

MENTORING AS A STRATEGY  
FOR DEALING WITH STUDENTS  
WHO ARE EDUCATIONALLY AT RISK:  
A STUDY OF THE FORMAL  
MENTORING PROGRAM  
AT  
RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE

BY  
RICHARD L. BLAIS

A Thesis  
submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

Department of Educational Administration and Foundations  
University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the role played by teachers who act as mentors to high school students who have been identified as being educationally at risk. The study looked at the formal mentoring program at River East Collegiate in 1990 - 1991. The purpose was to obtain both teacher mentor and student protege perceptions on mentoring. More specifically the intent was to identify those qualities that effective mentor employ; to determine the strategies, both effective and ineffective, that mentors use, and to examine the nature of the relationships established during the mentoring process.

Interviews were held individually with both teacher mentors and their student proteges in order to obtain the perspectives of both teacher and student on mentoring.

The study indicated that teachers who mentor educationally at risk students can make a difference in their educational outcomes. Those qualities that were found in effective mentors were identified along with strategies, both effective and ineffective, that mentors used when mentoring those students. The study also showed that in education, teaching and mentoring appear to be complementary.

Several areas open to further study are also identified and discussed.

## CONTENTS

CONTENTS .....	i
LIST OF TABLES .....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	iv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
Purpose of the Study .....	4
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	6
Dropout Characteristics .....	7
Mentoring .....	9
Mentoring and the School .....	35
CHAPTER 3: CURRENT PROGRAM AT RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE. ....	38
Program Rationale .....	42
Program Goal .....	42
General Program Objectives .....	43
Specific Program Objectives .....	43
Process .....	45
Identification of Students .....	46
Teacher Advisor's Responsibilities .....	47
Administrator's Responsibilities .....	49
Counsellor's Responsibilities .....	50
Resource Teacher's Responsibilities .....	51
Subject Teacher's Responsibilities .....	51
Program Implementation .....	52
Assignment of Students .....	52
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY .....	54
Method .....	55
Respondents .....	58
Procedure .....	58
Data Analysis .....	59
CHAPTER 5: TEACHER MENTOR INTERVIEWS .....	63
Views of Mentoring .....	68
Teacher Mentor Qualities .....	71
Effective Strategies .....	74
Ineffective Strategies .....	79
Evaluation .....	81
Teaching and Mentoring .....	84
Conclusion .....	86

CHAPTER 6: STUDENT PROTEGE INTERVIEWS .....	88
On Being 'At Risk' .....	91
Teacher Mentor Qualities .....	92
Effective Strategies .....	99
Ineffective Strategies .....	101
Evaluation .....	102
Teaching and Mentoring .....	107
Conclusion .....	108
CHAPTER 7: MENTORING AT RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE .....	111
Teachers Can Make A Difference .....	111
Literature, Teacher, and Student Observations .	114
The River East Collegiate Program .....	124
Areas for Future Study .....	132
REFERENCES .....	135
APPENDICES .....	142
Appendix 1 .....	142
Appendix 2 .....	143
Appendix 3 .....	147
Appendix 4 .....	149
Appendix 5 .....	165
Appendix 6 .....	177
Appendix 7 .....	178

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1	STRATEGIES FOR MENTORS .....	31
TABLE 2	TACTICS FOR MENTORS .....	32
TABLE 3	STRATEGIES FOR LISTENING .....	33
TABLE 4	MAJOR PROTEGE LEARNING OUTCOMES .....	34

## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1	GRAY'S FOUR PHASE MENTORING MODEL .....	20
FIGURE 2	GRAY'S MENTOR-PROTEGE RELATIONSHIP MODEL	23
FIGURE 3	SCHOCKETT'S MENTORING MODEL .....	26



## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Although students have been dropping out of school for many years and despite the fact that we are experiencing some of the lowest dropout rates since the turn of the century (Wehlage and Rutter, 1986), the dropout problem has recently emerged as an important societal concern. Rising unemployment rates, increasing incidences of crime, violence and abuse, and the ever growing cost of social programs have caused government, educators, and society to seek solutions to these problems. Many of these problems have been connected to those individuals who have dropped out of school in the past. This has resulted in an effort directed towards reducing the number of dropouts by developing programs aimed at potential dropouts currently in the school system, which the best estimates indicate is in the 30 - 35 percent range (Levin, 1990, p. 2). This concern was highlighted in Canada by Radwanski in his Ontario Study of the Relevance of Education and the Issue of Dropouts and by the United States publication A Nation At Risk and the subsequent government commitment to provide funding and resources specifically designed to effect a decrease in the dropout rate.

A number of programs have been established in an attempt to address the issue. Each is a response to a specific set of

circumstances found in a particular locale. Of these programs, mentoring is suggested to be a strategy that will address a variety of factors generally attributed to those who are educationally at risk.

Mentoring is based upon the establishment of a caring relationship. Therein an opportunity is provided for those individuals who are at risk to form a bond between themselves, the mentor, and the institution that one would hope would result in the student successfully completing her/his schooling.

There is a great deal of ambiguity as to what is meant by the term 'being at risk'. Definitions range from all students being at risk at some time and in some way in their academic careers, to those who are near the point of actually dropping out of school. For the purpose of this study, the definition used will be that developed by River East Collegiate, even though it contains the same ambiguity that exists elsewhere. The commonly accepted meaning of 'at risk' at the Collegiate refers to those students who are not likely to complete their high school in 3 to 4 years. At some time during this period they are likely to withdraw from high school. These are the individuals who require a different type of help to graduate as compared to the majority of students enrolled at the school. The establishment of a mentoring relationship between these individuals and a teacher is an attempt to

provide this needed extra help. At River East Collegiate it is felt that approximately 10 percent of the student body would fall into this category.

These are the students who need a guide, a trusted friend and advocate. From this perspective it becomes increasingly important to construct a program that will provide a structure where students who are most at risk can be linked up with that person with whom they can communicate. This then is the role of the mentor and it ranges from "the protecting and opening doors to guiding, teaching and coaching, to consulting, advising, and counselling" (Odell, 1989, p. 6).

The concept of mentoring has evolved outside of the educational system. In the business community businesspersons who have had mentors have achieved higher levels of success, income, and job satisfaction than those without mentoring relationships (Bey, 1989). This can provide an important example for working with at risk students who need to experience success. Since most successful people have had mentors (Richardson, 1989), it can be argued that by providing mentors to students who are educationally at risk, students' chances of achieving success in school will be greatly enhanced, thereby increasing the likelihood of their completing school.

### Purpose of the Study

The question to be addressed in this study is: Can teachers, through a formal mentoring process, make a difference in the educational success of students who have been identified as being educationally at risk?

This study will examine the formal mentoring program at River East Collegiate during the 1990-91 school year. Student and teacher perceptions will be related regarding:

1. the effect on the mentoring relationship as a result of:
  - (a) the methods used in the selection of the students in the program, and
  - (b) the matching of the students with specific mentors;
2. the strategies used by the mentors during the mentoring process;
3. the nature of the relationships established during the year; and
4. the outcomes of the process as determined by:
  - (a) teacher satisfaction/dissatisfaction, and
  - (b) student successes/failures.

The current literature on students who are at risk of dropping out will be reviewed with a focus on the reasons for dropping out. Emphasis will be given to the literature on

mentoring as a strategy for enhancing the chances of at risk students successfully completing high school.

Following the examination of the formal mentoring procedure that is in place at the Collegiate, a series of recommendations on ways to become a good mentor and develop a good mentoring program will be proposed. It is to be noted, however, that this study is not intended to evaluate the program that is presently in place at River East Collegiate.

## CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The number of students who drop out has declined steadily since 1900 when the rate for male youth was close to 90 percent. Wehlage and Rutter (1986) pointed out that the rate reached a low point of 12-15 percent in the 1960's and is presently holding at 25 percent nationally in the United States. These figures are based on those who actually drop out of school and do not take into account those who later re-enter and complete their high school. Rumberger (1987), on the other hand, concluded that the rate is closer to 16 percent nationally and based his figure on the number of 25 - 29 year olds who have not completed high school. Still others have the figure closer to 30 percent nationally. Radwanski (1987), after analyzing the various methods used in Canada to determine the dropout rate, concluded that the rate "is between 31 and 33 percent" (p. 70) for the province of Ontario, which can be assumed to be typical for most of Canada. Despite this variation in the rates which is attributable to the method used in the calculation of the figure, all agree that "serious economic and social consequences will result for those who fail to obtain a high school diploma" (Wehlage and Rutter, 1986, p. 374).

Actual dropout rates vary widely between school systems and from school to school within a particular system. Core area schools have consistently higher dropout rates than suburban schools (Rumberger, 1987). As well, there is no 'typical' dropout and so it becomes impossible to draw a profile of an average dropout. Many reasons are given for dropping out, yet research shows that few dropouts enter high school "and see themselves dropping out" (Wehlage and Rutter, 1986, p. 384). If this is so, why then do students drop out in such large numbers? Something must occur during their high school years to change their minds. Dropping out is not only a complex process, but also a conscious individual decision.

#### Dropout Characteristics

In an attempt to come to grips with this problem, researchers have identified a number of factors or characteristics that can contribute to the student's decision to drop out and not complete her/his schooling. There are some characteristics that have been recognized as being more common in dropouts than in those who successfully complete high school. It must be noted that students possessing some of these characteristics may not drop out, while others who possess none of them may indeed drop out.

The literature cites a wide variety of characteristics that can be attributed to students who drop out. In order to bring a semblance of order and clarity to them, they can be placed

into five broad categories: (a) family based problems (Levin, 1989, Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, and Fernandez, 1989, Radwanski, 1987, ), (b) personal problems (Wehlage et al., 1989), (c) socio-economic problems (Levin, 1989, Wehlage et al., 1989), (d) membership in minority groups (Morris, 1991, Hoh and Osborne, 1990, Orlikow, 1990, Levin, 1989, Wehlage et al., 1989, Radwanski, 1987), and (e) school related factors (Finn, 1991, Radwanski, 1987, Rumberger, 1987, Wehlage and Rutter, 1986, Fine, 1986, Natriello, Pallas, and McDill, 1986). The first four are often beyond the scope and control of the school, yet seem to be the ones that have been most often cited. Educators must have an understanding of them as they often influence the actions of the students and play a major role in their decision to drop out. The least understood and until recently the least researched were those school related factors. It is into this latter category that schools should focus their energy and resources as it is the one area that they can most directly influence. Mentoring appears to offer a method and process that could provide the means for the school to address these school based factors.

The basic premise for most mentoring programs is the belief that the intervention of a caring person into the life of a student can make a difference in her/his educational success. Such programs attempt to identify students who are at risk of dropping out and match them up with a mentor. The mentor's (often a teacher's) function is to become that caring person



who shows an interest in the student (Willbur, 1989), a situation that is strikingly absent from the school experience of many dropouts (Fine, 1986). The intent is to establish an on-going one-on-one relationship whereby the mentor encourages, listens, gives advice, advocates for, acts as a role model for, and shares information and experiences with the student (Smink, 1990).

### Mentoring

Mentoring is not a recent innovation or concept. Most people can recall that at various times in their lives they have encountered individuals who have exerted a remarkable influence on their lives. These are the individuals who have taken an interest in the progress of that person and have provided help, advice and encouragement along the way. It is this caring relationship that appears to be absent from the lives of most students who are at risk in our schools (Finn, 1989). The situation is not unique to a specific type of individual. They range from students in families with a high socio-economic position to those below the poverty line. Also included in this group are students who range from the academically competent to those with academic deficiencies. Finn (1989) noted that while at school, dropouts participated less in school related activities and did not identify themselves with the school as much as did those who completed school. Often the dropouts reported that "there was no one in the family in whom they could confide or who accepted them as

"complete persons" (Finn, 1989, p. 131). It is at this critical time in the lives of the students who are at risk of dropping out that they desperately require such a caring individual. The development of a mentor program in the schools can provide for such a need.

The roots of mentoring can be found in history and it has been applied in various situations to the present day. The concept of mentoring is first found in Greek mythology in Homer's epic poem the Odyssey. Mentor was the faithful friend of Odysseus to whom he entrusted the responsibility to educate, counsel, and sponsor his son Telemachus while he was off fighting the Trojan War. It was Mentor, who in Odysseus' absence, guided and educated his son and taught him to think for himself. He helped the young Telemachus to achieve manhood and confirm his identity in an adult world. The literary image of this Homeric character "has come to mean a trusted counsellor or guide" (McGovern, 1980, p. 53). The Dictionary of Occupational Titles (1977) described a mentor as a person who works with people and relates to them in "their total personality in order to advise, counsel and/or guide them with regard to problems that may be resolved by legal, scientific, clinical, spiritual, and/or other professional principles" (p. 1270). Shandley (1989) defined mentoring as "an intentional process of interaction between at least two individuals...a nurturing process that fosters the growth and development of the protege...an insightful

process in which the wisdom of the mentor is acquired and applied by the protege...a supportive, often protective process" (p. 60).

The individual who is receiving the benefits of this relationship is referred to as either the 'mentee' or the 'protege'. This comes from the French verb 'protéger' which means 'to protect'. It is used today to denote individuals who are helped to reach their career and life goals by mentors (Richardson, 1989). This person is the one "who is both a recipient of assistance and a participant in a comprehensive effort toward becoming self-reliant and accountable" (Kay, 1990, p. 27).

This would indicate that mentoring is a relationship that develops over time between the mentor and protege wherein the participation of both parties is a key ingredient in the relationship (Kay, 1990). The act of mentoring is a process whereby significant assistance is offered by a more experienced person (mentor) to a less experienced person (protege) who is in a period of transition. As this applies to at risk students, it would indicate that mentoring is provided for students who are at risk with the mentor working with them in the transition process from being at risk to being not at risk. This is accomplished by providing for those who are at risk a mentor who will develop and foster a warm, caring, and positive working relationship with the

student in an effort to support both personal and academic growth (Aiello and Gatewood, 1989). The key becomes the "personal investment of one person in another person" (Willbur, 1989).

Mentoring is a system that successful people have used for centuries and a large number of successful people have indicated that they had at least one significant mentor who helped them (Richardson, 1989). The purpose of establishing this relationship in schools is to provide students with an opportunity to have educated individuals with successful careers generate interest in them to carry on their own education to a successful completion (Dickerson, 1989). It is a co-operative effort between the two parties in an effort towards developing in the protege self-reliance whereby she/he will be able to think and do things for her/himself. (Kay, 1990). Kay (1990) identified six principles, described as the 'shoulds' on how to help young people achieve this self-reliance.

1. The protege must receive encouragement and unconditional acceptance by the mentor. This is achieved by the mentor knowing what to do, believing that mistakes are not final or irreversible, and the provision of an emotionally safe environment where the protege can feel free to try new things without the fear of irreversible loss.

2. There must be mutual consent between the mentor and protege to establish the relationship.
3. The mentor must have adequate resources and expertise which includes using a variety of people in the effort to assist the protege.
4. The mentor should provide generalized assistance in the development of attitudes, skills, and behaviours in the protege. Those who provide 'the answer' for the protege inhibit her/him from finding out for her/himself.
5. The mentor should put the growth of the protege ahead of her/his own needs, except where both can be mutually served.
6. Mentors who themselves are self-reliant are more willing and able to help others become self-reliant.

(Kay, 1990, p. 35)

Since the mid 1970's mentoring has become intensively used in business and academia, though not until recently as a formal program, but rather initially as a natural supportive process where more experienced individuals helped those new to the field of employment. More recently at the university level Jacobi (1991) noted that "whereas mentoring has long been associated with the apprentice model of graduate education, it is increasingly looked to today as a retention and enhancement strategy for undergraduate education (p. 505). There has been little research with the use of mentoring as a

strategy with K to 12 students, let alone with those who are educationally at risk. As such, there is not much evidence as to what works and why or why not (Gray, 1989a). What works in one situation may not work in another, yet one thing is certain - that the process of mentoring is a "developmental process that requires time to develop and produce the desired results and must be monitored to ensure success" (Gray, 1989a, p. 17).

There are at least three types of mentoring. The first is Informal Mentoring where the mentor is generally an older person who identifies a younger person to guide. In this role the mentor acts as a "teacher, guide, sponsor, exemplar, wise counsellor, supporter of the protege's life transitions and facilitator of their dreams" (Gray, 1989, p.17). This person exerts a comprehensive influence on the protege's personal and professional life, often without the protege's being aware of it.

The second type is Career Mentoring. In this situation the protege is guided in her/his career advancement by the mentor and the protege generally becomes aware of the situation once it has begun. This is neither planned nor formalized and depends upon the unique relationship of the mentor and protege.

The third type and the subject of this study is Planned Project Mentoring. This is established to carry out a special project and lasts from 4 to 18 months. The purpose is to help in a systematic way proteges "expand awareness of career possibilities, gain in-depth understanding of the realities of specific careers such as the aptitude and educational requirements needed for success, what kind of time and life style a job actually entails" (Gray, 1989a, p. 18).

This type seems to be the easiest to arrange and evaluate in education as individual mentors can be located to help individual at risk students carry out tasks that would attempt to motivate them to remain in school, improve academic performance, increase motivation, and develop self-esteem. For those who are most severely at risk "a much more intensive personalized program of one-on-one relationships with staff members" (Aiello and Gatewood, 1989, p. 5) can be developed.

In order to apply the concept of Planned Project Mentoring suitable mentors have to be identified and the relationship has to be formed and fostered. This latter point, the fostering of the relationship (Gray, 1989a), is critical if the program is to be successful. This involves getting the two parties to know one another, to form one-on-one meetings with each understanding the role of the other, to develop mutual trust and belief in one another, and above all, to

help the protege to feel safe and non threatened. A critical factor in planned programs is to provide a relationship where the assistance and evaluative functions are assigned to different personnel in the school setting because only the assistance function is compatible with a significant mentoring relationship (Bey, 1990). A key component that facilitates the establishment and development of this relationship is the careful matching of mentor and protege. Efforts must be made to make the match compatible through an effort to link participants based upon common interests and communication styles (Gray 1989a). Simply to identify the individuals and arrange a time for the interaction to take place will not initiate the relationship. Mismatches of the participants, and time and place constraints suitable for school programs often frustrate the development of this relationship. Careful selection and sensitive preparation can greatly enhance the chance of success (Haensly and Edlind, 1986).

