



***Mentoring Immigrant Youth:
Supporting Relationships for
Newcomer Youth
December 15, 2016***

2016 Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series Planning Team

The Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series is **funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention** through the National Mentoring Resource Center and facilitated in partnership with MENTOR:
The National Mentoring Partnership



Good to Know...

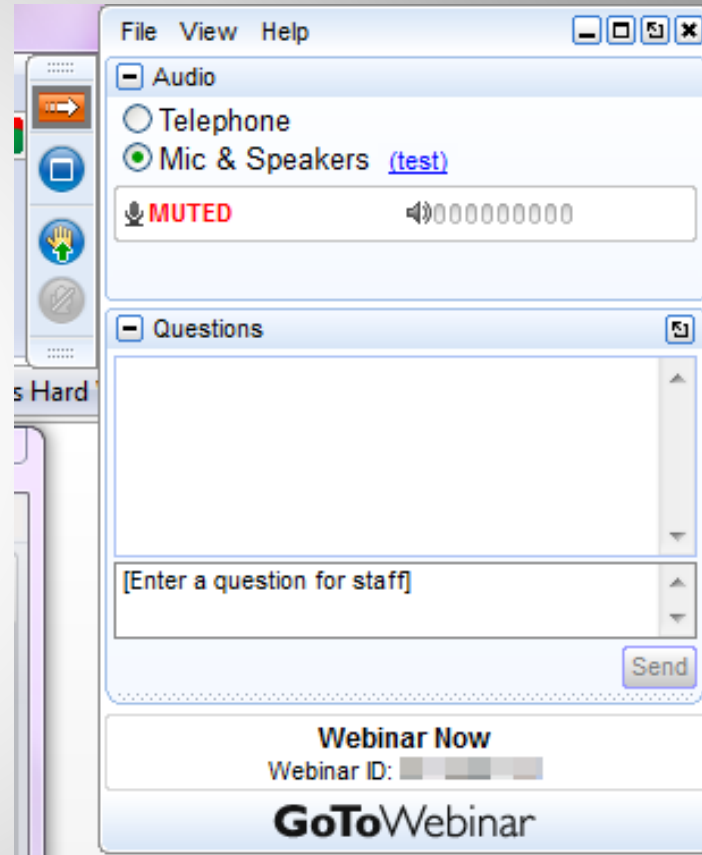
One week after the webinar, all attendees receive an email with:

- Instructions for how to access a 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?



Polls 1 & 2

- **Poll #1** : What is your role in the mentoring field?
 - Practitioner
 - Researcher
 - Technical assistance provider
 - Funder
 - Other
- **Poll #2**: How long has your program been serving immigrant – origin youth?
 - We are beginning to explore
 - Less than 1 year
 - More than 2 years
 - More than 5 years
 - Other

Today's Webinar

- Dr. Ashmeet Oberoi, Assistant Professor
University of Miami and Member of National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board (funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention)
- Susan Nomi, Director of Programs
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Peel

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

Panelist 1



Dr. Ashmeet Kaur Oberoi, Clinical Assistant Professor

University of Miami

- National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board Member (funded by OJJDP)
- Ph.D. in Psychology, Community & Prevention Research from University of Illinois at Chicago & Master's of Science from Delhi University
- Participation in several research projects.

Panelist 2



Susan Nomi,

**Director of Program, Big Brothers Big Sisters
of Peel**

- Over 20+ years of experience in the mentoring field in Canada;
- Graduate of McMaster University, Bachelor of Social Work degree;
- Current role includes leadership in community partnerships, program development and evaluation;
- Participation in several research projects.

