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Mentoring Programs in Juvenile Treatment Drug Courts: Understanding the Difficulties of Applying Best Practices

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Mentoring programs have the potential to positively influence youth, especially at-risk youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Several researchers have proposed a set of mentoring "best practices" as guidelines to establishing successful mentoring programs that, if implemented appropriately, can yield positive results benefitting both the youth and the community. One particular juvenile justice program that can benefit from mentoring programs is the juvenile drug treatment court (JDTC) program. JDTC programs are diversion programs that provide assistance to youth who struggle with substance use issues and delinquency. Because these programs are community based and champion reintegration of youth in the community, they are prime candidates for mentoring programs. In this study, data were collected from ten mentoring programs operating within JDTC programs. Researchers interviewed JDTC team members and mentor program workers, analyzed JDTC and mentoring program policy manuals, and held a focus group of JDTC and mentoring professionals. JDTC mentoring programs' practices were subsequently compared to mentoring best practices proposed in the literature. Results suggest that there is relatively little overlap between current mentor best practices and JDTC mentor program practices. This is likely the result of several structural and population-based barriers unique to JDTCs. Implications are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Adult role models and mentors have the potential to provide significant resources to youth in their community (Brown, 2004; Lerner, 2007; Tully, 2004; Zimmerman, Bingenheimer, & Notaro, 2002). These resources are typically provided through some sort of beneficial relationship. While some of these relationships might occur naturally (see Zimmerman et al., 2002), many are established through mentor programs, programs designed to match youth with adult or young adult role models. These types of programs provide structure and support with the hope of leading to meaningful and valuable relationships between the mentors and mentees (i.e., youth). The development of these relationships is critical to the success of the mentor's positive influence on the mentee and vice versa (Hamilton & Hamilton, 2010; Rhodes & Spencer, 2010; Zand et al., 2009). It is through these programs that communities can help and encourage youth.

Mentor programs can positively impact youth and increase youth success in school, at home, or within employment (Britner, Balcazar, Blechman, Blinn-Pike, & Larose, 2006; DuBois, Holloway, Valentaine, & Cooper, 2002). DuBois et al. (2002) conducted a meta-analysis and found that evidence-based practices and model-driven mentoring programs have more positive

outcomes than programs that lack these foundations. This implies that mentoring programs that are able to successfully implement research-based practices and procedures can increase the benefit that the youth receive from the program.

Several researchers and practitioners have proposed practices for mentor programs that if followed, will likely yield positive outcomes for youth (i.e., Anastasia, Skinner, and Mundhenk, 2012; Deutsch & Spencer, 2009; Yelderman & Thomas, 2015). Anastasia et al. (2012) developed a set of "best practices" that are suggested to benefit communities and schools and increase the likelihood for youth to achieve positive outcomes. These best practices include practices for both mentoring programs and mentors specifically, and are derived from empirical findings from previous research. The effectiveness of best practices are contingent upon the ability of programs to implement these practices; however, not all programs have the resources to do so. Thus, not all youth are afforded the opportunity to participate in these types of programs.

The purpose of the current research is two-fold. First, Anastasia et al.'s (2012) model of best practices for mentoring programs will be compared to data collected on mentoring program practices observed within ten juvenile drug treatment court (JDTC) mentoring programs in order to determine whether or not JDTC mentoring practices overlap with best practices. Anastasia et al.'s (2012) best practices are used in the current research because they are more extensive than Deutsh & Spencer's (2010) best practices, are the most concise and succinct set of best practices currently identified in the literature, include practices supported by empirical research, and are more comprehensive than other proposed sets of practices by describing practices at both the mentor level and program level. Second, JDTC program practices will be extensively reviewed in order to identify challenges and problems unique to JDTCs that might inhibit their ability to implement Anastasia et al.'s (2012) best practices.

Mentoring Best Practices

Anastasia and colleagues (2012) conducted a secondary review of the literature and conducted interviews regarding mentoring programs and practices. As a result, they proposed a set of best practices for mentoring programs that, if implemented, will increase the possibility for youth success and positive life outcomes. These mentoring best practices act as a guide for mentor programs, establishing foundational aspects of program structure and function. According to Anastasia et al. (2012), mentoring best practices are divided into two categories, which are program best practices and mentor best practices.

Program best practices identify specific program components that contribute to overall program sustainability and establish a platform from which mentors can work. These include formal structure, clear expectations, ongoing support, and organizational self-monitoring. *Formal structure* refers to setting and establishing formal program policies and procedures and the structured use of community resources. *Clear expectations* refer to setting boundaries and goals for mentors, formalizing position roles, and explaining procedures and requirements. *Ongoing support* refers to support provided to the mentors during their mentoring relationships that allows them to adequately provide their mentor services to the youth. This includes orientations, trainings, meetings, etc. Finally, *organizational self-monitoring* refers to the evaluation of the mentor program as a whole, focusing on model fidelity, organizational structure, sustainability, and staff appropriations (Anastasia et al., 2012).