Within the school context there are at least three possible sources of mentors. There have been some instances of 'peer' mentoring throughout the business community and this can be applied to a limited extent within the schools. This would have successful students becoming the mentors for those who are at risk of dropping out. Potential peer mentors would have to be identified, trained, matched with proteges, and monitored. The identification of suitable students to become



mentors and their training and development would have to take place on a continual basis as the school population is constantly changing.

A second possible source is from the community at large. The community has a host of potential mentors from retired individuals to successful business persons. These can be recruited as sources of primary mentoring, that is these individuals who have achieved a degree of success in their chosen fields, can relate their success to the students that they are mentoring and thus add a degree of reality to the situation. They can use their own expertise, experiences, and practical wisdom. In addition, they often have access to other specialists who can provide secondary mentoring (Gray, 1989). This is where additional individuals can be brought into the mentoring process so as to provide the protege with other information and experiences that relate to the protege's own particular situation. A further source from the community is the post secondary educational system and in particular teacher education schools and faculties. Teacher education programs can offer credit courses whereby education students (future teachers) can be placed in a colloquial relationship and help the protege realize the importance of school and the tragic consequences of not graduating. As a "large part of a student's school experience is learning how to master the education system and then negotiate his or her way through it" (Richardson, 1989, p. 29) who is better than

a college student who has successfully negotiated the system to help the protege find her/his way through the system? Mature age college students are easy to find, expect to be taught, and to turn in assignments, thereby making it easy for program co-ordinators to establish and exercise quality control over the mentoring process (Gray, 1989). Such a program provides "teacher education students with experiences which enable them to work more effectively ... in their own classrooms" (Wiseman, Larke, and Bradley, 1989, p. 37). With such a training program in place teachers would enter teaching with a set of mentoring skills and strategies already in place which would then best serve the interest of all students.

Teachers themselves are the third source of mentors and are the subject of this study, along with the individual students that they mentor. Few teacher education programs exist that focus on mentoring yet "the belief is widespread that influence of faculty, as exemplars and as caring persons, can be substantial (McQuillen, 1992, p. 403). Within the school setting teachers are natural mentors and planned programs that are established merely formalize the process. Teaching has always been a meeting of minds where young people followed older more experienced people around and learned from them by listening to them and seeking their advice and help. With the planned mentoring programs that are

established in the schools, we see an attempt to return to what was successful in the past.

A clear and defined mentoring process has to be established for a planned mentoring program to be successful. In his research, Gray (1989a) has identified certain generic components of a Planned Mentoring Program which should be clearly understood and carefully considered before implementing a program. These components must be adapted to the situation that exists within the specific school. Similarly "one mentor will likely fulfill the role in ways that vary substantially from how other mentors may operate" (Huling-Austin, 1990, p. 48).

Gray's (1989a) Four Phase Mentoring Model (Figure 1) provides the vehicle for the establishment of an effective planned mentoring program. The implementation of a program requires a number of specific components and "if this is not done, success is not likely" (Gray, p. 19). The effective implementation of this model, as observed in *The Mentor Project* at Harriet Tubman Continuation High School in Compton California, resulted in the proteges becoming more capable and responsible. This was measured by students doing necessary homework, improved attitudes towards peers and academic improvement (Outen, 1989).



take place. Haring-Hidore (1986) concurred and stated that in order for a planned program to survive and flourish, there must be commitment and support from all levels. Imposed programs rarely work as well as those where individuals willingly 'buy in'.

Therefore, all program structures, expectations, and outcomes must be communicated to potential participants and input from them should be readily accepted.

3. Planned mentoring is not a stop-gap measure, but a proactive developmental process that strives to help people do their job better, to fit into the organizational culture of the institution, and learn the skills required for future success. Such a process takes time to evolve.
4. Planned mentoring programs should be designed around the desired outcomes. These outcomes should relate to the needs of the participants and determine who will be selected as mentors and proteges. These outcomes also determine the type of training that will be provided.
5. Planned mentoring should begin small and grow over time. A pilot program can ferret out problems before the program is extended to the larger group.
6. Prospective mentors and proteges should receive an orientation that clearly outlines the program's

goals, objectives, expectations, and anticipated outcomes. Evaluation methods should likewise be explained. Only in this way can the prospective participants make an informed decision to participate and take ownership of the program.

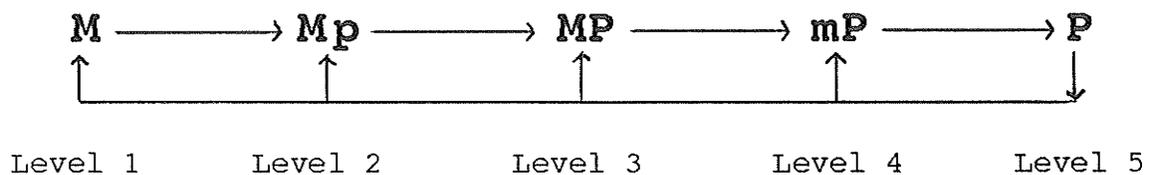
7. Specific mentors and proteges should be carefully selected from the volunteers and matched so that intended goals are achieved. One method is to match communication styles by using Gray and Anderson's *Mentoring Style Indicator* (Appendix 4) so as to identify mentors and match them with the student's level of development and needs.
8. Training must be provided for mentors and proteges so that they are aware of expectations and how to fulfill their roles. Dickerson (1989), Willbur (1989) and Aiello & Gatewood (1989) concur that training of mentors is critical. It is a mistake to conclude that since mentors have more experience than proteges that they will automatically be good mentors.
9. Mentoring involves a close personal relationship between mentor and protege. As such it must be carefully monitored, by a program co-ordinator on a regular basis to address conflicts, if and when they occur, for no matter how good the training, there will always be conflicts. The program co-ordinator should be carefully trained in conflict resolution techniques.

10. Planned mentoring programs should be evaluated on a regular basis. Quantitative and qualitative data need to be collected and analyzed so as to obtain in depth information as to the successes and failures of the program. It is only through such evaluations that the program can be improved and appropriate interventions designed to ensure that program outcomes are realized.

Two specific models of mentoring have been designed and can be applied to the school situation. Gray's (1989a) *Mentor-Protege Relationship Model* (Figure 2) and the Schockett, Yoshimura, Beyard-Tyler, and Haring (1983) *Model of Mentoring* (Figure 3) both operate on the principle that the mentor takes the protege on a journey from passivity and lack of confidence to eventual self-reliance and separation at which point the protege is able to function on her/his own.

**FIGURE 2**

**GRAY'S (1984) MENTOR-PROTEGE RELATIONSHIP MODEL**



(Gray, 1989a, p. 19)

Gray's model finds the protege at Level 1 (**M**) with a lack of experience and unrealistic goals. At this stage the protege requires direction and training to learn skills to perform unfamiliar or difficult tasks. Here the mentor must be prescriptive and structure procedures for the protege to follow. Proteges must be willing to accept the wise counsel, role modeling, and advice of the mentor. This level gives the protege roots or a grounding in the school's norms and helps her/him fit in.

Level 2 (**Mp**) finds the protege more experienced with a better ability to contribute more to problem solving and decision making. Here the protege still requires direction but not as prescriptive as at Level 1. Discussions can take place that help the protege to arrive at her/his own way of thinking. The mentor can also confront the protege about how she/he persists in doing some things that cause her/him problems, however, at this level the protege has greater input than at Level 1.

Level 3 (**MP**) has the protege with sufficient experience to carry on collaborative problem solving and decision making with the mentor. This is the transition point from dependence on the mentor (Levels 1 & 2) to independence (Levels 4 & 5). The protege views the former mentor interventions negatively and now strives to be more independent and autonomous.



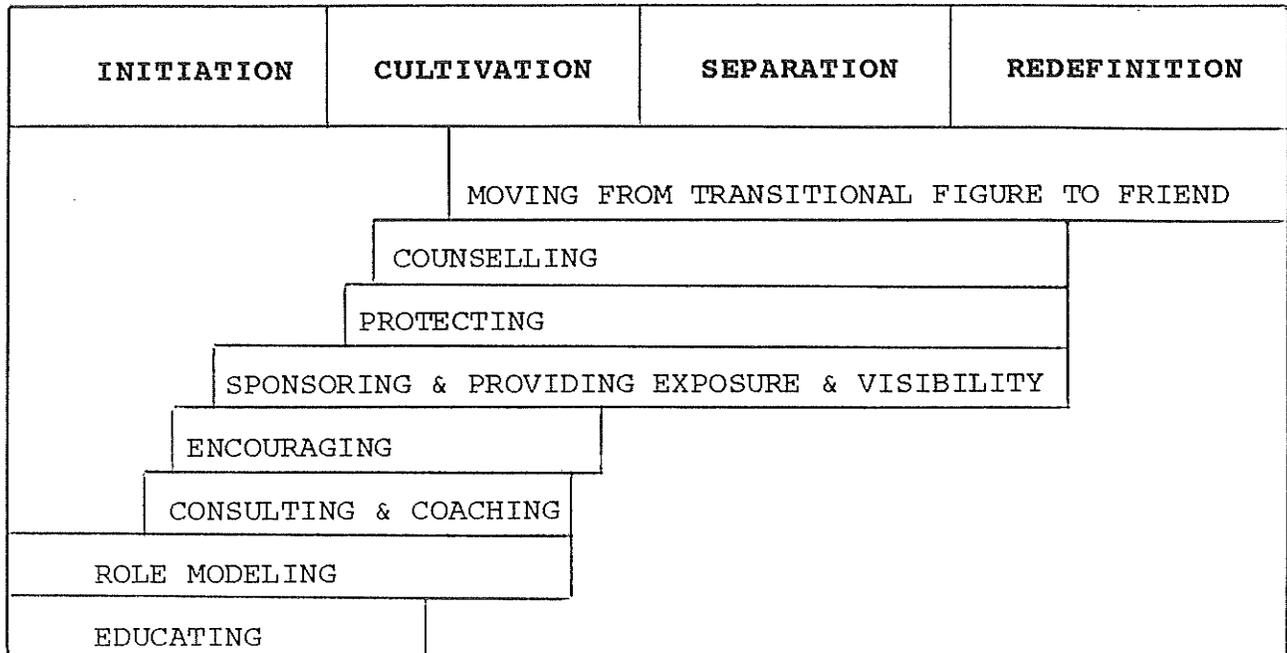
Level 4 (**mP**) has the protege at a self-reliant point, yet still requiring confirmation from the mentor. No longer is the mentor prescriptive and the protege does not require suggestions or collaboration. All that is required from the mentor is moral support, feedback, and availability for consultation if required by the protege. The protege is becoming her/his own person with her/his own style of work to attempt and achieve successes on her/his own.

Level 5 (**P**) finds the protege entirely capable of acting on her/his own. At this point the relationship between the mentor and protege is broken and separation takes place with the the protege pursuing her/his own goals.

With this model, the level of intervention varies with the protege's ability to handle specific situations. In some instances intervention might indeed be at Level 1, while for others in which the protege might have some experience, Level 2 or 3 intervention might be appropriate. The ultimate objective is to have the protege capable of reacting at Level 5.

FIGURE 3

## SCHOCKETT MODEL OF MENTORING



(Schockett et al., 1983)

The Schockett et al. (1983) Model of Mentoring has similar developmental progress on the part of the protege. In the Initiation Phase the mentor provides educating and role modeling for the protege. This is to enhance the protege's skills and intellectual development which is accomplished by providing suggestions on challenging tasks and offering constructive criticism. The role modeling provides an opportunity for the protege to observe how the mentor reacts to specific situations, accepts responsibility, interacts with others, handles conflict and balances professional and personal demands. At this stage the mentor also undertakes

the function of sponsoring the protege by becoming an advocate and protector for her/him by helping the protege make contacts with others.

At the Cultivation Phase the relationship between mentor and protege grows and expands. Less time is spent by the mentor on educating and role modeling functions. Consulting and coaching, which involves introduction to the school's dynamics and norms, takes place here. Also goal clarification and implementation occurs in this phase, with the hope of establishing in the protege a set of personal standards. Time is also spent encouraging the protege by building up self-confidence and self-reliance through emotional support and positive feedback. Motivation to do her/his best is very critical in this phase as is counselling to discuss the protege's concerns.

The Separation Phase involves a decreasing amount of support on the part of the mentor. A feeling of independence is developed in the protege that ultimately leads to separation when the protege has reached the degree of self-reliance whereby she/he can move on her/his own and is capable of independent thought and action.

The final Redefinition Phase refers to the establishment of a new relationship between mentor and protege. They now become

friends or peers, depending upon the circumstances of the initial mentoring relationship.

The models give a clear indication of the mentoring process. Within this process the position of the mentor is clear and defined. However, the variation of mentor roles range from role modeling (Gray, 1989, McQuillen, 1992, Haring-Hidore, 1985), to protecting and opening doors (Gray, 1989), to guiding (Aiello & Gatewood, 1989), teaching (Aiello & Gatewood, 1989, Willbur, 1989), and to consulting, advising and counselling (Gray, 1989, Aiello & Gatewood, 1989). The mentor must also be a good listener (Daloz, 1986), a trusted friend (Dickerson, 1989), and a builder of self-esteem (Willbur, 1989). The role of the mentor is extremely complex and each mentor tends to develop her/his own role by considering the individual circumstances and needs of the students with whom she/he has been assigned (Huling-Austin, 1990). Gray (1989), Haring-Hidore (1985), Daloz (1986), and Willbur (1989) all concur on the importance of adequate and proper training for program success. This is a key factor for the development and successful implementation of any planned mentoring program. As the roles and expectations of mentors are many and varied it is essential that they be schooled in the skills and strategies associated with effective mentoring.

The first essential skill in this training is the development of the skill of listening so as to determine how the proteges are moving, what they want for themselves and how they tell their stories. The second skill is the ability to determine levels of development of the proteges. Only in this way can the mentor understand the nature of the protege's demands and adjust her/his expectations and approach to the protege's particular strengths and weaknesses. What is simple for one may prove a challenge for another and overwhelming to yet a third (Daloz, 1986). It is important to know when to step in or when to move back, when to support and when to challenge. A third skill to be imparted to mentors is relationship building techniques. As it is essential to create a bond between mentor and protege, the mentor must be capable of developing a trusting and caring relationship that is non-threatening to the protege. Unless this can occur (free of the fears and pressures of evaluation) the relationship is doomed to failure from the start. The feeling of trust cannot be established if such a fear or concern is present.

Brooks and Haring-Hidore (1987) state that the proper training of participants, that is mentor and protege, is an important element for the success of a program. This becomes essential in order for both parties to know what is expected of them and how to fulfill their roles. This is particularly important for the mentors who must have an insight into:

1. the expected behaviours and reactions of their proteges;
2. the expected changes that may occur in their proteges during the mentoring period;
3. the protege's socio-economic history; and
4. the structure and purpose of the relationship itself (Dickerson, 1989).

Gray (1989a) noted that "it is a mistake to assume that just because mentors have greater experience and practical wisdom, they automatically know how to fulfill essential mentor roles" (p. 21). Therefore any orientation that improves praising, listening, basic mentoring skills, strategies and techniques, and how to identify various learning styles will be of benefit to the mentor (Willbur, 1989).

The proper instruction of mentors should include a set of strategies and techniques for them to use in specific situations. The provision of a structure (Daloz, 1986) is beneficial to mentors, especially for those who themselves are not quite as confident in their mentoring abilities as others. Teachers who are often hesitant, tend to react in a more positive manner if they have at their disposal a series of prescribed strategies or tactics to utilize in a variety of situations. Such assistance and training can help those teachers to become more effective as mentors. This tends to increase the prospects of successful mentoring encounters and subsequent program success.

Aiello and Gatewood (1988) have identified a number of such strategies (Table 1).

**TABLE 1**

**STRATEGIES FOR MENTORS**

1. Contact protege's teachers to assess progress
2. Dialog on problem solving
3. Develop rapport and trust through small steps
4. Make contact at home and encourage parental involvement
5. Encourage participation in clubs and other extra-curricular activities
6. Use interims to review protege's success and need for improvement
7. Have daily/weekly contact with the protege
8. Help protege assess strengths and weaknesses
9. Have protege do weekly progress reports
10. Provide and encourage new experiences for protege
11. Reinforce strengths to encourage greater self-esteem and success
12. Encourage parenting classes/workshops for parents
13. Set definite time for meeting protege
14. Show genuine interest and stick with protege
15. Share experiences and knowledge with protege
16. Visit (the protege's) home
17. Help protege develop positive relationships with other students

(Aiello and Gatewood, 1989, p. 7)

They have also determined a number of tactics for mentors to implement in mentoring situations (Table 2).

**TABLE 2**

**TACTICS FOR MENTORS**

*INTERPERSONAL*

1. Engage in mutually enjoyable activities
2. Develop rapport and trust in small stages
3. Provide and encourage new experiences for proteges
4. Share experience and knowledge with proteges
5. Be consistent but flexible

*MENTORING PROCESS*

1. Generate a commitment to the mentor program
2. Share concerns and plan activities with proteges
3. Keep parents and counsellors informed

*ACADEMIC*

1. Provide instructional support for proteges
2. Monitor academic progress and attendance regularly
3. Help proteges to improve study skills/habits
4. Offer to tutor or help arrange tutoring sessions

*SELF-DEVELOPMENT*

1. Encourage responsible behaviour
2. Promote greater in-school and healthy outside activities
3. Foster a positive self-image
4. Help develop post-high school plans
5. Help proteges assess their respective strengths and weaknesses
6. Reinforce strengths to encourage greater self-esteem and success
7. Help proteges develop positive relationships with other students

(Aiello and Gatewood, 1989, p 7)



Willbur (1989) in turn offers a series of strategies for Listening (Table 3).

