

Starting an Ementoring Program

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Getting started

Organizing and administering a responsible e-mentoring program requires no less effort than conducting a traditional mentoring program. *Elements of Effective Practice* should be incorporated into the effort: orientation and training for mentors and youth; screening and matching; ongoing support for the mentor pairs and having in place safety and technology guidelines. Just as with face-to-face mentoring programs, an online program needs to have safeguards in place to protect everyone involved and ensure participants' safety and privacy.

You will need to have technology in place that provides a safe and secure environment for communication exchanges, archives all messages and has the ability to track communications between mentoring pairs. Develop a safety plan by adapting your existing safeguards to cyberspace. Include a code of online conduct, and train your mentoring participants to learn how to keep their personal information safe and how they can be safe online.

The major benefit of this form of mentoring is that it can overcome some challenges associated with traditional, face-to-face mentoring, especially the time commitments that prevent many adults from mentoring. E-mentoring takes advantage of the ease, convenience and availability of the Internet, so it can also help young people deepen their understanding of the positive potential of online communications.

E-mentoring can be the exclusive vehicle for young people and mentors to connect or it can be added as an additional communication tool for those who ordinarily meet in

person. Either way, e-mentoring shares the goal of face-to-face mentoring: establishing a trusting, nurturing, positive relationship between the mentor and a young person.

How can an e-mentoring program be developed?

E-mentoring is a flexible option for program coordinators who are looking to add a new component to an existing face-to-face program or develop a new stand alone program. E-mentoring programs can match young people and adults from the same community or ones that use the Internet to break down geographic boundaries. Young people can benefit from an e-mentoring program that:

- Focuses on academic achievement, career exploration or development of a supportive and nurturing relationship.
- Spans an entire calendar year, school year, or time period of several years.
- Asks their online volunteers to send just one or two e-mails a week or one that calls for volunteers to spend several hours each week communicating with youth.
- Is a curriculum-based program that matches youth one-to-one with an individual mentor or program that matches entire classrooms of students with mentors from a single workplace.

Are you currently implementing a traditional face-to-face mentoring program? If so, you might want to think about adding an e-mentoring component to your current efforts. This is a great way to give your mentoring pairs another way to communicate and you might find that they may share different information through e-mail than in their face-to-face meetings.

What factors do I need to determine in order to create a successful e-mentoring initiative?

E-mentoring programs can vary in size and duration. Research shows that the most successful mentoring programs are long-term and comprehensive. Mentoring is one of the most rewarding volunteer roles and, ideally, involves an enduring commitment to a personal relationship. During such a relationship, both mentors and young people experience many benefits. Together, they achieve realistic short-term goals that address the larger, more complex problems a young person faces.

To help your program succeed, spell out the following:

- * **How long the relationship is to last.** Typically e-mentoring programs ask for a commitment of between six months and one year. Most young people could benefit from a relationship of several years, but such a commitment may not be realistic.
- * **How often mentors and young people are to contact each other.** Many programs set a minimum of one contact per week. Others set minimum levels of attendance at scheduled program activities if mentors and young people are located in the same community.

* **The nature of the relationship and level of personal involvement.** The mentors and young people determine the depth to which their relationship develops. But, by designing program curriculum or activities and offering guidance, your organization helps them get acquainted and maintain contact.

Your organization and your partners should set minimum standards based on what is necessary to reach program goals. You should weigh a number of factors when deciding the size and scope of your program. Such factors include:

- Availability of staff to coordinate and oversee mentoring program activities;
- Access to technology for the participants and the sponsoring organization;
- Access to mentors (recruitment is ongoing); and
- Nature of your program goals and objectives.

Even if you have extensive resources, experience shows that it is best to start with a small program and build gradually. A good way to begin an e-mentoring program is by developing a pilot program that can provide the foundation for experience, credibility and growth. If your organization is relatively small, consider joining other small organizations to form an e-mentoring program. As your program takes shape and begins to grow, you'll want to develop long-range plans with expanded goals.

Youth Service Organizations launching an e-mentoring program for young people, must also decide whether youth participation in the program is voluntary or mandatory. There are pros and cons to each. Young people may feel less threatened by a mentoring initiative if they can choose whether to participate. Conversely, while mandatory participation may mean that more young people take part - and come to appreciate mentoring - you run the risk of making some of them feel resentful and even threatened. You need to choose an approach that works best for your organization and the young people you serve.