Mentor best practices identify specific aspects of mentoring relationships that facilitate the development of mutual satisfaction and beneficial interactions (Anastasia et al., 2012). These practices include training, commitment, respect for family, class, and culture, respect for individual outlook and attitudes, relationship building through activities, and access to support. *Training* refers to providing adequate opportunities to increase mentors' knowledge and skills related to their role as a mentor, and *commitment* refers to mentors' dedication to remain a mentor for a significant length of time (Anastasia et al., 2012). Longer term mentorships (lasting a year or longer) are associated with more positive outcomes (Grossman, Chan, Schwartz, & Rhodes, 2012; Rhodes & Lowe, 2008; Rhodes, Reddy, & Grossman, 2005). *Respect for family, class, and culture* refers to mentors providing their services within the context of the youth's culture. This is often addressed during the matching process in which matching on certain characteristics (e.g., race and gender) can be critical in building trust (see Holsinger & Ayers, 2004). *Respect for individuals' attitudes and outlook* refers to the individualized approach of mentoring, requiring mentors to tailor activities and relationship style to each youth. *Relationship building through activities* refers to the focus on establishing relationships by jointly participating in tasks, events, and activities. This is assumed to produce naturally developing relationships as a result of mutually enjoyed bonding experiences (Anastasia et al., 2012). Relationship activities and styles can significantly impact the development and effectiveness of mentoring relationships (Langhout, Rhodes, & Osborne, 2004). Lastly, *access to support* refers to the support system set up for the mentors, including social networks, mentor program resources, and family (Anastasia et al., 2012).

Mentoring Types

Not all mentoring programs are the same or designed to address the same issue. Similarly, not all mentor relationships develop in the same way or share a common purpose. Anastasia and colleagues (2012) identified eight different types (classifications) of mentoring strategies. Each of these strategies is based on three dimensions of mentoring relationships rooted in prior literature including natural vs. assigned, school-based vs. community-based, and developmental vs. prescriptive mentor relationships (see Anastasia et al., 2012; DuBois et al., 2002; Karcher & Herrera, 2007; Karcher & Nakkula, 2010; Pederson, Woolum, Gagne, & Coleman, 2009; Rhodes, 2007, 2008; Rhodes, Bogat, Roffman, Edelman, & Galasso, 2002; Spencer, 2007). The *natural vs. assigned* dimension describes whether a mentor relationship develops on its own (natural) or is created by a third party (assigned). The *school vs. community* dimension describes the setting of the mentoring relationship (whether in school or in the community). The *developmental vs. prescriptive* dimension describes whether or not the mentoring relationship focuses on youth development through bonding and relationship building activities (developmental) or achieving specific goals, including identifying solutions to behavioral and attitudinal issues (prescriptive).

Most research involves assigned community or school developmental mentoring relationships (e.g., BBBS) and natural community developmental relationships (e.g., a boss taking an employee under the wing). Anastasia et al.'s (2012) mentoring best practices were developed primarily within the context of these types of relationships. However, Anastasia et al. (2012) argues that best practices should also apply to natural school-based developmental and general prescriptive relationships. Mentoring programs within the juvenile justice system include

predominantly prescriptive relationships because their purpose is to help achieve the outcome of reducing delinquent behaviors (though they might have developmental goals as well). Due to their prescriptive nature and operation within the juvenile justice context, mentoring programs for juvenile justice involved youth potentially face unique barriers that differ from programs operating outside of the justice system (Miller, Barnes, Miller, & McKinnon, 2013). One of the goals of the current research is to address potential issues of applying best practices developed for assigned community or school developmental mentoring relationships and natural community developmental relationships to prescriptive mentoring relationships within the juvenile justice system.

Mentoring, Juvenile Justice, and Substance Use

Mentoring programs have been successful in eliciting positive impacts for at-risk youth and youth in schools and communities and have, therefore, gained popularity in the juvenile justice system (DuBois et al., 2002; Eells, 2003; Jones-Brown & Hanriquez, 1996; Tierney, Grossman, & Resch, 1995; VanderVen, 2004). Moreover, mentoring programs within the juvenile justice system have led to reduced delinquency and substance use (Rhodes et al., 2005; Thomas, Lorenzetti, & Spragins, 2013; Tolan, Henry, Schoeny, Lovegrove, & Nichols, 2014), suggesting that mentoring programs might act as a prevention mechanism with the ability to change delinquent trajectories of justice involved youth.

Although these research findings seem promising, mentor programs within the juvenile justice system appear to have systematically different challenges when trying to implement research-based best practices compared to other community and school-based mentoring programs (see Kupchik, 2007). Implementing mentor program best practices in juvenile justice settings might be exceedingly difficult due to the strict contexts and the necessity to accommodate other juvenile justice programs (Britner et al., 2006). This might partially explain why much of the juvenile justice mentoring research is mixed, suggesting the in some instances, mentoring reduces negative behavior but in other instances, it has no effect or increases negative behaviors (Britner et al., 2006; Matz, 2014).

Mentor Programs and Juvenile drug treatment courts

One juvenile justice context that might benefit from mentoring is the juvenile drug treatment court (JDTC). JDTCs are diversion programs that allow youth to sidestep prolonged detention and receive treatment while under probationary services. Justice involved youth in JDTCs might not face the same barriers as youth in other juvenile justice contexts because JDTCs are reintegrative approaches to helping youth assimilate back into the community under juvenile justice and substance use treatment supervision. Because JDTCs emphasize community involvement, community-based mentoring programs are attractive reintegrative tools. Prior research suggests that JDTC programs are generally effective (albeit modestly) in increasing positive youth outcomes (Stein, Homan, & DeBerard, 2015). Mentoring programs provide JDTCs with assistance in helping youth achieve these positive outcomes. However, as with other juvenile justice contexts, JDTCs might still face barriers that prevent implementation of mentoring best practices. This study examines mentoring program practices within JDTCs and compares them with Anastasia et al.'s (2012) list of mentoring best practices in order to determine areas of overlap and areas of contrast and identify unique barriers that JDTCs might face.

