Becoming a Better Mentor:
Strategies to Be There for Young People

MENTOR

CHAPTER 3

MAKING ROOM FOR FUN AND PLAY

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MAKING ROOM FOR FUN AND PLAY

Just over ten years ago, I — along with my friend and mentor, Mike Nakkula — offered a proposal to our colleagues, based on a review of 30 years of research on youth mentoring and what made it most effective across different groups of youth and settings. The proposal was a framework in which there are four core types of mentoring activities: 1) playing, 2) talking, 3) learning, and 4) doing. It suggested that the strongest mentoring relationships reflected a balance of these four types of interactions. The ordering of these activity types in our framework was deliberate. It underscores that being playful is a critical tool in a mentor's relationship-building toolkit, even if they are part of a mentoring program that is more goal-directed or structured. The capacity to be playful is tool number one. It's that important! It's also that challenging. This chapter tries to coach the skill of playfulness by revealing what it means to be a "playful" mentor, why it is important, and how fun in mentoring varies across contexts, and provides some ideas to help you be playful.

Before focusing on the tool of playfulness, let's consider why mentors may need a "refresher" chapter on something so basic as having fun or being playful. It's because you are a grown-up. You are in charge, "the adult in the room," and you have entered into a mentoring relationship, either through a natural connection or as part of a program, because you know the stakes for the youth you mentor are high. You know you can make a big difference in your mentee's life if you do it right. So, you take your mentoring seriously. That's what separates you from another mentor who doesn't go the extra mile and read this book. You want to do this right and maximize your potential impact — this youth mentoring is serious business!

Like Christopher Robin in the recent motion picture, Pooh, most adults struggle to retain, regain, or reengage their playful selves. For most adults, it is the other three tools in a mentor's toolkit — talking, learning, and doing—that reflect the usual, familiar, and comfortable roles that characterize how adults interact with young people. In very few of the common roles adults play in youth's lives does fun — doing something just for the fun of it — factor in as a central objective.

From my point of view, and supported by considerable research evidence, it is the opportunity mentoring affords us to reintroduce play into adult-youth relationships that makes youth mentoring a unique and powerful role that adults can "play" (pun intended) in the lives of youth. The goal of this chapter is to increase your appreciation of the power of play in adult-youth relationships, to boost your confidence in deploying this very important tool in your mentoring toolkit, and to authorize you to be a fun, playful mentor.

> "A child who does not play is not a child, but the man who doesn't play has lost forever the child who lived in him and who he will miss terribly."
>
> —Pablo Neruda

[1] Spencer, R. (2007). "It's Not What I Expected": A Qualitative Study of Youth Mentoring Relationship Failures. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 22(4), 331–354. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558407301915

What Does Making Room for Fun and Play Mean?

Being a playful mentor means expressing your joy when you meet with your mentee. There are lots of ways to define play and describe the experience of having fun, but for this chapter it may be most helpful if we focus on two elements of this tool: Your experiencing joy, and your expressing it to your mentee. Focus, further, on these two sources of joy. First, you can take pleasure or find joy in your mentee's engagement in activities (whether that activity reflects your mentee's playing, sharing, learning, or doing something). Second, you can experience joy in your relationship by engaging in, and thereby sharing with your mentee, something that brings you joy. This last example, of being playful by sharing something personally meaningful and pleasurable in your life, is an important concept unpacked later in this chapter.

Whether the source of your joy is from appreciating what your mentee is doing or saying or results from sharing something that interests, motivates, or inspires you personally, the result should be the same — a genuine expression of that joy in the context of time spent with your mentee, that generates a smile on your face (and ideally on your mentee's face too). Playful mentoring can happen in "big" ways, such as by choosing something fun to do during your time together (e.g., playing a game together); or playful mentoring can occur in smaller, unplanned ways, like through spontaneous sharing of funny stories with each other, or a playful, momentary digression from a more goal-oriented task. Play is an activity that can be both "in the moment" or planned, as well as youth oriented or mentor generated. Generally, however, it has no specific tie-in to adult values or future-oriented goals. That's what makes it particularly special to youth and uncommon in the standard repertoire of many adult-youth relationships.

