The following is excerpted from “How to Build A Successful Mentoring Program Using the Elements of Effective Practice”.

(The tool kit has lots of information, so I thought I would pull out some of the ideas that might be most useful to you in your schools and programs. Always remember to have safe guards in place for both the mentor and mentee. Never let the mentor be alone with the mentee; do extensive screening of mentors; if you feel uncomfortable about a situation, listen to your intuition and step in; listen to what children say, and don’t say; if a child’s behavior suddenly changes, investigate further.)

**Mentoring:** Mentoring is a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee.

**Types of Mentoring:** Responsible mentoring can occur in these forms:

- **Traditional mentoring:** One adult to one young person.
- **Group mentoring:** One adult to up to four young people.
- **Team mentoring:** Several adults working with small groups of young people in which the adult to-youth ratio is not greater than 1:4.
- **Peer mentoring:** Caring youth mentoring other youth.
- **E-mentoring:** Mentoring via e-mail and the Internet.

**Locations of Mentoring:** Mentoring can take place in a wide array of settings, such as these:

- Workplace;
- School;
- Faith-based organization;
- Juvenile corrections facility;
- Community setting; and
- “Virtual community,” where e-mentoring takes place

**WHAT IS MENTORING TODAY?**
Mentoring is a time-proven strategy that can help young people of all circumstances achieve their potential. Mentors are caring individuals who, along with parents or guardians, provide young people with support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement and a constructive example. But mentoring is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. Every young person who would benefit from a mentoring relationship has individual needs. Effective mentoring programs offer enough flexibility to help meet each mentee’s personal needs, yet allow mentoring relationships to flourish within a safe structure.

**Duration of Mentoring:** Because relationships and a sense of bonding occur over time between mentors and mentees, the duration and consistency of each mentoring
relationship is very important. At a minimum, mentors and mentees should meet regularly at least four hours per month for at least a year. There are exceptions, such as school-based mentoring, which coincide with the school year, and other types of special mentoring initiatives. In such special circumstances, mentees need to know from the outset how long they can expect the relationship to last, so they can adjust their expectations accordingly.

WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL MENTORING RELATIONSHIP?
According to Dr. Jean Rhodes, professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, the most significant predictor of positive mentoring results is whether mentors and mentees share a close, trusting relationship. Such relationships do not just happen. They need ongoing support and monitoring, particularly during the early stages, to ensure that the relationships do not terminate prematurely. As Dr. Rhodes notes, when the tool of change is a close relationship— as is the case with mentoring— everyone should proceed with care.

Dr. Rhodes described four program practices that are essential for strong and effective mentoring relationships. Those practices are as follows:
• Conducting reasonably intensive screening of potential mentors;
• Making matches based on interests that both the mentor and the mentee share;
• Providing more than six hours of training for mentors; and
• Offering post-match training and support.

These four practices can help ensure successful mentoring relationships that endure over time.

There are other ways mentors can sustain effective mentoring relationships, including these:
• Maintain a steady presence in the mentee’s life. That means showing up for scheduled meetings or, when that is not possible, telling the mentee in advance, in order to avoid any disappointment. A phone call, e-mail or fax can help when a face to-face meeting isn’t possible.
• Focus on the mentee’s needs—not the mentor’s own wants and needs. Mentors should look to improve the mentee’s prospects while respecting the young person’s life circumstances and perspective. This includes not trying to transform the mentee or impose the mentor’s own values on the mentee.
• Pay attention to the mentee’s need for fun.
• Get to know the mentee’s family without getting over involved. Mentors need to understand that they are not substitutes for parents.
• Seek out and use the help and support of mentoring program staff.

By contrast, less effective mentors:
• Do not meet regularly with the mentee;
• Adopt an authoritative tone;
• Put more emphasis on changing the mentee’s behavior than on developing a warm relationship based on trust and respect; and
• Try to transform the mentee by imposing a set of values inconsistent with the mentee’s life circumstances.

*Brief online “pep talks” can boost student learning*

http://chronicle.umbmentoring.org/online-pep-talks-can-boost-student-learning/

Brief online interventions that instill a “growth mindset” and a sense of purpose can improve learning, especially for struggling students.

These interventions could potentially reach vast numbers of students at low cost.

“Two interventions, each lasting about 45 minutes and delivered online, raised achievement in a large and diverse group of underperforming students over an academic semester,” writes Gregory Walton, an assistant professor of psychology at Stanford University, along with his colleagues…

Now, the new research shows that growth mindset and sense-of-purpose interventions can be scaled to virtually unlimited numbers of students at low cost, Paunesku says.

*How mentoring affects academic outcomes: The role of relationship quality*

Interesting study on School Based Mentoring. The study showed better academic outcomes for students who felt they had a close relationship with their mentor. Those who did not feel close to their mentor had no positive effect on their academics. To read more click on the link below.


*On Mentoring and Perennials, By Jean Rhodes and Belle Liang.*

If you’ve been out in the garden, this article comparing gardening to mentoring may interest you. Check out the link below:

http://chronicle.umbmentoring.org/on-mentoring-and-perennial/