METHODS

Procedure

Ten JDTC mentoring programs (representing nine states) were selected to receive on-site technical assistance through a partnership between the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ). Each of the ten sites had previously applied for and received grant funding from OJJDP. Sites were selected based on eligibility criteria outlined in the OJJDP grant solicitation. These ten sites were then visited by NCJFCJ staff, who provided on-site technical assistance. During technical assistance visits, data were collected through holding on-site interviews, content analysis of program handbooks and policy manuals, and conducting a focus group.

On-site interviews consisted of four NCJFCJ staff members traveling to the ten juvenile treatment courts. Each member of the staff had been previously trained by the NCJFCJ to provide technical assistance. When on-site, researchers reviewed the program manuals for the JDTCs and the mentoring programs and interviewed key program members including judges, program supervisors and coordinators, program managers, mentors, mentor coordinators and directors, case workers, and juvenile probations officers. Interviews were semi-structured including a standardized set of questions with the allowance of informal and improvisational follow-up questions and inquiries to clarify interviewees' responses. Standardized questions included type of mentoring, recruitment strategies, mentor screening practices, training, matching, mentoring activities, mentoring resources and support, closure, JDTC roles and responsibilities, and program evaluations and assessments. NCJFCJ staff also met with mentees, educators, service providers, law enforcement, and other community collaborators who were present and willing to be interviewed. NCJFCJ staff sat in on staffing meetings and court hearings as well. During all of these sessions, staff took notes. Notes from these interviews focused on program structure and practices, program expectations and goals, challenges and deficiencies, and relationship building activities.[1] Only one staff member attended each site; thus, interviews involved a single interviewer and either a single interviewee or a group of interviewees (e.g., groups of mentors or groups of mentees).

Content analysis of the program manuals and handbooks involved a single staff member using the materials to identify information needed to complete the interview questions when this information was not obtained in the interview. Reasons for not obtaining this information included interviewees' lack of knowledge about certain practices, lack of time, etc. The content analysis did not utilize a sophisticated coding scheme but rather a presence or absence coding scheme. Data collected in this regard was coded for frequency analysis, and when information was present, it was used to supplement the information retrieved from the interviews.

In the focus group session, 29 total mentoring professionals from each of the ten sites were invited to meet and discuss mentoring programs, both generally and specific to their courts. Attendees included judges, court coordinators, project directors, probation officers, mentor

[1] This list is not exhaustive.

coordinators, and program evaluators. The focus group was facilitated by the same NCJFCJ staff members that were largely responsible for the on-site interviews. This took place after their site visits. The focus group also included other outside mentoring professionals; however, this was only 3 out of the 29 focus group attendees. During this focus group session, all participants engaged in general discussion about their mentoring programs, idea generation, and force field analysis, which is an organizational tool used to assess current forces impacting the state of an organization or in this case, a mentoring program (derived from Kurt Lewin's [1948] Field Theory; see Page, 1977). According to force field analysis, the current state of a program is the result of competing forces. These forces are either positive (strengthening/driving) or negative (inhibiting/restraining) and exert influence on the state of the program (Lewin, 1948; Page, 1977). Using force field analysis in this context allowed researchers to identify positive and negative forces related to JDTC mentoring programs.

Two NCJFCJ staff members facilitated the force field analysis exercise in which they gave participants cards and asked them to identify major aspects related to successful mentoring programs. Then the participants, as a group, had to agree on the rank order of these aspects and place them on a large board at the front of the room as a group. Once the rank order was established, NCJFCJ staff asked participants to gather in small groups of three to four and come up with three driving and three restraining forces for each of the key aspects of mentoring programs they previously ranked. Then, once all participants had written their ideas on cards, they placed them on the front board while ranking them by relative influence and importance. Once all participants had placed the cards on the front board, the entire group (all 29 attendees) deliberated about each card and rank until all cards were ordered in a manner agreed upon by the group. This concluded the focus group force field analysis session.

Lastly, researchers assessed information in JDTC program manuals in order to gather information related to program missions, goals, training, screening, mentoring models, support, matching policies, and recruitment. Any time this information was contradicted by interviews with team members, the information from the actual team members was used in the final results.

RESULTS

First, descriptions of JDTC mentoring programs are reported including program goals, mentoring models, collaborating agencies, recruitment strategies, screening strategies, and matching strategies. Then, program and mentor best practices are compared to JDTC mentoring program practices in order to better understand where the two overlap and where they contrast. An analysis of strengthening and inhibiting factors related to JDTC mentoring programs is then discussed to help provide a more in-depth understanding of mentoring programs in JDTCs. Finally, barriers to implementing best practices in JDTC mentoring programs are identified.

Program Descriptions

To provide a description of the mentoring programs, qualitative data on program and mentoring practices were analyzed and quantified into the percentage of mentoring programs that engaged in a specific practice. A presence and absence coding scheme was used, identifying whether or not mentoring programs specified or currently engaged in certain mentoring program practices.