What kind of obstacles could I face when implementing my e-mentoring initiative?

Every mentoring program potentially faces obstacles, and e-mentoring is no different. Here are some potential obstacles you may need to plan for:

- **Volunteers' apprehensions.** Many potential volunteers question whether they have the skills, time, ability and experience needed to be good mentors. They may need to be approached a number of times before they can be persuaded to mentor. One of the best ways to help them overcome their apprehensions is to have a successful mentor discussion with them and share insights.
- **Volunteers' expectations.** Mentors need to understand their exact role and responsibilities so they do not become disillusioned and drop out. You can help prevent that possibility by carefully screening potential volunteers, providing

them with job descriptions and carefully matching mentors' skills and talents with participants' needs.

- **Parents' concerns.** Parents may feel threatened by the idea of a stranger providing guidance and encouragement to their children. You need to meet with parents to allay their fears. Explain that mentors neither take the place of parents nor undermine their authority, but are a positive force in their children's lives.
- **Young people's skepticism.** Young people selected to take part in the program may bristle at the idea of "needing" a mentor, yet secretly want someone to talk with. Once again, open communication is critical. Explain that participants are selected because they appear to have potential and the mentor can help them realize that potential - and can offer a willing, nonjudgmental ear.
- **Technology shortfalls.** Adults and young people participating in the program need to have e-mail and access to a computer. Your organization needs to have the technology (software/Web site) in place to create a safe and secure environment for your mentoring pairs to communicate.

What kind of information do I need to include in my e-mentoring program plan?

To improve your chances of success, you should plan your e-mentoring program in detail, including its proposed size, duration, activities and target populations.

Some issues you need to address include:

- Establishing an underlying philosophy for your program;
- Setting specific goals and objectives;
- Arriving at realistic program size and duration;
- Targeting youth participants;
- Recruiting volunteers;
- Determining roles for volunteers;
- Determining technology options;
- Designing e-mentoring program activities;
- Developing a plan for when the program/relationship comes to an end or if a mentoring pair needs to be rematched;
- Developing a plan for staff turnover, who will be in charge if the program coordinator leaves the program, how will the e-mentoring program continue; and
- Setting up methods for evaluating your program.

Do your homework. Learn from other successful e-mentoring programs by contacting their staff or reading about their program. (Use the resources of this Web site and the Internet.) Find out how they do recruitment, training, screening, matching, etc. Investigate best practices, such as the [*Elements of Effective Practice*](#), guidelines for safe and effective mentoring. You may even find an e-mentoring program coordinator willing to mentor you and guide you in implementing your program.

Because mentoring is all about building individual strengths, your program philosophy should be positive and dedicated to empowering the individuals you wish to serve. Your philosophy should be reflected in all aspects of your program, including its:

- Goals;
- Program materials and communications;
- Orientation and training; and
- Interactions among program staff, mentors and young people.

Help ensure the success of your program by starting small and building gradually. Keep your initial goals manageable. Start with a small number of mentoring matches until your coordinators feel comfortable with the process. As they gain experience, they can expand accordingly.

For best program results, all partners should be involved in the initial shaping of the program and its ongoing development. Here are some steps you can take to ensure that everyone provides input regarding the program's direction:

1. **Hold a meeting** that includes representatives of the partner organizations, including decision-makers, program coordinators and other members of the mentoring team. Together, decide on your basic program design, including:

- What you hope to accomplish;
- Who you want to reach;
- How you intend to structure the program;
- What online communication tools will be used to manage the e-mentoring program; and
- How you will fund operating costs.

2. **Design a technology implementation plan** that includes:

- A communication system that will meet the needs of the program and its participants;
- A communication system that is safe and reliable;
- Clearly defined technology requirements of partner organizations;
- The defining of technology related roles and responsibilities among program participants;
- Determine whether the mentors and youth participants need e-mail accounts or computers or whether your program will provide them;
- Policies regarding privacy and security of participant data and communication; and
- Policies regarding access to communication content, including privacy. Who will be allowed to view e-mails and under what circumstances will they be viewed?

