

Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series

**“They always come and they never say goodbye:”
Understanding Healthy Closure in
Youth Mentoring**



June 18, 2015

2015 Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series Planning Team



Good to Know...

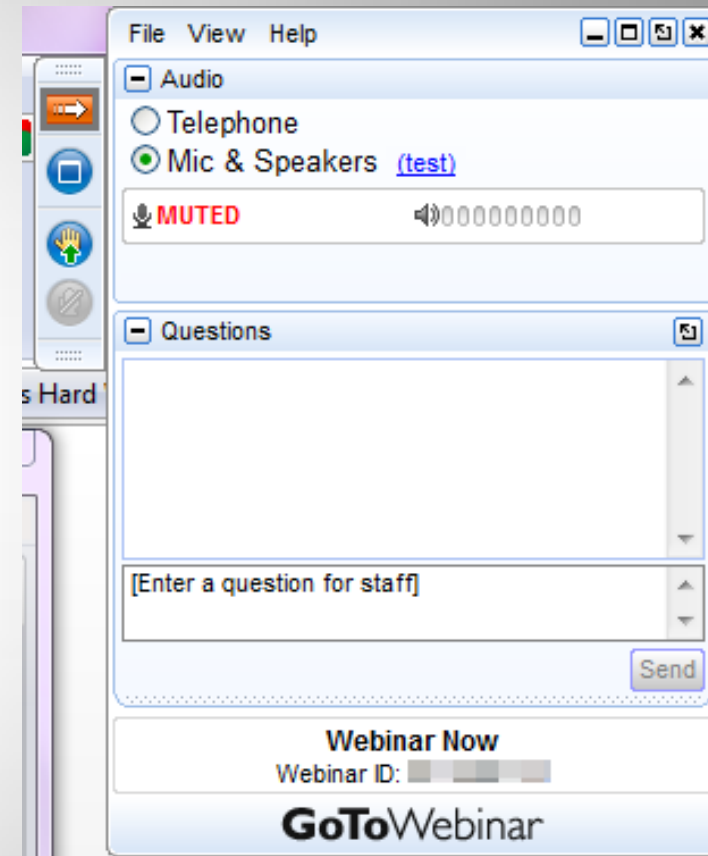
After the webinar, all attendees receive:

- Instructions for how to access PDF of presentation slides and webinar recording
- Link to the Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series webpage, where all slides, recordings, and resources are posted.

Please help us out by answering survey questions at the end of the webinar.

Participate in Today's Webinar

- All attendees muted for best sound
- Type questions and comments in the question box
- Respond to polls
- Who is with us today?



Today's Webinar

- **Theory and Research Overview**
 - Renée Spencer
- **Practice Recommendations and Case Examples**
 - Michael Garringer, MENTOR
 - Meghan Perry, Institute for Youth Success

**Q & A throughout the presentation
(use the Q & A panel)**

Objectives

1. Examine research on mentoring relationship endings including why relationships end and how attachment theory relates to healthy closure
2. Learn principles of healthy closure
3. Uncover strategies to determine when and how to close youth mentoring relationships

Polls!

How does your agency handle closure?