Several program goals were described in program descriptions and mission statements. Most sites (70%) reported that reducing substance abuse and providing each youth with a mentor were prioritized goals. This reiterates and reinforces the JDTCs' emphasis on reducing substance use. Other goals include increasing community safety, family functioning, and pro-social behavior (see Table 1 for complete breakdown of program descriptions).

Mentor program models were also assessed resulting in four types of models. These are volunteer one on one, paid one on one, group, and group peer models. Every site reported at least one type of one on one model. While most programs use paid one on one models (60%), many use volunteer one on one models (50%) Group models are utilized less.

For recruitment, most sites employ strategies through human resources (60%) and by word of mouth (50%). Other strategies include job or volunteer fairs, flyers and posters, and personal contacts. Although most sites use only one recruitment strategy (60%), several use more than one. Two sites use four strategies, one site uses three strategies, and two sites use two strategies. All sites that use only one recruitment strategy, use human resources.

Nearly all sites have significant collaboration. All sites collaborate with three or more agencies and organizations, and 70% of the sites collaborate with at least five other agencies and organizations. All sites collaborate with juvenile court and juvenile probation, and 70% of the sites collaborate with school boards, prosecutors, and public defenders. Other collaborating agencies include Big Brother Big Sisters (BBBS), mental health agencies, and private services.

When screening mentors, most sites use criminal background checks (80%), human resources (60%), and mentor applications (60%). Other screening strategies include child/sex abuse histories, home visits, personal interests, personal references, and age requirements. Fifty percent of the sites use at least five screening strategies, while the others use as few as one.

Lastly, most sites employ matching strategies when determining which mentors fit well with mentees. Most sites use mentor availability (70%) and personal interests (50%) to make matches. Other strategies include mentor schedule, location, gender, racial/cultural identities, and school status. Seventy percent of the sites use at least three matching strategies, and these typically include common interests and availability.

Comparing JDTC Mentoring Program Practices with "Best Practices"

Mentor programs' goals, models, and strategies provide a general overview of the typical framework of mentor programs within JDTCs, which aids in the interpretation of program practices as they compare to Anastasia et al.'s (2012) best practices. The following results describe how observations of JDTC mentoring programs compare to each of Anastasia et al.'s (2012) mentoring program and mentor best practices.

Program Best Practices

In the following sections, qualitative data collected through interviews and the review of program and policy materials are presented. These data are subsequently compared to Anastasia et al.'s (2012) mentoring program best practices.

Table 1. *Description of Mentoring Program Characteristics*

Program Characteristics	% of sites
Goals	
Reduce crime	30%
Increase community safety	50%
Reduce substance abuse	70%
Increase pro-social behavior	50%
Increase family functioning	50%
Provide mentor	70%
Increase school attendance	20%
Increase collaboration	20%
Prevent placement	20%
Increase links to community services	30%
Enhance offender accountability	10%
Mentoring Strategies	
Volunteer (1 to 1)	50%
Paid (1 to 1)	60%
Group	20%
Peer group	20%
Collaborating Agencies	
Juvenile court	100%
Juvenile probation	100%
School	70%
Mental health	30%
Prosecutors	70%
Public defenders	70%
BBBS	30%
Private services	40%
Recruitment Strategies	
Word of mouth	50%
Human resources	60%
Job/volunteer fair	30%
Flyers/posters	40%
Personal contacts	20%
Screening Strategies	
Human resources screening	60%
Criminal background	80%
Child/sex abuse	20%
Interview	50%
Mentor application	60%
Personal references	50%
Home visits	20%
Personal interests	20%
Age requirement	30%
Matching Strategies	
Mentor schedule	40%
Location	40%
Gender	40%
Interests	50%
Availability	70%
Racial/cultural identity	40%
School status	20%

Formal structure. JDTC mentoring programs mostly contain formal structures related to the mentoring relationships, mentors, and mentees. Each JDTC program outlines specific roles for mentors, mentoring relationship guidelines, and interactions with the youth and families. Each mentor is given a policy and procedures manual describing their role as a mentors, the purpose of the mentor program, and the overall goals of the program. These manuals also contain guidelines for appropriate mentoring relationships. Though programs with more resources, or those which used established programs (e.g., BBBS or mentor agencies), found it easy to follow and measure mentors' adherence to these guidelines, many programs face difficulties due to lack of resources. Also, several sites who use BBBS had to adapt their program structures to serve older substance abusing youth because BBBS is aimed at younger low-risk youth.

Clear expectations. Nearly all programs set clear expectations with mentor guidelines by engaging in structured interviews and contractual agreements with mentors and setting mentoring goals. This typically occurred during the interview and orientation process. Some jurisdictions used on-the-job training to communicate these messages, and these trainings were most likely less effective than formal orientation or specialized training.

Ongoing support. JDTCs with well-established and comprehensive mentor programs provide substantial support. These programs provide mentors with activities, information on JDTC practices, and feedback on their efforts. Some programs with fewer resources rely more on mentors' self-monitoring. These mentors are expected to develop their own activities, seek out their own trainings, and engage parents when they feel comfortable and deem it necessary.

