Engaging Young Men of Color in Conversations on Masculinity

*IMPACT Webinar Series*

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Featured Speakers

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MENTOR Overview – www.mentoring.org

MENTOR’s Mission is to fuel the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships for America’s young people and to close the mentoring gap for the one in three young people growing up without this critical support.

• Nationally recognized field leader with more than 25 years of experience
• Demonstrated results and impact grounded in a community responsive approach
• Proven ability to help unlock new public and private dollars and engagement in mentoring
• Successful cross-sector and collective impact convener
• Member of the Social Impact 100, America’s 100 top-performing nonprofit organizations
MENTOR’s National Program Network
MENTOR’s National Footprint

26 affiliates serve as catalysts of the state/local mentoring movement
MENTOR’s Public/Private Partnerships
The Need for Mentoring

One in three young people are growing up without a mentor.

This is the mentoring gap in America.

46 Million
All young people ages 8-18

22 Million
Young people with no risk factors

24 Million
Young people facing risk factors

15 Million
Had a mentor
2.4M structured
12.6M informal

7 Million
Never had a mentor

15 Million
Had a mentor
4.5 M structured
10.5M informal

9 Million
Never had a mentor
The Mentoring Effect

WITH A MENTOR, AT-RISK YOUTH ARE:

55% more likely be enrolled in college

78% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities

130% more than twice as likely to say that they held a leadership position in a club or sports team

90% Respondents who had a mentor said they are now interested in becoming mentors

Research has consistently shown that mentoring has a positive effect in improving outcomes for young people with mentors versus those that do not.
Setting the Context:
Overview of The Fellowship Initiative & Masculinity Guide
The Fellowship Initiative
A Commitment To Driving Successful Outcomes for Young Men Of Color
YOUNG PEOPLE OF COLOR FROM ECONOMICALLY-DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES FACE EXTREME ODDS WHEN NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, COLLEGE ACCESS AND SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD

Compared to their peers, low-income young men of color are less likely to

- Graduate from high school: 20% lower rates
- Earn a bachelor’s degree: 50% lower rates
- Secure employment and advance in careers

For too many, there are few positive professional role models and the path to success is out of reach.
Enter The Fellowship Initiative (TFI)

Focusing on students from economically distressed communities who have potential but have not achieved strong academic performance and may be at higher risk.

TFI represents an innovative approach to build a support system targeted at those showing untapped talent to help them achieve their potential - **increasing access to knowledge, skills, resources, and experiences.**

Piloting strategies to explore whether the **right combination of intensive academic and leadership training** can help young men of color complete their high school education prepared to excel in colleges and universities.
Building On Success

Pilot program (launched in 2010) and initial expansion (2014) demonstrated that with a comprehensive enrichment program, young men of color can succeed in high school and college.

2018: Full scale programs in Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, and New York

Growing number of young men served - **200 students** recruited for class of 2020 (from 25 students in pilot)

More than **350 JPMC employees** have volunteered to work with the fellows as TFI Mentors, coaches, speakers and role models
TFI Focuses on Providing Fellows with the Skills, Knowledge, and Experiences Necessary for Success in High School and College

**High Touch**
Educate and support through college planning process and into college experience
- 3 Saturdays per month
- 2x per month after-school sessions
- 6-8 weeks of summer intensives (including Outward Bound, global leadership development, and more)

**Comprehensive**
Engage in academic enrichment, immersive learning, family workshops, career preparation, leadership development, mentorship and more
- Grounded in best youth research to support academic, personal and professional development

**Top Quality Partners**
Bring access to key collaboration opportunities within and outside JPMC
Best-in-class educational organizations and local with successful track records (e.g., Outward Bound, World Learning)
## 5 Key Elements

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<th>ACADEMICS</th>
<th>MENTORING</th>
<th>COLLEGE PREP</th>
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<td>Visits to JPMorgan Chase offices 3 x per month for classes and tutoring</td>
<td>Pairing with a dedicated JPMorgan Chase mentor who provides regular guidance on academic issues, college planning, financial aid and career pathways</td>
<td>SAT and ACT prep classes, college and financial aid advice and college tours</td>
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<td>Addition of more than 300 academic hours to the public school calendar</td>
<td>Opportunities to meet successful professionals of color</td>
<td>Assistance with scholarships, fee waivers, personal statements and college applications</td>
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<th>LEADERSHIP</th>
<th>SOCIAL SUPPORT &amp; NETWORKS</th>
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<td>Robust leadership development, service learning, civic engagement, and experiential learning opportunities</td>
<td>Help with the managing the challenges of daily life</td>
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<td>Ability to practice new skills and foster personal growth, self-confidence and perseverance</td>
<td>Resolving conflicts and maintaining social relationships</td>
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<td>Building strong communication and trust with teachers, counselors and TFI staff</td>
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Key Programming Recommendations
Establish boundaries, guidelines & norms.

- For programs, the monitoring and support of matches and mentoring groups is an appropriate time to establish and reinforce appropriate boundaries, important guidelines and norms informed by youth and adults.