> Play is work for a child. So, the work of a mentor is to relearn to play like a child.
>
> —Me, Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring (2018)

Almost universally, *effective* mentors do one essential thing. They communicate, nearly every time they meet with their mentee, their experience of joy when they are in the presence of their mentee. For the master mentor, expressions of joy happen during fun activities as well as in serious interactions. You'll know you are on your way to mastering the art of being a playful mentor, and you will recognize the moments when you have successfully incorporated play, fun, and joyful interaction into your mentoring, every time you become aware that your mentee sees a smile on your face.

Why Play Is Important in Mentoring Relationships

Play is the best way to enter the world of a young person — no matter what age — because doing that extends a sign of respect to youth. Mentors empower young people, embolden them, encourage them, and respect them by being playful, because youth know that's their zone, not yours. Lawrence Cohen, in Playful Parenting, writes, "For adults, play means leisure, but for children, play is more like their job. Play is also children's main way of communicating, of experimenting, and of learning." Play is their work, and it is what they are supposed to do.

Play can serve to equalize the power imbalance between mentees and their mentors — pulling them more toward the friend "zone." For young people, game play of all kinds, including creative crafts as well as sports, falls in this zone and provides youth with a chance to win, succeed, and excel, relative to the mentor. These are uncommon experiences in youth's typical interactions with adults, making them unique mentoring activities.

Playful interactions can form bridges that transcend differences and mistrust. This can be particularly true when there are differences in the personal characteristics of mentors and their mentees, whether these are age, sex, race, or social class. When such differences are a part of a given mentoring relationship, play may serve as the ultimate leveler and allow commonality to be found in the playful interactions they forge. Expressions of joy and pleasure in spending time with another person reveal the two individuals not "boundaried" and separated by their differences; it may thereby provide the best way to transcend those differences. So, if mistrust resides in perceived differences (particularly early in a relationship), or when connecting with a mentor is compromised by a mentee's history of feeling misunderstood or rejected by adults, playful mentoring can establish the necessary preconditions for harder work, such as by establishing mutual trust and creating a sense of being part of a team.

Failures when trying to inject humor into a match can provide opportunities to deepen the relationship and build trust. When a mentor's joke or effort to introduce a game into the match falls flat, or worse, is experienced as hurtful or in poor taste, mentors have an opportunity to provide a reparative response and engage in the attunement practices described in chapter 4. Carefully tuning in to whether attempts at humor or fun are working for your mentee provide a unique way to learn about your mentee and respond empathically to your mentee.

Playful mentoring interactions can build a safe haven at times when the nature of a planned activity brings up the mentee's insecurities or anxieties (e.g., the mentee fears revealing academic deficiencies by engaging in a science activity or doing homework together). A playful approach by the mentor can communicate their investment in the mentee and a willingness to be vulnerable and not-so-serious. For example, when a mentor shares a funny story of failing at a similar or related task, either when younger or more recently, they communicate a willingness to join the mentee in the anxiety or fear that an activity may evoke, and thereby help diffuse those fears, making the youth more open to taking risks and being vulnerable.

Losing oneself through complete engagement in an activity is a form of play. What may be most important for young people, and what adults sometimes can lose sight of, is the powerful experience of being lost in play. We can call it the

experience of "flow," or the feeling of being fully engrossed in an activity such that you lose track of time and feel your capacities are fully engaged. Experiencing that flow is linked with many positive outcomes for youth, the most important of which is that it serves as a source of motivation and the desire to learn new skills in pursuit of new chances to experience this flow state. And when adults express joy in response to seeing the mentee deep in play or lost in that state of purposeful flow, the mirroring back of the youth's playful joy is healing and reparative. Research on parenting interventions reveals that when adults respect a child's deep engagement in play, it helps adults re-align with the youth and establish themselves as trusted confidants and partners.

Infusing play into structured, formal, and goal-directed mentoring pays dividends to both mentors and the youth they work with. Some youth may need time having fun and developing trust in the mentoring relationship before any "targeted" or strategic supports (e.g., those described in chapter 10 on goal setting) will be heard or received by the mentee. Research regularly finds that even for very goal-directed programs, the most powerful indicator of longer and stronger relationships is the extent to which the matches in those programs engage in play.

Infusing fun into mentoring efforts or programs that are instructionally focused or rely on information-rich mentoring activities can help the youth feel partnered with, valued, and important. Why? At a very basic level, because it gives mentees the message that they are more important than the task at hand.