Many JDTC mentoring programs establish modes of frequent contact between program administrators or coordinators and mentors. Monitoring strategies include coordinator oversight, regular contact, monthly written mentor reports, regular trainings, and group meetings. Some programs contact the mentees and their families in order to monitor the mentoring relationship. Paid mentors who develop case plans for the mentoring relationship and youth seem to have more monitoring and support than volunteer mentors and mentors without case plans.

JDTCs that have more involved mentor and JDTC coordinators are better able to monitor and provide support for mentors. Each mentoring relationship is discussed at JDTC regularly scheduled meetings, which involve coordinators and team members. These meetings often include case reviews, integrating feedback from the mentoring relationship into the evaluations of the JDTC youths' progress. Though allowing mentors to attend and report on youth during meetings was discussed, no program implements this practice. Overall, sites seem to implement a wide range of monitoring strategies from monthly reports to extensive case plan evaluations.

Organizational self-monitoring. There is little emphasis on organizational self-monitoring within the JDTC and mentoring program collaboration. Most monitoring focuses on the mentors and mentees. However, JDTC team buy-in and program support is important, such that teams who are more invested in the programs are more in tune with the internal procedures and oversight of the program and staff as a whole. Differences in vision and goals, among team and staff, for these programs reduce the frequency and quality of program self-monitoring.

Mentor Best Practices

In the following sections, qualitative data collected through interviews and the review of program and policy materials are presented. These data are subsequently compared to Anastasia et al.'s (2012) mentor best practices.

Training. Orientations and trainings are critical in mentoring programs. Across the ten sites, training practices and schedules vary dramatically. Some sites provide only on-the-job training, but others provide upwards of 40 hours of training before being matched with a mentee and an additional 20 hours of training afterward. For sites that use external mentoring agencies, mentors often complete two trainings, one with the external agency and one with the JDTC. Most trainings cover topics such as program rules and orientation, adolescent substance abuse, adolescent development, family engagement, boundary setting, and case management. However, extensive training is not the norm. Initial minimal training (1- 2 hours or reading the guidelines) and on-the-job training are more common across the sites.

An important component related to differences in training is access to resources. Training amount often depends on training resources. Sites with more available training resources are able to provide more opportunities for mentors compared to sites with fewer resources. Training opportunities increase more when JDTCs collaborate with public agencies, which provide opportunities for trainings, conferences, webinars, and other seminars related to JDTC youth.

Some sites have mentors with special backgrounds such as Master's degrees in social work or similar fields. In many instances, these qualifications are considered sufficient to replace training. However, one concern from many of the sites is that mentors did not have the *right* training. Many JDTC supervisors and coordinators claim that mentors lack training on treatment related information, adolescent behavior, substance abuse, mental health, and trauma. Because they lack this training, many are considered underqualified to be mentors for JDTC youth. However, untrained mentors are still used since mentors are not necessarily plentiful.

Commitment. Commitment also varies across sites. Although mentor commitment is critically emphasized, some sites have trouble with keeping mentors for a significant period of time. One site, in particular, averages a turnover rate of three months of mentoring per mentor. At this site, JDTC youth would sometimes see more than one mentor throughout the duration of the program. At other sites, mentors are dedicated to continuing their mentoring relationships as long as possible, some of them agreeing to be a mentor for at least a year.

Respect for family, class, and culture. Respecting mentees' backgrounds is addressed in many aspects of the mentor program. First, most program policies and procedures manuals outline specific information related to cultural competence and family engagement. Second, the matching process pairs mentors with mentees based on backgrounds, cultures, race, identities, and interests (this was at least the intent of each site). This allows mentees to have mentors who share life experiences and better understand their situations and goals. Third, mentors who receive more extensive training are informed of practices related to cultural identities and family engagement. One interview with a mentee revealed that her favorite activities with her mentor were ones that incorporated her culture, suggesting that culture is both important and

meaningful. At another site, cultural misunderstanding led to the inability to implement a mentoring program, suggesting that culture is important during program implementation as well.

Respect for individual outlook and attitudes. Youths' individual and outlooks and attitudes are greeted with respect to a certain degree. While respecting the wants and desires of each individual mentee is important, individual outlooks and attitudes are usually associated with the reason as to why the youth are in the JDTC program in the first place. JDTC youths' attitudes and outlooks are mostly apathetic and negative. Many youth are uninterested in having mentors or meeting with them. Attitude and outlook change are part of the overall goal of both the mentor and JDTC programs. Thus, understanding youths' attitudes and outlooks in order to promote change is considered more important than passively respecting them.

Relationship building through activities. Many JDTC mentor programs provide mentors with guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate activities. They also provide mentors with suggestions for activities based on the JDTC collaborations with the community. Also, several JDTC programs host activities and events for mentors, mentees, and their families. These events usually include activities with high levels of involvement and sometimes prizes, parting favors, or drawings. Other sites that have low levels of monitoring leave activities to the discretion of the mentor and with little oversight. Although these mentors are not surveyed on the types of activities they mostly engage in, it is speculated that they participate in convenient activities and activities that match their motivation. Highly motivated mentors might be more likely to plan mutually beneficial and engaging activities, compared to less motivated mentors.

One problem associated with engaging in relationship building activities is the lack of proper transportation systems. Often, mentees use public transportation, which inhibits their ability to meet mentors at some locations (if the mentors were not able to drive them to the activity). This is especially difficult when trying to maneuver busy and complicated schedules.