3. Set clear rules and expectations. Your planning group needs to ensure that the program philosophy and rules are easy to understand, implement and follow. For instance, you need to determine the answers to questions such as these:

- Will e-mentoring involve groups or be one-to-one?
- Will all e-mailing take place onsite or will communication be allowed from home computers?
- Who is responsible for monitoring e-mail exchanges and what kind of monitoring will take place?

4. Develop your program goals. Be realistic and set goals and objectives that you can attain and evaluate. The primary goals of your e-mentoring program will be to provide mentoring relationships and support activities, projects and curriculum designed to accomplish any of the following:

- Provide a stable, nurturing relationship for youth;
- Show young people varied career and life opportunities that exist so they can live up to their potential;
- Help prevent students from dropping out of school;
- Encourage young people to improve their academic performance; and
- Help alleviate social problems that affect young people.

5. Set objectives. These might include:

- Deciding how many adults you want to recruit as mentors;
- Setting the number of hours you expect mentors to spend communicating with their mentees or set a minimum number of e-mail messages they should exchange each week;
- Deciding what types of activities you want to promote, such as tutoring, Internet exploration and information sharing, character-building exercises, career exploration, opportunities for social interaction, values clarification exercises and practice of writing skills;
- Holding events that encourage parents to get involved in the program;
- Providing training and orientation for mentors, young people, parents and others involved in the program; and
- Evaluating and monitoring your program's progress and success.

6. Create an action plan that reflects your program goals and objectives. Include plans for:

- Creating a timeline and strategies for recruiting mentors;
- Researching technology options and installing needed software and/or Web sites;
- Hosting a kick-off event or activity;
- Orienting mentors, youth and parents;
- Training mentors and young people;

- Developing a schedule of regular communications (e.g., monthly communication with mentors to discuss successes and frustrations, or opportunities for youth to offer suggestions for new ways of doing things);
- Developing a process for continually evaluating the program's effectiveness (e.g., how many mentor/youth relationships are still going strong after one month, two months, a year);
- Developing criteria that will help determine when an e-mentoring relationship needs to be rematched or to remove a mentor or mentee from your program.
- Creating a plan for publicizing and promoting the program; and
- Holding a recognition event or activities.

Steps to start an e-mentoring program

Here are a few suggested steps to get you started in developing your e-mentoring program.

1. Determine if e-mentoring fits your organization. Identify if your program will be Web- or e-mail-based and if it will be a stand-alone program or are you adding this to an existing traditional program. Do you have the technology in place to implement e-mentoring?

- **Web-based Model.** The mentors and mentees go to the Internet and access the Web page of the e-mentoring program. You can partner with an existing e-mentoring program that fits with the goals of your program (i.e. icouldbe.org, e-buddies.org or telementor.org), or you can plan to develop your own Web site to manage your e-mentoring program. Note that the latter will require considerable funding and technical expertise.
- **E-mail-based Model.** The mentors and mentees use the own unique email address to communicate with each other. You will need to have technology in place that provides a safe and secure environment for email exchanges, archives all e-mail messages and the ability to track e-mail communications between mentoring pairs.
- **Adding E-mentoring to a Traditional Face-to-Face Program.** You will need to determine if the new e-mentoring component will be a Web- or e-mail –based program.
- **Stand-Alone Model.** The mentoring pairs only communicate online either through e-mail or a Web site.
- **[Mentors Online: The E-mentoring Tool Kit](#).** Provides the resources organizations need to allow mentors and young people to connect via the exchange of e-mails.

2. Identify the nature of your e-mentoring program. E-mentoring is flexible in that you can design a program around a variety of disciplines, such as:

- Improving academic achievement or college preparation;
- Encouraging career exploration; or
- Developing a supportive nurturing relationship with an adult.

3. Identify who will be the mentors. E-mentoring may appeal to a wide variety of people. In looking at the nature of your program you might want to reach out to the business community, college students or the general community. Also, if you are adding e-mentoring to a traditional program, reach out to the mentors involved in the program to see if they are open to adding e-mentoring to their relationship. Traits for an ideal e-mentor:

- Have regular access to computers and their own e-mail account;
- Are excited and interested in becoming a mentor; and
- Are comfortable with technology and self-expression online.

When recruiting your mentors they need to understand that their involvement in a young person's life is just as important through this online relationship as it would be meeting face-to-face.

