, for the most part consistent across all respondent groups and the vast majority of questionnaire items, the researcher acknowledges that unanticipated factors, including the halo effect, may have influenced the results in ways that cannot be discerned.

Nevertheless, the study is valuable because it suggests areas for future research, as well as identifies

recommendations for mentoring program administrators. While there is a rich and extensive body of literature on the subject of mentoring programs, there is still much more research that needs to be done if we are to understand what, exactly, makes mentoring work, for whom, and under what conditions.

REFERENCES

Achenbach, T. M., & Edelbrock, C. S. (1991). Behavior problems and competencies reported by parents of normal and disturbed children aged four through sixteen. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, *46*, 467-469.

Alessandri, M., Foster, S., Keating, L.M., & Tomishima, M.A. (2002). The effects of a mentoring program on at-risk youth. *Adolescence, 37*(148), 717.

Allen, T.D., & Eby, L.T. (2007). *The Blackwell handbook of mentoring: A multiple perspectives approach*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Amato, P.R. (2005). The impact of family formation change on the cognitive, emotional, and social well being of the next generation. *The Future of Children, 15*(2), 75-96.

Anderson, L.W., & Bourke, S.F. (2000). *Assessing affective characteristics in the schools.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Armitage, J. (2003). Diverting young people from the criminal justice system: What works? What's promising? Roundtable discussion, Australian Institute Criminology Conference, Canberra cited in Dawes, G., & Dawes, C. (2005) Mentoring 2: A program for 'at-risk' indigenous youth. *Youth Studies*, *24*(4), 45-49.

Arnold, A. R., Holland, J. L., Rollin, S. A., Rubin, R. I., & Solomon, S. (2003). A stress management curriculum for at-risk youth. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, *42*(1), 79.

Aughinbaugh, A., Pierret, C.R., & Rothstein, D.S. (2005). The impact of family structure transitions on youth achievement. *Demography, 42*(3), 447-468.

Azzam, A.M. (2007). Why students drop out. *Educational Leadership, 46*(7), 91-93.

Barnett, V. (1991). *Sample survey principles and methods*. London: Edward Arnold.

Barrow, F., Armstrong, M., Vargo, A., & Boothroyd, R. (2007). Understanding the findings of resilience-related research for fostering the development of African American adolescents. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 16*(2), 393-413.

Barth, R.P., Wildfire, J., & Green, R.L. (2006). Placement into foster care and the interplay of urbanicity, child behavior problems, and poverty. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 76*(3), 358-366.

Berlin, G.L. (2007). Rewarding the work of individuals: A counterintuitive approach to reducing poverty and strengthening families. *The Future of Children, 17*(2), 17-42.

Big Brothers/Sisters of America. (2006). *About us*. Retrieved on August 30, 2006 from http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.diJKKYPLJvH/b.1539781/k.4319/Mentors__The_Largest_Youth_Mentoring_Programs_from_Big_Brothers_Big_Sisters.htm.

Black, S., & Hausman, A. (2008). Adolescents'' views of guns in a high violence community. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *23*(5), 592-610.

Blanchard, L.T., Gurka, M.J., & Blackman, J.A. (2006). Emotional, developmental, and behavioral health of American children and their families: A report from the 2003 National Survey of Children's Health. *Pediatrics, 117*(6), 202-212.

Blanchette, C.M. (1997). At-risk and delinquent youth: Most programs lack coordinated federal efforts. Testimony before the Subcommittee on Youth Violence, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate Retrieved November 15, 2005, http://www.conginst.org.

Boatright, B., Phelps, L., & Schmitz, C.D. (1986). The effects of halo and leniency on cooperating teacher reports using Likert-type rating scales. *Journal of Educational Research, 79*(3), 151.

Booth, A., & Crouter, A.C. (2001). *Does it take a village?: Community effects on children, adolescents, and families.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Brocato, J., & Wagner, E.F. (2003). Harm reduction: A social work practice model and social justice agenda. *Health and Social Work, 28*(2), 117.

Brown, W.K. (2004). Resiliency and the mentoring factor: Many resiliency experts draw on their own autobiographical experiences of surmounting adversity. A common thread in these works is the power of mentors. *Reclaiming Children and Youth, 13*(2), 75.

Brudney, J.L. (1999). The effective use of volunteers: Best practices for the public sector. *Law and Contemporary Problems, 62*(4), 219.

Bryant, S.E. (2005). The impact of peer mentoring on organizational knowledge creation and sharing: An empirical study in a software firm. *Group and Organization Management, 30*(3), 319-338.

Bullis, M., Yovahoff, P., Mueller, G., & Havel, E. (2002). Life on the "outs" – Examination of the facility-to-community transition of incarcerated youth. *Exceptional Children*, *69*(7), 7-22.

Campbell-Whatley, G. D., Algozzine, B., & Obiakor, E. E. (1997). Using mentoring to improve academic programming for African American male youths with mild disabilities. *The School Counselor*, *44*, 362-367.

Cassel, R.N. (2003). A high school drop-out prevention program for the at-risk sophomore students. *Education, 123*(4), 649.

Census (2000). U.S. Census Bureau (online). Retrieved December 8, 2006. http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html.

Chaiken, M.R. (1998). *Violent neighborhoods—violent kids: What could be done with boys in D.C.* Alexandria, VA: LINC.

Chapin, J., & Coleman, G. (2006). Knowledge is power: A theory based approach to reducing school violence. *Journal of Family Violence, 21*(6), 381-386.

Chapman, J.F., Desai, R.A., Falzer, P.R., & Borum, R. (2006). Violence risk and race in a sample of youth in juvenile detention. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 4*(2), 170-184.

Cho, H., Hallfors, D.D., & Sanchez, V. (2005). Evaluation of a high school peer group intervention for at-risk youth. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 33*(3), 363-374.

Christie, K.(2006). Stateline: Counting the truants. *The Phi Delta Kappan, 87*(7), 485-486.

Clutterbuck, D. (2002). Why mentoring programs and relationships fail. *Link & Learn*.

Clutterbuck, D. & Ragins, B. R. (2002). *Mentoring and Diversity: An International Perspectives,* Butterworth-Heinemann.

Colley, H. (2003). Mentoring for social inclusion: A critical approach to nurturing successful mentoring relations. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Dannerbeck, A.M. (2005). Differences in parenting attributes, experiences, and behaviors of delinquent youth with and without a parental history of incarceration. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, 3*(3), 199-213.