Accessing support. Anastasia et al., (2012) describe this best practice as the purposeful outreach to the program, family, and friends for support while being a mentor. In their article, no evidence was provided for this practice even though it was thought to be important. No JDTC program places emphasis on the mentors' development of support networks outside of the program. There is also no evidence that mentors sought support outside of the program.

The application of best practices in JDTCs varies widely across sites. Some sites implement these practices much better than others; however, on the whole, JDTCs struggle. A focus group was conducted to discuss mentor program implementation in order to better delineate problems associated with mentor programs within the JDTC context.

Driving and Restraining Forces Related to Factors of Program Success and Effectiveness

In the force field analysis, mentor program professionals were asked to come up with key factors of mentor programs that are critical to effectiveness and success (see *Figure 1*). The group developed a total of five key aspects and ranked them in order of importance. These included vision, model (program) fidelity, grit, effectiveness, and mentors, respectively. *Vision* was defined as forward thinking and hope. *Model fidelity* was defined by picking and following a model that is youth and family driven and empowering youth. *Grit* was defined as motivation

and commitment by mentors and JDTC staff. Grit was also defined as devotion to safety for the mentors and mentees. *Effectiveness* was defined as building a program that was adaptable and sustainable and included extensive collaboration and community connections. Lastly, *mentors* was defined as having access to a quality mentor pool, good matching processes, fruitful relationships, trust, and mentors that had outlooks that aligned with the program.

Driving forces. The group identified and agreed on several driving forces for each of the identified aspects of success. For *vision*, strong driving forces were identified as strong team members, testimonials from past JDTC graduates, community support, and resources. No weak driving forces were identified. For *model fidelity*, strong driving forces were identified as freedom of choice, independence from traditional juvenile justice system, collaboration and communication, training, guidance, and aid for poverty and mental illness. No weak forces were identified. Strong driving forces for *grit* included testimonials to increase team motivation, community and interpersonal recognition for their efforts, and acknowledging the necessity of JDTCs. Recognition was identified as a weak driving force. For *effectiveness*, driving forces included invested team members, buy-in from the community and the judge, vested interest from the community, and appropriate funding. Lastly, for *mentors*, strong driving forces included mentor motivation and volunteers.

Restraining forces. Teams also identified several components that hindered or restrained the each aspect of success related to JDTC mentoring programs (see *Figure 1*). Regarding *vision*, strong restraining forces were identified as a lack of resources, competing goals and visions, autocratic leanings (judges' overuse of discretion), family cynicism, negative client outcomes (e.g., drop-out rates, termination rates, positive drug screens, etc.), poverty, mental illness, and rigid/status quo mentality (i.e., refusing to change because it is the way things have always been). No weak forces were identified. Regarding *model fidelity*, strong restraining forces were identified as new marijuana laws, contractual constraints, political connections, lack of support for adding mentor programs, consensus-based decision-making (i.e., not valuing the individual who disagrees), and lack of collaboration and funding. No weak forces were identified. Regarding *grit*, strong restraining forces were identified as lack of funding and weak forces were identified as team/staff burnout, lack of team/staff transition processes, failed collaborative relationships, and lack of community buy-in or support. Regarding *effectiveness*, lack of cultural awareness was the only strong restraining force identified; no weak forces were identified. Lastly, regarding *mentors*, lack of resources was the only strong restraining force identified; no weak forces were identified.

Overall, driving and restraining forces seemed to reflect what the courts did well and what they struggled with. They also identified several of the barriers that the researchers identified when observing these sites. This suggests that JDTC mentor programs are not blind to their struggles and have developed ideas about what factors might help overcome these barriers.

Figure 1. Force field analysis chart.

Driving Forces		Ideal State	Restraining Forces	
Weak	**Strong**		**Strong**	**Weak**
	Testimonials Creative, talented people Positive catalyst Mavericks Community support & recognition Resources	**Vision** **Hope**	Lack of Resources Competing Visions Autocratic Leanings (i.e., Judges discretion) Family Cynicism Poverty & Mental Illness Negative Client Outcomes Systemic Old/Rigid Thinking Status Quo Mentality	
	Choice Independence from system Collaboration Communication Effective Training (evidence-based) Poverty & Mental Illness Guidance	**Follow the Model** **Empower** **Youth & Family Driven**	Contractual Restraints Marijuana Law Connecting to new political leader (mayor) Lack of program support Consensus-based decision making Lack of collaboration Funding	
Recognition	Testimonials Recognition Necessity	**Grit** **Motivation** **Commitment** **Safety**	Funding	Team/staff transition Burnout Failed relationships No buy-in/lack of community support
	Invested team Buy-In Vested Interest Funding	**Effective** **Adaptable** **Sustainable** **Collaboration** **Community Connections**	Lack of cultural awareness	
	Motivation Volunteers	**Mentors** **Quality Pool** **Matching** **Trust** **Relationships** **Aligned**	Lack of Resources	

Note. This figure represents what was on the board in the front of the room during the activity.

Unique Barriers Faced by JDTC Mentoring Programs

One of the main goals of this research was to identify barriers that JDTC mentoring programs face. When observing JDTC mentor programs and interviewing team members, several barriers arose, which were unique to the JDTC context. Each barrier was tied to an existing best practice proposed by Anastasia and colleagues (2012).