4. Identify who will be the mentees. Identify the age range of the mentees who will participate in the program, potentially 13-17 years old. When determining which young people will be part of your e-mentoring program you want identify a young person who:

- Is eager, enthusiastic and interested in having a mentor;
- Has regular access to computers and their own e-mail account;
- Can commit to your programs timeframe and guidelines; and
- Can express themselves through online communication.

5. Determine how often and where your mentoring pairs will communicate with one another. With an e-mentoring relationship the more communication between mentor and mentee the better opportunity for them to make a connection.

- Mentoring pairs should send a minimum of one e-mail per week. They can send more e-mail during the week if they choose to.
- If the mentoring pairs are meeting face-to-face and e-mentoring is being added to the program. The mentoring pairs should still send a minimum of one e-mail per week.
- Determine how many days can go by before you start contacting your mentoring pairs to see why they haven't sent a message.
- Determine where the mentees will have access to a computer. Determining the process for giving the mentees access to the computer is crucial to the success of the program. Is your program part of an after-school program or community-based organization? Will the mentees get special access to the computers to send e-mail to their mentors?
- Is your program set up to run during the school year or is it a yearlong program? Your program should be at least six months. Research has shown that mentoring pairs should be matched six months or more in order for a connection to be made and less time could actually harm the young person.

6. Determine how the mentoring participants will be trained. Will the mentoring participants receive face-to-face training, online training or a combination of both? Who will conduct the training?

- Check in your community to see if you have a State or Local *Mentoring Partnership*, they can provide mentor training.
- MENTOR has developed online training for both the mentor and mentee.
- Train all the youth at the same time, if possible. Have youth fill out their profiles and evaluation surveys during the training session.

7. Develop a plan for ongoing support. Determine who will be responsible for working with the mentors and the mentees.

- **Program Coordinator.** Having a separate Program Coordinator for both mentor and mentee is very important to the success of the program. This person will be a point of contact for your mentors and mentees throughout the program's duration. The Program Coordinator will answer questions and provide suggestions on how to move the relationships forward, ensure that e-mails are being sent, and assist with any concerns or technical issues. If your e-mentoring program is small, the Program Coordinator for mentors and mentees can be the same person, but be sure both the mentors and mentees know who is on board to support them during the program.
- **Mentors.** Develop a bi-weekly newsletter addressing issues the mentors may face in their relationships or provide them with topics they can share with their mentees. Also, think about bringing the mentors together to share their experiences with each other. If you can't have a face-to-face meeting think about conducting an online chat, conference call or connect one-on-one through e-mail.
- **Mentees.** Program Coordinators need to be available to assist mentees with crafting their message to their mentors. Provide them with ideas or questions to ask their mentors if they get stuck. Bring them together as a group and make them feel special, like they are part of club. You can ask them how their relationships are going and if they have issues or questions about the program.

8. How will you screen your mentoring pairs? There are no short cuts with an e-mentoring program. You should develop a plan to screen both the mentors and mentees.

- **For Mentors.** Develop an application that the mentors complete and indicate they agree to a background screening. You can also do phone interviews to walk them through the program to make sure they understand the commitment they are making and answer any questions they might have.
- **For Mentees.** Consider giving them a writing assignment telling you why they want to be part of the program. This will help you assess their writing skills and give you insight as to how they will be during the course of the program.

9. What criteria will you use to match your mentors and mentees? The nature of your program will determine what criteria you will use to match your mentors and mentees.

Make sure your mentoring pairs complete a matching profile questionnaire and ask the mentees what they are looking for in a mentor.

10. What safe guards will you have in place to protect your mentoring pairs privacy and security? If you are launching your own e-mentoring program, you need to have safeguards in place to protect your mentoring pairs:

- You will need to be able to track the e-mail activity between mentors and mentees;
- You should archive all the messages being exchanged so you can use them for evaluation and have the ability to review them on an as needed basis; and
- If you are partnering with a Web-based program, you should make sure that they have in place all the security and tracking features to allow you to manage your program effectively.