**TABLE 3**  
**STRATEGIES FOR LISTENING**

1. Avoid being judgmental - Concentrate on the message and not the person.
2. Don't be insincere in your listening - If you fake attention, it will be evident.
3. Listen for ideas and not just facts - Look for the big meaning in what is said.
4. Avoid communication killers - Analyze your responses and be sure to avoid any action or words that will cut off communication.
5. Put what you are hearing into words - After you have listened closely, try to put what the other person is saying and feeling into words and see how they react.
6. Get agreement - Communication involves knowing when and how to listen as well as how to use words.

(Willbur, 1989, p. 34)

When armed with these skills, strategies, and techniques, teacher mentors can enter with confidence into a meaningful mentoring relationship and expect a degree of success. It is only through the careful planning, training, and implementation of a mentoring process that there can be hope to achieve the desired outcomes. Within this formal framework the actual mentoring situations though sometimes planned are often spontaneous. Most planned mentoring programs, however, have prescribed outcomes and Gray (1989a) describes a series of protege learning outcomes (Table 4).

TABLE 4

## MAJOR PROTEGE LEARNING OUTCOMES

*IMPROVED PERSONAL SKILLS*

1. self-motivation, self-discipline, goal-setting
2. learns to proact rather than react
3. develops potential and talents
4. self-confidence and self-reliance
5. self-expression (speaking, creativity)
6. interpersonal skills (communication, sharing)
7. cooperation and socialization
8. concern for others, trust, honesty
9. responsibility, task commitment
10. creative problem solving

*IMPROVED ATTITUDES*

1. listens to mentor and other role models
2. responds to what responsible role models teach
3. values what the mentor has to offer
4. organizes new values into a value system; gives up irresponsible, anti-social values
5. lives according to more socially responsible values

*IMPROVED COGNITIVE SKILLS*

1. acquires and uses new knowledge and concepts
2. analyzes differences and similarities, pros and cons, right and wrong
3. synthesizes, creates, designs new and better ways
4. critically evaluates what works and what doesn't, what's realistic and what isn't
5. aware of how one's thoughts influences one's actions

Gray, 1989a, p. 19)

When all elements come together into a smooth process mentoring can achieve its goals and outcomes. Such a process as described herein can occur when all parties have the will to achieve and the commitment to follow through with their plans. The approach can be a developmental one that takes the protege from where she/he is at risk of withdrawing from

school prior to graduation, to the situation where she/he begins to achieve both personal and academic successes. Once this level has been attained the student can begin to see the value of remaining in school until graduation, and in some cases a continuation of her/his education beyond high school. As self-reliance is reached, the student no longer is as educationally at risk as before and can seek out her/his own way in life. This is the goal that a planned mentoring program for at risk students strives to achieve.

#### Mentoring and the School

The mentoring models described are readily applicable to many school situations. Given the changing nature of society whereby many students will be in a single parent family during their years in school, it can be argued that in many instances the caring individual in the home will be absent from the life of the student (Finn, 1989). Even in situations where there exists a two parent family, both parents often work thereby creating a greater chance of a situation occurring where the parents will be absent when the student requires a caring person with whom to confer. In both instances the time for interaction between parent and child is decreased and perhaps in some instances, even nonexistent.

As students spend a minimum of five hours a day in the school, it becomes apparent on a daily basis that during these hours the student is often in personal contact with

several teachers, often for a longer period of time, though perhaps not as directly as with adults in the home. In some instances where the student participates in extra-curricular activities such as band, drama or athletics, this contact time between teacher and student is significantly increased and can be more direct.

The opportunities to develop informal mentoring relationships between teachers and students are constantly available. River East Collegiate has taken this one step farther and has established a formal mentoring program designed specifically for that group of students deemed to be the most at risk of dropping out of high school. The program was instituted with the belief that for most of these individuals that caring person was absent from their lives, if not at home, certainly within the institution of the school.

The program is an attempt to place that caring person into the life of these students, at least in the school setting. In this way it is hoped that the student will develop a bond with the mentor and through this teacher mentor obtain the needed care, concern, advice, and interest in her/himself as a person. With such interventions it is hoped that the at risk student will become self-reliant, gain self-esteem, and satisfactorily complete high school and go on to become successful and a contributing member of society.

This study will attempt to determine what is required for a teacher mentor to provide that caring atmosphere which is often absent from the life of an at risk student within the school. Those actions on the part of the teacher mentor that cause a student to gain positive and/or negative experiences and successes and/or failures in the school will be identified along with the effective and ineffective practises of the teacher mentor that lead to those outcomes.

## CHAPTER 3

## THE CURRENT PROGRAM AT RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE

River East Collegiate is a suburban high school with 1100 students in grades 10, 11, and 12. The area from which the school draws the majority of its students is basically a middle to upper middle income region. The student population is divided fairly evenly between female and male students who generally range between 15 and 18 years of age. The students themselves place a high emphasis on part time work and most have aspirations to go on to post secondary education. The programs offered at the school are primarily academic. The Collegiate has a reputation as a school that has high academic standards with programs ranging from Business Education through to Advanced Placement.

For the past several years there has been a growing concern at the school over the number of students who do not complete their high school education. This failure was evidenced by students not having sufficient credits to obtain a high school diploma and the students' formal withdrawal from the Collegiate. The number of such students was judged by the Collegiate to be in the range of 10 percent of the present student population.

In 1984 the River East School Division #9 initiated a Division-wide program to address the problem of students who were at risk of dropping out of school. Schools became involved on a voluntary basis and in 1985 River East Collegiate established a program with six volunteer teachers and a part time program co-ordinator. This small group met on a weekly basis as part of the formal Student Support Program that was already in place in the school. The administrators of the school strongly supported the program, while many teachers remained skeptical. This group adopted a program whereby each teacher would have assigned to her/him up to three students who were identified as being at risk of not completing high school. The students selected were referred to the program by the feeder schools, other teachers, and the school administrators. Due to the small number of staff, only those who were felt to be most at risk as based upon poor academic progress and poor attendance were taken into the program. The program co-ordinator would contact these students, discuss with them their academic situation, and provide them with the opportunity of entering the program if they so desired. Other students, whose problems were deemed not to be as critical, were monitored and interventions took place only if warranted, or they were attended to by the counsellors, school administrators, or resource personnel.

The staff received professional development on matters such as conflict resolution, role modeling, and mentoring

practices and techniques. The teacher mentors would meet with their assigned students at least once a week. No special timetable considerations were made for the staff, although they were assigned one less formal supervision per six day school cycle. The teachers would use their free time to accommodate the students in the program.

Over the five year period from 1985 - 1990 several other teachers came into the program. The staff soon came to accept the mentoring part of the Student Support Program as a viable way of keeping these students in school and cooperated with the teacher mentors in dealing with the academic and personal problems of the students in the program. The success rate, though difficult to measure, as there were no guarantees that the students in the program would actually have withdrawn from school had they not been in the program, appeared to be quite high. For the five year period of this limited program a large number of the students who were formally admitted to the program remained in school and obtained their high school diploma.

Due to the limited nature of the mentoring aspect of the Student Support Program, not all students who were identified as being educationally at risk could participate. There was a need to provide the same services to all students within the school who were determined to be at risk. As a result, in 1990 the present program was implemented.



The present program requires that all of the teaching and administrative staff of the collegiate participate. A structure with clear lines of communication and support was developed as a framework for the program (Appendix 1). The staff was clearly informed as to the program structure, expectations, and hoped for outcomes, as presented by the Collegiate's Teacher Advisor Committee. The 10 percent of the student body (120 students) determined to be the most at risk were identified and each of the 60 staff members, excluding administrators, were assigned two of these students. These individuals were placed in the teacher's regular Advisory Group and identified as being at risk. Contact with the home to inform the parents that their daughter/son was identified as being at risk was left to the discretion of the teacher mentor. The teacher then focused on these two students in a more intensive manner than the other students in the advisory group.

The Collegiate provided a two day Professional Development session to train the staff in mentoring skills and procedures prior to the 1990-91 school year to familiarize the staff with these skills. As well, those teachers who had been in the previous program were called upon for help and advice whenever required. The program also had a staff co-ordinator and a para-professional to help with record keeping which

included the recording of grades, preparation of anecdotal reports and attendance follow-up for students in the program.

The main features of the program including rationale, goals and objectives, responsibilities and roles of all parties, and processes are described below.

#### Program Rationale

A number of students at River East Collegiate were identified as being at risk of not completing their high school education within 3 to 4 years. The staff and administrators of the Collegiate believed that by identifying those students in need of extra assistance, and that by providing them with additional resources in and/or out of school, a larger percentage of the students enrolled would achieve greater personal and school success. This would come about through the design and implementation of a mentoring program that involved the total staff of the collegiate and which specifically targeted the 10 percent of the student body that was identified as being the most at risk.

#### Program Goal

The goal of the program was to facilitate the student's success in both personal and academic life through the improvement of self-esteem, self-reliance, and academic performance while enrolled at River East Collegiate. This

would ensure that the student attained the benefits of her/his educational experience.

#### General Program Objectives

Four general objectives were identified for the program.

1. To identify the students with behavioral problems that interfere with their educational success.
2. To provide students with a series of strategies that will enable them to become more skillful in decision making, problem solving and coping with both personal and academic difficulties.
3. To provide the students and their families with access to resources, both in and out of school, that will be needed to overcome their personal and academic difficulties.
4. To provide Collegiate staff with on-going professional development, resources, and assistance as they work with these students who are experiencing difficulties.

#### Specific Program Objectives

The collegiate identified three specific student outcomes for the program.

1. Academic. The academic outcomes were divided into short and long term objectives. The short term objectives (on-going) included the completion of all class assignments, projects and other work

within the time frame given by the teachers; the writing of all tests and exams as set by the teachers; and the participation in and contribution to all regular classroom activities. The long term objectives involved the obtaining of passing grades in all regular courses and the successful completion of high school.

2. Behavioural. The behavioural outcomes focused on the improvement of work and study habits, the development of a positive attitude towards school, the showing of consideration and respect towards peers and staff, and the participation in a variety of extracurricular school activities.
3. Attendance. The general attendance requirement was stated in the River East Collegiate Attendance Policy and was the ultimate objective. Whereas the attendance and/or punctuality of the student who had been identified as being educationally at risk may have fallen short of this policy, the on-going objective was to bring about consistent improvement in regular attendance at all teacher advisor meetings, the attending of all regular scheduled classes, and the arrival at all scheduled classes and activities on time.

### Process

An organizational structure and set of procedures deemed to be essential for the implementation of an effective program was established by the school administrators and the program co-ordinator. The structure designed by this group for the program was based upon communication, information gathering, and referral to the School Support Team.

1. Communication. An organizational structure was designed that would facilitate the smooth and easy flow of information (Appendix 1). The teacher advisors were formed into 'teams' of approximately fifteen (15). Each team had a designated administrator and counsellor with whom the teacher advisor could consult regarding the students. Regular meetings of each team were called by the administrator or counsellor for the purpose of sharing concerns and strategies for assisting the at risk students, recommending or developing action plans for specific students, and determining whether to refer the student's case to the School Support Team. At times these meetings were for the entire group of fifteen teacher advisors, while at other times the team was subdivided for the convenience of meeting at a particular time. If deemed appropriate by the teacher advisor the parents/guardians were informed of the action plans developed for their

child/ward, and of the outcomes. A brief record of the proceedings of the regular meetings was submitted to the program co-ordinator.

2. Information gathering. An essential element of a successful program was felt to be the efficient gathering of pertinent information concerning the at risk student. The teacher advisors monitored the academic progress of the students carefully by teachers of the students as required. The methods employed included personal contact, anecdotal report forms and meetings with subject teachers (Appendix 2). The Teacher Aide assisted in the distribution, collection and collation of this information.
3. Referral to the School Support Team. When it was deemed necessary to refer a student, the teacher advisor completed the referral form (Appendix 3), attended the School Support Team meeting at which the student's case was discussed, and presented additional information as required.

#### Identification of Students

The criteria used in the identification of students who were educationally at risk varied according to the grade level. For Grade 10 (Year One) students, the feeder junior high schools identified the students based on their own criteria

for the students who they felt would be at risk in the high school. In Grades 11 and 12 (Years Two and Three) the students brought into the program were those who:

1. had fewer than four (4) academic credits when entering their second year, or fewer than twelve (12) academic credits when entering their third year in high school; and/or
2. had four or more academic failures in the second reporting period of the Collegiate; and/or
3. were currently involved with outside agencies with regard to social, psychological, or psychiatric services; and/or
4. were presently enrolled in the former at risk program; and/or
5. were specially referred to the program by staff or administration.

#### Teacher Advisor's Responsibilities

The role of the teacher advisor was varied and involved the capacity to:

1. identify students who should be, but are not as yet, in the formal program;
2. communicate on a regular basis with the students who had been identified and placed in their advisor groups. This discussion often concerned the issues affecting their academic progress and adjustment to the school;

3. communicate on a regular basis with the parents of these students concerning issues that affected their son or daughter;
4. assist these students with support and direction for on-going problem solving strategies and techniques, and immediate problems and difficulties;
5. seek, whenever necessary and appropriate, consultation and/or support from counsellors, resource, administration, and other staff in assisting with the at risk students in their care;
6. give, when appropriate, the at risk students and their parents information concerning sources of assistance outside of the school; and
7. attend the regularly scheduled team meetings to share strategies and concerns.

There were a number of set procedures that the school's Teacher Advisor Committee felt should be followed to facilitate the successful implementation of the program. Teacher mentors were to meet initially with the at risk student at least once a cycle at the beginning of the school year to assess the present situation, identify one or two specific problems, develop strategies to help resolve the problem, set specific short term performance goals, and document and assess the success of the actions taken. When there was evidence of significant progress or whenever it was deemed beneficial by the teacher mentor, the meetings were set on a bi-weekly basis. The next step was to make contact



with the parents/guardian as soon as possible at the start of the school year and then formally meet with them at each school reporting period. Mentors were also requested to maintain an on-going log of the procedures undertaken with the student and their outcomes. It was also recommended that they get to know, if possible, the friends of the student. The final set procedure was to encourage the student to get involved in the school's extracurricular activities.

#### Administrator's Responsibilities

The Administrators had a critical role of support and their responsibilities included:

1. monitoring the overall progress and effectiveness of the program from the total school perspective;
2. arranging regular meetings with the counsellor so as to provide the teacher advisors with support whenever required;
3. arranging resources (staffing, professional support persons - medical, psychiatric, counselling, physical space for meetings) so that the required resources and facilities were available whenever required;
4. facilitating the professional development of the school personnel and teacher advisors;
5. consulting with the teacher advisor and the counsellor whenever major disciplinary measures are contemplated; and

6. assigning the at risk students to a specific teacher advisor on the basis of two students per teacher.

### Counsellor's Responsibilities

The role of the counsellor was one of support and organization. This required the counsellor to:

1. work collaboratively with the teacher advisors within their designated group (Appendix 1) requiring them to share information, resources and ideas to meet the needs of the student, and develop a systematic problem solving approach directed at solving immediate problems and increasing the teacher advisor's problem solving ability in the future;
2. provide leadership in bringing together all appropriate human resources and school based and outside agencies that were required to meet the needs of the student;
3. provide individual counselling for the students upon request;
4. refer cases, where appropriate or necessary, to the School Support Team for consultation and assistance;  
and
5. hold, together with the appropriate administrator, regular support group meetings with the teacher advisors.

### Resource Teacher's Responsibilities

The resource teacher provided the teacher advisor and other school staff with a variety of services directed at the at risk population. This required the resource teacher to:

1. work collaboratively with the teacher advisor and subject teachers by sharing information, resources, and ideas to meet the needs of each student;
2. become instrumental in program management, where special programs were required, by keeping accurate records and by conducting on-going evaluation of the program and objectives;
3. provide, where appropriate or necessary, direct service through testing, analytic teaching and presentation, and indirect service through teachers, peer tutors, para-professionals, volunteers and any others that were required;
4. refer cases, where appropriate and necessary, to the School Support Team; and
5. attend team support meetings upon request.

### Subject Teacher's Responsibilities

Each individual subject teacher worked together with all parties to:

1. provide the teacher advisor, upon request, information regarding the academic progress and behaviour of the at risk student; and

2. support the recommendations developed for the student with respect to specific subject short term goals.

#### Program Implementation

The counselling staff identified students who were currently involved in the Student Support Program, were presently receiving services of the Child Guidance Clinic, NEWFACES, or other outside agencies, and those others who should be in the program based upon their knowledge and experience. The teaching staff, through their daily contact with students referred students to the program. Such referrals were made to that student's teacher advisor. The teacher advisor then made a referral to the program co-ordinator but these students were not added to the list of students in the program. As with all schools, students enroll at various times of the year. These students were considered for the program if they met the criteria as indicated for admittance to the program, or upon the recommendation of the sending school, but they did not become part of the official list of students who were considered to be in the formal mentoring program.

#### Assignment of Students

An administrator assigned the at risk students to the teacher advisors on the basis of two students per teacher. An attempt was made to accommodate the recommendations of the

counsellors and the program co-ordinator for specific placement requests for student proteges. Students who had been previously in the program could make requests for specific teacher mentors and were accommodated if at all possible.

## CHAPTER 4

## METHODOLOGY

This study used an interview format to obtain the data that were used to analyze mentoring as a strategy for helping those students who were at risk of not completing high school. Student and teacher perceptions were obtained concerning their views on mentoring, the nature of the mentor protege relationship that was established, the strategies used by effective mentors, and teacher and student satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction that occurred during the year. The data were used to identify those effective practises that both an individual mentor and a school can employ to develop a good mentoring relationship and program.

The study focused on the formal mentoring program at River East Collegiate that was established in September of 1990. The data were gathered through individual interviews with four teacher-mentors and the one or two students that each teacher was mentoring. The individual teachers interviewed were selected by the program coordinator based upon the following criteria:

1. the teacher's active involvement in the program, that is, the teacher will have made an effort to carry out the task of mentoring with those students who were assigned to him/her;

2. the teacher having a minimum of two proteges at the start of the academic year (there may be some instances where the protege may have withdrawn from the Collegiate during the course of the year); and
3. the willingness of the teacher mentor to participate in the study and share information.