Daughtry, D., Gibson, J., & Abels, A. (2009). Mentoring students and professionals with disabilities. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 40*(2), 201-205.

Dawes, G., & Dawes, C.(2005). Mentoring 2: A program for 'at-risk' indigenous youth. *Youth Studies*. *24*(4), 45-49.

Dishion, T.J., & Dodge, K.A. (2005). Peer contagion in intervention for children and adolescents: Moving toward an understanding of the ecology and dynamics of change. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 33*(3), 395-400.

DuBois, D.L., Holloway, B.E., Valentine, J.C., & Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *30*(2), 157-197.

DuBois, D.L., & Karcher, M.J. (2005). *Handbook of youth mentoring.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

DuBois, D.L., Holloway, B., Valentine, J., & Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-

analytic review. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *30*(2), 157-197.

DuBois, D.L., & Silverthorn, N. (2005). Natural mentoring relationships and adolescent health: Evidence from a national study. *American Journal of Public Health*, *95*(3), 518-524.

Eby, L.T., Allen, T.D., Evans, S.C., Ng, T., & DuBois, D.L. (2008). Does mentoring matter?: A multi-disciplinary meta-analysis comparing mentored and non-mentored individuals. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 72*(2), 254-267.

Erikson, E. (1994). *Childhood and society.* New York: W.W. Norton.

Fergusson, D.M., Horwood, L.J., & Ridder, E. (2005). Show me the child at seven: The consequences of conduct problems in childhood for psychosocial functioning in adulthood. *Journal of Child Psychology & Psychiatry, 46*(8), 837-849.

Fetsch, R.J., & Silliman, B. (2002). Which youth violence prevention programs work? *The Forum for Family and Consumer Issues*, *7*(1). [Electronic Version]. Retrieved on August 6, 2006 from http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/pub/2002w/ fetsch.html].

Fitzpatrick, M., Griswold, D.E., Kim, K.H., Lee, S.H., Liss, J.M., Nix-Williams, T.,Theoharis, R., & Walther-Thomas, C. (2006). Create effective mentoring relationships:

Strategies for mentor and mentee success. Intervention in School and Clinic, 41(4), 233.

Foundation Center. (2005). More American teenagers volunteer than adults, study finds. [Electronic Document]. Retrieved on August 30, 2006 http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/news/story.jhtml?id=124200002.

Franklin, S. (2007). Incidence and types of juvenile violence. *Encyclopedia of Juvenile Violence.* Westport, CT: Greenwood.

Frecknall, P., & Luks, A. (1992). An evaluation of parental assessment of the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program in New York City. *Adolescence*, *27*, 715-718.

Galbraith, M.W. (2003). Celebrating mentoring. *Adult Learning, 14*(1), 2.

Garris, D. (1998). Poverty, single-parent households, and youth at-risk behavior: An empirical study. *Journal of Economic Issues*, *32*(4), 1079-1105.

Gilchrist, L. D., Schinke, S. P., & Maxell, J. S. (1987). Life skills counseling for preventing problems in adolescence. *Journal of Social Service Research*, *10*, 73-84.

Government Performance and Results Act (1993). Retrieved December 8, 2006. http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/mgmt-gpra/gplaw2m.html.

Granallo, P.F., & Hanna, F.J. (2003) Incarcerated and court-involved adolescents: Counseling an at-risk population. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *81*(1), 11-18.

Greenberger, E., Chen, C., & Beam, M.R. (1998). The role of 'very important' non-parental adults in adolescent development. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *27*(3), 321.

Grossman, J. B., & Garry, E. M. (1997). Mentoring: A proven delinquency prevention strategy. *Juvenile Justice Bulletin*, April, 1-7. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Grossman, J. B., & Rhodes, J. E. (2004). The test of time: Predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *30*(2), 199-219.

Grossman, J. B., & Tierney, J. P. (1998). Does mentoring work? An impact study of the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. *Evaluation Review*, *22*, 403-426.

Hamilton, S. F., & Hamilton, M. A. (1992, March). Mentoring programs: Promise and paradox. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 546-550.

HOSTS. (2006). Systems to accelerate student achievement. [Electronic Document]. Retrieved on August 30, 2006 from http://www.hosts.com/.

Jekielek, S., Moore, K.A., & Hair, E.C. (2002). *Mentoring programs and youth development: A synthesis.* [Electronic

Version]. Retrieved on August 20, 2006 from http://www.childtrends.org/what_works/clarkwww/mentor/mentorrpt.pdf

Karcher, M.J., Kuperminc, G.P., Portwood, S.G., Sipe, C.L., & Taylor, A.S. (2006). Mentoring programs: A framework to inform program development, research, and evaluation. *Journal of Community Psychology, 34*(6), 709-725.

Keating, L.M., Tomishima, M.A., Foster, S., & Alessandri, M. (2002). The effects of a mentoring program on at-risk youth. *Adolescence*, *37*(148), 717-734.

Kennedy, R.L., & Morton, J.H. (1999). *Alternative strategies for teaching at-risk students*. New York: Peter Lang.

Kierkus, C.A., & Hewitt, J.D. (2009). The contextual nature of the family structure/delinquency relationship. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 37*(2), 123-132.

Lane, K.L. (2007). Identifying and supporting students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders within multilevel models: Data driven approaches to conducting secondary interventions with an academic emphasis. *Education and Treatment of Children, 30*(4), 135-164.

Larson, R. (2006). Positive youth development, willful adolescents, and mentoring. *Journal of Community Psychology, 34*(6), 677-689.

Laursen, E.K. (2000). Strength based practice with children in trouble. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, *9*(2), 70-75.

LeBlanc, L., Swisher, R., Vitaro, F., & Tremblay, R.E. (2007). School social climate and teachers' perceptions of classroom behavior problems: A 10 year longitudinal and multilevel study. *Social Psychology of Education, 10*(4), 429-442.

Leventhal, J.M. (2005). Getting prevention right: Maintaining the status quo is not an option. *Child Abuse and Neglect, 29*(3), 209-213.

Lipschitz-Elhawi, R., & Itzhaky, H. (2005). Social support, mastery, self-esteem, and individual adjustment among at-risk youth. *Child and Youth Care Forum, 34*(5), 329-346.

Lucas, K.F. (2001). The social construction of mentoring roles. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 9*(1), 23-47.

