

Top 10 Lessons from Research on Youth Mentoring

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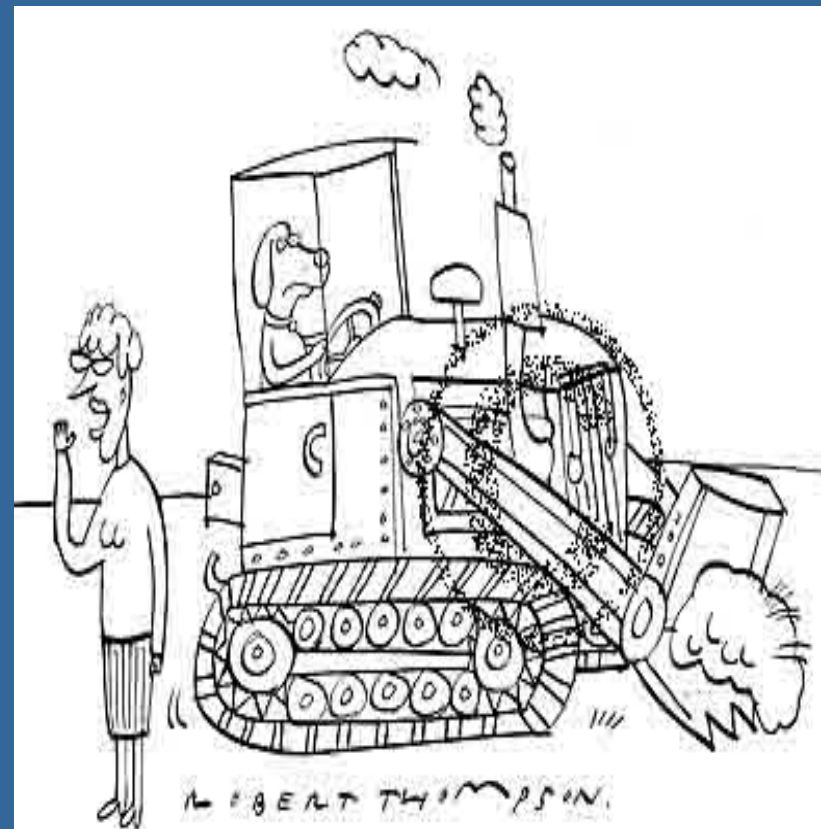
YOU'VE NEVER PLANTED POTATOES BEFORE HAVE YOU?

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MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership
Research and Policy Council Meeting
September 27, 2006
Boston, MA

Lesson 1: Use the right tools

- Apply theory and research (e.g., developmental vs. prescriptive approach)
- Assess mentoring with instruments that reflect desired qualities



'David! The dog's digging up the lawn again!'

Lesson 2: Prepare soil

- Importance of a proactive approach: Pre-match training for mentors (& protégés)
 - expectations
 - ethical problem-solving
 - relational skills
 - developmental and multicultural issues
 - provide a “guiding framework” based on theory and research

Lesson 3: Weed early

- Don't wait for big problems, identify competent mentors through pre-match assessment
 - Mentors: interests, awareness of developmental and multicultural issues, personality, expectations, relational skills
 - Protégés: interests, personality, expectations, support-seeking skills

Lesson 4: Right size

- Bigger isn't better and more isn't always what you want in a mentor program.
 - Have realistic expectations for the size of a program based on funding and resources.

Lesson 5: Right fit (plant compatible combos)

- Some combinations are compatible, others are deadly
 - Match mentors and protégés with compatible interests, personalities, and expectations/goals
 - Provide ongoing relational skills training to increase compatibility

Lesson 6: Water faithfully

- Mentors need ongoing training, supervision, and support



Lesson 7: Team work

- Mentors should not work in isolation, they need to be in ongoing consultation with program supervisors, protégé's parents and other caregivers

Lesson 8: Every plant is different

- Mentors & protégés come with different backgrounds, personalities, expectations, & skill levels.
- Training needs to reflect the differences in mentors and in protégés



Lesson 9: Don't give up on a “dead” plant

- Understand the developmental stages of mentoring
- A “disinterested” protégé may need time to engage

Lesson 10: Evaluate, Evaluate

- Assess the process and outcomes of a program, as well as the process and outcomes of individual matches.
- **USE THE RIGHT TOOLS** – ones that reflect the desired processes and outcomes
 - (e.g., the Relational Health Indices - Mentor Scale – Youth Version)
- Be ready to change practices as needed