The students that were interviewed were the ones who had been assigned to the teacher mentors selected for the interview process.

#### Method

A series of structured interviews was conducted with each of the selected teacher mentors and with each student protege of those teacher mentors. Each interview, though focusing on identical areas, was designed to elicit the particular perspective of the individuals from each of the two groups being interviewed. The interviews were held at the end of the school year and were limited to those in the program in the 1990-91 school year.

The interview followed the interview guide (Appendix 5) developed for the study. The questions were based upon the information that the literature and researchers had cited as being important to mentoring and planned mentoring programs. The program goals and objectives that were established at River East Collegiate were also considered in the design of the interview questions. The interview also allowed for the

perceptions of the participants in the program to be voiced. Several open ended questions with probes were put into the design of the instrument so as to allow the subjects to answer freely and elaborate as much as possible.

Following each initial response, various secondary probe questions were used to elicit further responses and to gain more specific and detailed information on the topic. Each group of questions was arranged to move from the specific to the general. This was done to get the subject to focus on a topic, feel more comfortable with the area of investigation, and then to express her/himself more freely.

There was a pilot interview undertaken with a teacher mentor prior to the formal interviews. This initial interview was recorded and the responses reviewed to determine the degree of clarity of the questions and participant interest and attention. If the respondent had to ask for clarification of a particular question, that question was modified so as to be clearer. The responses were examined to determine whether or not they elicited the data sought. Questions that did not, were checked for ambiguity and clarity. The responses were recorded on a tape recorder and questions analyzed by the interviewer for unclear wording, redundancy, timing, quality of recording, and length of time. This was done to improve the quality and clarity of the data and recording procedure.



The initial intent was to interview the four teacher mentors and each of the two student-proteges that were attached to each teacher. However, only five student proteges were interviewed. Only one teacher had two student proteges. One teacher had a student-protege transferred to another school early in the year, another teacher had a student assigned that was determined not to be at risk and was only monitored during the year, and the other teacher had a student protege drop out of school during the year.

The time anticipated for each interview was from 45 minutes to one hour. In actual fact the time varied significantly between student and teachers. For the most part the interviews with the students were much shorter than anticipated. They ranged from 25 minutes to 40 minutes. Several students were somewhat brief in their responses to both the initial questions and the probe questions. The teacher respondents were much closer to the projected times. Their interviews ranged from 40 to 55 minutes.

As comfortable a location as possible with a minimum of background noise was deemed the most suitable for the interviews. This would allow for a high quality of recording with as little interference as possible from outside sources in order to provide a minimum chance for error that could affect the reliability of the interviews. The comfort of the respondents were considered to be an important factor so they

were asked to select the location for the interview. These locations, as anticipated, varied with the respondents. For the students, two took place in their homes while the three others took place in quiet local restaurants. Two teachers selected their homes while the other two chose the school as the location for their interviews. The interviews took place without interruptions and were transcribed as soon as possible upon completion.

#### Respondents

The respondents in this study were teachers and students at River East Collegiate. A full description of the teacher mentor and student protege respondents is in Chapter 5 (Teacher Mentor Interviews) and Chapter 6 (Student Protege Interviews) respectively.

#### Procedure

The program coordinator at River East Collegiate identified the teacher mentors to be interviewed according to the established criteria. The participants were then contacted, apprised of the nature of the study, assured of the confidentiality of the responses, and asked to participate in the study.

All of the students, including four of whom were under the age of eighteen, had to obtain a signed letter granting parental permission to participate in the interview (Appendix

6). Also a letter of consent on the part of the student to participate was obtained from each student participant (Appendix 7). No parents refused permission for their daughter/son to participate in the interview. All students also agreed to participate. A similar letter was obtained from each teacher participant. A suitable time for the interview with each respondent was arranged. At the start of each interview the format and specific procedure was explained in order to provide a feeling of comfort and to establish a rapport with the subject.

#### Data Analysis

All interviews took place at the prearranged times and locations. The quality of the recordings was good which made for easy and accurate transcribing. Each interview was transcribed by the interviewer from the original tape in its entirety and included only the questions and responses. From this a second transcription was then made which contained only selected responses that were considered to be relevant to the study.

This transcription was then reviewed several times and similar or related responses were grouped together. These in turn were then reviewed and revised. A number of these groups related to specific areas examined by the interview questions while others evolved from the information provided by the respondents.

Once this latter transcription was completed, the groups were organized in general descriptive categories. These categories were then used as the basis for the analysis of the Teacher Mentor (Chapter 5) and Student Protege (Chapter 6) interviews. Within each of these descriptive categories themes were established and the selected responses were arranged so as to reflect the opinions and feelings held in common by all respondents, those held by two, three or more respondents respectively, and those held individually. Finally, a link between categories was drawn so as to determine statements of meaning that ran through most of the pertinent data. Minority meaning and themes that appeared to have high impact were noted as well.

More specifically, an attempt was made to determine the effective and ineffective characteristics and qualities in a mentor both from the perspective of the teacher mentor and the student protege. Emphasis was given to identifying what the respondents considered actions that effective mentors (as defined by the respondents) took, how they did it, and what characteristics and qualities they perceived to be important in an effective teacher mentor. The effective and ineffective actions and strategies perceived to be critical in the mentor-protege relationship were also identified in an attempt to determine the qualities and characteristics of an effective mentoring program.

Following the interviews, the examination of the data gathered provided information that allowed for a clear view of the mentoring program and the associated perceptions of the participants. Sufficient data were obtained that related to the initial question posed 'Can teachers, through a formal mentoring process, make a difference in the educational success of students who have been identified as being educationally at risk?'. As well, the data allowed for the establishment of a series of effective strategies to be used by mentors as well as qualities that effective teacher-mentors seem to possess in order to establish a positive mentor-protégé relationship. Also a number of program characteristics considered to be important to an effective mentoring program were established.

The results of this study may be limited by the fact that only those students who remained in the program at the end of the 1990 - 1991 academic year were interviewed. As not all student protégés that were initially assigned to each teacher mentor were included, some aspects concerning the program may have been missed.

As previously indicated this study was not intended to evaluate the program at River East Collegiate. The intent was to look at the formal mentoring program and to determine the characteristics and qualities of effective mentors, to

identify strategies that lead to positive mentor-protégé relationships, and to consider the value of teachers acting as mentors to students who have been determined to be educationally at risk.

## CHAPTER 5

## TEACHER MENTOR INTERVIEWS

The intent of the mentoring program was to provide for both formal and informal opportunities for teacher mentors and student proteges to meet. Most teachers set a formal structured meeting once per six day school cycle (six teaching days) according to the expressed expectations of the program. As the year progressed, the frequency of meetings was left to the discretion of the teacher mentor. In most cases formal meetings were decreased to once every two school cycles. For some, a specific time in the six day school cycle was set. For others, the time for the next meeting was set at the end of each meeting. The opportunities for informal meetings to take place allowed for this reduction in formal meetings.

In the River East Collegiate program informal contact was also made at the start of each school day. As the students who were being mentored were placed in the Teacher Advisor group of their teacher mentor and this group met at the start of each school day, they would see their mentor at the start of the day, prior to the commencement of formal classes. Also, a second opportunity was worked into the program for mentor and protege to meet as the teacher mentor taught the student protege at least one academic subject. Thus contact

between mentor and protege would take place a minimum of once or twice a day as well as on other 'chance' occasions during the day. This allowed for some contact, though not always totally private in nature due to the setting. Where privacy was required a formal meeting was planned at a time and location that was suitable to both mentor and protege.

The locations of the individual meetings between mentor and protege varied. Some took place in the classroom of the teacher mentor while others were held in the school library, seminar rooms, Multi-Purpose Area, or cafeteria. Some meetings took place outside of the school setting in places such as local parks or restaurants.

The matters discussed at these meetings also varied according to each particular set of circumstances, however discussion usually revolved around two general areas. One related to school matters, more specifically academics and attendance which were two of the specific criteria of the program. On these occasions matters such as study habits, the completion of assignments, or the meeting of deadlines were discussed. At times a tutoring opportunity was provided. The other area was more personal in nature and dealt with such topics as the student protege's relations with the home or school, their relationships with their peers or adults, or with making and keeping commitments such as attending the formal mentor-



protege meetings and completing matters upon which agreement had been reached previously.

For the student protege there was a person in the school, other than a peer, with whom she/he could communicate. The teacher mentor was someone that was there to talk to without the fear or worry about punishment for what was said. This person was sought out for help and advice and a caring and trusting relationship was established during the course of the year. For one student interviewed it provided a reason for coming to school each day. For another it gave the confidence to do well in academics and to try for university. For yet another it provided an advocate between the student and the school administrators. Students who were new to the school found an adult to whom they could relate and go for help as they found high school rather impersonal.

The teacher mentors themselves met in their specific groups (see Appendix 1) on a monthly basis. These meetings were held in the school Conference Room at a time suitable for the members of each group. They were held either in the mornings prior to the start of the school day, during lunch, or after school. At these meetings each teacher mentor discussed matters that related to their specific student protege. It soon became evident that for most teacher mentors these discussions had little or no relevance, unless they knew or taught that particular student. The format of these meetings

changed and the program co-ordinator focused each meeting on a specific topic such as attendance, contact with the parent, parent-teacher conferences, or strategies to be used with proteges. Literature was provided and the meetings became mini professional development sessions.

The program was evaluated at the end of the year and it was recommended that the formal group meetings be held quarterly rather than monthly. Other than this change the program would continue with the same format the following year.

The teachers that were interviewed represented a cross section of the teaching staff at River East Collegiate. For the purpose of these observations the teacher respondents will be given fictitious names. The two female teachers will be referred to as Ms. Stuart and Ms. Roberts. The two male respondents will be Mr. Bennet and Mr. Wallace.

The teachers interviewed had different experiences in their teaching careers that provided them with varied backgrounds in mentoring. Ms. Stuart, though new to high school teaching, had previously taught at a junior high school for a number of years. While there, she was a team leader with responsibility for several teachers and the academic, personal, and social success of some 120 students. She had no formal training in mentoring but indicated that the program at River East

Collegiate had some similarities with the way that she tried to relate to the students at her previous school.

Ms. Roberts had also been teaching for a number of years at both the junior and senior high school levels. While at the junior high school level she had been involved with a mentor program for first year teachers in the school division and had previously mentored a first year teacher. She therefore did have a mentoring background and this training provided her with a variety of strategies to use with her student proteges.

Mr. Bennet, an experienced high school teacher, was involved in the voluntary informal mentoring program at River East Collegiate that preceded the present program. He was one of the several staff members who had volunteered to act as mentors to specific students who had been identified as being 'at risk'. He had received substantial training during those years prior to the establishment of the formal program that is the subject of this paper. He brought his experience and knowledge of mentoring to the formal program.

Mr. Wallace had no training in mentoring. He had taught at the high school level for some fifteen years and during that time had actively participated in coaching several sports.

These teachers were interviewed and provided information from their own perspective and experience with mentoring. Once the interviews were completed, the data were reviewed and organized into categories based upon teacher: views of mentoring; training as mentors; qualities of effective mentors; strategies, both effective and ineffective; criteria for evaluating mentoring success; and their role both as teacher and mentor. Within each of these categories, the responses were grouped into those held in common, those noted by two or more mentors, and those expressed individually.

#### Views of Mentoring

From the perspective of the teachers involved in the formal program, mentoring is an attempt to provide an atmosphere of support, care, and guidance for individual student proteges. For Ms. Stuart, this meant "support for those students who still, even though at high school, seem to need help, additional help to be successful" and for Mr. Wallace it was that "extra teacher care...to help these kids achieve their goals".

This 'extra teacher care' went well beyond academics in the minds of those teachers interviewed. Ms. Stuart saw it as being "successful academically or it can be successful in terms of helping them in their decision making outside of academic areas". It was, as Ms. Roberts stated, "academic or personal" help.

For Mr. Bennet, mentoring "goes beyond an instructional level". It was a "connection that shows a personal interest in an individual, which provides them with an example that they might choose to follow". Ms. Stuart concurred and described this part of mentoring as 'role modeling', wherein the mentor provided an atmosphere where the student protege would say "I would like to be like that person".

There was a general agreement among the teachers interviewed that mentoring had to evolve beyond the formal structure and general process of the mentoring program as designed. They felt that there was the need for a level of personalization to be developed between the mentor and the protege for the program to work effectively. "You try something that has worked for someone else...and maybe it works and maybe it doesn't. It depends on the student. There is...just no one strategy" (Ms. Stuart). She felt that the approach had to be personalized and "differs from student to student". She likewise noted that the relationship cannot "be too structured". For Mr. Bennet it was developing "a connection that shows personal interest in an individual". Mr. Wallace viewed it as working with each student and "setting some goals, and trying to decide what you want to do with your life" and that "through trial and error" one developed a method and a strategy that was suitable for the situation.

In order to support, guide, care for, and provide a role model, the teacher has to acquire the skills of mentoring. An integral part of this process is to become aware of effective strategies to be used and ineffective strategies to be avoided.

All respondents placed a high value on formal and informal training prior to the implementation of the formal program, through which the teacher mentors would be made aware of these strategies. The staff had devoted some in-service education time to the program and brought in Bill and Marilyn Gray from the International Mentoring Institute in Vancouver, British Columbia, to provide some intensive instruction for the formal part of the training. Though perceived as necessary and valuable, "We just crammed it into too short a time period and I think we needed more time" (Ms. Roberts). For Ms. Stuart "It was like an immersion". Mr. Bennet would expand upon this initial training and saw as valuable "the sort of training that takes a week somewhere where you really get into it and get intensive training". He added that, "I'm not sure that you ever get enough training because it is probably the sort of thing that one improves as you do it and learn more about it". This view was also held by Mr. Wallace who stated that with a real solid training course "It would make me a better mentor and in turn it would probably make me a better teacher."

Both Mr. Wallace and Mr. Bennet linked teaching and mentoring closely together. Mr. Wallace elaborated: "You are always mentoring...it's a constant part of the profession...you are mentoring all of the time." For him, as a teacher, some training was provided "in some of our University education" and through "trial and error and through the experience of teaching". He saw this as enabling teachers to develop "our own techniques in mentoring and are pretty well versed in it, just through our experience and our jobs". Mr. Bennet expanded upon this and observed that the program enhanced his role as a teacher to the point "...that you feel that you are not just an information giver in class". He further equated mentoring with his career goals in a rhetorical question followed by a comment: "Why did I really get into Education? Was it not to provide assistance, to be a helper? And, on a personal level, this seems to be being a helper."

#### Teacher Mentor Qualities

In order to be an effective mentor, the teachers pointed out that certain qualities should be inherent in a teacher so that the mentoring aspect of the program can be accomplished effectively. These qualities were many and varied, ranging from the use of common sense and the ability to be flexible, to the use of discipline in a firm and fair manner. The one common quality, however, was 'honesty'. Ms. Stuart expressed it as "being honest with kids" while Ms. Roberts described it as being "open and honest." Mr. Bennet viewed this quality as

"an honest optimism that you can talk over with kids" and for Mr. Wallace it was described as "being very straight, very forthright with your reply."

Another important quality for Ms. Stuart was that of "common sense," meaning that the teacher mentor would not continue to use "the thing that did not work." She also valued the qualities of "fairness" and being "reasonably friendly", as did Mr. Wallace who described the ideal mentor as being "firm, fair and friendly". Also highlighted by Ms. Stuart, as qualities essential for successful mentoring, were patience and a sense of humour along with tenacity, which she defined as being "willing to hang in there...not willing to give up on them...knowing and telling them that you can not wear me down".

Ms. Roberts saw flexibility and being receptive to change as being important for a mentor. She also believed that it was important for the mentor to "care about kids" and above all to "believe in" mentoring.

Reliability was a critical quality for Mr. Bennet, which he described as being "someone whom the student can count on". He concurred with Ms. Stuart that "patience" was critical as "one does not see results overnight". He considered "optimism" as being equally important and, because "kids pick up on the mood very quickly", this optimism cannot be "an



unrealistic optimism, but an honest optimism that you can talk over with the kids". Other important qualities Mr. Bennet identified as being important were that teacher mentors show "resourcefulness" and that they be "accomplished and respected in their own field" and show an "understanding of what it is like to grow up and can sympathize with that". The ideal mentor should also be "a person who probably goes the extra mile, who does a little extra to make that student feel valued".

For Mr. Wallace, a critical quality dealt with the teacher mentor having a personality "where you're not getting mad, not getting upset, you're not getting tough, you're being very straight, very forthright with your reply, but you're not mad". In line with his conviction that teachers are mentors and that mentors are teachers, he summed up the qualities as being those same ones considered essential for a teacher, that they "enjoy working with kids and caring about people" and if this care was "not really from the heart and genuine, I think that you are wasting your time". For him "that is what teaching is all about". He further expanded upon this by pointing out that the teacher and mentor must be "a caring person...who is prepared to put in the time...to develop that kid to his potential...a kid who feels very comfortable and very confident and very reassured in that teacher's midst".

### Effective Strategies

The teachers identified a number of effective strategies to be used in establishing a good working relationship between the mentor and the protege. One commonly accepted strategy was the establishment and development of a good 'problem solving' approach. Ms. Stuart's approach to this was "to identify where [the student] could improve in terms of subject [academic]. To try and identify what needs improving and...what you [the student] can do to improve". Ms. Roberts saw this as making "them solve the problem. Make them look to what they can do" and would begin by what "I teach them and then the natural helper technique, that one that 'I can see that something is bothering you'". Mr. Bennet viewed his role in this approach as providing the student with "more insight and more information in terms of a particular position or subject or goal and allows them to make a better informed decision". Thus the teacher does not make the decision, for "the decision still rests with them, but hopefully after being in a mentoring program they are stronger and more capable of making an informed decision". Mr. Wallace strived to establish this strategy by working with the student on "responsibility, commitment, setting some goals, and trying to decide what you [the student] want to do with your life".