Polls 3 & 4

- **3rd Poll:** What is your program's greatest barrier to supporting immigrant-origin youth most effectively?
 - Cultural competency training for staff and volunteers
 - Connecting with family members
 - Recruiting suitable mentors
 - A partnership with school(s) served by the youth
 - A knowledge of research and proven practices
- **4th Poll:** What percentage of students in your program are currently immigrant and refugee youth?
 - Less than 10%
 - 10-25%
 - 26-50%
 - 51-75%
 - More than 75%

Panelist 1




Dr. Ashmeet Kaur Oberoi, Clinical Assistant Professor

University of Miami

- National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board Member (funded by OJJDP)
- Ph.D. in Psychology, Community & Prevention Research from University of Illinois at Chicago & Master's of Science from Delhi University
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Setting the Stage

- Immigrant-origin youth are defined as those children and adolescents under age eighteen who are either foreign-born or U.S.-born to immigrant parents.
 - Refugees flee their countries of origin for fear of persecution due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.
 - Immigrant and refugee youth (IRY) projected to account for one-third of U.S. children by 2050
 - Many linguistic, educational, developmental, economic, and cultural gaps
 - Acculturative stress (strains/stressors associated with the acculturative process) is a common experience
 - language problems,
 - discrimination,
 - differences in acculturation with parents
 - peer issues
- 
- Depressive symptoms
 - Problem behaviors
 - Poor school engagement
 - Academic underachievement

In Theory, Mentoring can Help

- Facilitating acculturation to the new culture and connecting youth and their families to resources in the new country
- Mentoring may provide an avenue through which they can form connections with caring adults that help them develop
 - motivation and a sense of efficacy for academic tasks
 - positive social relations with teachers and peers at school
- Mentors can potentially be helpful in facilitating parent-child relationships and improving family dynamics by helping to navigate
 - acculturation gaps between parents and children, and
 - culture brokering by children

Research findings on Effectiveness

1. Mentoring programs can serve as a useful form of support for IRY, facilitating outcomes in the areas of acculturation, social integration and academic performance; conclusion is preliminary.
2. Mentors can be effective in helping IRY find success in navigating the complex and challenging task of adjusting to a new school and facilitate their school/academic engagement.
 - The role that fellow classmates and peers may be able to play

Keep in Mind

1. Carefully consider the nuanced needs and specific cultural backgrounds of the mentees and families you wish to serve.
2. Aware of the pre-, during- and post-migration circumstances, for instance:
 - a) Create a safe space for undocumented youth to explore their legal status and identities as “illegals”
 - b) Refugee youth – sometimes, arrive with very basic academic skills and struggle to catch up.

Keep in Mind (contd.)

3. Pre-mentoring relationship training, relationship building activities, setting clear expectations, mentee involvement in choice of activities, and family engagement may enhance the likely benefits of mentoring for IRY.
4. The cultural norms, gender dynamics, and family-related customs of the native culture of the youth being served.
 - a) Concept of non-related mentor
 - b) Collectivistic cultures
 - c) Cultural norms around gender interactions with the opposite sex

Who can be mentors?

1. Both cross-culture and same-culture mentoring relationships show potential
2. The cultural understanding that same-culture mentors bring to the relationship and the cultural competency of cross-culture mentors each may be helpful.
 - a) Same culture mentors - Language competency, Language competency, Cultural interpreters, Bicultural identity Bicultural identity, culture brokering for family
 - b) Individuals with international work or education experience
 - c) Culture Competency Trainings and 'shadowing'

Who can be mentors? (contd.)

3. Prospective mentors' attitudes about immigration policy and immigrants themselves should be taken into account.

- Make sure that you are screening out applicants who have political or moral views that would be a barrier to giving IRY the mentoring they need.