Markstrom, C.A., Li, X., Blackshire, L., & Wilfong, J.J. (2005). Ego strength development of adolescents involved in adult-sponsored structured activities. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 34*(2), 85-95.

Mechoulan, S. (2006). Divorce laws and the structure of the American family. *The Journal of Legal Studies, 35*(1), 143-174.

Miller, A. (2002). *Mentoring students and young people: A handbook of effective practice.* London: Kogan Page.

Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Masters and Doctoral studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Nelson, C., & Valliant, P. M. (1993). Personality dynamics of adolescent boys where the father was absent. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, *76*, 435-443.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2009). *Juvenile Violence Research*. (online). Retrieved February 3, 2009 http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.

Office of National Drug Control Policy (2006). *National drug control strategy* (online). http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov/publications/policy/ndcs06/

Office of Research Education Consumer Guide (1993). *Mentoring* http://www.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ConsumerGuides/mentor.html October.

100 Black Men of America. (2006). Mission. [Electronic Document]. Retrieved on August 30, 2006 from http://www.100blackmen.org/index.php? option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=40.

Page, M.E., & Stevens, A.H. (2005). Understanding racial differences in the economic costs of growing up in a single-parent family. *Demography, 42*(1), 75-90.

Pajares, F., & Urdan, T.C. (2006). *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents.* New York: Information Age Publishing.

Patterson, G. R., DeBaryshe, B. D., & Ramsey, E. (1989). A developmental perspective on antisocial behavior. *American Psychologist*, *44*, 329-335.

Philip, K. (2003). Youth mentoring: The American dream comes to the UK? *The British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, *31*(1), 101-112.

Portwood, S.G., Ayers, P.M., Kinnison, K.E., Waris, R.G., & Wise, D.L.(2005). YouthFriends: Outcomes from a school-based mentoring program. *The Journal of Primary Prevention, 26*(2), 129-188.

Prothrow-Stith, D., & Spivak, H.R. (2004). *Murder is no accident: Understanding and preventing youth violence in America.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Ragin, B.R. (1989). Barriers to mentoring: Female manager's dilemma. *Human Relations*, *42*, 50-56.

Rathgeb Smith, S. (2007). Social services and social policy. *Society, 44*(3), 54-59.

Rhodes, J. E. (1994). Older and wiser: Mentoring relationships in childhood and adolescence. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, *14*, 187-196.

Rhodes, J. & DuBois, D. (2008). 'Mentoring Relationships and Programs for Youth', *Current Directions in Psychological Science,* vol. 17, no. 4.

Roche, G. R. (1979). Much ado about mentors. *Harvard Business Review, 57*, 14-28.

Royse, D. (1998). Mentoring high-risk minority youth: Evaluation of the Brothers Project. *Adolescence*, *33*, 145-158.

Save the Children. (1999). Overview of Save the Children's National Mentoring Database [On-line]. Retrieved February 3, 2005 www.savethechildren.org/mentors2d.html.

Shufelt, J.L., & Cocozza, J.J. (2006). *Youth with mental health disorders in the juvenile justice system: Results from a multi-state prevalence study.* Washington, D.C.: National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice.

Slicker, E. K., & Palmer, D. J. (1993). Mentoring at-risk high school students: Evaluation of a school-based program. *The School Counselor*, *40*, 327-334.

Slovak, K., Carlson, K., & Helm, L. (2007). The influence of family violence on youth attitudes. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 24*(1), 77-99.

Snyder, H. N., & Sickmund, M. (2006). *Juvenile offenders and victims: 2006 national report*. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Spencer, R. (2006). Understanding the mentoring process between adolescents and adults. *Youth and Society, 37*(3), 287-315.

Stephen, G. (1997). Youth at risk: saving the world's most precious resource. *The Futurist*, *31*, 2.

Struchen, W., & Porta, M. (1997). From role modeling to mentoring for African American youth: Ingredients for successful relationships. *Preventing School Failure*, *41*(3), 119-123.

Steuart Watson, T. & Skinner, C. (2004). 'Encyclopedia of School Psychology', *Birkhauser.*

Thornberry, T.P., Krohn, M.D., Lizotte, A.J., Smith, C.A., & Tobin, K. (2003). *Gangs and delinquency in developmental perspective.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Thurber, C.A., Scanlin, M.M., Scheuler, L., & Henderson, K.A. (2007). Youth development outcomes of the camp experience: Evidence for multidimensional growth. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 36*(3), 241-254.

Tierney, J. P., Grossman, J., & Resch, N. L. (1995). *Making a difference: An impact study*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures.

Walsh, F. (2003). *Normal family processes: Growing diversity and complexity.* New York: Guilford Press.

Walker, C. D. (2005). The Pal/BBBS partnership evaluation of a cross-age mentoring program. Unpublished MA Thesis, Graduate School, University of Texas at Arlington.

Watts, E. L., & Eggelletion, L. (1999). Society's impact on adolescents and their sexuality. In: P. S. Carroll (Ed) *Using literature to help troubled teenagers cope with societal issues*. (pp. 79-110) Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Weinstein, S. (1999). *The educator's guide to substance abuse prevention*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Wight, R.G., Botticello, A.L., & Aneshensel, C.S. (2006). Socioeconomic context, social support, and adolescent mental health: A multilevel investigation. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 35*(1), 109-120.

Williams, G. (2005). Teenagers volunteer at double the rate of adults, government study finds. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy.* (Online Version). Retrieved on August 30, 2006 http://philanthropy.com/free/articles/v18/i05/050040.

Wilson-Brewer, R., Cohen, S., O'Donnel, L., & Goodman, I. (1991). Violence prevention for young adolescents: A survey of the state of the art. (ERIC, ED356442.)

Wodarski, J. S. (1988). Preventive health services for adolescents: A practice paradigm. *Social Work in Education* (pp. 200-225).

Youth Research and Technical Assistant Project (1993). *Assessment for at-risk youth*. Waltham, MA: Center for Human Resources, Brandeis University, Heller Graduate School, (pp. 3-4).

Wright, K. E. (1999). Just Say No: DARE doesn't work. Family Watch Library (online). Retrieved January 12, 2005, www.familywatch.org.

Zand, D.H., Thomson, N., Cervantes, R., Espiritu, R., Klagholz, D., Lablanc, L., & Taylor, A. (2009). The mentor-youth alliance: The role of mentoring relationships in promoting youth competence. *Journal of Adolescence, 32*(1), 1-17.