Another effective strategy used was that of 'open disclosure' and 'informative feedback' to students. Ms. Stuart achieved this through the gathering of anecdotal reports from teachers

and sitting down with the student and saying "'This is where you were last year and this is where we have come' where she could see progress all of the time". Ms. Stuart put it this way - that there is "nothing wrong with telling them that you care and that if we did not care, like you think that we are on your back, well if I were you, when people are not on your back, that is when they do not care, and if somebody is not after you for those things, you can interpret it that they do not care enough about you". Mr. Wallace mirrored this saying to students, "If I didn't care, I would sit back and do nothing, but because I care, that's why I'm talking to your other teachers, phoning your parents, checking your attendance, getting notes from you, referring you to tutoring help, and all these things. I'm putting in all this extra time because I do care."

The initial approach in this strategy of open disclosure, used by Mr. Wallace, was to monitor the student from a distance. He felt that if there was a need to step in and become more involved, "...then at that time you lay everything out on the table as to exactly how you are going to be operating...what you expect of the student and what the student should expect of you". He added that it was essential for the student to know that "...you are there to help them...to reach their potential, that that's part of your job".

Mr. Bennet likewise let students know that he cared. His approach was that he cannot "let the student feel that he doesn't care about them". He felt that it was essential to stick with them "...even when they do something that may be contrary to what I believe their best interest is". He added, however, that he cannot let go of his position in what he thinks is their best interest "so that I stick with them, but I don't necessarily change to accommodate them, if I don't think that what they are doing is right".

Mr. Bennet included those matters that "are not school related" as well as letting the student know "how you feel about a certain thing so that they can feel a little more comfortable with the idea of expressing emotion, not the question and answer type of thing that maybe they are expected to do in the classroom". For Bennet the classroom setting was often the least effective environment for mentoring students to the point that he stated, "I took one of my mentoring students out and we talked in a restaurant and it seemed to be that that is where he actually was the most comfortable."

Mr. Bennet believed that both the teacher mentor and the student protege together should attend "events concerning adolescent behaviour, events concerning mood, depression", because these could lead to future discussion and disclosure. This he felt was essential and could act as a springboard to

open communication for he believed that there are students who either "don't know the vocabulary of the situation they're in or are just so reluctant to speak that perhaps we just spend too much time just trying to pry open that conversation".

Mr. Wallace placed high emphasis on making time available for the student. He stated that "it's putting in time with them...the more that he's going to be aware that you are trying to help him out". He noted that the teacher must as a priority "be willing to put in the time to make the program go".

The ability to communicate with the student protege was essential. Mr. Wallace would tell the student "right off the bat what you are going to do - lay it on the table...once they know exactly what you expect of them, I think that's the first hurdle". This approach was part of his overall strategy of being "firm, fair, and friendly" with all students. Mr. Wallace indicated that all students, and especially those identified as being at risk, should be treated with a firm hand and in this way "showing that you care...the kid has to know that you care about them...[but]...if it's not really from the heart and genuine, I think that you are wasting your time". For him the most important point to establish in this strategy was that the student "feels good about you", that you are going "to be honest with him". In this respect he

observed that "I tell my mentor kids...that what you do in your high school years will determine to a large extent what you do for the rest of your life" and from that he goes on to try and establish "responsibility, commitment, setting some goals, and trying to decide what you want to do with your life".

Communication between the mentor and the home was viewed somewhat differently by the teacher respondents. Ms. Stuart felt that the parents were to "be kept informed as to what is going on, but they do not play a direct role". She further stated that it "sometimes complicates it because it is another variable that we do not have any control over". Ms. Roberts voiced a similar concern and cautions that "they have to work with us and not be threatened by the fact that we are working with their kid...as long as they are open with us and honest with us, and will support us. Just don't work against us".

In contrast, Mr. Bennet saw the need for the relationship between school and parent to become stronger - "I could see the parent becoming involved even more, because this is not just an isolated behaviour that just happened here at school and that it happens in a totally different way at home". He saw merit in establishing a "consistency in collaboration between the home, school, and parent". He did caution that "if they don't get along very well with their parents, then

maybe they will start to overlap that and not get along with the teacher". If this were to occur, he would use it as a strategy so that the student "can start to understand the position of the parent and the teacher a little better". To him "this is the name of the game, try to resolve things a little better within the social group" so that they "do not isolate themselves from all of the adults in the world".

Mr. Wallace likewise saw the value of contact with the home. He felt that such contact should be limited to a minimum if the student is doing fine, but "once the kid is not doing fine, then I think that there has to be a lot of communication between the teacher mentor and the parent...once the student needs more mentoring, the parents most definitely have to be involved".

#### Ineffective Strategies

The teachers did not hesitate to point out that there were many strategies that were ineffective and therefore should be avoided. In most cases these were strategies that were attempted from time to time and for the most part failed. Often these ineffective strategies led to a deterioration in the mentor-protégé relationship.

Most agreed that "nagging should be avoided" and that the format of the meetings should not "be too structured" (Ms. Stuart). Likewise Ms. Stuart viewed it as detrimental to the

relationship to "give the feeling that somehow we have all of the answers and we are sitting in judgement rather than we are just a person trying to help them". The relationship should be personal and spontaneous rather than strictly defined for all too often a tension results over following rule, which might be important to some teachers and administration, but is of lesser importance in the mentoring relationship "compared to the other successes" that the student might be experiencing.

Mr. Bennet would avoid situations that could lead to disrespect "in both directions" and "calling them to task". If this was implemented as the primary strategy, it "would destroy any value to the mentoring relationship". In his view the teacher mentor did not "start in a sort of punitive manner coming down very hard like 'You haven't done this this and you haven't done that". It was more effective if it became "a gentle probing rather than another bat hitting them over the head which they certainly don't need".

For Mr. Wallace any strategy that led to conflict should be avoided. In order to do this he would, as mentioned earlier, have all expectations concerning the student's and teacher's responsibilities laid out in the open from the start. "Once it's laid all on the table, I think that helps to avoid conflict". He would also avoid any strategy that would "show the kids that you don't care" which was demonstrated by "not



talking with them occasionally, not asking how they are doing, not asking them how it's going". Another strategy he felt should be avoided "would be to give the kid the feeling that he is in the program because he is a dummy, because he is not the equal of other kids".

#### Evaluation

Teacher respondents had established criteria for determining the effectiveness of their mentoring relationship with their student proteges. Some of the criteria were based on common measurable results, but all teachers had additional, individual criteria for success that were more subjective and less measurable.

The common measurable criteria, predetermined by the program, were to be general academic grades and attendance. As these were the basic criteria used to determine whether or not a student was to be flagged as being 'at risk', those responsible for the program and all teachers were concerned about and kept updated on both attendance and measured academic achievement.

For Ms. Stuart, the measurable criteria were obvious: "she passed clear, except for Phys Ed" and attendance "was better than last year". She further observed that "I felt that both of them [student proteges] made successes...I have [succeeded] with my boy because his parents have told me".

For the girl, she was now able to make "her own decisions, if that is self reliant. She passed and was going to summer school, she did well. She did not get any failures". She summed it up with the words "I really feel good because you set out goals for yourself and if you achieve those goals...if your kids are successful you feel good". Even for a student that was forced to withdraw from school for problems other than academics and attendance, the mentoring was not a total failure because "he had good things to say about his Teacher Advisor - me". For Ms. Stuart, the mentoring relationship established had many successes, both for the student proteges and for the teacher mentor herself.

The criteria for evaluation established by Ms. Roberts were similar, but the successes were not as apparent. The "academics went up a bit. My attendance problem didn't erase, but it got better"; nevertheless, the fact that her student "felt more comfortable at school, felt that there was somebody here that they could talk to" was a measure of success. For one student protege, success was "just the amount that she would open up and come to me...things that she made and brought in and shared". Success was shown in that "she wasn't as negative, she didn't have as many concerns". Yet Ms. Roberts did view the process at times as being somewhat negative because of the excessive demands made by the students, one in particular, on her time. "She was

putting demands on me for my time that was not just available for her".

Time demands were also referred to by Mr. Bennet, even though he saw mentoring as a part of teaching. His observation was "It's part of the teaching load and it is a load". In measurable results, attendance showed positive results for "attendance did improve" as well as "his grades". For Mr. Bennet, there were also those successes that were less measurable. He noted that the relationship "has been a positive exchange, if not always showing a clear physical positive outcome like staying in school and doing better and so on". To him success was achieved if a student left "high school feeling that there was a willingness on the part of the school to try and understand them" and that the "mentoring program must have helped to reduce that alienation" often felt by students who are educationally at risk. For one of his students the fact that "she was taking more control of her relationship with that individual" showed that she was becoming more self reliant.

Academic success was also apparent to Mr. Wallace for "he passed everything but Math...he failed only one and he had some good marks". As for attendance "his attendance was good". In general he stated that "I thought that he was performing at a level a little above that [at which] he was capable of performing." Other successes were noted by the

fact that in elementary school he was "deemed to be a slow learner and socially had a lot of problems" while now "socially he is more adept" and "is more self reliant and more responsible" as shown by the fact that he came out for the school football team which gave him "a feeling of accomplishment, something where he could really excel".

### Teaching and Mentoring

Teaching and mentoring were very closely linked to one another in Mr. Wallace's view, so much so that to him mentoring was an integral part of teaching. "You have to teach the kids...you have to know the kids in order to be an effective mentor...as a teacher you are always mentoring...It's a constant part of the profession". In a sense, mentoring was teaching and teaching was mentoring. To him, it was essential that the teacher mentor should also be scheduled as a subject teacher of the students to whom she/he will be a mentor.

Mr. Bennet saw mentoring more as "part of the teaching load" and felt that it should be recognized as such, even to the point of it being "as valid as doing something else for the school". Ms. Roberts found teaching the student protege as valuable for it offered her a strategy - "I usually start with what I teach them" as a means of communication. Ms. Stuart saw teaching a subject to the student that was being

mentored as important "so that you have some way of getting to them in terms of contact". For her, teaching the student at least one subject guaranteed contact with the student on a regular basis.

For these teachers, and in particular Ms. Stuart and Ms. Roberts, the fact that the students being mentored be located in their classes was more for a matter of convenience for them than it was for Mr. Wallace who saw it as a logical part of teaching. It appeared that he had incorporated the process of mentoring these students, who were educationally at risk, into his role of being a teacher and teaching. For his students, the fact that they were flagged as being educationally at risk or not was insignificant, for his approach was the same for all of them. All of his students appeared to benefit from his view of mentoring. The only apparent difference was that those students identified in the formal part of mentoring might have received some extra attention for "you are mentoring all of the time...these same students probably would have gotten seventy-five to eighty percent of the attention that they might get right now because these are the students that right away you recognize that need help anyway...it's just an automatic. It comes with the territory".

### Conclusion

From these observations, all respondents agreed that students who were determined to be educationally 'at risk' required extra care that often went beyond academics. In order to accomplish this effectively, the teacher must acquire the requisite skills in mentoring, some of which come through formal professional development education. Parallel to these skills were those that came with the experience of teaching and were gained over time through trial and error.

In each of the mentor-protégé relationships that were established there were successes, some more obvious than others. Those that were measurable showed successes in the areas of academics and attendance for all. Those that were less measurable, though equally important, ranged from the student's ability to "open up" to being more positive about school, staying in school, and gaining the confidence to do better in the future. For the teacher respondents these successes were accomplished because teaching and mentoring complimented each other, as Mr. Wallace observed: "As a teacher you are always mentoring...It's a constant part of your profession".

The teachers interviewed noted that the most critical quality of an effective mentor was that of honesty. When this was combined with the strategies of using open disclosure and of providing informative feedback to students, the ground for

effective mentoring was in place. Teachers often used such strategies to show their students that they cared. Underlying the entire process, the fundamental element of the qualities and strategies of the mentor was the ability to communicate honestly with the protege. Without this, the relationship would not be effective, and mentoring would not be possible.

## CHAPTER 6

## STUDENT PROTEGE INTERVIEWS

The student respondents were the students who had been mentored specifically by those teachers who had been interviewed at River East Collegiate. For the purposes of these observations the student respondents will be given fictitious names. The male respondents will be referred to as Darryl, Jason, and Ryan, while the female respondents will be Allison and Cathy.

Darryl, 15 years old and in grade 10, was new to the school and lived at home with both parents. He was identified as being at risk while at junior high school. His DAT (Differential Aptitude Test) results indicated that he was achieving well below the level that he should have reached. His teachers found him to be putting forward a poor effort, having difficulty concentrating, and lacking in organizational skills. He used class time poorly, was inconsistent in class, and often did not complete assignments. As a result of these observations, the guidance counselors felt that he was at risk and recommended him for placement in the program at River East Collegiate.

Jason, 17 years old, came from a single parent family. He registered at River East Collegiate in 1989 after a



disastrous Grade 10 at another local high school where he accumulated an equivalent of 41 days absent and failed all courses. Because of this he was put into the volunteer mentoring program that was in place at that time and obtained 5 of 7 academic credits. In 1990 he was assigned to the formal mentoring program.

Ryan, 17 years of age and in grade 11, lived at home with both parents. During his first year at River East Collegiate he struggled academically. He had difficulty with assignments and tests and was found to be somewhat withdrawn and hesitant to seek out help. He quickly became defensive whenever someone offered advice or constructive criticism and was disruptive in class at times. As a consequence he was recommended for inclusion in the formal mentoring program in 1990 by the school counsellors.

Allison was 16 years old and in grade 11. She lived at home with both parents, had a part time job, and participated in the music program at the school. In 1989, her first year at River East Collegiate, she began to show a pattern of missed assignments and fell into the habit of not writing tests. Her teachers noticed that she was withdrawn at times and had difficulty with reasoning skills. She was barely achieving passing grades. Her teachers recommended that she be placed in the formal mentoring program in 1990.

Cathy, like Darryl, was new to River East Collegiate. She was 16 years old and in grade 10. She came from a single parent family and lived with her mother. For the previous four years she had alternated between her present school division and a neighboring one as her mother changed residences often. She was not recommended for the mentoring program as her previous school was not aware that Cathy would be attending River East Collegiate. Her Teacher Advisor, who became her mentor, brought her into the formal program when she noticed that she was failing all of her academic subjects during the first grading period and was constantly seeking her [the teacher] out for conversation. She soon discovered that Cathy had a disruptive home life and related social and personal problems.

These students were interviewed and their responses were categorized according to their views on: being 'at risk'; the qualities of an effective mentor; mentoring strategies, both effective and ineffective; criteria for evaluation of the success of the mentoring relationship; and the ability of the teachers to be both teacher and mentor. Once categorized, the observations of the individual respondents are presented in groups according to those held to be significant by all respondents, those noted as being important by two or more students, and those viewed as being significant by individual students.

On Being "At Risk"

Those students who had been identified as being at risk of not completing high school successfully did not see themselves as being at risk at all. When asked the question "Do you consider yourself at risk of not completing high school?" their response was an unequivocal 'no'. Allison stated firmly "No, because I want to go on to work. I want to take psychology at university." An even stronger response came from Cathy who firmly voiced "No. Why would I be at risk of not finishing?". For both it appeared that the completion of high school was an accepted conclusion, despite the fact that they had been identified as being at risk by the school teaching staff.

Jason was equally optimistic, yet somewhat cautious in his response, realizing that he did have some difficulty with the school. He observed that "I know that I will eventually complete high school". Darryl had a similar view and stated that "it doesn't matter how long I stay in, for the career that I want I have to get good marks in the '00' level courses". Equally optimistic was Ryan who stated that "I'll get my high school for sure. I just know that I'll get it".

It was clear that for these students there was no doubt that they would complete their high school. Their comments also indicated that it was their intention in some cases to go on beyond high school to pursue careers already determined.

### Teacher Mentor Qualities

The student respondents had definite thoughts on the qualities that an effective teacher mentor should have. As with the teachers, these qualities were many and varied. They ranged from the showing of 'patience', 'trust', and 'respect' to being 'friendly', 'easy to talk to', and 'a good listener'.

It appeared that for the students interviewed the establishment and development of effective communication channels between the student and teacher mentor was a central factor to the relationship. All student respondents referred directly to this throughout the interviews. For the students, the qualities of an effective teacher mentor revolved around or were directly related to the ability of the teacher mentor to communicate effectively with the student. Communication was the binding element, which exactly corresponds to the teacher mentors' perceptions described in Chapter 5.

For the students, effective communication ranged from just being there to talk with, if and when required, to the mentor taking the initiative and questioning the student in order to stimulate the student to enter into meaningful conversation. Allison referred to this as the teacher "putting [aside] her time always to help out" and "being there when you want them

there". The desire for the teacher to 'be there' for the student was viewed as being very important by Cathy. To have the teacher mentor "just to be there" was critical when she wanted to talk. "I just keep on talking to them, see how they are, like I ask every day". She added that "If I talk to her before the day started, I would have this thing lifted from me and I would be so cheerful". For her the need to talk required that the teacher mentor give her attention, yet she did realize the excessive demands of time made on the mentor as she noted "I think I always get on her nerves". This perception paralleled the view held by some of the teacher mentors who viewed the demands for their time made by their student proteges as being too demanding at times.

Allison noted that the quality of being "friendly" was also important and stated that being "easy to get along with" was paramount in this communication process. This quality of friendliness was likewise referred to by Darryl and Jason. For Darryl it was in fact the critical factor in the relationship that was developed between him and Ms. Roberts. Darryl described Ms. Roberts as being "talkative and I wouldn't have to go up and ask her, like she would ask me a lot of questions and she was friends with us". When questioned as to what he meant by being 'friends with us', he responded that Ms. Roberts "would act less like a teacher" and more "like a friend" and "ask us questions, like things that we did on our weekend". Further elaboration showed the

quality of 'friendly' as being able to "make a joke now and then to show us that they were being friendly". Darryl went on to compare a friendly teacher mentor to a 'peer tutor' (another program offered in the school for students to help students that are having difficulties socially or academically). He described this peer tutor as "a student that is helping another student". Clearly, for Darryl, it was the teacher who opened the channel of communication.