Implementation and Sustainability

1. Strategies like community-family-school partnerships and offering them at religious sites, have been proposed; however, research is lacking
2. Close collaboration between community leaders, schools and families in mentoring programs and support services for IRY has been argued to be important; however, research addressing this possibility is lacking.
3. Institutional and structural resources that can support the establishment and sustenance of natural mentoring relationships

Panelist 2



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Conversation Club Program

Site-based Group Mentoring Program

Newcomer youth ages 12-18

Volunteer Mentors ages 18-24 (post-secondary students);
some with immigration experiences

Ratios: 4 youth to 1 mentor

- Weekly program meetings of mentors and newcomer youth facilitated by program staff;
- Program Parameters – boundaries, confidentiality, values
- Informal, relaxed; safe & fun
- School Year session; Summer session
- Generously funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

Outreach & Partnerships

Community Outreach: Partnership with a settlement organization

Keys to newcomer youth recruitment:

- Partners with relationships with newcomer families
- Trusted and safe program location

Expanded to schools

Partnership development was essential in reaching newcomer youth & staff training opportunities!



Program Values & Goals

Program Values

Respect & Inclusion; Respect for all cultures & diversity; Youth engagement & youth voice

Program Goals

- Practice English language conversation skills in a safe, encouraging environment;
- Build confidence and sense of belonging through mentoring relationships
- Provide opportunities for social integration and friendship with youth from other cultures and backgrounds; cultural sharing & celebrations
- Build leadership skills through youth engagement & youth voice

Program Themes

- **“Shared authorship” approach:** All youth have input in program planning & leadership of activities
- **Practice English language skills and vocabulary:** Small group activities; Team-building activities; discussion of “hot topics”
- **Debates:** Team games and presentations
- **Games:** Non-threatening way to participate
- **Cultural celebrations and sharing:** Potlucks & games
- **Group projects:** Plan an event or campaign; Workshops of high interest to youth, diversity training
- **Field Trips:** Agency events



3 Year Program Evaluation

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada - Formal Evaluation Study by:

- Dr. Julia Pryce, Ph.D. & Dr. Michael Kelly, Ph.D.
- Loyola University Chicago School of Social Work

To assess CC's impact on newcomers in regards to the following factors:

- Hope (Hope Scale)
- Belonging (Perceived Cohesion Scale)

Pre and Post Surveys & Interviews with youth

Process data from pilot Agencies – York & Ottawa



Evaluation Findings – Year 3

120 Participants completed pre & post surveys:

- Conversation Club increased newcomers' sense of hope for the future.
- Conversation Club increased young people's sense of belonging to both the Club and to Canada.

Across the 18 interviews conducted with participants at the end of the program year, several themes emerged:

- Conversation Club increased newcomer's sense of hope and belonging
- Conversation Club increased newcomer's English communication skills
- Relationships with mentors and program staff were crucial



Voices of Youth

“It was surprising at first, because I thought to be friends we have to have things in common, like big things, religion and culture... but then I realized it doesn't have to be religion, can be something else. Like *how you look at people*. It doesn't have to be the culture. That's what makes me... like, have friends now.”



Voices of Youth

“This club is very nice; there is no discrimination. People don’t judge you on the basis of your looks or your caste or your background. Like, it’s just, everyone is, uh, everyone is just, has this experience to share how they feel and they’re encouraged to, like, express themselves, don’t feel left out.”



Best Practices

- **Diversity Competence** – staff & volunteer training of; Culture and Language of staff/volunteers; anti-oppression approach & practices
- **Hiring the Right Staff** - Passion for building connections with youth; understanding of issues facing newcomer youth; training in trauma informed practice
- Focus on **relationship building** and developing a sense of community; high ratio of mentors to youth
- **Youth Engagement**, empowerment and youth voice
- **Cultural Celebrations and Sharing** – building cross-cultural bridges and understanding; supporting positive cultural identity

Resources

Ontario Mentoring Coalition - Toolkit of Effective Mentoring for Youth Facing Barrier to Success

<http://ontariomentoringcoalition.ca/mentoringyouthfacingbarriers/tailored-mentoring-for-youth-with-specific-needs/newcomer-youth/>

Alberta Mentoring Partnership – Tools for Mentoring Newcomer and Refugee Children and Youth