Zimmerman, M. A., Bingenheimer, J.B., & Notaro, P.C. (2002). Natural mentors and adolescent resiliency: A study with urban youth. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *30*(2), 221-43.

Please print CHILD BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST FOR AGES 6-18

For office use only
ID #

CHILD'S FULL NAME First	Middle	Last

PARENTS' USUAL TYPE OF WORK, even if not working now. *(Please be specific — for example, auto mechanic, high school teacher, homemaker, laborer, lathe operator, shoe salesman, army sergeant.)*

FATHER'S TYPE OF WORK ______

MOTHER'S TYPE OF WORK ______

CHILD'S GENDER ☐ Boy ☐ Girl

CHILD'S AGE

CHILD'S ETHNIC GROUP OR RACE

TODAY'S DATE Mo.____ Date ____ Yr. ____

CHILD'S BIRTHDATE Mo.____ Date ____ Yr. ____

THIS FORM FILLED OUT BY: (print your full name)

______

GRADE IN SCHOOL ______

NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL ☐

Please fill out this form to reflect *your* view of the child's behavior even if other people might not agree. Feel free to print additional comments beside each item and in the space provided on page 2. ***Be sure to answer all items.***

Your gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Your relation to the child:

☐ Biological Parent ☐ Step Parent ☐ Grandparent
☐ Adoptive Parent ☐ Foster Parent ☐ Other (specify)______

I. Please list the sports your child most likes to take part in. For example: swimming, baseball, skating, skate boarding, bike riding, fishing, etc.

☐ None

Compared to others of the same age, about how much time does he/she spend in each? / **Compared to others of the same age, how well does he/she do each one?**

	Less Than Average	Average	More Than Average	Don't Know	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Don't Know
a. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

II. Please list your child's favorite hobbies, activities, and games, other than sports. For example: stamps, dolls, books, piano, crafts, cars, computers, singing, etc. (Do ***not*** include listening to radio or TV.)

☐ None

Compared to others of the same age, about how much time does he/she spend in each? / **Compared to others of the same age, how well does he/she do each one?**

	Less Than Average	Average	More Than Average	Don't Know	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Don't Know
a. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

III. Please list any organizations, clubs, teams, or groups your child belongs to.

☐ None

Compared to others of the same age, how active is he/she in each?

	Less Active	Average	More Active	Don't Know
a. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐

IV. Please list any jobs or chores your child has. For example: paper route, babysitting, making bed, working in store, etc. (Include both paid and unpaid jobs and chores.)

☐ None

Compared to others of the same age, how well does he/she carry them out?

	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Don't Know
a. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. ______	☐	☐	☐	☐

Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Copyright 2001 T. Achenbach
ASEBA, University of Vermont
1 South Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401-3456
www.ASEBA.org

UNAUTHORIZED COPYING IS ILLEGAL

6-1-01 Edition - 201

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

V. 1. About how many close friends does your child have? (Do *not* include brothers & sisters)

☐ None ☐ 1 ☐ 2 or 3 ☐ 4 or more

2. About how many times a week does your child do things with any friends outside of regular school hours? (Do *not* include brothers & sisters)

☐ Less than 1 ☐ 1 or 2 ☐ 3 or more

VI. Compared to others of his/her age, how well does your child:

	Worse	Average	Better	
a. Get along with his/her brothers & sisters?	☐	☐	☐	☐ Has no brothers or sisters
b. Get along with other kids?	☐	☐	☐	
c. Behave with his/her parents?	☐	☐	☐	
d. Play and work alone?	☐	☐	☐	

VII. 1. Performance in academic subjects. ☐ Does not attend school because ______________________

____

Check a box for each subject that child takes	Failing	Below Average	Average	Above Average
a. Reading, English, or Language Arts	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. History or Social Studies	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Arithmetic or Math	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Science	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. ______________	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. ______________	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. ______________	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other academic subjects–for example: computer courses, foreign language, business. Do ***not*** include gym, shop, driver's ed., or other nonacademic subjects.

2. Does your child receive special education or remedial services or attend a special class or special school?

☐ No ☐ Yes—kind of services, class, or school:

3. Has your child repeated any grades? ☐ No ☐ Yes—grades and reasons:

4. Has your child had any academic or other problems in school? ☐ No ☐ Yes—please describe:

When did these problems start?______________________

Have these problems ended? ☐ No ☐ Yes–when?

Does your child have any illness or disability (either physical or mental)? ☐ No ☐ Yes—please describe:

What concerns you most about your child?

Please describe the best things about your child.

Be sure you answered all items.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

Below is a list of items that describe pupils. For each item that describes the pupil ***now or within the past 2 months,*** please circle the ***2*** if the item is ***very true or often true*** of the pupil. Circle the ***1*** if the item is ***somewhat or sometimes true*** of the pupil. If the item is ***not true*** of the pupil, circle the ***0***. Please answer all items as well as you can, even if some do not seem to apply to this pupil.

0 = Not True (as far as you know) 1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True 2 = Very True or Often True

0 1 2 1. Acts too young for his/her age
0 1 2 2. Hums or makes other odd noises in class
0 1 2 3. Argues a lot
0 1 2 4. Fails to finish things he/she starts
0 1 2 5. There is very little that he/she enjoys
0 1 2 6. Defiant, talks back to staff
0 1 2 7. Bragging, boasting
0 1 2 8. Can't concentrate, can't pay attention for long
0 1 2 9. Can't get his/her mind off certain thoughts; obsessions (describe): ________________
____
0 1 2 10. Can't sit still, restless, or hyperactive
0 1 2 11. Clings to adults or too dependent
0 1 2 12. Complains of loneliness
0 1 2 13. Confused or seems to be in a fog
0 1 2 14. Cries a lot
0 1 2 15. Fidgets
0 1 2 16. Cruelty, bullying, or meanness to others
0 1 2 17. Daydreams or gets lost in his/her thoughts
0 1 2 18. Deliberately harms self or attempts suicide
0 1 2 19. Demands a lot of attention
0 1 2 20. Destroys his/her own things
0 1 2 21. Destroys property belonging to others
0 1 2 22. Difficulty following directions
0 1 2 23. Disobedient at school
0 1 2 24. Disturbs other pupils
0 1 2 25. Doesn't get along with other pupils
0 1 2 26. Doesn't seem to feel guilty after misbehaving
0 1 2 27. Easily jealous
0 1 2 28. Breaks school rules
0 1 2 29. Fears certain animals, situations, or places other than school (describe):____________
____
0 1 2 30. Fears going to school
0 1 2 31. Fears he/she might think or do something bad
0 1 2 32. Feels he/she has to be perfect
0 1 2 33. Feels or complains that no one loves him/her