This approach can also benefit mentors. In his book, *The Power of Play,* David Elkind argues that over time (across development) the separate internal drives propelling adults' investment in work, love, and play become more and more separated, such that by adulthood play becomes divorced from work and love. Elkind argues that this is not helpful to adults. I'd argue this split that adults form among work, play, and love restrains mentors. So, infusing fun and finding ways to make planned "mentoring work" more fun and playful will benefit all mentors, not just those who embrace the "luxury" of engaging more fully in traditional playful mentoring activities with their mentees.

I would like to conclude this section by returning to the idea that at least one of the reasons playful mentoring may be important is that a playful mentor is a happy mentor — and that a happy mentor *smiles*. In an article by a leading scholar (Renee Spencer, author of chapter 1 in this resource) called, "Girls (and boys) just want to have fun . . .", a common theme emerging in interviews conducted with mentees was the central role of play and engaging in fun activities together. As exemplified by one young person: "'. . . each time we hang out, we [are] always *laughing* and . . . glad to be together.'" This mentee links laughing with the sense that *my mentor is glad to be with me*. When you smile, you convey being happy. What are you happy about? Your mentee's conclusion often will be, at some emotional level, "You are happy, because you are with me, and that means I am loved, I am interesting, and I am worth your time."

What Does Play Look Like in Mentoring?

There are many different types of play, and figuring out which forms of playful engagement give you the most direct access to your mentee's inner life can take some experimentation. Each mentee is different in terms of their interest in imaginative play, wordplay, creative expression, role play, or rule-based games and competitive play. If you google

"types of play," numerous websites will pop up that offer a huge variety of different forms of play you could consider incorporating into your relationship. Below, I describe only a few. But you would be well advised to consider not only what types of play are most common for your mentee's age and gender (considered in the next section), but also what types of play you, yourself, are most drawn to and likely to enjoy. It is critical that you bring your interests, passions, and curiosities to the table, not only as a way of sharing your joy, but also to increase the likelihood that you truly have fun when you engage in activities intended to be fun. Considerable research suggests mentoring relationships are most successful when mentors and mentees collaborate when selecting activities to do together.

Play as a backdrop for conversations – Mentors of youth of all ages will at times see the value of engaging in parallel play, where both the mentor and the mentee do something creative, but independently, as a backdrop to their conversations about other things. Drawing, painting, or building something together can provide a way to normalize conversations that might otherwise feel awkward or uncomfortable if done without such an accompanying activity. If this is the reason for deploying games into your time together, try to avoid games that are too mentally demanding and actually make conversation difficult. It's hard to have a conversation with your opponent when playing chess, for example, but easy when playing checkers.

Play as context to communicate appreciation of the mentee's focused engagement – Watching your mentee play (for example, by showing you their skills at a video game or demonstrating some other new skill or competence they want to show off) can also be valuable in your relationship. It can be a way for youth to communicate their competence and can be very validating for them. Mentors would be well advised to avoid taking seriously the doubting comments that enter their mind, such as, "How is this a good use of our mentoring time?" or "How is the skill my mentee is showing me valuable, going to help them in the future, or related to our task today?" Remember, play is a youth's work. And the youth selects the activity they find enjoyment engaging in or playing, and most adults would be well advised not to critique the value or potential use of such skills.

A young person can feel appreciated "on their own terms" when an adult or older peer watches them play or perform successfully at something that is meaningful to them. But watching your mentee engage in solitary play is only powerful when these observations are accompanied by explicit communication of your pleasure in their engagement. Watching a young person play without communicating your joy is a lost opportunity to show your pride in your mentee and your appreciation for the skill they are sharing with you.

Play as a way to connect, bridge differences, and share experiences that deepen the relationship – Play can even be a simple digression, where you communicate to the youth, "Hey, let me share something personal with you, something I think you'll find interesting (given what I know about you) or that I want to share with you about me — something that has absolutely no linear, logical, or obvious role or purpose in my sharing other than for you and me to connect." Similarly, laughter and play can also be inserted into more tense, tough moments with mentees to diffuse the tension and reestablish connection between the two of you.

Contextual Considerations for Play and Having Fun

There are three pivotal factors to consider when deciding how or when to be playful in a match: the mentee's age, their gender, and where you two are in your relationship's life cycle.