Cathy, also mentored by Ms. Roberts, indicated that it was important for the teacher mentor "just to be there" and to "be able to ask them questions if you have any". For her the teacher mentor had to be "a good listener". Jason echoed this 'good listener' quality and described his teacher mentor, Mr. Bennet, as being a person that was easy to communicate with because "he treats you with respect and he listens".

Given these two diverse demands, especially on the same teacher as was the case with Ms. Roberts, developing effective communication channels can be both difficult and challenging. The effective teacher mentor must be able to assess each student so as to determine the best method of establishing the appropriate channels to be used in order to foster effective communication.

Another key component in communication, as described by several of the student respondents, was the ability of the

teacher mentor to be ready, willing, and able to talk. Ryan put it this way - "we just talked, it wasn't really discussions or anything like you do in class". This quality was equally important for Cathy who noted that an effective teacher mentor should "just talk to the students, just be able to talk to the students". For her it was very important that the teacher be "easy to talk to". Darryl described this quality as one where the teacher mentor "should be like open and talkative because most people, like me, don't like to keep on talking, they just answer what's being asked"

Within this element of communication the students readily identified a number of specific qualities that would be essential for the establishment of a smooth communication process. A key element was the quality of trust. Cathy referred to her teacher mentor Ms. Roberts as being "a person you can talk to and trust". Her relationship with her teacher mentor was built upon this base because for her she could "talk with anybody as long as I can trust them". When asked about trust and the building of that trust it was Cathy's opinion that to build trust "you have to meet them right in the middle. You just build on the trust and friendship, you know - just be able to talk with them each day...and be able to get confidence with them".

Jason viewed this quality of trust as being a critical factor in the building of a positive relationship between the

student and teacher mentor. Communication was easy with Mr. Bennet because "I trusted him...it was a combination of different qualities. It wasn't because he was a teacher, because there are a lot of teachers I have who I don't talk to". He further elaborated "I know that I wasn't going to get into trouble for talking to him and I could say what I wanted to".

Several of the students identified a quality that can be described as being 'even-tempered' as a critical factor in the establishment of an effective and meaningful communication process. Ryan explained this quality, found in Mr. Wallace: "he was kind of laid back. He never really seemed to get mad". This was further described by Jason when referring to Mr. Bennet: "he's understanding, he doesn't get angry or explode". Allison found the same quality in Ms. Stuart: "she never got mad at me for anything or something"

Other important qualities to be found in effective teacher mentors were many and varied. Each student readily provided a number of such qualities when asked to describe the ideal teacher mentor. For Ryan, in addition to the expectation of the teacher 'being there' and being 'talkative', was the quality of "patience". Cathy found the quality of having a "good personality" and being a "fun loving person" as being important. Allison felt that the ideal teacher mentor should be "polite" and "kind" as well. Darryl would have the teacher



mentor acting more like a friend than a teacher, that is, a person "you can talk open to...and they will agree or disagree on different things even about other teachers and stuff like that". Jason brought all of these qualities together in his description of an ideal teacher mentor. He would have this person being "friendly, intelligent, charismatic, trustful, respectful, and admirable".

When these qualities were present in a teacher mentor, the result often was the establishment of a positive and productive relationship that fostered the development of effective channels of communication. The result was the establishment of a workable relationship from the perspective of the students that were being mentored.

With reference to this relationship, Allison indicated that the student had some responsibility for she/he must put into it some effort as well as the teacher. She further elaborated and described 'effort' as "when they want to talk to you, you should not just leave there, like well just tell them that you will be there or not. Go talk to them too, so they don't have to run after you". Jason stated that the "student should be willing to work and live up to their end of the deal". This responsibility in the relationship he described as "whatever the teacher mentor and student put across, like the boundaries that they set, the goals that they set. I think that the student should try to live up to that and try to

work to accomplish that if the relationship is to work properly". Jason further elaborated and noted that the student "should treat the teacher the same way that they want to be treated".

As for the responsibility of the teacher, Jason felt that the teacher should 'be there' if needed - "I guess if you need somebody to talk to it would be helpful if they were there to talk to". Further to this he added that the teacher mentor should "make sure that you have the knowledge, you know what you are doing, that everything is all right, that you've got what you need to accomplish whatever it is that you have to accomplish". In general he felt that both the teacher mentor and the student "should just cooperate with each other".

Both Jason and Ryan observed that a key responsibility of the teacher mentor was to act as an advocate for the student. Ryan put it in terms that "if you were in trouble or something...with another teacher or something...to put in a good word for you would be nice". Jason vocalized this in a stronger manner and noted that "he helped me fight the administration". This occurred when Mr. Bennet spoke to the administration "about allowing me to stay in school".

These qualities, though many and varied, all related to the ability of the teacher mentor to communicate with the student. From the perspective of the students interviewed,

the fact that they wanted the teacher mentor to be there more as a friend than as a teacher, reinforced this fact. It was with a friend that they felt most comfortable and therefore more willing to talk with and listen to. It was this friend rather than the authority figure of the teacher that they sought out and felt comfortable with when they had questions, concerns, or problems.

#### Effective Strategies

The student perspectives on effective strategies for mentoring were much simpler than those of the teacher mentors. Often the strategies employed by the teachers were not obvious to the students. From the comments of the student respondents, it appeared that to the students the most effective strategy was 'talking'. All student respondents viewed this as being significant.

'Talking', however, meant two different things to the students. For Darryl this meant that the teacher mentor would take the initiative - "she was talkative and I wouldn't have to go up to her and ask her, like she would ask me a lot of questions".

In opposition to this was the view of Cathy who wanted the teacher to be "a good listener" and consistently sought out

her teacher mentor and talked to her even before the regular school day started.

Ryan saw talking also as an effective strategy, but from a different perspective. For him 'talking' meant something casual - "we just talked, it wasn't really discussions or anything like you do in class". He further elaborated on this 'talking' and expressed it as "not getting on the person's back too much about things. Just like talk to me and stuff like that...just not like keep bringing it up, getting mad at the student".

Another effective strategy that teacher mentors employed was referred to by Darryl. In his reference to the 'peer tutor' program he noted that the strategy employed there where students provide assistance to other students, both academically and socially, would be good for teacher mentors to employ. He felt that this, as in the case of his teacher mentor Ms. Roberts, would create a situation "where you can talk openly to them". In such a situation, the teacher mentor would reveal a sense of humour as Darryl indicated earlier (p. 94), but also provide information every "Every morning she tells us about all the stuff that happens and all the stuff that's going on in the school and everything that we might not know of otherwise."

Jason put this another way. He noted that the teacher mentor should not "really act as a teacher talking to a student, but as a friend talking to a friend".

Cathy also focused on the importance of talking and stated that "it's just so easy to talk to her". For Cathy an effective strategy was for the teacher "just to talk to the students, just be able to talk to the students". In her case, the student took the initiative, yet the fact that Ms. Roberts made herself available was the critical factor. If she did not have the willingness to be there to listen to and talk with Cathy, the mentoring relationship may have failed.

From the perspective of the students, it appeared that the strategy that seemed to work the most effectively was the willingness and ability of the mentor to talk to the student. Thus good communications skills on the part of the teacher mentor was the basis for an effective mentoring experience.

#### Ineffective Strategies

As with those strategies that were considered to be effective, the students were generally not aware of specific strategies that were ineffective. They did, however, have strong opinions on specific practices that should be avoided. For Allison it was the teacher mentor being "grumpy" and "yelling". The fact that Ms. Stuart "never got mad at me for

anything or something" was critical. Ms. Stuart gave her the feeling that "she watched over me I guess you could say". Ryan expressed the same concern and referred to the fact that Mr. Wallace "would never really get mad or anything...he never really got upset about too much stuff". Cathy voiced similar sentiments and noted that the teacher should "be there and have a smile on their face".

It was apparent that the failure to be available to talk with the students, coupled with impatience, a frown, and the inability to communicate meant disaster from the perspective of the student respondents. When this occurred there was the failure to communicate and without communication the mentoring process became ineffective as the students were not willing participants.

#### Evaluation

The criteria for evaluation of the program from the perspective of the students can be categorized into those that were measurable, with criteria such as attendance and academics, and those that are more abstract and therefore somewhat subjective and thus less measurable. In this latter area were those criteria based upon student feelings. These were somewhat difficult to measure and therefore more elusive in nature.

Within the area of the measurable criteria of attendance and academic grades, the students felt that they had achieved successes that were quite significant in some cases. Allison observed that "there's my marks raising and my attendance is getting better". She further noted that she now knew that "I could do it, that I can get good marks if I put my mind to it".

Darryl felt that he improved significantly in Mathematics where Ms. Roberts "got me motivated to go to extra help classes". His attendance improved as well. Ryan likewise noted academic success as with the fact that "my English and Chemistry marks went up a little bit on the last term".

A criteria for success for Jason was the fact that Mr. Bennet "helped me a couple of times to stay in school" and "he helped me fight the administration" where he would talk to the administration so that Jason would be allowed to remain in school, as indicated on page 98. He concluded with the statement - "I got two credits this year. That's two credits that I wouldn't have had if I got kicked out of school". He pointed out that these successes were the result of Mr. Bennet and his "direct intervention" for "it helped keep me in school...well that's pretty much the most important thing".

Cathy did not show measurable results in her academics or attendance because of family conflicts: however, as will be noted later, it was her opinion that she made great strides in those less measurable criteria.

The students felt that there were a number of other successes that they attributed to the program and the relationships that were established with their teacher mentors. These, though less measurable, were equally as significant as the academic and attendance criteria.

For Allison it was the belief that she could now get good marks "if I put my mind to it". This belief, which resulted from improved grades, led her to make the statement that "I think that I am going to do good next year. I feel all set in my mind to do it". This confidence, though difficult to quantify, showed a level of advancement for Allison who now felt confident about the future.

Cathy showed the least improvement as far as academics and attendance were concerned. When grades were referred to she noted that "they kind of slid...like up and down because of...I don't know...because some teachers say that it doesn't have anything to do with the home but...coming from a student that knows it and lives it at home with the problem, you know that it does affect [the student] like in the morning, if I have an argument...it would stick through me throughout the



day and I would slack off because I would still have the problem and it just doesn't go away and it's hard for me to concentrate".

Yet, from her own perspective, she achieved significant success. Her initial comment about the mentoring relationship pointed out that she was a student who was added to the program by Ms. Roberts. Cathy stated "she selected me and I really thank her for it". She added "She basically helped me through them [problems] and I still kind of have the problem, but she helped me throughout the year to get most of it".

When asked about the benefits of the program for her, she clearly stated that there were positive outcomes. "It gave me confidence in myself" and "while she was helping me out with my problem, a lot came out of me and she helped me throughout the year and she still does even though she's not here".

Clearly the positive outcomes are continuing for her. She summed up her comments by noting that she did improve in her own eyes. "I did in my own way, but I guess to the teachers I didn't, but to my own way I felt that I did my best...from mine I think I did all right throughout the year". A final comment showed further positive effects of her involvement in the program. She observed that "for the coming year I feel a lot more positive than I did last year" and concerning the work of the teacher mentor Ms. Roberts - "She helped me a lot. She made me feel good about myself...and I am here to stay and try for grade twelve".

When commenting about the program in general, all students interviewed were positive in their observations and evaluation. This was specifically indicated by Allison who stated outright that "I think that it is a good idea...it's good for the students and the teacher. It helps you to get to know the teacher better and in like a different way, not just as a person that stands up in front of the classroom and gives lectures all day". She summed up her feelings by noting "I think that it's good for the kids to have something like this. It makes things easier for them".

Cathy was even more positive and indicated this by the comment "I love it" and "Everything was positive". For her the program made the school into a place where she wanted to be. "After I went here it's like I want to stay here and finish grade twelve. It's just something about the school...it's a strong feeling...[of] open arms". Again she was describing something intangible and hard to measure, but for Cathy this feeling was a critical element that made her attitude about the future much more positive than when she entered the program.

Jason, though less emphatic, noted that "now that I look back at it, it was a good deal. It helped. I thought it was a good program". For him it was a good program because "I got to stay in school" and "I got two credits". Jason further

commented on the program and indicated that to him it was "kind of the 'good cop bad cop' syndrome. They're both trying to accomplish the same...[ends] and they're working together, so you have the administration that's always hard handed... pretty much [in] the way that he deals with things, and you have the 'good cop' who's not hard, who's nice with the way the he deals with things". In this he viewed the teacher mentor as the 'good cop' acting as the advocate for the student.

The program was positive for Ryan for "I got to know Mr. Wallace a little better". This was echoed by Darryl who observed that "I think that it is a good idea...high school is kind of impersonal...the teacher sometimes doesn't even know your name, so this teacher knows you and everything". For both Ryan and Darryl the program provided a feeling of comfort and gave them someone in the school with whom they could identify.

#### Teaching and Mentoring

The students that were interviewed for this study offered little concerning the dual role of the teacher as mentor and evaluator. For them it was not an issue. Each felt comfortable with the relationship that was established and none noted that there was a conflict between the role of the teacher in the classroom as an authority figure and

evaluator, and the role of the teacher as mentor and advocate for the student.

Cathy was the only one that referred directly to the dual role of the teacher. For her "it was good because I saw Ms. Roberts in the morning and I see her again during the day and it would be great".

Darryl referred to this indirectly when he observed "it kind of got me motivated to go to extra help classes ...because being in my teacher advisor meetings...she would get the chance to tell me about extra help early". As with the teachers in this study, the students did not object to the dual role of subject teacher and mentor played by the teachers.

#### Conclusion

From the perspective of the students interviewed, they did not see themselves as being at risk of not completing high school; however, they did observe that the formal mentoring program in place at River East Collegiate was of value and did play a role in their academic and, for some, in their personal lives.

In the relationship that was established between themselves and their specific mentors, all respondents emphatically noted that that the key to a successful relationship was the

ability of both participants to communicate effectively with each other. This 'effective communication' meant different things to each respondent. These interpretations ranged from "just to be there" and to be "a good listener" to being ready, willing and able to talk so that the student would not have to initiate and carry on the conversation. Without this communication the students felt that a positive relationship would not take place. For them, this was the key quality and the foundation of an effective mentoring relationship.

The students, though lacking in formal knowledge about mentoring and the strategies that would make for effective mentoring, were ready to point out the practices that worked and did not work. For them, having the mentor 'talk' or 'be a good listener', worked while situations where the mentor began 'yelling' and 'got mad' did not work.

The students were equally emphatic about criteria that measured success. For most, success was measured in the number of credits obtained at the end of the year. In addition to this Jason measured success by the fact that he remained in school and Cathy felt satisfied with the progress that she had made in coming to grips with her personal problems. For these students, the fact that their mentors were also their subject teachers was not a detrimental element of the program and did not detract from the success of the relationship between mentor and protege. Indeed, the

duality of the roles of teacher/mentor and student/protege appears to have contributed positively to the development of the mentor-protege relationship, as perceived by both parties, in spite of the apparent contradiction between the teacher's role as an authority figure and evaluator and the mentor's role as 'friend' and counsellor.

## CHAPTER 7

## MENTORING AT RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE

In this chapter the data collected will be examined in light of the question initially posed: to determine whether or not a mentoring program that uses teachers as mentors can affect the educational outcomes of students who have been identified as being educationally at risk. The qualities and strategies that lead to effective mentoring cited by the literature will be compared to the responses of the teachers and students as they relate to the program that was implemented at River East Collegiate. The formal program in place at River East Collegiate will be discussed, observations on the program will be made, and suggestions will be given to be considered when implementing such a planned formal mentoring program. In conclusion recommendations for future study will be made along with questions that remain to be answered through future research.

Teachers Can Make A Difference

From the perspective of the teachers and students interviewed, the response to the question 'Can teachers, through a formal mentoring program, make a difference in the educational outcomes of students who have been identified as being educationally at risk?' was 'Yes, mentoring does make a difference'. This was evident through the responses of both

the teachers and the students when they referred to the positive outcomes in those measurable criteria of academic results and attendance. Success was also evidenced by the fact that these students were still in school.

The extent to which this success can be directly attributed to the formal mentoring program was difficult to ascertain. It was difficult to quantify the actual success of the formal mentoring program. From the results of these interviews it was apparent that there were a number of successes that were measurable, together with a number of other subjective successes which were based upon personal feelings and observations.

Whether those students would have achieved the same positive results, without their participation in the formal mentoring program, is a question open to speculation. It is difficult to know in advance whether or not a specific student will react positively or negatively to the mentor's attempt to establish an effective mentoring relationship. Would such a relationship have developed without the formal program? Was it the skills of the specific teacher that made the difference? Would the results have been the same had the student not been deliberately placed with that particular teacher?



That there were evident successes is not in doubt, yet perhaps they were attributable, not to the program itself, but to the fact that there was a teacher there who was ready, willing, and able to establish effective channels of communication with the student. Where there was a teacher who was ready to give of her/his time to listen to and give advice to the student, successes might be the eventual outcome, without a formal mentoring program. This may be as Mr. Wallace observed: "You are always mentoring...it's a constant part of the profession...you are mentoring all of the time". For him, and perhaps the other teachers as well, the formal training in mentoring techniques through the professional development education that went along with the formal program at River East Collegiate was useful. He "picked up some new ideas and new concepts" along with those that came from his university education and through "trial and error". Perhaps for him some of those initial skills were attributable to his extensive coaching experiences. One might conclude from this that he was already a good mentor whose skills were merely enhanced and augmented by the training that came along with the formal program. This enhancement alone might be sufficient argument to justify the establishment of a formal mentoring program. If he was considered to be the ideal, then surely those with fewer initial skills than he would greatly benefit from such a formal program and from this, the students who are educationally at risk would reap the benefits.

### Literature, Teacher, and Student Observations

These general conclusions however mask the subtleties of how mentoring actually works. Those subtle actions and elements can be gleaned from the literature and the responses of those interviewed.

There were a number of elements held in common with the literature and the teacher and/or student respondents. The major element common to all was that of communication which was cited as being the foundation to effective mentoring. The literature noted that there was a drastic deficiency of communication in the families of dropouts. It was pointed out by Finn(1989) that dropouts often had no one in the family in whom they could confide. Deloz (1986) would have the mentor be a good listener and Wilbur (1989) cited a series of six strategies that the mentor could use to foster good listening habits in mentors (Chapter 2). Gray (1989) described this element of communication as the mentor being willing and able to consult, advise and counsel the protege.