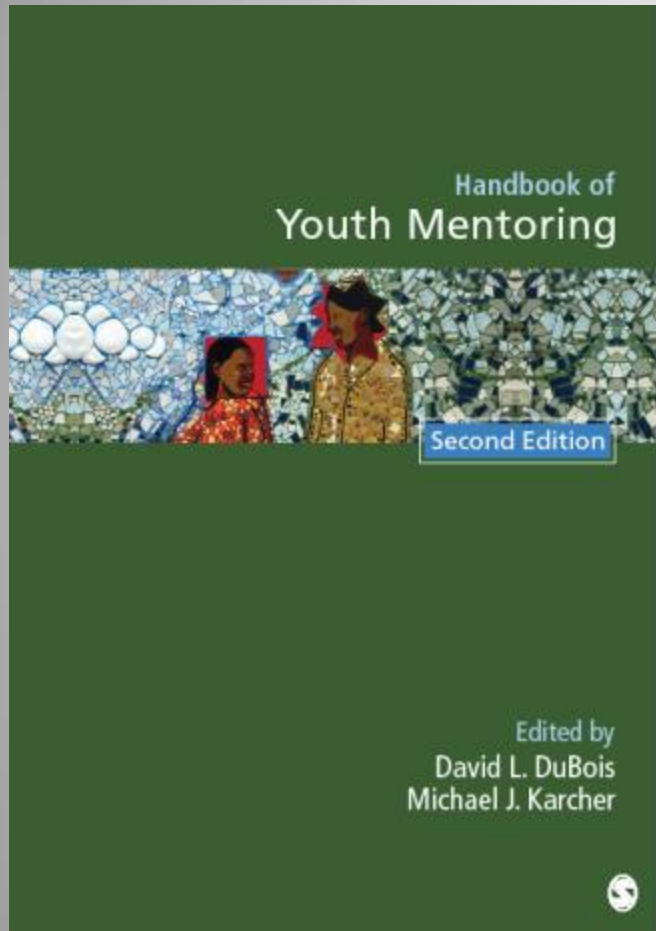


Personal Reflection

- Think about a relationship ending you experienced...
- How was the ending (the relationship transition) handled by you and other person?
- How did it make you feel?
- What if anything could have made it more positive?



Handbook of Youth Mentoring



Termination and Closure of Mentoring Relationships

Authors:

- Renée Spencer
- Antoinette Basualdo-Delmonico

Renée Spencer



- Associate Professor, Boston University School of Social Work
- Research focuses on relational processes at work in more and less successful youth mentoring relationships
- Has published widely and work has been funded by William T. Grant Foundation, OJJDP, and Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

“This I Believe”

- Most, if not all, mentoring relationships end
 - 1/3 to 1/2 matches end prematurely
- How they end matters
- Most of us are pretty bad at saying goodbye
- Programs need to help mentors and youth end relationships well

Why Relationships End

- Changes in life circumstances
- Youth dissatisfaction
- Mentor dissatisfaction
 - Perceived lack of mentee motivation
 - Unfulfilled expectations
 - Inadequate agency support
- Gradual dissolution
- Mentor abandonment

(Spencer, 2007; Spencer et al, in press)