0 1 2 34. Feels others are out to get him/her
0 1 2 35. Feels worthless or inferior
0 1 2 36. Gets hurt a lot, accident-prone
0 1 2 37. Gets in many fights
0 1 2 38. Gets teased a lot
0 1 2 39. Hangs around with others who get in trouble
0 1 2 40. Hears sounds or voices that aren't there (describe):__________________________
____
0 1 2 41. Impulsive or acts without thinking
0 1 2 42. Would rather be alone than with others
0 1 2 43. Lying or cheating
0 1 2 44. Bites fingernails
0 1 2 45. Nervous, high-strung, or tense
0 1 2 46. Nervous movements or twitching (describe): __________________________
____
0 1 2 47. Overconforms to rules
0 1 2 48. Not liked by other pupils
0 1 2 49. Has difficulty learning
0 1 2 50. Too fearful or anxious
0 1 2 51. Feels dizzy or lightheaded
0 1 2 52. Feels too guilty
0 1 2 53. Talks out of turn
0 1 2 54. Overtired without good reason
0 1 2 55. Overweight

56. Physical problems ***without known medical cause:***

0 1 2 a. Aches or pains (***not*** stomach or headaches)
0 1 2 b. Headaches
0 1 2 c. Nausea, feels sick
0 1 2 d. Eye problems (***not*** if corrected by glasses) (describe):__________________________
____
0 1 2 e. Rashes or other skin problems
0 1 2 f. Stomachaches
0 1 2 g. Vomiting, throwing up
0 1 2 h. Other (describe):__________________________
____
____

 Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

0 = Not True (as far as you know) **1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True** **2 = Very True or Often True**

0 1 2 57. Physically attacks people

0 1 2 58. Picks nose, skin, or other parts of body (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 59. Plays with own sex parts in public

0 1 2 60. Plays with own sex parts too much

0 1 2 61. Poor school work

0 1 2 62. Poorly coordinated or clumsy

0 1 2 63. Prefers being with older kids

0 1 2 64. Prefers being with younger kids

0 1 2 65. Refuses to talk

0 1 2 66. Repeats certain acts over and over; compulsions (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 67. Runs away from home

0 1 2 68. Screams a lot

0 1 2 69. Secretive, keeps things to self

0 1 2 70. Sees things that aren't there (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 71. Self-conscious or easily embarrassed

0 1 2 72. Sets fires

0 1 2 73. Sexual problems (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 74. Showing off or clowning

0 1 2 75. Too shy or timid

0 1 2 76. Sleeps less than most kids

0 1 2 77. Sleeps more than most kids during day and/or night (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 78. Inattentive or easily distracted

0 1 2 79. Speech problem (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 80. Stares blankly

0 1 2 81. Steals at home

0 1 2 82. Steals outside the home

0 1 2 83. Stores up too many things he/she doesn't need (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 84. Strange behavior (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 85. Strange ideas (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 86. Stubborn, sullen, or irritable

0 1 2 87. Sudden changes in mood or feelings

0 1 2 88. Sulks a lot

0 1 2 89. Suspicious

0 1 2 90. Swearing or obscene language

0 1 2 91. Talks about killing self

0 1 2 92. Talks or walks in sleep (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 93. Talks too much

0 1 2 94. Teases a lot

0 1 2 95. Temper tantrums or hot temper

0 1 2 96. Thinks about sex too much

0 1 2 97. Threatens people

0 1 2 98. Thumb-sucking

0 1 2 99. Smokes, chews, or sniffs tobacco

0 1 2 100. Trouble sleeping (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 101. Truancy, skips school

0 1 2 102. Underactive, slow moving, or lacks energy

0 1 2 103. Unhappy, sad, or depressed

0 1 2 104. Unusually loud

0 1 2 105. Uses drugs for nonmedical purposes (***don't*** include alcohol or tobacco) (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 106. Vandalism

0 1 2 107. Wets self during the day

0 1 2 108. Wets the bed

0 1 2 109. Whining

0 1 2 110. Wishes to be of opposite sex

0 1 2 111. Withdrawn, doesn't get involved with others

0 1 2 112. Worries

113. Please write in any problems your child has that were not listed above:

0 1 2 ______________________________

0 1 2 ______________________________

0 1 2 ______________________________

Please be sure you answered all items.

TEACHER'S REPORT FORM FOR AGES 6-18

For office use only
ID #

Your answers will be used to compare the pupil with other pupils whose teachers have completed similar forms. The information from this form will also be used for comparison with other information about this pupil. Please answer as well as you can, even if you lack full information. Scores on individual items will be combined to identify general patterns of behavior. Feel free to print additional comments beside each item and in the spaces provided on page 2. ***Please print, and answer all items.***

PUPIL'S FULL NAME First Middle Last

PARENTS' USUAL TYPE OF WORK, even if not working now *(Please be specific — for example, auto mechanic, high school teacher, homemaker, laborer, lathe operator, shoe salesman, army sergeant.)*

FATHER'S TYPE OF WORK ____________________

MOTHER'S TYPE OF WORK ____________________

PUPIL'S GENDER ❒ Boy ❒ Girl

PUPIL'S AGE

PUPIL'S ETHNIC GROUP OR RACE

TODAY'S DATE Mo.______ Date______ Yr.______

PUPIL'S BIRTHDATE (if known) Mo.______ Date______ Yr.______

THIS FORM FILLED OUT BY: (*print your full name*)

GRADE IN SCHOOL ________

NAME AND ADDRESS OF SCHOOL

____

____

Your gender: ❒ Male ❒ Female

Your role at the school:

❒ Classroom Teacher ❒ Counselor

❒ Special Educator ❒ Administrator

❒ Teacher's Aide ❒ Other (specify):

I. For how many months have you known this pupil? __________ **months**

II. How well do you know him/her? 1. ❒ Not Well 2. ❒ Moderately Well 3. ❒ Very Well

III. How much time does he/she spend in your class or service per week?

IV. What kind of class or service is it? (Please be specific, e.g., regular 5th grade, 7th grade math, learning disability, counseling, etc.)