Teachers likewise considered this element of communication to be critical in fostering effective mentoring relationships. Mr. Wallace felt that the ability to communicate with the student was his first priority and his initial strategy was built around this. Mr. Bennet took his students to a local

restaurant in order to make them feel comfortable and thereby provide an atmosphere that would better foster free and easy communication.

Yet, it was the students themselves who placed the greatest emphasis on communication. They cited this as the most essential element and defined it in varying ways. For one it was the mentor being a "good listener" while in others it was the mentor being "talkative" and taking the lead in not only initiating conversation but also sustaining it. For them this indicated that the mentor was showing interest and this was interpreted as a caring attitude on the part of the mentor. The literature likewise noted that the teacher's real or perceived lack of interest in students was the most common reason given by dropouts for their decision to withdraw from school (Radwanski, 1987). When this occurred students had the feeling that the school had rejected them and that little effort had been expended by the school to keep them in school. This factor was supported by the students through their expressed desire that their mentor "be there" when needed. In a similar manner teachers also noted that their being available made the students "aware that you are trying to help" (Mr. Wallace). Wallace also observed that the teacher must have as a priority the willingness "to put in the time", otherwise it would be difficult to establish an effective mentoring relationship. The students clearly wanted someone there to listen to them, advise them, talk openly

with them, and even act as an advocate for them should the need arise.

The relationship that was established between the teacher and student must be based on honesty and trust. The literature noted that the mentor must be like a faithful friend and trusted counsellor (McGovern, 1980). Dikerson (1989) called the mentor a 'trusted friend'. These elements of honesty and trust were also described by the teachers as essential in establishing an effective mentoring relationship. Ms. Stuart described this as being "open and honest" with the students. Mr. Wallace defined it as "being very straight, very forthright with your reply". For the students it was "a person you can talk to and trust" (Cathy). Jason described this as a situation where "I trusted him...I know that I wasn't going to get into trouble for talking to him and I could say what I wanted to".

The literature and teacher respondents concurred in the basic definitions of mentoring and the mentoring relationship. The literature considered mentoring to be the establishment of a 'caring relationship' (Finn, 1989) that developed over time. Aiello and Gatewood (1989) described it as developing a 'warm, positive, and caring relationship' that would support the student's personal and academic growth. This was supported by the view of the teacher respondents who defined mentoring as an attempt to provide a caring and supportive

environment for the students. For the teachers that care often went beyond academics and often meant helping the students in their decisions outside of academics (Ms. Stuart). Ms. Roberts interpreted this as both academic and personal caring. To Mr. Bennet it meant showing "a personal interest in an individual". This care and concern was highlighted by the student respondents as they acknowledged this help in their academic successes. It was Cathy who displayed the most progress in the personal aspect of this caring as she experienced a noticeable improvement in personal matters.

Improved academic performance was another common element. This outcome was a measure of success of the mentoring relationship for both the teachers and the students and a predictable outcome of positive mentoring, according to the literature (Outen, 1989).

The literature cited the development of self-reliance in the proteges as a desired outcome of a positive mentoring relationship (Kay, 1990). This was a sought after goal for the teachers as well. Ms. Stuart described this when noting that her protege was now better able to make "her own decisions".

Both the literature and the teachers pointed out the need for the development of personalized programs for each protege.

Gray (1989a) noted that there was not much evidence as to what works and what does not. He observed that what worked in one situation did not necessarily work in another. The teacher respondents reinforced this as they pointed out that there was a need for a level of personalization to be developed between the mentor and the protege. As Ms. Stuart observed: "You try something that has worked for someone else...and maybe it works and maybe it doesn't. It depends on the student. There is just no one strategy".

Proper teacher training in the skills, strategies, and tactics of mentoring was also an important element that both the literature and the teachers emphasized. The literature noted a link between mentoring and teaching. Aiello and Gatewood (1989) and Wilbur (1989) both referred to the role of the mentor as that of teaching. The teacher respondents, especially Mr. Wallace, referred to the strong link between teaching and mentoring. To Wallace both were inseparable and complemented each other, thus making teachers mentors by nature. Within this context, the teachers felt that the proper training of mentors was imperative. As the formal teacher training institutions did not pay significant attention to mentoring it was left up to the schools and their professional development education to accomplish the task of proper training. Gray (1989), Haring-Hidore (1985), Daloz (1986), and Wilbur (1989) all agreed that adequate and proper training were essential for program success. Brooks

and Haring-Hidore (1987) noted that there was mounting evidence that this training was a primary element for effective mentoring. The teacher respondents substantiated this and recommended not only initial in-service education training, but also the continuation of this training over time. All teachers placed a high value on this formal training. As Mr. Bennet noted; "I'm not sure that you ever get enough training because it is... that sort of thing that one improves as you do it and learn more about it".

As to the implementation of a formal planned mentoring program, the efforts of the teaching staff at River East Collegiate followed many of the recommendations found in the literature cited. The program most closely followed the Gray (1989a) Four Phase Mentoring Model. The program received support from the administrators, was proactive and developmental in nature, and had grown over time from a few volunteers to total staff involvement. It also included formal training in mentoring, and was based upon a close relationship between mentor and protege. The program itself, as Gray (1989a) suggested, was adapted to the situation and goals of River East Collegiate.

The student respondents, though less schooled in mentoring than the teaching staff, cited several important elements that were also noted by the teachers. Both felt that the

mentor and protege should help foster a calm and respectful relationship. The students described this as the mentor being even tempered and not getting mad or yelling or being grumpy. The teachers would create this by showing patience, not getting mad or being judgmental, and never nagging or showing disrespect.

There were, however, some elements present in the program at River East Collegiate that were in contrast to what the literature suggested. This was found in both the program and in the teacher and student responses. The literature clearly suggested that there was a natural conflict between the evaluative role of the teacher and the mentor's role of advocate, friend, and counsellor. Bey (1990) stated that it was critical to provide a relationship where the assistance and the evaluative functions were provided by different personnel in the school. In direct contrast to this were the observations of the teachers. All respondents supported the fact that they were actually mentoring the students that they taught. They found no conflict in the combination of the roles. In fact several noted that the roles were complementary. For Mr. Wallace mentoring was "a constant part of the profession". Mr. Bennet saw mentoring as part of the teaching load and Ms. Roberts found that teaching her proteges provided her with an effective strategy for establishing an effective channel of communication with them.



The students themselves did not refer to this negatively nor did they find it awkward.

This difference may be due to the fact that most of the literature on mentoring, with the exception of Bey (1990), relates to mentoring in a business context or at a post-secondary educational level. In business, where moving up the corporate ladder is often as much a matter of politics as it is of competence, one can accept the need to separate the evaluative and assistance roles. Conversely, in education, as indicated by the responses of the teachers and students, these two basic roles do not appear to be in conflict and do not seem to take away from the establishment of an effective and workable mentoring relationship in the school, and in fact, are perceived to contribute positively to the development of a proper mentor-protégé relationship.

The literature stated that the careful matching of mentor and protégé was essential. Gray (1989a) observed that every effort must be made to make the match between mentor and protégé as compatible as possible and should be based upon common interests and communication styles. It was his opinion that merely to identify the individuals and arrange times for interaction would do nothing to foster a positive relationship. Haensly and Edlind (1986) likewise observed that careful selection and sensitive preparation generally enhanced the chances of success.

At River East Collegiate little effort was made to create matches as Gray (1989a) suggested. Only if specifically requested by a mentor would a particular protege be matched with that mentor. The primary criterion for the matching of mentor and protege was that each teacher would have two of the 100 plus students in the school that were identified as being the most educationally at risk and, if possible, the mentor also taught their proteges at least one subject in order to increase contact time. Now, if we accept the premise that teachers have some natural mentoring abilities and couple that with this method of placement, the resulting combinations, though in contradiction to the literature, may be effective and overcome Gray's (1989a) concern. It may be that teaching, with its demand for a teacher to be flexible in approaches and styles, allows a teacher to become compatible with various students. This may be the catalyst for a teacher to initiate an effective and lasting mentoring relationship with different students.

The literature placed a high value on the proper training of mentor and protege (Brooks and Haring-Hidore, 1987) and this was considered a primary element for success. It was pointed out that this training was essential so that both parties knew what was expected of them and how to fulfill their respective roles. At River East Collegiate there was no provision made for the training of the students as proteges.

Perhaps this was the reason that the students lacked a good working knowledge of mentoring, the skills and strategies involved, and their responsibilities in the program. It appeared that the imparting of this knowledge was left to the individual mentors to accomplish. It was the strategy of Mr. Wallace to do this immediately as the relationship was initially established. He told the student "right off the bat what you are going to do...lay it on the table...once they know exactly what you expect of them, I think that's the first hurdle". This strategy appeared to be effective for Wallace; however, the formal training of proteges may be an effective strategy, especially for those mentors that might have difficulty with Wallace's approach.

A final difference existed in the identification of the students who were determined to be educationally at risk. The literature noted that an average of 30 percent of students are at risk. River East Collegiate identified the 10 percent of their school population that appeared to be the most at risk. Wehlage and Rutter (1986) noted that the conscious decision to drop out is made during high school. Yet, of the students interviewed, all of whom had been deemed educationally at risk, all denied the fact that they were at risk and each felt confident about finishing high school successfully. These students were not even close to thinking about such a decision, let alone making it.

It was apparent that effective mentoring as found in the literature and in practise in the high school have many common elements. All supported the fact that successful mentoring was based upon the establishment of clear and effective channels of communication between the mentor and the protege. Such a relationship must be based upon honesty and trust and it was further enhanced by the proper training of the mentors. Nevertheless, there were some contrasts that were evident. These revolved around the assistance and evaluative roles when teachers act as mentors. Linked to this was the careful matching of mentor and protege and the proper training of the protege that the literature suggested was essential, yet there was an element on which the River East Collegiate program expended little time and effort. Based upon the apparent successes the program at the school, it appeared that these differences did not have a noticeable effect on the outcomes of the program.

#### The River East Collegiate Program

In the light of the comments of the respondents and the literature on mentoring, there are a number of observations that can be made concerning the program that is in place at River East Collegiate. In some instances these observations can be developed into recommendations for program improvement. These conclusions can also be viewed as recommendations for other educational institutions that

intend to implement a similar program to provide support for those students who are educationally at risk in their institution.

The first observation revolves around the view held by some of the staff that mentoring is an integral part of teaching. As well, the literature notes that mentoring is teaching and can be a useful means of addressing the problems of students who are educationally at risk. The literature, however, does not refer to teaching as mentoring as do the teacher respondents. Given both views, one can argue that the roles are complementary and that mentoring can make a difference in the educational outcomes of students who are educationally at risk, if teachers do the mentoring. If this is true, then teachers acting as mentors in the school should be given more attention. If dropping out is as serious and detrimental a problem in our society today as it appears to be, teachers mentoring these students should be given more serious attention as a viable strategy for the retention of these students in the school. Educational institutions should not only recognize mentoring as an effective strategy, but they should also provide the time and resources required to develop and enhance mentoring skills among their staff. Parallel to this is the fact that in the River East Collegiate program the teachers mentor the students that they teach in regular classes. The apparent effectiveness of this strategy indicates that this method should receive more

attention in the establishment of specific mentor-protégé relationships in educational institutions for those students who are educationally at risk. As teachers become better mentors they would also become better teachers and all students would benefit, not just those specifically identified as being educationally at risk.

A second observation revolves around the aspect of the training of the participants in the strategies, tactics and subtleties of mentoring. There is common agreement about the importance of the training of mentors in the strategies that revolve around the mentoring process. In addition, the respondents pointed out that the elements of honesty, openness, trust, and commitment are critical to effective mentoring. It is difficult to teach such elements, yet are these not the same elements that make teachers effective? Therefore, as schools often have teachers who are both effective and ineffective, so too will a school then have both effective and ineffective mentors. If similar skills are found in both effective teachers and effective mentors, one can assume that if a school has effective teachers, then these teachers should make effective mentors. The next step is to develop a planned and continuing professional development education program for the staff that provides them with a formal knowledge of effective strategies, techniques, tactics, and the subtleties of mentoring. This will serve to enhance the existing mentoring capabilities of

the staff. When such a plan of action is in place, the benefit will be accrued by those students at whom the program is targeted. Therefore, an effective teaching staff that is schooled in mentoring will make for effective mentoring.

A third observation deals with the element of communication. The fostering of effective channels of communication with the student is the most critical element in the establishment of an effective mentoring relationship. There is however some question as to the degree of communication with the home. From the responses of those students and teachers interviewed, it can be stated that in some instances the degree of contact with the home may best be left to the discretion of the individual mentor. In instances where the proteges are experiencing problems related to the home, contact and disclosure of the matters discussed could lead to the deterioration of the mentor-protege relationship. If open disclosure and trust are critical elements in an effective relationship, the mentor may have to decide to keep communication with the home to a minimum. Perhaps in some instances contact may have to be done away with entirely. If and when contact is made, the teacher mentor should be discreet as to what is disclosed.

Student responsibilities form a fourth observation as they become the proteges in the relationship. There is no doubt that there is initial denial on the part of the student that

has been identified as being educationally at risk. Therefore it is difficult to instill in the student the realization that she/he has certain responsibilities in this mentor-protége relationship. It follows that the acceptance of responsibilities is a slow growth process on the part of the student. The task of the teacher is to help the student recognize the difficulties that she/he is having and the potential outcome - their eventual dropping out. Once this realization becomes plausible to the student, then and only then is she/he ready to accept the responsibilities that go along with being a protégé. The road to this stage is often long and time consuming. It requires patience and tenacity on the part of the teacher until the proper circumstances are present whereby the student finally acknowledges the fact that she/he may indeed be educationally at risk. An experienced teacher and mentor can often foster such a realization sooner in a potential dropout.

This leads to the fifth observation which revolves around the developmental growth of mentoring. It is a process whereby the program, the mentor, and the protégé all move through a series of stages. The program itself must evolve from a small pilot one that develops over time that can be made into one that is based upon the specific needs and objectives of the school. Only in this manner can a program develop that makes effective use of the total resources of the school. The ideal would be to begin with those interested in mentoring and from



there expand to take in more of the teaching staff. The ultimate goal would be to incorporate the total staff in some aspect of mentoring, keeping in mind that perhaps not all teachers would want to mentor, let alone be effective mentors.

Once a specific program has been formalized, the program likewise moves through a series of stages. The initial stage is that of identification. Here the mentors are identified and a list of potential proteges is drawn up according to the criteria established by the school. This is followed by the matching of mentor and protege, once again according to the criteria established for this. The next stage is the provision of support for the program in terms of time and resources. Program design has to provide for a certain degree of flexibility so as to allow for the individual differences and varying strategies and qualities of specific mentors. This flexibility is also required so as to accommodate the varying degrees of program acceptance by the proteges. The final stage of the implemented program is that of evaluation and adjustment. This is based upon the program outcomes as measured by the established criteria for evaluation that had been previously set.

The individual mentoring relationship as established by the mentor also goes through a series of stages. The initial task for the mentor is to build a suitable and effective

relationship between her/himself and her/his protege. This might require the mentor to attempt several different strategies until a suitable relationship can be established. Once this is accomplished, the mentor then must foster an environment based upon honesty and trust that will ultimately promote open disclosure between her/himself and the protege. Throughout this process the mentor must provide ongoing support according to the specific needs and requirements of the protege.

The student proteges likewise go through a series of stages. For them the initial stage appears to be one of denial of the fact that they may be educationally at risk. The challenge for the mentor is to bring the student from this denial to the next stage of development, that of the acceptance of that possibility. It is only from this point on that the student can move to the stage of self-reliance. Once capable of initiating and carrying out decisions, the protege can move from being educationally at risk to successfully completing high school.

The sixth observation is that a formal mentoring program for students who are educationally at risk can have spin-off benefits for all students who are enrolled at the school. Teachers with good mentoring skills can be more effective as teachers. It improves their communication skills and provides them with the skills and strategies to help specific students

through the establishment of a mentor-protége relationship, a relationship that when required goes beyond that of a teacher-student relationship. If teaching is mentoring, and as teachers become more effective as mentors, then it holds that all students should obtain the positive benefits of mentoring in the daily matters that are carried out at the school and in the teacher-student relationships that are established. In this way the whole school can benefit. As an extension of this, one can then argue that as schools are part of and reflect the community, a logical extension of this would be that the community will reap the ultimate benefits of a decreased dropout rate which is the ultimate goal of the mentoring program. Therefore, it is to the benefit of all parties concerned to establish an effective mentoring program at the high school level.

A final observation deals with the present structure of schools. The student proteges noted that communication was the key factor in the establishment of an effective mentor-protége relationship. The manner in which most high schools are structured results in students seeing a different teacher for each subject. This does not provide the means for individual students to establish a continuing association with a specific teacher during their years in the school. The students do not have a person that is there to provide support, guidance, and advice when needed. Often the students

will go through high school as an anonymous entity. As individuals they are taken for granted and often ignored.

The program at River East Collegiate is an attempt to prevent this anonymity from occurring. Each student is attached to a specific Teacher Advisor for the academic year. It is this teacher that is the link between the student and the institution. The teacher is that caring person, that role model, that mentor to the student that has been specifically identified as being at risk as well as to all the students within that smaller Teacher Advisor Group. This may be why mentoring at River East Collegiate appears to have made a difference.

Perhaps our schools are becoming too large and the student is merely an anonymous unit within the institution. Perhaps it is time to change, to restructure the institution called a school so as to provide that person who 'is there' for the student.

#### Areas for Future Study

This study does open several areas for further investigation as it leaves several questions unanswered. An initial question deals with the effectiveness of the program on a total school basis. This study, based upon teachers who volunteered to be interviewed, presents a mere window and as

such leaves some question as to the total effectiveness of the program. A study on a school wide basis would produce more reliable observations.