First, JDTC youth are uninterested in being a part of the mentoring program or having a mentor, and motivation to comply with mentoring requirements is low. Many youth want to keep to themselves and progress through the JDTC program alone, making it difficult for mentors to stay motivated and committed. Also, apathetic mentees might skip mentoring activities, threatening the potential of building relationships. When mentors are unable to meet with their mentees on a regular basis and engage in mutually beneficial activities, mentors are unable to sustain the best practices of commitment and relationship building through activities.

Second, JDTC youth are troubled and display various behavioral issues (e.g., acting out, delinquency, and truancy from school). These behaviors often relate to trauma, substance abuse, adolescent neurological development, mental health, and family relations. Because this population is so diverse, training mentors on each of these topics and expecting them to be able to handle situations specific to each of these topics is difficult. Extensive training in all of these areas might not be feasible for mentors or affordable for mentor and JDTC programs. Therefore, the best practice of adequate and extensive training for mentors is difficult to achieve in JDTCs.

Third, although many programs have formal structure, mentoring is often viewed as another level of structure, or another task to engage in. Youth have to attend treatment, appear in court, attend school, drug test, meet with probation officers, and sometimes work. Meeting with a mentor adds another requirement, which might appear burdensome to youth and family members who are responsible for driving the youth to these meetings. These burdens might increase apathy toward the mentoring relationships or resistance altogether. This suggests that rigid and formal structure might burden youth and families in JDTCs.

Fourth, parental engagement can be low in JDTCs which further complicates mentoring relationships. Support from mentees' families is critical in mentoring relationships but often JDTC youth are high risk partially because of their family situation. Although mentors might be trained in various skills, they might be incapable of understanding many of the family issues these youth live with. Mentors' inability to understand JDTC youths' family situations might lead to mentors' inability to meet the best practice of respecting youths' families.

Fifth, JDTC programs often run into the problem of not having enough mentors, which can undermine nearly every mentoring program and mentor best practice. This is related to both not having enough mentors overall and not having enough mentors to correctly match with youth. Many rural jurisdictions have JDTC youth populations of 5-10 youth. However, because the population of the area is also small, very few mentors are available for the JDTC. In these situations, not all youth who want a mentor or would benefit from a mentor are able to obtain one. In other jurisdictions in which mentoring agencies are used or where only one mentor is used for all JDTC youth, there are not enough mentors of certain demographics to be matched appropriately with youth. In one jurisdiction, a female mentor was matched with male youth and

the male youth considered mentor meetings to be "dates." These youth often viewed their female mentor in a sexual manner rather than viewing her as a role model. While most of the matching problems were related to gender, issues can also occur for mismatches in race and class as well.

Sixth, mentees are often confused about the role of the mentor. Mentors are involved in the mentee's life at the same level as the rest of the JDTC team; therefore, mentors are viewed as members of the JDTC team. This negates the ability of the mentor to be a "role model"; thus, mentees do not respect and trust the mentor, undermining relationship building.

Seventh, mentoring programs within JDTCs can suffer in the practice of commitment and relationship building due to several programmatic and structural constraints. JDTC youth often struggle with delinquency, substance abuse, mental illness, and trauma while in the program. Any one of these can lead to issues that cause mentees to be detained. When youth are detained, their ability to meet with their mentor in a meaningful manner suffers. Also, some jurisdictions have JDTC programs that last only 9 -12 months. Youth are often processed through the program and were in the program for several months before eligible to have a mentor, and the matching process sometimes took more than a month. This meant that youth had only six to eight months with a mentor. Since mentoring relationships of a year or longer are ideal, especially for positive attitudinal and behavioral changes, youth in shorter mentoring programs are unable to experience these effects. This threatens the best practice of commitment.

DISCUSSION

Mentor programs within JDTCs appear to thrive off of strong collaboration and sufficient resources. However, several procedural and structural constraints inhibit JDTC mentoring programs' success. Although Anastasia et al.'s (2012) mentoring best practices provide hope and promise for mentoring programs with the ability to implement them, JDTC programs appear to be at a disadvantage. The purposes of this study were to examine overlap and contrast between best practices and mentoring program practices across ten sites and to identify barriers unique to JDTCs that might inhibit their ability to implement these best practices.

Mentoring program best practices included establishing a formal structure, setting clear expectations, providing on-going support, and organizational self-monitoring. Most sites had formal structures and provided clear expectations for their mentors, which was evident by the focus group's placement of vision and fidelity to the mentor model as the two most important factors related to success and positive outcomes of mentoring programs. Similarly, each site had a program manual that provided guidelines and expectations for mentors. Although some sites displayed more structure and set clearer expectations than others, these differences were small. In contrast, sites varied greatly in providing monitoring and support for mentors and overall organizational self-monitoring. Many sites did not have the resources to provide sufficient support for mentors or to monitor the program as a whole. This suggests that there is only partial overlap between JDTC mentoring practices and Anastasia et al.'s (2012) best practices at the program level.

Mentor best practices included training, commitment, respect for family and culture, respect for mentees' individual outlook and attitudes, activity-based relationship development, and accessing support networks. None of the mentor best practices were consistently implemented across all sites. Mentors' training appeared to be grossly inadequate for serving JDTC youth. Also, commitment and relationship building activities varied greatly across sites, posing problems for many programs. However, these were considered to be important to program success and effectiveness according to the focus group. Respect for family and culture was a more represented practice, but some sites failed at achieving this as well.