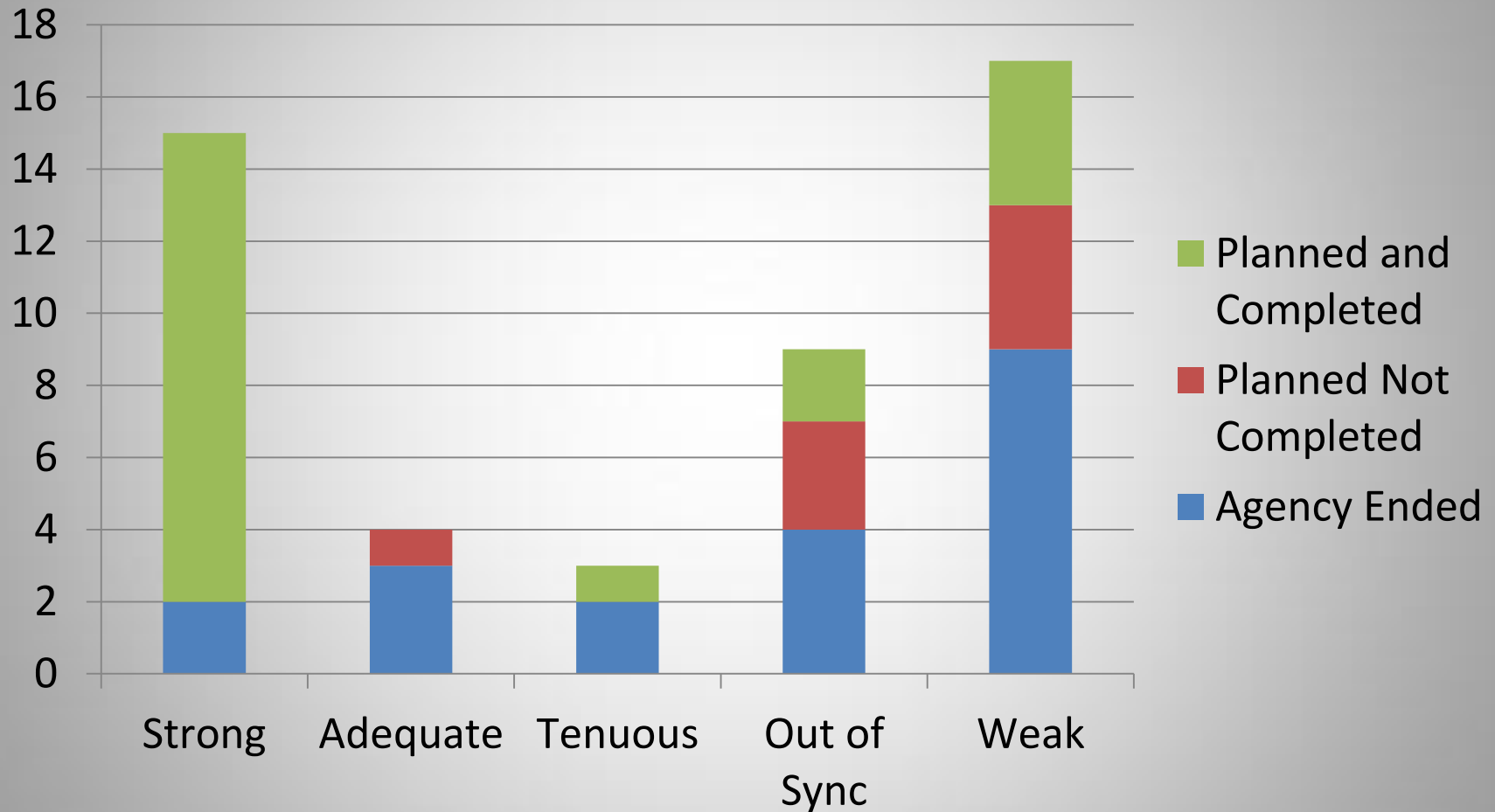
How Relationships End

Type of Ending	No. of Cases
Planned and Completed	20
Planned Not Completed	8
No Plan - Agency Ended	20

“I don’t think he likes me no more... Because he left without saying, he just left without calling.” (a youth)

“discouraged me from wanting to put him in a situation again not saying that another person would do the same thing.” (a parent)

Relationship Strength and Type of Ending



(Spencer et al., in press)

Impact of Match Endings

- Youth
 - Disappointment, sadness for lost opportunities, activities
 - Reticence about re-matching
 - Confusion
 - Left open-ended by mentor in attempt to minimize negative feelings
 - Wanted chance to say goodbye
- Parents/Guardians
 - Dissatisfaction, anger
 - Unfulfilled commitment
 - Wanted chance to say good-bye
 - Longed for clarity for child about ending
 - Concern about failed relationship for child
- Mentors
 - Disappointment, guilt, relief

(Spencer et al., in press)

Importance of Achieving Closure

- Finish what was started!
- Need to address both:
 - *How* relationships end (procedural endings)
 - *Impact* of endings – how people are left feeling about the ending
- Can influence how people feel about their overall experience participating in the program

But Hard to Do!

- Most of us are pretty bad at saying goodbye
 - More apt to say “see you around” rather than “good-bye”
- Avoidance
 - Most of us want to avoid pain and loss
 - Endings can dredge up past experiences of relationship ruptures and loss
 - Feelings of guilt, hurt, regret, etc. in present relationship
- Lack of modeling
- First Do No Harm

Relationship Endings


Decline

- Passive drifting apart
- Happens over time
- Levels of importance and closeness decrease

Dissolution

- Active
- Happens instantly/in a short amount of time
- Intentional ending

Timing of Closure

	Early Ending	Well-Timed Ending	Overdue Ending
Functional	Unexpected but Structured (unplanned, but completed ending) <i>sadness, pensiveness</i>	Expected and Structured (planned and completed ending) <i>satisfaction, admiration</i>	Delayed but Structured (unplanned, but agency completed ending) <i>frustration, acceptance</i>
Dysfunctional	Unexpected and Unstructured (unplanned and not completed ending) <i>abandonment, fear, anger</i>	Expected and Unstructured (planned and not completed ending) <i>anticipation, confusion</i>	Delayed and Unstructured (unplanned, and no agency completed ending) <i>resentment, dissatisfaction</i>

Considerations for Closing a Mentoring Relationship

- How relevant is the relationship to both parties?
- What is the quality of youth and adult interactions?
- What's the youth and adult's commitment to pre-established program expectations?