E-MENTORING PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

TASK:	WEEKS FROM PROGRAM LAUNCH:
Assess technical readiness for e-mentoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your program have the staff to support an e-mentoring program? • What software will you use to manage your e-mentoring program? 	16 Weeks
Apply for <i>Mentors Online: The E-mentoring Tool Kit</i> or identify alternate source for software to manage program. (www.mentoring.org/emc)	15 Weeks
Train program staff on how <i>Mentors Online</i> or other software will help manage program.	13 Weeks
Identify and confirm source of mentees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine age range. • How often will they communicate? • Do all mentees have access to e-mail? 	11 Weeks
Identify and confirm source of mentors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees from a local business. • Individuals from the community. • Students from a university. 	11 Weeks
Install <i>Mentors Online</i> or implement other software.	11 Weeks
Test <i>Mentors Online</i> or other software to ensure that it is working properly.	9 Weeks
Youth preparation: The site coordinator recruits, screens and trains youth. This includes processing youth profiles and parental permission slips and ensuring complete pre-evaluation survey for youth. The site coordinator will be asked to identify (<i>number</i>) youth at the site to participate in the e-mentoring program.	7 Weeks
Adult preparation: The program coordinator recruits, screens and trains adults. This includes holding an orientation, conducting background checks, training and processing mentor profiles. The program coordinator will be asked to identify (<i>number</i>) adults at the site to participate in the e-mentoring program.	7 Weeks
Enter participant profile information into <i>Mentors Online</i> .	4 Weeks
Matching: The site coordinator will choose a two-hour block of time for a conference call to match youth with mentors. Link mentoring pairs in <i>Mentors Online</i> software.	3 Weeks
Notify mentees and mentors informing them they are matched.	2 Weeks
Program Launch	Launch Date
First e-mail exchanges between mentors and youth	Up to 1 Week Post-Launch Date

Midpoint assessment with program staff	3 or 4 Months Post-Launch
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Courtesy of Digital Heroes Campaign, America Online, Inc.

Post-program evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-surveys with youth; • Focus groups with youth; • Interviews with program coordinators; and • Surveys and interviews with mentors. 	8 to 12 Months Post-Launch
Next steps with mentors and youth: Mentors and youth determine if they want to be matched again the next year. Site coordinator decides whether they would like to continue and expand the e-mentoring program.	8 to 12 Months Post-Launch

Courtesy of Digital Heroes Campaign, America Online, Inc.

E-MENTORING PROGRAM FACT SHEET DIGITAL HEROES CAMPAIGN

Note: MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership is no longer a partner organization of the Digital Heroes Campaign. This is a sample Fact Sheet for an e-mentoring program.

<p>Background</p>	<p>The Digital Heroes Campaign (DHC) is working to unlock the power of the Internet to broaden and deepen the reach of traditional mentoring. Through DHC, thoroughly screened and trained youth and adults are matched in one-on-one relationships and communicate weekly through a secure website. As in all quality mentoring relationships, the needs and interests of the young people drive the exchanges between the youth and adults.</p> <p>DHC was launched in 2000 and is a partnership among America Online, <i>People</i> magazine, PowerUP, MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR), and the Waitt Family Foundation. Approximately 175 youth and 175 adults participated in the pilot program, which is being evaluated by two of the nation's leading researchers in the mentoring field. DHC mentors included America Online employees from across the company, such as a quality assurance software engineer, an assistant general counsel, a news editor, and an interactive media developer, as well as 100 other influential people, such as actor/dancer Gregory Hines and <i>Weekend Today</i> anchor Soledad O'Brien, recruited by <i>People</i> magazine.</p>
<p>Participants</p>	<p>Mentees are 175 young people between the ages of 13 and 17 who regularly participate in community-based programs (at least once a week) between September and June.</p> <p>Mentors are 175 thoroughly trained and screened adults recruited by AOL Time Warner and <i>People</i> magazine.</p>
<p>How It Works</p>	<p>AOL, <i>People</i>, and DHC sites work with a mentoring expert from MENTOR to match a youth with a mentor. DHC staff carefully reviews personal profiles written by youth and adults. To make the matches, staff considers the interests and needs of the young person, as well as commonalities that may exist between the young person and the adult, such as similar family backgrounds and shared enthusiasms.</p> <p>Once matched, mentors and youth have a meaningful exchange at least once a week using the secure e-mentoring technology developed specifically for DHC. (See below for more information.) A meaningful exchange can be as simple as sharing information about school and career or working on a project together.</p>
<p>Safety, Security</p>	<p>DHC partner organizations recognize the importance of safety and security from the standpoint of both mentor and mentee. To that end, America Online employs state-of-the-art technology and safeguards to meet the unique privacy and security needs of both mentors and the youth involved.</p>