<http://albertamentors.ca/tools-research/>

Additional Resources

CAMH – Mental Health Refugee Project - Resources

<https://www.porticonetwork.ca/web/rmhp/toolkit/social-determinants-of-refugee-mental-health;jsessionid=C9B8409232622B4B41C95FE1C1B91534>

Mental Health Promotion – CAMH Resources

<https://www.porticonetwork.ca/web/rmhp/toolkit/mental-health-promotion>

School Mental Health - Assist

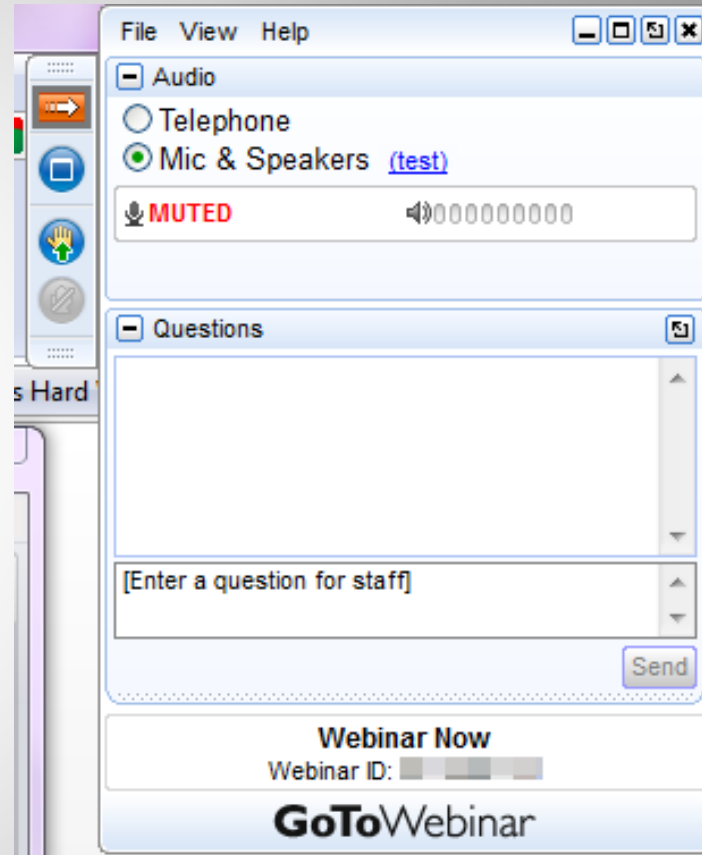
<http://smh-assist.ca/resources>

Info Sheet– Helping Students to Manage Anxiety

<http://smh-assist.ca/blog/2016/09/21/back-to-school-featured-resource-educator-info-sheet-on-helping-students-to-manage-anxiety/>

Q&A for all Panelists

Type your questions in the question box:



Additional Resources

[Growing Up in a New Country: A Positive Youth Development Toolkit for Working with Refugees and Immigrants](#) – A fairly comprehensive guide for youth workers of all types that includes a special “toolbox” for mentoring FG-IRY. Published by Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services.

[Mentoring Immigrant Youth: A Toolkit for Program Coordinators](#) – A toolkit on the topic published by MENTOR in 2009.

[New Directions in Mentoring Refugee Youth](#) – A brief guide published recently by Bridging Refugee Youth and Children’s Services.

Additional Resources



NATIONAL
MENTORING
RESOURCE CENTER
A Program of OJJDP

National Mentoring Resource Center

Apply for no-cost help for your mentoring program, funded by OJJDP

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...