Also, there was no evidence that mentors' accessibility to outside support networks was present or beneficial. From the current analysis, this best practice seemed to be absent in mentor programs. Finally, in JDTC programs, respecting individuals' outlooks and attitudes took on a different meaning. Anastasia et al. (2012) suggested that this best practice described the mentors' incorporation of youths' individuality and developmental needs. However, program observation identified this practice to, instead, describe the goal of restructuring youths' attitudes and outlooks to be appropriate in the community. In JDTCs, this practice took on more of a "norm defining and reinforcing" practice rather than a "respect" type of practice. Integrating actions related to developmental needs, however, was absolutely critical.

Overall, Anastasia et al.'s (2012) mentoring program and mentor best practices did not convincingly map onto JDTC mentor program practices. JDTCs experienced difficulties in establishing and implementing most of the best practices. Sites differed in implementation success, and the main contributing factor seemed to be the availability of resources.

One contributing explanation as to why many of these program and mentor best practices were inconsistent across sites and often inadequately implemented or upheld is the notion that these programs face barriers unique to JDTC mentoring programs. JDTC programs facilitate structured environments for high-risk youth, which limits the flexibility of mentor programs (i.e., length of relationship, meeting with mentor being a burden, and high risk populations). This is a substantial finding because this calls into question the ability to implement best practices that are linked to positive and beneficial outcomes for youth. By having a structured environment that increases the difficulty of attaining a year-long mentoring relationship prevents the JDTC youth from receiving the benefits from such relationships. Establishing only short-term relationships (less than a year) undermines the purpose of such relationships. Mentoring relationships should be considered long-term bonding relationships, establishing a meaningful relationship over a life course that enables mentees to engage in productive activities and withdraw from harmful activities. Yet, providing JDTC mentees with a short-term mentor might resemble more of a temporary teacher, who is treated much differently and unable to have the same impact or serve the same purpose.

Also, JDTC youth seem apathetic due to the burdens of the mentor programs and their view of mentors as JDTC team members. JDTC youth's idea of a mentor and a JDTC team member is rather confounded, and it seems as if presenting a mentor to JDTC youth without also communicating that the mentor is an extension of the JDTC team is problematic and unlikely. This might contribute to JDTCs' inability to implement the best practices of overall commitment and relationship building through activities. If a mentoring relationship is structured in a way that

inhibits the building of trust, value, and security, then the mentoring relationship fails at its very purpose. Positive outcomes and benefits will cease to exist in this case.

Lastly, JDTC youth are high risk populations, meaning they suffer from poor decision-making, substance use/mental health issues, often low family support, and poor school performance. This population might not necessarily be able to be mentored in the same way as other youth. Mentors might require more training on drug use and mental health, child abuse and neglect, trauma, and school engagement, which differs from mentors involved in other programs. In order to allow mentors to meaningfully impact their mentees, in the JDTC context, these barriers must be overcome.

Underlying these findings is the notion that Anastasia et al.'s (2012) best practices were developed for natural and assigned community developmental mentoring relationships and applicable for natural school-based developmental and prescribed relationship types. However, JDTC mentoring relationships are assigned community-based prescriptive relationships. This suggests that these best practices were not developed for the types of relationships found in JDTC mentoring programs. Thus, Anastasia et al.'s (2012) best practices might inadequately address the needs of JDTC mentoring programs.

Limitations and Future Directions

Although this study provided a comprehensive look at several JDTC mentoring programs, these programs are only a few of many mentoring programs in existence. It is possible that other programs better implement these best practices. Because this research utilized a convenience sampling procedure, only analyzing data from programs awarded grant funding from OJJDP, the courts and mentoring programs in the current study might have unique characteristics compared to other courts and programs. Therefore, the data might not be generalizable to all JDTC mentoring programs. Also, there were no outcomes or comparisons with other programs associated with this research. Therefore, no conclusions can be made regarding program effectiveness. The current study utilized only descriptive qualitative data and simple content analysis approaches for the comparison of current program practices to proposed best practices from the literature (i.e., Anastasia et al., 2012), whereas more sophisticated content analysis techniques and interview assessments might have yielded more precise results. Lastly, researchers did not engage in in-depth interviews with both the mentors and mentees together, addressing relationship dynamics. Thus, this research is unable to make any conclusions about relationship quality or other relationship components.

Future research might look at comparing mentoring outcomes between programs that implement more of Anastasia et al.'s (2012) best practices compared to those that implement fewer best practices. Also, researchers should observe and interview more JDTC mentor programs to see if different trends emerge. Finally, future research should identify common practices of JDTC mentor programs that relate to successful outcomes. Based on these observations, researchers should develop mentoring best practices specific to JDTCs. This can be applied to mentoring programs in the broader juvenile justice context as well because many juvenile justice programs likely face many of the same barriers.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no dispute against the benefit of mentors on today's youth. Understanding the factors related to creating successful programs is important to help provide youth with mentors and the potential benefit from these relationships. The current study examined a set of proposed best practices for these types of programs and compared them with JDTC mentor programs. Based on these observations, current best practices did not fit JDTC programs as a result of a high risk youth population and structural barriers unique to JDTCs. Although these best practices are a good starting point, new or revised best practices should be developed for JDTCs and juvenile justice involved youth and related mentoring programs.

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