Age

Play with young children often builds on themes of power, freedom, acceptance, and love, and such play communicates to you how they make sense of the world. This is why the animated reading of books that build on these themes is so engaging and playful for them, and can provide a way to engage in discussion that helps mentors better understand their mentees. For adolescents, the undeniable bridge they live on between fantastic childhood and serious adulthood leads them to want to have a foot in both worlds. Rule-based, competitive games offer such a bridge. Similarly, casual discussion of role conflicts and interpersonal dynamics in movies, news, and even friendships allow for a blend of fantasy and reality, and serves as a playground to practice the art of understanding social relationships.

Gender

It would be a mistake, and do mentors a disservice, to affirm stereotypes about what types of play are better for girls versus boys (in addition to considerations for nongendered or transitioning youth). Such splits by sex or gender in play types also are reflected in psychological research, to be sure. The famous developmental psychologist, Erik Erikson, highlighted gender differences in forms of play that he saw reflecting both socialization forces and biological drives to protect, defend, and dominate that differed between boys and girls. For example, his observations of girls and boys in his therapy work suggested boys liked to build tall, dominating structures, whereas girls tended to build enclosed spaces that were homelike. But such gender differences are not universal, and for some mentees, the expectations and prohibitions that have been placed on them by adults in their lives may feel stagnating. Mentors can provide healing, reparative responses for mentees with such experiences. In fact, mentors may be in a unique role to affirm a mentee's interest in forms of play that do not conform to societal expectations about gender-typical play.

What is universal, very healthy, and good to encourage across both genders is the desire to create. Creation in many forms is equivalent to playing in the traditional sense. Think of creativity as the act of making something using a preferred set of materials. With blocks, mentees will build; with paint, they will illustrate and express what lies within them. But youth also create using words, through stories, poems, song lyrics, and communication of unique ideas. There are many forms of media that can be used to deploy creativity as forms of playful interactions.

Where You Are in the Mentoring Life Cycle

There is considerable evidence of the need for a balance of play and work, so to speak, across the mentoring relationship life cycle, and it may be somewhat (if not largely) contingent on the youth's age. For example, early studies of effective relationship styles apparent in the friendship-based Big Brothers Big Sisters community-based mentoring program revealed that mentors who build the relationship through play and non-directed conversations, which allowed the mentor and mentee to learn about one another, yielded stronger relationships and better outcomes. Once these relationships were established, mentors could then more easily begin to focus on more targeted goals. This work included mostly preadolescents; few older teens were included in their study, which clearly revealed that mentors who came in with a "fixing" approach and who, from day one, focused on sharing their wisdom on how the youth could improve their lives (called the "prescriptive style") fared most poorly.

By contrast, foundational research on a mentoring in apprenticeship program for older youth found the opposite. Those teens, who came to the program hoping it would prepare them to enter the work world, were quite resistant to early efforts by mentors to befriend them through casual conversation and playful interactions. For them, it was work first, play later. In fact, the most effective relationships were those that established solid working relationships and then used those successes as the springboard for forming a more personal relationship later.

I argue that these two sets of findings are not inconsistent. First, as noted earlier, the age of the youth matters — with older youth often wanting a clear purposeful reason for developing this relationship, while younger children may simply embark on and enjoy the relationship in and of itself. Second, the context of the relationship is also important. In the first example, the Big Brothers Big Sisters program sets up youth for a friendship; the program reported in the apprenticeship study was structured to help establish career-related competencies. Both programs achieved goals but did so differently and in different sequences of play and more purposeful "work."

Most important was that in both types of programs, there was collaboration in decisions about what to do and discuss, and sharing by both mentors and mentees of personal experiences and interests. What seemed to influence the order was the explicit goals of the program, and the readiness of the mentees to partner. This brings us back to a point discussed earlier: When differences or mistrust may be at play, relationship building might need to be prioritized earlier, regardless of the goals of the program or the relationship. Where performance anxiety is possibly present — and for some youth, note that there can be performance anxiety around "relationship building" — bridges may need to be forged first. Play offers a relationship-building alternative to personal sharing (i.e., interpersonal risk-taking) that can help cultivate trust and safety in the match.

Tips and Final Thoughts

In this section, I offer the following tips as you embark on efforts to become a more playful mentor:

> Be your authentic self, especially during moments of play and fun with your mentee.