	<p>The technology ensures that only participating youth and mentors can communicate with each other. It also provides mentoring support to all participants at the click of a mouse.</p> <p>All mentors and youth are thoroughly prepared for their relationships. They receive training and are instructed on what to do and who to turn to if a problem arises in their relationship. Mentors submit to a basic background check that requires providing birthdates, social security numbers and previous address information to independent security firms. Parents and/or youth guardians sign an agreement allowing their children to participate and acknowledging that they understand the privacy and security requirements of the program. For program evaluation purposes only, all e-mail exchanges are archived (after being coded to ensure anonymity).</p>
<p>Role of DHC Sites</p>	<p>DHC sites are the heart and soul of the DHC program. If selected, your site will be responsible for recruiting, training, and supporting up to 15 DHC youth participants. Given this important responsibility, DHC partner organizations work to ensure that your site has everything you need to support successful mentoring relationships. (See below for more details.)</p>
<p>What DHC Provides to Sites</p>	<p>Orientation and training. Designated DHC site coordinators will receive orientation and training that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Group training on how to run a successful DHC program for all the DHC site coordinators on Friday and Saturday, October X and X, at AOL headquarters. Participants will receive a workbook with DHC policies and procedures, timeline for completing key tasks, standardized forms and a where-to-turn directory of resources. AOL and <i>People</i> magazine will cover travel and lodging expenses for DHC coordinators. ▪ Training on how to prepare and train youth participants for DHC. A train-the-trainer session will be supplemented by online training for youth. ▪ At least one onsite visit with the appropriate national DHC staff. ▪ Midpoint check-in to assess progress and fine-tune operations, if needed. This can take place by phone or as a site visit with the appropriate national DHC staff. ▪ Periodic conference calls and/or online chats with DHC coordinators from other sites to cover DHC topics of most interest to them (e.g., something they want to share with others or something that requires input from others). <p>Mentors. Youth participants will be matched with screened, trained and thoroughly prepared mentors from AOL Time Warner or notable Americans recruited by <i>People</i> magazine.</p> <p>Secure Website. DHC sites will be connected to a secure server for safe and reliable correspondence between youth and mentors and a website that provides ongoing support to DHC mentees and mentors throughout their</p>

	<p>relationships.</p> <p>Mentoring Expertise. Participating youth-serving sites will receive consultation and support from national mentoring experts throughout the DHC time period.</p> <p>Impact Assessment. DHC sites will participate in a national evaluation of DHC that provides insights into the impact and effectiveness of the mentoring relationship on youth.</p>
<p>What Is Expected of DHC Sites</p>	<p>Staffing. DHC sites must designate one staff person (not a volunteer) to recruit, train, support, monitor and help match youth and participate in the evaluation process for the Digital Heroes Campaign. This person must be knowledgeable about the students and skilled in using the Internet and e-mail. The DHC site coordinator must communicate weekly with DHC national staff about youth participation in the program and any issues or challenges affecting the program. DHC site coordinators must complete all DHC tasks on schedule. (For a detailed description of the time commitment required by the DHC site coordinator, see “DHC Site Coordinators’ Roles and Responsibilities.”)</p> <p>Youth Participants. DHC sites must recruit 15 young people between the ages of 13 and 17 who, between September 2001 and June 2002, are participating in the site’s programs at least once a week.</p> <p>Operations. The DHC site must be open and staffed from September through June to allow DHC mentees to receive orientation and training, communicate at least once a week with their mentors, and participate in the evaluation process.</p> <p>Technology. DHC sites must have equipment, wiring, and access to technical support to allow youth to successfully participate in the program.</p> <p>Contingency Plans. If the designated DHC staff or a youth participant leaves the site and therefore the DHC program, the site must ensure a smooth transition. For example, if the DHC site coordinator vacates the position at any time during the program, the site must designate an interim coordinator until a permanent coordinator is hired and notify national DHC staff of the transition. Once the permanent replacement is hired, national DHC staff will visit the site and train the new DHC site coordinator. If a youth leaves the program, the site supervisor must immediately inform national DHC staff and, together with AOL and/or <i>People</i> magazine, decide how they will handle the transition with the mentor and the youth.</p>
<p>Questions?</p>	<p>Please contact <i>(name)</i> at <i>(company name)</i> at <i>(phone number)</i>, or via e-mail at <i>(e-mail address)</i>.</p>
<p>Check It Out</p>	<p>For additional information about the Digital Heroes Campaign, visit the DHC website at <i>(Web address)</i>.</p>

