

Mentoring an adolescent isn't necessarily more difficult than mentoring a younger child, but it is different. That means that your training for these mentors and for mentors whose matches are entering the teens will need to reflect the uniqueness of this period of life. But fear not, there are resources available throughout Virginia and the United States. The information below will help you find and access them.

### How Do I Begin?

Every mentor needs to know the basics of strong mentoring, including beginning the relationship, building trust, testing the relationship, increasing independence, and moving on. In addition, mentors of adolescents need a general understanding of adolescent development and how teens are influenced by family, peers, community, school, relationships with adults outside the family, and other factors.

### Who Can Help?

For resources on training mentors to work with adolescents, you may want to do a little research. Here are organizations that offer training and or training resources that may be relevant:

- The *National Mentoring Center* ([www.nwrel.org/mentoring/publications.html](http://www.nwrel.org/mentoring/publications.html)) offers a wide variety of publications and training materials for programs and mentoring professionals. All publications are available for download on their Website and may be reproduced and incorporated into other materials as long as appropriate citation is included.
- The *National Mentoring Partnership* ([www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org)) has a wide range of resources to support mentoring programs, including *How to Build a Successful Mentoring Program Using the Elements of Effective Practice*, a comprehensive tool kit containing tools, templates and advice for implementing quality programs, and the *Research Corner*, where you will find the latest research on mentoring theory, practice and programs. Potential mentors will also benefit from information about mentor roles and stories of mentor-mentee pairs.
- *Search Institute* ([www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)) offers training in building Developmental Assets. Teaching mentors about the assets and what they can do to help youth get them is a great way to help them see the power and potential they have to make a difference.
- Virginia Mentoring Partnership ([www.vamentoring.org](http://www.vamentoring.org)) offers technical assistance and training support to help start and sustain quality mentoring initiatives, and to prepare both mentors and mentees to make the most of their mentoring relationships. VMP provides mentor and mentee training and training curricula, and offers consultations services and resource development for mentor programs as well.

#### **Try It!**

Networking with colleagues in other organizations isn't usually a top priority for busy, dedicated program providers. But sometimes one call, email, or visit saves hours of time and effort. This week, reach out to one person who works with mentors of adolescents. Ask about their training: issues they address, resources they use, frequently asked questions, and so on.

At the very least you'll have checked in with someone who can empathize with the professional challenges you face!