V. Has he/she ever been referred for special class placement, services, or tutoring?

❒ Don't Know 0. ❒ No 1. ❒ Yes — what kind and when?

VI. Has he/she repeated any grades? ❒ Don't Know 0. ❒ No 1. ❒ Yes — grades and reasons:

VII. Current academic performance — list academic subjects and check box that indicates pupil's performance for each subject:

Academic subject	1. Far below grade	2. Somewhat below grade	3. At grade level	4. Somewhat above grade	5. Far above grade
1. ____________	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
2. ____________	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
3. ____________	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
4. ____________	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
5. ____________	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
6. ____________	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Copyright 2001 T. Achenbach
ASEBA, University of Vermont
1 South Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401-3456
www.ASEBA.org

UNAUTHORIZED COPYING IS ILLEGAL

6-1-01 Edition - 301

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

VIII. Compared to typical pupils of the same age:	**1. Much less**	**2. Somewhat less**	**3. Slightly less**	**4. About average**	**5. Slightly more**	**6. Somewhat more**	**7. Much more**
1. How hard is he/she working?	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
2. How appropriately is he/she behaving?	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
3. How much is he/she learning?	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐
4. How happy is he/she?	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐	❐

IX. Most recent achievement test scores (optional):

Name of test	Subject	Date	Percentile or grade level obtained

X. IQ, readiness, or aptitude tests (optional):

Name of test	Date	IQ or equivalent scores

Does this pupil have any illness or disability (either physical or mental)? ❐ No ❐ Yes— please describe:

What concerns you most about this pupil?

Please describe the best things about this pupil:

Please feel free to write any comments about this pupil's work, behavior, or potential, using extra pages if necessary.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

Below is a list of items that describe pupils. For each item that describes the pupil ***now or within the past 2 months,*** please circle the ***2*** if the item is ***very true or often true*** of the pupil. Circle the ***1*** if the item is ***somewhat or sometimes true*** of the pupil. If the item is ***not true*** of the pupil, circle the ***0***. Please answer all items as well as you can, even if some do not seem to apply to this pupil.

0 = Not True (as far as you know) **1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True** **2 = Very True or Often True**

0	1	2	1. Acts too young for his/her age
0	1	2	2. Hums or makes other odd noises in class
0	1	2	3. Argues a lot
0	1	2	4. Fails to finish things he/she starts
0	1	2	5. There is very little that he/she enjoys
0	1	2	6. Defiant, talks back to staff
0	1	2	7. Bragging, boasting
0	1	2	8. Can't concentrate, can't pay attention for long
0	1	2	9. Can't get his/her mind off certain thoughts; obsessions (describe): ________________ ________________
0	1	2	10. Can't sit still, restless, or hyperactive
0	1	2	11. Clings to adults or too dependent
0	1	2	12. Complains of loneliness
0	1	2	13. Confused or seems to be in a fog
0	1	2	14. Cries a lot
0	1	2	15. Fidgets
0	1	2	16. Cruelty, bullying, or meanness to others
0	1	2	17. Daydreams or gets lost in his/her thoughts
0	1	2	18. Deliberately harms self or attempts suicide
0	1	2	19. Demands a lot of attention
0	1	2	20. Destroys his/her own things
0	1	2	21. Destroys property belonging to others
0	1	2	22. Difficulty following directions
0	1	2	23. Disobedient at school
0	1	2	24. Disturbs other pupils
0	1	2	25. Doesn't get along with other pupils
0	1	2	26. Doesn't seem to feel guilty after misbehaving
0	1	2	27. Easily jealous
0	1	2	28. Breaks school rules
0	1	2	29. Fears certain animals, situations, or places other than school (describe):____________ ________________
0	1	2	30. Fears going to school
0	1	2	31. Fears he/she might think or do something bad
0	1	2	32. Feels he/she has to be perfect
0	1	2	33. Feels or complains that no one loves him/her
0	1	2	34. Feels others are out to get him/her
0	1	2	35. Feels worthless or inferior
0	1	2	36. Gets hurt a lot, accident-prone
0	1	2	37. Gets in many fights
0	1	2	38. Gets teased a lot
0	1	2	39. Hangs around with others who get in trouble
0	1	2	40. Hears sounds or voices that aren't there (describe):________________ ________________
0	1	2	41. Impulsive or acts without thinking
0	1	2	42. Would rather be alone than with others
0	1	2	43. Lying or cheating
0	1	2	44. Bites fingernails
0	1	2	45. Nervous, high-strung, or tense
0	1	2	46. Nervous movements or twitching (describe): ________________ ________________
0	1	2	47. Overconforms to rules
0	1	2	48. Not liked by other pupils
0	1	2	49. Has difficulty learning
0	1	2	50. Too fearful or anxious
0	1	2	51. Feels dizzy or lightheaded
0	1	2	52. Feels too guilty
0	1	2	53. Talks out of turn
0	1	2	54. Overtired without good reason
0	1	2	55. Overweight
			56. Physical problems ***without known medical cause:***
0	1	2	a. Aches or pains (***not*** stomach or headaches)
0	1	2	b. Headaches
0	1	2	c. Nausea, feels sick
0	1	2	d. Eye problems (***not*** if corrected by glasses) (describe):________________ ________________
0	1	2	e. Rashes or other skin problems
0	1	2	f. Stomachaches
0	1	2	g. Vomiting, throwing up
0	1	2	h. Other (describe):________________ ________________ ________________

 Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

0 = Not True **1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True** **2 = Very True or Often True**