You need to bring yourself to the table, in small ways and bigger ways. Let me share an example from my own mentoring experience of how I brought myself into my relationship in a playful way. One day during our meeting, I opened my Far Side calendar, and my mentee (a third grader in a school-based mentoring program) asked about it. Soon, I found that sharing Far Side comics with him, in between sets of math and spelling flash cards, was a fun way to help him practice reading and complex thinking. (That justification calmed my insecurities about having fun while working with my mentee in the hallway outside his classroom that arose whenever teachers walked by.) We read many Far Side comics — first I did, then he would read one — and we'd try to figure out what made them funny. Though I justified this as creative tutoring, my mentee's own words later confirmed what my own research on mentoring activities should have already taught me. To my surprise, after working with this youth for three years, when I asked him what he enjoyed doing most together, he said, "When you make me laugh." I repeatedly asked, "What thing did we do specifically that was helpful or positive in our mentoring?" and he just kept answering, "You were funny and made me laugh." Finally, he appeased my appeal for specifics and said it was when we read the Far Side comics. That's the time I also recall laughing during our meetings the most. After meeting with him for three years, doing lots of school-related and creative things, that's what we both remembered and valued.

One reason reading those particular comics may have been so impactful has to be that they made me laugh, and I truly experienced joy sharing my interests with my mentee in this way. I love the Far Side and that came through. I think any activity that can lead you to smile and communicate joy will be useful — assuming your mentee also enjoys the activity — and there is no better way to be real with your mentee than to share what you love.

Sharing funny stories from your own life can make you appear more real, personal, and open in a way that helps forge a connection.

My children, for example, and my mentees alike, have always appreciated hearing odd, quirky, and sometimes funny stories from my own years in school, at summer camp, and in my family. Stories that provide a lesson by ending in an unexpected way, or that show how I did something stupid but that I can laugh at in hindsight are usually well received and help make me less unfamiliar and seem more like them. They make me more real, more vulnerable, more flawed — much as most youth view themselves every day. Such partly funny stories foster connection and mutual sharing of vulnerabilities and often trigger youth to either share their own "stupidities" or to ask adults questions about the types of coping strategies they've used in the past.

Consider using playful activities that are not so fully engrossing or challenging that they can't be interrupted to allow a side conversation.

This may seem contradictory to the "flow" discussion above, or inconsistent with the chapter in this resource on goal setting (chapter 10) and more targeted mentoring activities, but it is not meant to be. Rather, it is to emphasize that even when not trying to be deliberately funny or playful, be sure to select mentoring activities that allow you to "drop the prop" (set aside the task at hand for a moment) to connect through conversation, when such opportunities arise.

Games — or any activities — that demand uninterrupted attention don't allow the power of interpersonal connection through play to be realized. They foster more "parallel play" where each is doing their own thing, in relative isolation. Considering the earlier example, in a game like chess, where the youth is 100 percent focused on the game during their move, and the mentor is similarly preoccupied during their turn, opportunities for connection and conversation are sidelined. Likewise, most video games don't allow spontaneous digressions and conversation when they are all-engrossing. So, if your goal is to communicate joy at watching your mentee demonstrate their skills, then a video game may serve that brief purpose. But as a mentoring activity to deepen the friendship, such games are not very helpful because they don't allow back and forth interactions. By contrast, checkers is less demanding. It allows more pauses, side conversation, and ongoing discussion. Similarly, tic-tac-toe, is intense but short, and conversations can happen in between game sets. An exception to this general rule (as discussed earlier) is that engaging in an intense game that precludes communication may be useful to give the mentee a chance to shine and "level the playing field." But making your entire relationship focused on these kinds of activities would be a missed opportunity.

> Think about your face! Are you smiling, ever, often? You need to work hard on communicating "specialness" to your mentee.

Do you tend to look serious, show a furrowed brow or squint (even if just because you need glasses but refuse to wear them), or cross your arms when you are thinking or observing? If so, you will need to work harder on communicating "specialness" to your mentee. Your job is to make sure your mentee remembers you looking happy to be with them. Smiling is the easiest way to do that, but so too are nonverbal signs of engagement and enjoyment, such as leaning forward, raising your eyebrows with your eyes wide open, and responding directly to what your mentee shares with you (even just reflecting what you hear back to them to communicate you are giving them your undivided attention). Your mentee will notice what you're saying with your body as much as they notice what you say with your words, so it's very important to be "attuned" to your own (as well as your mentee's) nonverbal cues (see chapter 4 on attunement). The easiest way to ensure you will laugh and smile in the presence of your mentee is to be prepared to play.