Scenario

A 10 year old boy from a single parent household has been matched with a 24 year old male mentor in your program for 6 months. The mentor was initially motivated to volunteer to learn more about working with kids.

- The pair meets fairly consistently, the mentor's re-scheduled twice.
- They generally spend time together playing basketball at the local community center.
- When the youth is asked how it's going with his mentor he says, "fine." Similarly, when the mentor is asked about the relationship's progress he states, "good I guess."
- On his way out of the community center last week you overheard the mentor say to another volunteer "I'm relieved to be half-way done with this."

Principles of Healthy Closure



1. Be clear & honest about the reasons for closure
2. Make it positive!
3. Develop appropriate and realistic plans for continued communication

Principle 1: Be Clear & Honest

- Be clear about the timeframe
 - gradual is better, but the date should be identified
- Identify natural emotions, like grief, denial, resentment, relief, or mixed feelings
- Allow time for reflection. Feelings will change over time so multiple conversations are ideal

Principle 2: Make it Positive

- Make the last meeting together special
- Affirm contributions of both the youth and adult
- Focus on the strengths of the relationship, particularly the strengths of the young person
- Cultivate a positive platform for both the youth and adult to move forward

Principle 3: Develop Appropriate & Realistic Plans for Continued Communication

- Recap reflections –what did & didn't work?
- Utilize appropriate closure/transition documents
 - Termination agreement for participants ending contact.
 - Continued contact agreements and support pacts for youth and adults continuing a natural relationship

Managing Healthy Closure



- Policy and procedures for anticipated and unanticipated closures
- Process for re-matching
- Tools & process for exit interviews
- Formal closure agreement / continued contact form

Closure in Varying Program Models

- School-Based –end of the year celebration
- Group –Final project, performance, expo
- Community-Based –varied based on the unique needs of participants



Innovations in Closure

- Youth Build USA, *Finding Mentors Finding Success: A Guide to finding and engaging supportive adults throughout your life*
- Karcher's 3,2,1 Reflection Activity



- 3 good things from today
- 2 things you did not enjoy
- 1 thing you might do differently in the future

New Benchmarks and Enhancements in the *Elements of Effective Practice* 4th Edition

STANDARD 6: CLOSURE

Facilitate bringing the match to closure in a way that affirms the contributions of the mentor and mentee and offers them the opportunity to prepare and assess the experience.

Stay tuned...More information on the entire 4th Edition to come over the summer!

Additional Resources



National Mentoring Resource Center

Apply for no-cost help for your mentoring program

www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org

Mentoring Connector

Recruit mentors by submitting your program to the Mentoring Connector (previously called the VRS)

<https://connect.mentoring.org/admin>

Remember...

After the webinar:

- Please help us out by answering survey questions at the end of the webinar.
- Everyone will get an email with information on how to download the slides, recording, and resources on the CMWS webpage on the MENTOR website:

http://www.mentoring.org/program_resources/training_opportunities/collaborative_mentoring_webinar_series/

Stay Connected

- Email us at collaborativewebinarseries@mentoring.org
- Tweet with hashtag #MentoringWebinar
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The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.mentoring.org/program_resources/training_opportunities/collaborative_mentoring_webinar_series. The page features the MENTOR logo (National Mentoring Partnership) and the tagline "Expanding the World of Quality Mentoring". Navigation links include HOME, ABOUT MENTOR, START A PROGRAM, PROGRAM RESOURCES (highlighted), GET INVOLVED, NEWS & RESEARCH, and SUMMIT 2015. A search bar is present. The breadcrumb trail reads: > Home > Program Resources > Training Opportunities > Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series. The main heading is "Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series". The text describes the series as a partnership between MENTOR and several state-level mentoring organizations, including the Maryland Mentoring Resource Center, Indiana Mentoring Partnership, Kansas Mentors, the Mentoring Center of Central Ohio, the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota, Oregon Mentors, and the Mentoring Partnership of Southwestern Pennsylvania. The text states that the series focuses on strengthening mentoring practice, sharing resources, and putting research into practice. On the right, there are logos for Collaborating Partners: MENTOR, mentoring partnership, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Chesapeake, and Indiana. Social media icons for Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Email, and LinkedIn are also visible.

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NATIONAL
MENTORING
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Mentor Recruitment

Thursday, July 16 2015 – 1-2:15 p.m. ET



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