- Discussions of gender identity require clear group and match norms in order to create an environment where each individual can express their authentic identity and navigate complex and complicated discussions with appropriate support. Examples include:
  - Define and practice the ability to hold each other accountable
  - Model tolerating disagreement while preserving respect and trust
  - Provide supports and resources to help youth and mentors navigate problem solving
Sample boundaries, guidelines & norms.

- Express your personal opinions respectfully and constructively.
- Disrupt disrespect. Agree on a word to use when you hear something hurtful or disrespectful to pause the discussion.
- Give the benefit of the doubt. Don’t go on the attack when you hear something you don’t like. Ask the person to explain and work it out.
- Step forward, step back—speak-up, but remember: others need airtime too!
- Use both heart and mind. Support and praise others, express feelings, and apologize when out of line.
Create an inclusive culture.

- There is no one singular definition of what masculinity or gender identity “should” look like.

- Group mentoring experiences often emphasize collaborative activities and group tasks while enabling dialogue, discussion and personal sharing around relevant topics.

- Focus on support, supervision, and monitoring best practices. Establish a clear process for checking in, seeking feedback, and handling problems.

- Creating culture is an ongoing process.
Create an inclusive culture.

- Ask your mentee probing questions to facilitate safe and open dialogue:
  
  - Can you share one thing that I should absolutely know about you?
  - Which one of your core values is most important to you and why?
  - When was the last time you cried and why?
  - What are some of your personal triggers? Pet peeves?
  - Who is your “go-to-person” when you’re facing personal challenges? What do they say or do to make you feel supported?
  - How can I best support you?
Engage youth proactively.

- Youth are sources of allyship and support for each other and important sources of feedback for programs.

- Youth stories and perspectives are essential to conversations about masculinity. Listen to understand rather than respond - let youth tell and own their story using their own words.

- Prioritize youth voice and agency from the beginning of programming.
Engage youth proactively.

- Plan your engagement activities with the goal of building trust
  - Trust and credibility are the basis for a productive mentoring relationship
  - Be open-minded and willing to think critically about your own perspective
  - The themes of a mentoring relationship should flow from mutual respect
    - Establish an underlying principal or set of values that can give mentoring context
    - Examples of contextual principals or values are personal growth, preparation for a new stage of life, fellowship or an important longitudinal endeavor
    - These contextual principals can frame the purpose and goals of activities and discussions
Engage expanded networks.

- Honor the role and importance of family and culture in shaping gender identity and masculinity norms.
- Engage proactively with the broader community that the young men come from and operate within.
- Encourage young men to share stories of and reflect on the voices that have shaped their experiences.
Engage expanded networks.

Parents/families are stakeholders in this process and their involvement is critical.

- Provide a range of workshops and meetings to inform, educate and engage parents and families (i.e. social emotional wellness, college prep, communication).

- Invite parents and families to participate in celebratory activities (i.e. as guest speakers, share culture/traditions such as food or music) and take ownership

- Endorse an open door policy approach -- strategize with parents during challenging moments as well as support and celebrate joyous occasions.

- Dare to engage adults in meaningful conversations with youth by establishing community agreements and revisit them as needed. Encourage the use of “I” messages, non-judgement, and respectful expressions of needs, feeling and concerns.
Leverage pop culture.

- Media and public figures have an impact on shaping what masculinity looks and feels like. Media intersects with larger systems such as sexism and homophobia.

- Examples of media include video games, internet, film and the social media platforms of public figures.

- Incorporate and reference popular culture and make sense of its influence on conversations and expressions of masculinity.
Reflect on and discuss pop culture.

- **What do you think about that [--what he just said/did?]**
  - How do you feel about that?  (exploring emotions and sentiments)
  - So why do you think that is what’s going on? (exploring interpretation)
  - What made you feel that way?

- **Do you think this was the best [right] way to do this?** (exploring values)

- **Do you think what he did has anything to do with being a man?**
  - Would you do anything differently?
  - Are there things you think men are expected to do that don’t make sense or are hurtful to others?
How to Prepare Mentors
Preparing Mentors for Discussions on Masculinity

- Create a safe and trusting space for both mentors and young people to share their experiences and emotions to each other and caring adults.

- Create a sense of self-awareness amongst participants individually and collectively by encouraging participants to look out for one another/themselves and check-in with each other.

- Mentors must role-model and share the challenges they are dealing with so young people can see what emotional struggle looks like and how to address their issues openly.

- Ensure that support services are in place for youth when they open up either onsite or through referrals as a follow-up.

- Make time for self-reflection around the topic of masculinity and gender identity. What has shaped your relationship with masculinity?
Additional Resources from MENTOR

- **Mentoring Connector**
  - National database of mentoring opportunities

- **National Mentoring Resource Center**
  - National clearinghouse of tools, resources and practices

- **Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series + IMPACT Webinar Series**
  - Free webinars by practitioners for practitioners

- **Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring (including supplemental guides)**

- **National Mentoring Summit**
  - Washington DC from January 30 – February 1, 2019