Bring fun things to do or share.

Whatever makes you chuckle is a good start — even if it turns out to be what they call "dad jokes" — you know, phrases, plays on words, or other silly expressions that are supposed to be funny, even if they are only really funny to you. If you are the only one laughing, it may not matter, for two reasons. First, you are smiling — that's what your mentee will remember (and attribute as your reaction to being with them). Second, it shows that you made an effort to share something you like and that is interesting to you, in an effort to engender similar happiness in your mentee.

Bring a playful stance to a planned mentoring activity that otherwise seems boring.

Sometimes bringing in a competitive stance is enough to make something boring, like completing math flashcards, fun. "If you can get six in a row correct, without missing any, we'll stop and do that thing you wanted to do . . ." (e.g., use the phone to find a picture online to show you some TV character or musician that your mentee can't believe you've never heard of). Thinking of ways to make a boring or worrying task or lesson fun and less serious helps shift the balance from boring to fun. Even in just those interactions and the negotiations they entail, you both will smile, and you will communicate to your mentee that their feelings have been heard and their needs are being recognized as important.

So, go out there and have some fun! And remember that even though being a mentor is a serious responsibility, the mentors who can bring and share joy and fun moments to a young person are those who are likely to do the most meaningful and memorable work.

Additional Reading and Resources

The print titles listed here should be available through local or online bookstores or through your public library.

Two books focused on helping adults bring play into their relationships with youth:

- ***Playful Parenting*** (2001) by Lawrence Cohen – This book provides step-by-step suggestions on ways to introduce play as well as how play can address parents' concerns.
- ***The Power of Play*** (2007) by David Elkind – This book provides an overview of the importance of play for youth in their development, generally and in specific contexts, like at home and at school.

Two books focused on helping adults bring play into their relationships with youth:

- ***You've Got to Be Kidding: How Jokes Can Help You Think*** (2009)
- ***A Time to Laugh: The Religion of Humor*** (2005)

You can also find a wide world of books of both jokes and fun in-person games through the library, as well as through collections of jokes online. Websites where teachers provide ideas for jazzing up boring lessons and invite fun or competition into teaching are also a good source of fun mentoring activities.

Diving into the research on play:

Much of the research on which this chapter was based can be found in a special issue of the Journal of Youth Development available online, including through Amazon:

- Karcher, M. J., Nakkula, M. J. (Eds.) (2010). Play, talk, learn: Promising practices in youth mentoring [Special issue]. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 126. Jossey-Bass.

Mentors who want to go even deeper into the research on the importance of play can seek out these articles, which should be available through your local public library or online through sources like Research Gate:

- Caldwell, L. L., & Witt, P. A. (2011). Leisure, recreation, and play from a developmental context. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 130, 13–27.
- Chilenski, S. M., Ridenour, T., Bequette, A. W., & Caldwell, L. L. (2015). Pathways of influence: How parental behaviors and free time experiences are associated with African American early adolescent development and academic achievement. *Journal of Negro Educatio*n, 84(3), 401–415.
- Nakkula, M. J., & Harris, J. T. (2010). Beyond the dichotomy of work and fun: Measuring the thorough interrelatedness of structure and quality in youth mentoring relationships. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 126, 71–87.
- Karcher, M. J., & Nakkula, M. J. (2010). Youth mentoring with a balanced focus, shared purpose, and collaborative interactions. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 126, 13–32.
- Karcher, M. J. & Hansen, K. (2014). Mentoring activities and interactions. In D. L. DuBois, & M. J. Karcher (Eds.), *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* (2nd ed., pp. 63–72). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Keller, T. E., & Pryce, J. M. (2010). Mutual but unequal: Mentoring as a hybrid of familiar relationship roles. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 126, 33–50.
- Keller, T. E., & Pryce, J. M. (2012). Different roles and different results: How activity orientations correspond to relationship quality and student outcomes in school-based mentoring. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 33(1), 47–64.
- Spencer, R., Drew, A. L., Walsh, J., & Kanchewa, S. S. (2018). Girls (and boys) just want to have fun: A mixed-methods examination of the role of gender in youth mentoring relationship duration and quality. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, 39(1), 17–35.