0	**1**	**2**	57. I physically attack people
0	**1**	**2**	58. I pick my skin or other parts of my body (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	59. I can be pretty friendly
0	**1**	**2**	60. I like to try new things
0	**1**	**2**	61. My school work is poor
0	**1**	**2**	62. I am poorly coordinated or clumsy
0	**1**	**2**	63. I would rather be with older kids than kids my own age
0	**1**	**2**	64. I would rather be with younger kids than kids my own age
0	**1**	**2**	65. I refuse to talk
0	**1**	**2**	66. I repeat certain acts over and over (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	67. I run away from home
0	**1**	**2**	68. I scream a lot
0	**1**	**2**	69. I am secretive or keep things to myself
0	**1**	**2**	70. I see things that other people think aren't there (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	71. I am self-conscious or easily embarrassed
0	**1**	**2**	72. I set fires
0	**1**	**2**	73. I can work well with my hands
0	**1**	**2**	74. I show off or clown
0	**1**	**2**	75. I am too shy or timid
0	**1**	**2**	76. I sleep less than most kids
0	**1**	**2**	77. I sleep more than most kids during day and/or night (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	78. I am inattentive or easily distracted
0	**1**	**2**	79. I have a speech problem (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	80. I stand up for my rights
0	**1**	**2**	81. I steal at home
0	**1**	**2**	82. I steal from places other than home
0	**1**	**2**	83. I store up too many things I don't need (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	84. I do things other people think are strange (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	85. I have thoughts that other people would think are strange (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	86. I am stubborn
0	**1**	**2**	87. My moods or feelings change suddenly
0	**1**	**2**	88. I enjoy being with people
0	**1**	**2**	89. I am suspicious
0	**1**	**2**	90. I swear or use dirty language
0	**1**	**2**	91. I think about killing myself
0	**1**	**2**	92. I like to make others laugh
0	**1**	**2**	93. I talk too much
0	**1**	**2**	94. I tease others a lot
0	**1**	**2**	95. I have a hot temper
0	**1**	**2**	96. I think about sex too much
0	**1**	**2**	97. I threaten to hurt people
0	**1**	**2**	98. I like to help others
0	**1**	**2**	99. I smoke, chew, or sniff tobacco
0	**1**	**2**	100. I have trouble sleeping (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	101. I cut classes or skip school
0	**1**	**2**	102. I don't have much energy
0	**1**	**2**	103. I am unhappy, sad, or depressed
0	**1**	**2**	104. I am louder than other kids
0	**1**	**2**	105. I use drugs for nonmedical purposes (***don't*** include alcohol or tobacco) (describe): ______________
0	**1**	**2**	106. I like to be fair to others
0	**1**	**2**	107. I enjoy a good joke
0	**1**	**2**	108. I like to take life easy
0	**1**	**2**	109. I try to help other people when I can
0	**1**	**2**	110. I wish I were of the opposite sex
0	**1**	**2**	111. I keep from getting involved with others
0	**1**	**2**	112. I worry a lot

Please be sure you answered all items.

Please write down anything else that describes your feelings, behavior, or interests:

Please print

YOUTH SELF-REPORT FOR AGES 11-18

For office use only
ID #

YOUR FULL NAME First Middle Last	PARENTS' USUAL TYPE OF WORK, even if not working now. *(Please be specific — for example, auto mechanic, high school teacher, homemaker, laborer, lathe operator, shoe salesman, army sergeant.)*
YOUR GENDER ❒ Boy ❒ Girl / YOUR AGE / YOUR ETHNIC GROUP OR RACE	FATHER'S TYPE OF WORK ______ MOTHER'S TYPE OF WORK ______
TODAY'S DATE Mo.____ Date ____ Yr. ____ / YOUR BIRTHDATE Mo.____ Date ____ Yr. ____	
GRADE IN SCHOOL ______ / NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL ❒ / IF YOU ARE WORKING, PLEASE STATE YOUR TYPE OF WORK: ______	Please fill out this form to reflect *your* views, even if other people might not agree. Feel free to print additional comments beside each item and in the spaces provided on pages 2 and 4. ***Be sure to answer all items.***

I. Please list the sports you most like to take part in. For example: swimming, baseball, skating, skate boarding, bike riding, fishing, etc.

❒ None

	Compared to others of your age, about how much time do you spend in each?			Compared to others of your age, how well do you do each one?		
	Less Than Average	Average	More Than Average	Below Average	Average	Above Average
a. ______	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
b. ______	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
c. ______	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

II. Please list your favorite hobbies, activities, and games, other than sports. For example: cards, books, piano, cars, computers, crafts, etc. (Do ***not*** include listening to radio or watching TV.)

❒ None

	Compared to others of your age, about how much time do you spend in each?			Compared to others of your age, how well do you do each one?		
	Less Than Average	Average	More Than Average	Below Average	Average	Above Average
a. ______	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
b. ______	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒
c. ______	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒	❒

III. Please list any organizations, clubs, teams, or groups you belong to.

❒ None

	Compared to others of your age, how active are you in each?		
	Less Active	Average	More Active
a. ______	❒	❒	❒
b. ______	❒	❒	❒
c. ______	❒	❒	❒

IV. Please list any jobs or chores you have. For example: paper route, babysitting, making bed, working in store, etc. (Include ***both*** paid and unpaid jobs and chores.)

❒ None

	Compared to others of your age, how well do you carry them out?		
	Below Average	Average	Above Average
a. ______	❒	❒	❒
b. ______	❒	❒	❒
c. ______	❒	❒	❒

Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Copyright 2001 T. Achenbach
ASEBA, University of Vermont
1 South Prospect St., Burlington, VT 05401-3456
www.ASEBA.org

UNAUTHORIZED COPYING IS ILLEGAL

6-1-01 Edition - 501

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

V. 1. About how many close friends do you have? (Do *not* include brothers & sisters)

☐ None ☐ 1 ☐ 2 or 3 ☐ 4 or more

2. About how many times a week do you do things with any friends outside of regular school hours? (Do *not* include brothers & sisters)

☐ Less than 1 ☐ 1 or 2 ☐ 3 or more

VI. Compared to others of your age, how well do you:

	Worse	Average	Better	
a. Get along with your brothers & sisters?	☐	☐	☐	☐ I have no brothers or sisters
b. Get along with other kids?	☐	☐	☐	
c. Get along with your parents?	☐	☐	☐	
d. Do things by yourself?	☐	☐	☐	

VII. 1. Performance in academic subjects. ☐ **I do not attend school because** ______________________________

____

Check a box for each subject that you take	Failing	Below Average	Average	Above Average
a. English or Language Arts	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. History or Social Studies	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Arithmetic or Math	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Science	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. ______________	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. ______________	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. ______________	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other academic subjects–for example: computer courses, foreign language, business. Do ***not*** include gym, shop, driver's ed., or other nonacademic subjects.