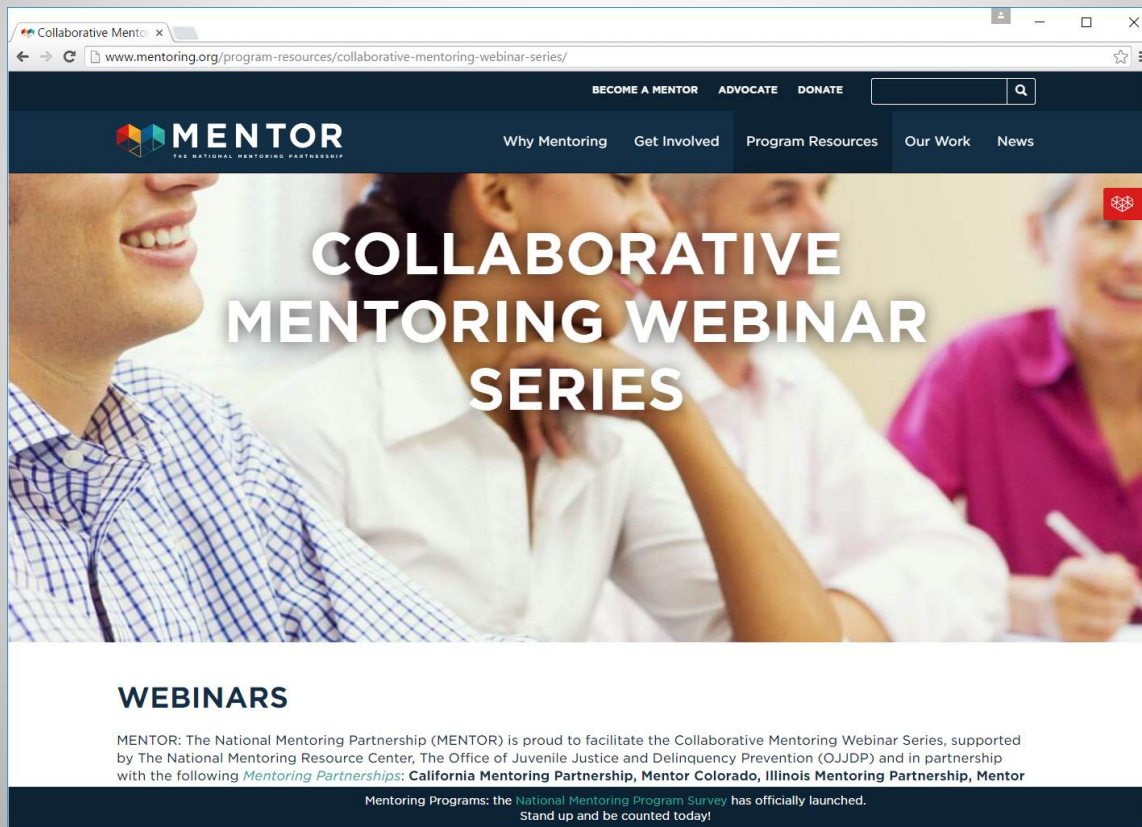
After the webinar:

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

Stay Connected

- Email us at collaborativewebinarseries@mentoring.org
- Tweet with hashtag **#MentoringWebinar**
- Visit our webpage on the MENTOR website for past and upcoming webinars:



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the MENTOR website. The URL in the address bar is www.mentoring.org/program-resources/collaborative-mentoring-webinar-series/. The page features a dark blue header with the MENTOR logo (The National Mentoring Partnership) and navigation links: "BECOME A MENTOR", "ADVOCATE", "DONATE", "Why Mentoring", "Get Involved", "Program Resources", "Our Work", and "News". A search bar is also present. Below the header is a large banner image of four diverse people smiling and talking, with the text "COLLABORATIVE MENTORING WEBINAR SERIES" overlaid in white. Underneath the banner is a section titled "WEBINARS" with a paragraph of text: "MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) is proud to facilitate the Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series, supported by The National Mentoring Resource Center, The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and in partnership with the following *Mentoring Partnerships*: California Mentoring Partnership, Mentor Colorado, Illinois Mentoring Partnership, Mentor Mentoring Programs: the National Mentoring Program Survey has officially launched. Stand up and be counted today!"

Join Us Next Month!



Building Non-Cognitive Skills
January 19, 2017
1 - 2:15 pm Eastern



Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series