E-MENTORING PROGRAM COORDINATOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Program coordinators play a critical role in the success of the e-mentoring program. Without their support, the program simply won't work!

Roles and Responsibilities of Site Coordinators:

1. **Receive training and preparation.** Contact MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership's network of State and Local *Mentoring Partnerships* (see www.mentoring.org) to see what is available in your area.
2. **Recruit** (*number*) youth between the ages of ____ and ____ who can commit to an 8 to 12 month relationship with a mentor. Youth must attend an orientation and training session, communicate via e-mail weekly with their mentor and participate in an evaluation process.
3. **Obtain parent/guardian consent.** Secure appropriate permissions from parents/guardians for the youth to participate in the e-mentoring program.
4. **Collaborate** with the matching of youth with mentors, in conjunction with program staff.
5. **Train and prepare** young people for their mentoring relationship.
6. **Support** youth in their mentoring relationship: answer questions, troubleshoot, notify program staff if a mentor or a young person is not e-mailing and keep youth informed about the program.
7. **Provide ongoing training and information.** Keep the program team informed of news/situations that can affect youth activities with mentors (both positively and negatively).
8. **Help implement evaluation procedures** to establish what is working in your program and what can be done to make your program better.
9. **Provide weekly updates** about progress or problems to program partners.
10. **Complete all tasks on schedule.**

Projected Time Commitment:

- During the first two months of the e-mentoring program, site coordinators can expect to spend ____ hours a week (one hour per youth) preparing themselves and the youth for the program.
- During the next four months, coordinators can expect to spend four hours a week supporting youth and communicating with the program staff.

- During the last month and a half, they can expect another 10 hours a week managing the evaluation process at their site, helping youth transition out of their mentoring relationship and wrapping up administrative details of the program.

Courtesy of Digital Heroes Campaign, America Online, Inc.

MENTOR PROFILE FORM

(For an e-mentoring program)

My name is _____ and I make my living as a _____. When I was a teenager I thought I'd like to be a _____ when I grew up. I have ___ brothers and ___ sisters and I am () the oldest, () the youngest, () in the middle. I grew up in _____ (town/state). I went to _____ (person/relationship) when I felt like I needed someone to talk to. My favorite things to do after school were _____ and _____.

Right now, I live in _____ with _____ and we have _____ (spouse/partner/children/pets, etc.). I spend my free time doing _____. I'm a big fan of _____ (sports team/player) and I really like _____ (music artist/group). My all-time favorite movie is _____ and the book I liked most when I was a teenager was _____.

Some interesting places I've visited are _____ and _____. I've never been to _____ but I'd love to go there someday.

If tomorrow I could be anything I wanted to be for one day, I'd be a _____. If I were Ruler of the Earth for one week, the three things I'd do or change would be _____, _____, and _____. If I could have dinner with anyone in history (past or present) it would be _____ because _____.

To me, success means the following:

_____.

MENTEE PROFILE FORM

(For an e-mentoring program)

My name is: Jane Doe

I am a participant at: Community Base Organization in my community.

I go to: USA High.

I am in 9th grade and I am 15 years old.

My birthday is October 5.

I have 3 brothers and 1 sister and I am the youngest.

My favorite classes are math and gym.

My favorite things to do after school are playing with my friends and schoolwork.

I spend my free time watching TV and the computer.

I am good at sports.

I'm a big fan of pop music and I really like Pink.

My all-time favorite movie is Freaky Friday and the book I liked most is Goosebumps.

When I watch television I like to watch Gilmore Girls.

When I think about jobs and careers, I think I might like to become an accountant.

I would like a mentor who could talk with me about

- School issues (course selection, study habits, time management);
- Planning for college or other post-high-school education (choosing a college, the application process, finding financial aid);
- Finding a part-time job while I am in school;
- Learning about career choices;
- Dealing with peers, friends, and others; and
- Sharing his/her own experiences.

Some interesting places I've visited are Florida and New York.

I've never been to Washington, DC, but I'd love to go there someday.

If tomorrow I could be anything I wanted to be for one day, I'd be an actress.

If I were Ruler of the Earth for one week, the three things I'd do or change would be:

1) violence

2) hunger

3) divorce

If I could have dinner with anyone in history (past or present) it would be Oprah because she has done a lot of great things.

I would also like to share the following things with my mentor:

How I am doing in school

What I would like to do when I get older

Things about my friends and family

MENTEE CONVERSATION TIP SHEET

Do you ever wonder what to say when you sit down to write your mentor? Do you sometimes draw a blank? Lots of people develop writer's block when faced with the task of writing. Not knowing what to say may result in short, unfulfilling e-mails between you and your mentor.

Your mentor has a wide range of life experiences; try tapping into these experiences by asking follow-up questions. Also, ask your mentor specific questions about his or her career and career choices. This practice may give your mentor some insight into the decisions you may be facing.

Here is a list of five thought-provoking questions you may want to use the next time you sit down in front of the computer to e-mail your mentor. Take some time to answer these questions yourself before sending them to your mentor. This way you can start a dialogue over e-mail about each question.

1. What is your greatest talent? What are some things you do really well?
2. How would your best friend describe your best characteristics and qualities?
3. What is the most important lesson you have learned in your life?
4. What is the biggest mistake you have ever made and what did you learn from it?
5. Who are some of the people you admire and why?

You may also want to share some of these more general questions with your e-mentor to get your online discussions going.

1. What did you do after you graduated from high school? Would you do that again?
2. What do you like most about your work?
3. What kinds of things do you do in your free time?
4. In what ways did your education prepare you for your job?
5. If you could go back to high school, what would you do differently?
6. Why were you interested in becoming an e-mentor?
7. How did you choose your career?
8. How do you define success? What do you think is most important for success?
9. Did you ever have a mentor? Do you have one now? How did that person help you?
10. What are your favorite, book, movie television show, and food?

Remember, your mentor wants to be involved in meaningful discussions with you online. This can happen only when there is a weekly exchange of meaningful e-mails.

CONGRATULATIONS/MATCHED E-MAIL
(For mentors using Mentors Online: The E-mentoring Tool Kit)

Congratulations!!

You have been matched with a youth who will be your mentee for the *(name of program)*. The *(name of program)* staff have worked together using the mentor and mentee profiles to make the best possible matches for this program. Below is information about the young person you are matched with.

[Insert information here about the youth they are matched with and information about sending an e-mail to that youth.]

We ask that you send the first e-mail to your mentee by *(date)*. To send an e-mail to your mentee, all you have to do is compose an e-mail and send it to *(Mentors Online central e-mail address that you created for your program)*. We have designed this program to be simple and easy.

Mentors Online has recently added a filter that will automatically remove your personal contact information, such as e-mail addresses and phone numbers, from the body of an e-mail. However, to ensure your security and privacy, if you currently have your signature line automatically appearing at the bottom of your e-mails, please turn this feature off when sending e-mail to your mentee. Also remember, your e-mail address, phone number and postal address should never be shared with your mentee.

[Include the Mentee Profile here.]

[Include information about the mentor's roles and responsibilities.]

As a mentor, you are committing to:

- Send at least one e-mail per week to your mentee for *(length of program)*;
- Ask for assistance if you need it;
- Contact your Program Coordinator if you are unable to communicate with your mentee for a week or two; and
- Participate in the *(name of program)* evaluation process.

[Include a note on privacy and security]

All correspondence, e-mail addresses, and access to the *(name of program)* Web site are completely private and secure through the *Mentors Online* software system. All e-mails will be archived and during the course of the program, a Program Coordinator will be periodically checking e-mails to review participants' exchanges. We'll also ask you to provide feedback about the program throughout the year.

Again, if you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this program or if other issues arise, please contact me at *(e-mail address and telephone number)*.

Regards,

Signature of Organization Representative

(Name of Organization Representative)

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