Do you have any illness, disability, or handicap? ☐ **No** ☐ **Yes—please describe:**

Please describe any concerns or problems you have about school:

Please describe any other concerns you have:

Please describe the best things about youself:

Be sure you answered all items.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

Below is a list of items that describe kids. For each item that describes you ***now or within the past 6 months***, please circle the ***2*** if the item is ***very true or often true*** of you. Circle the ***1*** if the item is ***somewhat or sometimes true*** of you. If the item is ***not true*** of you, circle the ***0***.

0 = Not True **1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True** **2 = Very True or Often True**

0 1 2 1. I act too young for my age

0 1 2 2. I drink alcohol without my parents' approval (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 3. I argue a lot

0 1 2 4. I fail to finish things that I start

0 1 2 5. There is very little that I enjoy

0 1 2 6. I like animals

0 1 2 7. I brag

0 1 2 8. I have trouble concentrating or paying attention

0 1 2 9. I can't get my mind off certain thoughts; (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 10. I have trouble sitting still

0 1 2 11. I'm too dependent on adults

0 1 2 12. I feel lonely

0 1 2 13. I feel confused or in a fog

0 1 2 14. I cry a lot

0 1 2 15. I am pretty honest

0 1 2 16. I am mean to others

0 1 2 17. I daydream a lot

0 1 2 18. I deliberately try to hurt or kill myself

0 1 2 19. I try to get a lot of attention

0 1 2 20. I destroy my own things

0 1 2 21. I destroy things belonging to others

0 1 2 22. I disobey my parents

0 1 2 23. I disobey at school

0 1 2 24. I don't eat as well as I should

0 1 2 25. I don't get along with other kids

0 1 2 26. I don't feel guilty after doing something I shouldn't

0 1 2 27. I am jealous of others

0 1 2 28. I break rules at home, school, or elsewhere

0 1 2 29. I am afraid of certain animals, situations, or places, other than school (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 30. I am afraid of going to school

0 1 2 31. I am afraid I might think or do something bad

0 1 2 32. I feel that I have to be perfect

0 1 2 33. I feel that no one loves me

0 1 2 34. I feel that others are out to get me

0 1 2 35. I feel worthless or inferior

0 1 2 36. I accidentally get hurt a lot

0 1 2 37. I get in many fights

0 1 2 38. I get teased a lot

0 1 2 39. I hang around with kids who get in trouble

0 1 2 40. I hear sounds or voices that other people think aren't there (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 41. I act without stopping to think

0 1 2 42. I would rather be alone than with others

0 1 2 43. I lie or cheat

0 1 2 44. I bite my fingernails

0 1 2 45. I am nervous or tense

0 1 2 46. Parts of my body twitch or make nervous movements (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 47. I have nightmares

0 1 2 48. I am not liked by other kids

0 1 2 49. I can do certain things better than most kids

0 1 2 50. I am too fearful or anxious

0 1 2 51. I feel dizzy or lightheaded

0 1 2 52. I feel too guilty

0 1 2 53. I eat too much

0 1 2 54. I feel overtired without good reason

0 1 2 55. I am overweight

56. Physical problems ***without known medical cause:***

0 1 2 a. Aches or pains (***not*** stomach or headaches)

0 1 2 b. Headaches

0 1 2 c. Nausea, feel sick

0 1 2 d. Problems with eyes (***not*** if corrected by glasses) (describe): ______________________________

0 1 2 e. Rashes or other skin problems

0 1 2 f. Stomachaches

0 1 2 g. Vomiting, throwing up

0 1 2 h. Other (describe): ______________________________

 Be sure you answered all items. Then see other side.

Please print. Be sure to answer all items.

0 = Not True **1 = Somewhat or Sometimes True** **2 = Very True or Often True**

0 1 2 57. I physically attack people

0 1 2 58. I pick my skin or other parts of my body (describe): ____________

0 1 2 59. I can be pretty friendly

0 1 2 60. I like to try new things

0 1 2 61. My school work is poor

0 1 2 62. I am poorly coordinated or clumsy

0 1 2 63. I would rather be with older kids than kids my own age

0 1 2 64. I would rather be with younger kids than kids my own age

0 1 2 65. I refuse to talk

0 1 2 66. I repeat certain acts over and over (describe): ____________

0 1 2 67. I run away from home

0 1 2 68. I scream a lot

0 1 2 69. I am secretive or keep things to myself

0 1 2 70. I see things that other people think aren't there (describe): ____________

0 1 2 71. I am self-conscious or easily embarrassed

0 1 2 72. I set fires

0 1 2 73. I can work well with my hands

0 1 2 74. I show off or clown

0 1 2 75. I am too shy or timid

0 1 2 76. I sleep less than most kids

0 1 2 77. I sleep more than most kids during day and/or night (describe): ____________

0 1 2 78. I am inattentive or easily distracted

0 1 2 79. I have a speech problem (describe): ____________

0 1 2 80. I stand up for my rights

0 1 2 81. I steal at home

0 1 2 82. I steal from places other than home

0 1 2 83. I store up too many things I don't need (describe): ____________

0 1 2 84. I do things other people think are strange (describe): ____________

0 1 2 85. I have thoughts that other people would think are strange (describe): ____________

0 1 2 86. I am stubborn

0 1 2 87. My moods or feelings change suddenly

0 1 2 88. I enjoy being with people

0 1 2 89. I am suspicious

0 1 2 90. I swear or use dirty language

0 1 2 91. I think about killing myself

0 1 2 92. I like to make others laugh

0 1 2 93. I talk too much

0 1 2 94. I tease others a lot

0 1 2 95. I have a hot temper

0 1 2 96. I think about sex too much

0 1 2 97. I threaten to hurt people

0 1 2 98. I like to help others

0 1 2 99. I smoke, chew, or sniff tobacco

0 1 2 100. I have trouble sleeping (describe): ____________

0 1 2 101. I cut classes or skip school

0 1 2 102. I don't have much energy

0 1 2 103. I am unhappy, sad, or depressed

0 1 2 104. I am louder than other kids

0 1 2 105. I use drugs for nonmedical purposes (***don't*** include alcohol or tobacco) (describe): ____________

0 1 2 106. I like to be fair to others

0 1 2 107. I enjoy a good joke

0 1 2 108. I like to take life easy

0 1 2 109. I try to help other people when I can

0 1 2 110. I wish I were of the opposite sex

0 1 2 111. I keep from getting involved with others

0 1 2 112. I worry a lot

Please be sure you answered all items.

Please write down anything else that describes your feelings, behavior, or interests: