New Meta-Analysis Evaluates the Effectiveness of Mentoring Programs

The meta-analysis, published in the fall of 2011 in the Psychological Science in the Public Interest, looked at 73 independent evaluations of mentoring programs published between 1999-2010. Among other things, the authors found that:

- Mentoring strengthens outcomes across multiple domains
- Mentoring programs that engage older peers or mentors in a group/team format show comparable levels of effectiveness to those programs that primarily focus on a one-to-one relationship
- Mentors are most effective when they are utilized in a teaching AND advocacy role
- There are not enough studies/data available to evaluate the impacts of mentoring on juvenile offenses, obesity or school drop-out

MORE INFORMATION:
The entire article can be found here.
You can also find a summary of their findings here, which is posted on www.KansasMentors.org.

Kansas Mentoring Month Kicks Off 2012

January not only marked the start of a fresh new year, but also an acknowledgement to some of the most important people in our lives—our mentors. The month of January is celebrated as National Mentoring Month (NMM), and on January 4, Governor Sam Brownback proclaimed it Kansas Mentoring Month. Mentoring matches from YouthFriends Basehor Linwood and Winfield 4-H Tech Wizards and Kansas Mentors (KM) Advisory Council members - Malissa Martin, Michelle Montgomery, Dan Soliday and Nicolette Geisler (KM staff) participated in the proclamation signing. Kansas Mentors also joined the Kansas Volunteer Commission in promoting the Heart of Kansas Book Drive. This campaign centered around Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service that challenged participants to work together to answer our communities most pressing problems, such as literacy. The culminating event was held at Meadows Elementary, where volunteer programs like Compeer and Foster Grandparents were honored for their service.

On the ground level, programs such as YouthFriends Kansas in Hays, Emporia, Hutchinson and Ulysses promoted NMM and MLK Day of Service by reading books, going through activities centered around MLK and donating over 400 books to youth in the program. Partners like the Compeer mentoring program in Topeka and Youth Horizons used NMM to host recruitment events and promote their mentoring programs via social media. While, Kansas Big Brothers Big Sisters programs hosted a Bring Your Little to Work Day to help promote the benefits of mentoring.

National Mentoring Month is a month full of celebration. It is a way for Kansas mentoring programs to celebrate the everyday people who are making a difference in the lives of our young people. Kansas Mentors celebrates NMM by advocating for mentoring and recognizing the great work and efforts put forth by its 200 plus partners that work tirelessly everyday to ensure that every youth has access to a caring and quality role model.

What a great way to kick off 2012!
Q: When and how do organizations apply for Kansas AmeriCorps grant?

A: Presently, there are twelve AmeriCorps Kansas programs at various sites throughout Kansas utilizing the skills of over 270 highly trained AmeriCorps members: volunteers who dedicate between three to ten months of their lives to community service. Kansas AmeriCorps members serve in public organizations like schools, public agencies, and state parks. They serve as mentors, youth after-school support, service-learning leaders, volunteer recruiters, health educators and so much more.

The application for the Kansas AmeriCorps grant is now open and the deadline for applying is April 5, 2012. Visit the Kansas Volunteer Commission’s website at www.KanServe.org to find out more about Kansas AmeriCorps and to access grant application materials.

*Based on Volunteering in America report 2011
http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/KS
Partner Spotlight

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Salina Experiencing Large Growth

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Salina is excited about the growth the program has been seeing. The most recent partnership is with Kansas Wesleyan Men’s Baseball Team. KWU’s Baseball Bigs, are 13 men from the baseball team and one coach and his wife, who wanted to make a difference in children’s lives. Since November, they have been volunteering their time to boys here in the Salina community, some of whom had been sitting on the waiting list for years. BBBS and the Salina community are so proud to have these college student-athletes, stepping up and being role models. What an example they have set for other college students and the rest of the community.

~Heather Murdock,
Program Coordinator, BBBS of Salina

Kansas Mentors Background Check Grants

In an effort to reduce a significant funding barrier that mentoring programs face when trying to recruit and match mentors with youth on their waiting lists, Kansas Mentors is excited to announce a grant opportunity to Gold Star Programs to help reduce the costs of Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) criminal background checks. Volunteer Kansas has graciously granted Kansas Mentors $100,000 to reimburse Gold Star mentoring programs in the state of Kansas conducting KBI background checks. The Kansas Mentors Gold Star program was developed in an effort to provide a safe and effective mentoring environment for the youth of Kansas. This program recognizes mentoring partners across the state who have committed to maintaining a basic set of standards to ensure a quality mentoring experience. Programs interested in becoming a Gold Star program, simply need to register and submit a self-assessment checklist along with supporting documentation.

Gold Star information and application and grant application materials can be found at www.kansasmentors.org. You may also contact Kansas Mentors as mentor@ksde.org.

New Resources at KansasMentors.org

Kansas Mentors makes every effort to provide up-to-date resources for mentoring programs, for communities wishing to start a mentoring program and for mentors. If you haven’t stopped by in a while - give us a visit.

Resources for Mentoring Programs include:
- MENTOR’s How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program Toolkit
- National Mentoring Month Toolkit and free promotional materials

Resources for Mentors include:
- Communication Skills for Mentors, a 13 video story training with real mentors, real youth and real situations that illustrate common challenges and proven strategies
- Tools for Mentoring Adolescents

Governor’s Points of Light Awards

Honor your mentors or other volunteers that have made a commitment to service in your community and have helped meet a critical need in your community by nominating them for a Governor’s Points of Light Award.

Connect with us!!

Follow Kansas Mentors and @KansasMentors on social media.