A second area that requires further study revolves around the role of the teacher mentor as both evaluator and advocate for the protege. The literature emphatically states that these roles are in conflict. The observation of the respondents is that the roles are complementary. Perhaps there is something in the nature of the program as established at River East Collegiate that overcomes the concern expressed in the literature. Is the field of education different in nature and scope than that of business?

Linked to this is a third area that opens for further investigation. This relates to the training of the proteges. Would training of the proteges enhance the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship and thereby the total program? This study clearly indicated that the knowledge of mentoring and the responsibilities of the proteges, was not largely understood by the proteges.

A fourth area of possible study deals with the matching of mentor and protege. Does the random selection of the mentor and protege together with the mentor teaching a subject to the protege lead to an effective mentor-protege relationship? The literature emphatically states that both practises are

not compatible, yet the responses of teachers and students indicate that such a matching has positive results.

Another question open to further study is linked to teachers as mentors. Can an effective mentor be 'created' by training or are the basic mentoring skills and abilities naturally inherent in good and effective teachers? Does training merely enhance 'what is' rather than 'create' the effective mentor?

A final area of potential research that parallels the former question relates to what makes one teacher more effective as a mentor than another teacher, given the same program, identical resources and the same formal training in mentoring. Are some teachers 'natural' mentors in the same way that some teachers are naturally 'good' teachers?

These questions bear out the need for further examination of formal mentoring programs as they relate to high school teachers mentoring students who are identified as being educationally at risk. This study merely touches the surface of an area that has great potential as an effective strategy in addressing the dropout problem that presently besets our academic institutions.

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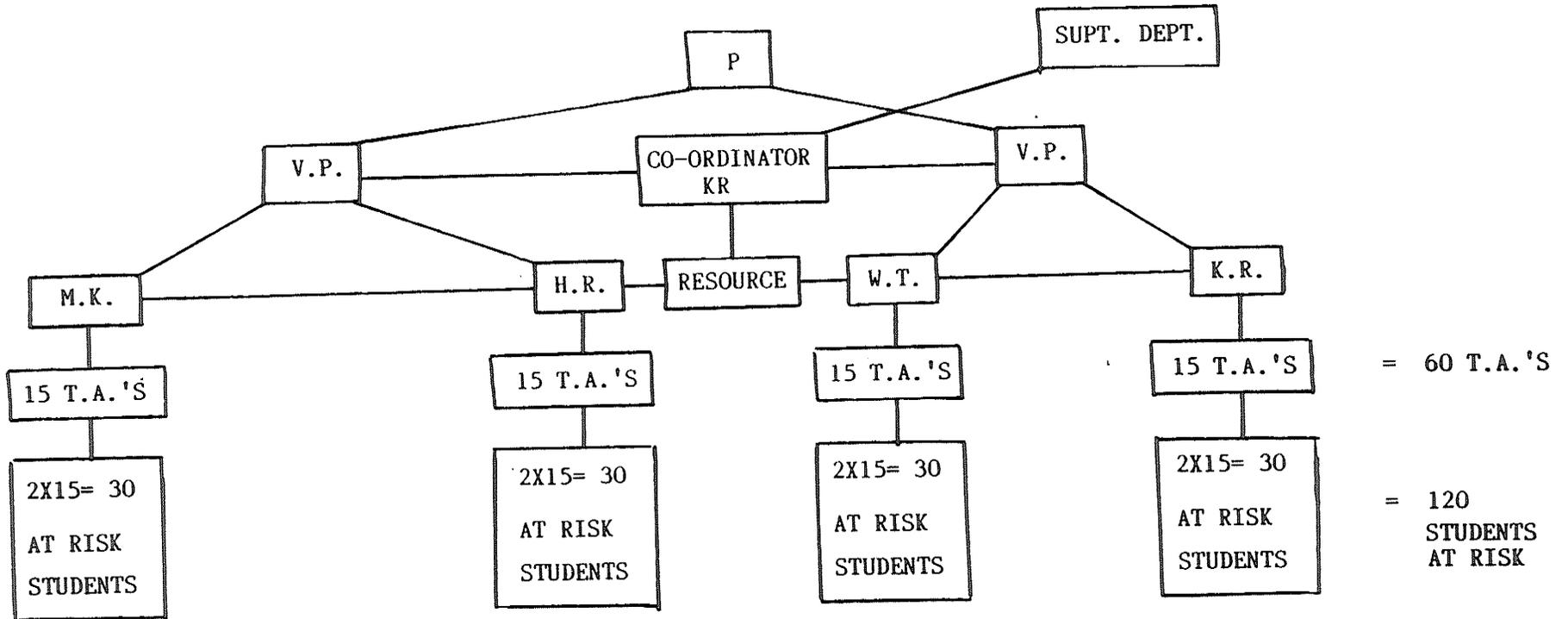
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AT-RISK PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER, 1990  
 RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE  
MONITORING AND SUPPORT GROUP

APPENDIX 1



# MEMO

From: Kathy Ramsay

APPENDIX 2

STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ T.A.: \_\_\_\_\_

The above-named student is being monitored by the Student Support Program. Please give us a brief up-date on his/her progress by responding to the following:

- 1. Attendance: good/peer
- 2. Academic: pass/fail
- 3. Emotional Behavioral: of concern/of no concern
- 4. Assignments Outstanding:

COMMENTS:

## RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE

## TA COMMUNICATION

STUDENT \_\_\_\_\_ TA \_\_\_\_\_

TO/FROM \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ at student's request \_\_\_\_\_ for subject teacher's information  
 \_\_\_\_\_ at parent's request \_\_\_\_\_ follow-up for course selection  
 \_\_\_\_\_ for TA's information \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ interview follow-up

-----  
 A brief report on this student is requested/offered. Please note any particular concerns or problems.

attitude \_\_\_\_\_

daily effort \_\_\_\_\_

class conduct/courtesy \_\_\_\_\_

attendance \_\_\_\_\_

test performance \_\_\_\_\_

assignments, labs, homework \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_ Would like a follow-up of anecdotal comments. (please check)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



PROGRESS REPORT

STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME SPAN: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: \_\_\_\_\_ TEACHER: \_\_\_\_\_

N.B.: please check (✓) and/or comment on the following:

1. Assignments handed in? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Comes to class prepared (books, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Notebooks up-to-date? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Homework completed? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Punctuality? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Participates in class? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Test mark (if any given during this time)? \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\* Please return by Monday, May 8, 1989 to M. Krochak in Guidance Office.

ANECDOTAL RECORD

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Level & Room No. \_\_\_\_\_

To \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. P. Friesen

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 19 \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. H. Schroeder

\_\_\_\_\_ at student's request \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. A. Funk

\_\_\_\_\_ at parent's request \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. M. Krochak

\_\_\_\_\_ subject teacher's request \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs. K. Ramsay

\_\_\_\_\_ follow-up on course selection \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs. H. Rempel

\_\_\_\_\_ counselling follow-up \_\_\_\_\_ Mr. W. Tucker

Please indicate briefly:

ATTITUDE:

EFFORT:

CONDUCT:

COURTESY:

PRESENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:

OTHER COMMENTS:

ATTENDANCE:

Please return by: Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

REFERRAL TO SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM

147

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ APPENDIX 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Referring Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Identify the problem: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Indicate the results of interventions used so far:

1) Meetings with the student: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) Contact with parents: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3) Disciplinary action: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4) Referral to administration: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Other interventions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What do you expect (behaviourally or performance-wise) that the student is not doing now? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations to the School Support Team/Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Urgency Scale: \_\_\_\_\_ High Risk: - immediate danger to self or others  
(check one) - known or suspected abuse  
- problem manifested for at least one month  
- problem interferes with academic, social,  
and/or occupational functioning  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ Low Risk

RIVER EAST COLLEGIATE  
SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM  
REFERRAL/BEHAVIOR OBSERVATION REPORT

148

Please indicate patterns of repeated behavior you have observed with regard to this student.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ T.A.: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Member Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Academic Characteristics**

<input type="checkbox"/> satisfactory or better	<input type="checkbox"/> performance hurt by frequent absences
<input type="checkbox"/> consistently tries	<input type="checkbox"/> does not do homework
<input type="checkbox"/> significant decline in grades	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Attendance**

<input type="checkbox"/> attends classes regularly	<input type="checkbox"/> frequent requests to leave class
<input type="checkbox"/> frequent unexcused absences	<input type="checkbox"/> pattern in absences (ie. day of the week, test day, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> frequent tardiness	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Physical Characteristics**

<input type="checkbox"/> appears healthy	<input type="checkbox"/> poor hygiene
<input type="checkbox"/> appears alert/attentive	<input type="checkbox"/> drowsy; fatigued
<input type="checkbox"/> physical complaints	<input type="checkbox"/> bruising; signs of abuse
<input type="checkbox"/> frequent physical injuries	<input type="checkbox"/> significant change in dress, weight, appearance

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Extra-Curricular Activities**

<input type="checkbox"/> overly involved in activities	<input type="checkbox"/> not involved
<input type="checkbox"/> regularly participates	<input type="checkbox"/> employed part time (____ hrs./wk)
<input type="checkbox"/> dropped out of an activity or sport	<input type="checkbox"/> community activities (____ hrs./wk)

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Classroom Behavior/Conduct**

<input type="checkbox"/> participates; adds to class	<input type="checkbox"/> excessively seeks adult attention/advice
<input type="checkbox"/> co-operative	<input type="checkbox"/> erratic behavior from day to day
<input type="checkbox"/> withdrawn; rarely participates	<input type="checkbox"/> disruptive
<input type="checkbox"/> excessive preoccupation with school success	<input type="checkbox"/> inattentive
<input type="checkbox"/> difficulty in accepting mistakes	<input type="checkbox"/> fails to remember things
<input type="checkbox"/> other students have expressed concern about this student	<input type="checkbox"/> disorganized
<input type="checkbox"/> defensive	<input type="checkbox"/> extremely negative
<input type="checkbox"/> inappropriate responses (sarcasm, rudeness, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> defiant
<input type="checkbox"/> significant mood changes	<input type="checkbox"/> cheating
	<input type="checkbox"/> hyperactive
	<input type="checkbox"/> fighting
	<input type="checkbox"/> obscene language or gestures

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Social Behavior**

<input type="checkbox"/> well adjusted	<input type="checkbox"/> avoids social contact
<input type="checkbox"/> has meaningful peer relationships	<input type="checkbox"/> belligerent
<input type="checkbox"/> suspicion of drug/alcohol problem	<input type="checkbox"/> vandalism
<input type="checkbox"/> change of friends	<input type="checkbox"/> talks of suicide
<input type="checkbox"/> known or suspected family problems	<input type="checkbox"/> significant change in living environment
<input type="checkbox"/> issues relating to sexual behavior (pregnancy, abortion, etc.)	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 4

***MSI • Mentoring Style Indicator™****for****Mentoring Youth***

developed by

**William A. Gray, Ph.D.**

and

**Terry D. Anderson, Ph.D.**

™ MSI • Mentoring Style Indicator trademark is owned by William A. Gray and Terry D. Anderson  
™ MPR • Mentor-Protege Relationship Model trademark is owned by William A. Gray

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**STEP 1: Answer All 8 Situations Below**

**Directions for Proteges:** *Imagine yourself as the Protege in each Situation below. Beneath each Situation are 4 ways that a mentor can help you handle that Situation. Write a 1 beside that style of mentoring you prefer **receiving** first. Write a 2 beside your second choice, a 3 beside your third choice, and a 4 beside your fourth choice. Make four choices for every Situation – even if there are other styles of mentoring you might prefer receiving.*

**Directions for Mentors:** *Imagine yourself as the Mentor in each Situation below. Beneath each Situation are 4 ways you can help the Protege handle that Situation. Write a 1 beside that style of mentoring you prefer **providing** first. Write a 2 beside your second choice, a 3 beside your third choice, and a 4 beside your fourth choice. Make four choices for every Situation – even if there are other styles of mentoring you might prefer providing.*

### Situation 1

Martin recently enrolled in a middle school that has a lot of teenage crime and drug abuse. Only 55% of the students go on to high school. Martin has always liked school and has gotten high grades. He was selected to be team captain on several athletic teams in elementary school because of his maturity, ability and size. Martin's parents tell him to "make something of yourself" and he wants to do this. Martin tells his mentor that a drug-pushing gang has begun pressuring him to become a member. How might the mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>___ A! Mentor leads a discussion to persuade Martin not to join the gang.</p> <p>___ B* Mentor gives Martin a step-by-step plan to follow to get the gang to leave him alone.</p> | <p>___ C# Mentor encourages Martin to describe his plan to deal with this gang; mentor offers to support Martin's plan.</p> <p>___ D% Mentor and Martin together agree on the plan Martin will use to get the gang to leave him alone.</p> |
|--|--|

### Situation 2

Marie's dream is to get a job with a large corporation and become a top sales executive. She has not taken any typing or word processing courses because she does not want to be stereotyped as another "female typist or "female word processor." Marie tells her mentor she does not believe these skills will enable her to advance her career. Marie is strong-willed and very self-reliant. She does not often listen to other people's advice. How might the mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>___ B% Mentor and Marie together decide if she needs to take typing and word processing courses, after discussing businesses where these skills are useful for advancing one's career.</p> <p>___ C* Mentor gives Marie a list of computer courses to take, and then escorts her to the computer teacher's office to enroll in one of the courses.</p> | <p>___ D! Mentor suggests various word processing courses Marie could take, and urges her to start taking them.</p> <p>___ A# Mentor listens to Marie's reasons for not taking these courses and supports whatever decision she makes.</p> |
|---|--|

## Situation 3

Albert is in the second semester of a very challenging program in a Science Magnet School. He was recommended for this special program because of his "natural ability to take things apart and fix them." Albert is making low grades on tests and assignments no matter how much he studies. He will be dropped from this program if his test grades do not improve this semester. Albert loves the science labs (especially dissecting frogs) and wants to continue in this program. How might a mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose* (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> C% Mentor and Albert discuss various ways to study for tests and then agree on new methods Albert will use.                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A! Mentor asks questions to find out why Albert's test grades are so low, and then suggests specific actions Albert can take to improve his grades. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D* Mentor explains exactly how Albert should study for tests to improve his grades, and sets up an appointment for him to receive tutoring. | <input type="checkbox"/> B# Mentor listens whenever Albert wants to describe his study habits, and then encourages him to keep trying to discover better ways to study.      |

## Situation 4

Marylou is easily influenced. For example, her mom and teachers influenced her to do well in school. Quite unexpectedly, she has recently made friends with a group of girls who skip classes and never do homework. Some of these girls have become teenage mothers. Marylou tells her mentor she is confused about what to do. She's not sure if she wants to hang out full time with these new friends or become a good student again. How might the mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose* (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> B! Mentor asks leading questions that get Marylou to realize what is best for her, and then urges her to do what is best.  | <input type="checkbox"/> D* Mentor describes a personal experience overcoming the bad influence of a teenage group, and then introduces Marylou to a more positive group of teenagers. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C# Mentor listens whenever Marylou talks about not knowing what to do; mentor encourages Marylou to make her own decision. | <input type="checkbox"/> A% Mentor and Marylou discuss the advantages and disadvantages of making either choice, and then agree on a plan of action Marylou will follow.               |

## Situation 5

Davita is a mature, out-going, capable student. She plans to attend college. She has just transferred to a new high school. In her previous school, Davita had no problem making friends with students who like to participate in sports or school clubs. She wants to make such friends in her new school. How might a mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose* (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A% Mentor and Davita discuss how she has made friends before, and agree on how she will do this in her new school.  | <input type="checkbox"/> C! Mentor suggests several things Davita can do to find the type of friends she wants. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B# Mentor encourages Davita to talk about how she plans to make new friends, and encourages her to follow her plan. | <input type="checkbox"/> D* Mentor explains to Davita the best way to make new friends in this school.          |

Fernando often puts off homework until the last minute. In spite of this, he has maintained a B average in high school while working part-time. Now, Fernando's grade 12 teachers are giving him more homework to do than he is used to. These teachers give lower marks for late work to "prepare graduating students for the realities of life after high school." Fernando is not managing his time very well and his grades are steadily falling. How might a mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose* (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> D# Mentor listens whenever Fernando talks about his problem getting all his homework done, and then encourages him to manage his time better.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A* Mentor gives Fernando a time management plan to follow so he will stop putting everything off until the last minute.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> B! Mentor confronts Fernando about the consequences of putting everything off until the last minute, and convinces him to stop doing this.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C% Mentor and Fernando discuss how he gets things done once he starts on them; then they agree on what each will do so Fernando starts tasks sooner.</p> |
|---|---|

### Situation 7

Alicia has just started attending the very demanding High School for the Performing Arts. She was admitted because of her individual achievements. In her new school, Alicia will be graded primarily on how well she works as a team member on a stage production of the hit movie, *Fame*. Alicia tells her mentor she has no experience contributing to a team effort, and wonders if she really wants to do this. How might a mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose* (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> C* Mentor explains to Alicia what she should do to be a good team member, and coaches her on how to do this between rehearsals.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> D# Mentor listens to Alicia describe how she plans to contribute to the team's efforts.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> A! Mentor leads a discussion to get Alicia to realize why everyone must work together as a team, and persuades her to try out several suggestions for doing this.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> B% Mentor and Alicia discuss her strengths, and together plan how she can use these strengths on the team.</p> |
|---|--|

### Situation 8

Jamaal has gotten this far in life on his charm and good looks. For example, he charms female students into letting him copy their homework and test papers. Jamaal thinks he's "a cool dude" and so do the girls who give in to his charming tactics. Jamaal is smart enough to do his own work and earn good grades through his own efforts. But, he believes he doesn't need to become a responsible adult ("I'll get by, man"). How might a mentor help?

*Mentoring Styles To Choose* (write 1 beside your first choice, 2 beside your second choice, etc.)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><input type="checkbox"/> B% Mentor and Jamaal discuss what he is doing and where it might lead; they agree on a plan for Jamaal to learn how to be more responsible.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> C# Mentor listens as Jamaal describes how he plans to "get by"; the mentor does not offer advice or tell Jamaal what to do.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> D* Mentor arranges for Jamaal to talk with several adult men who had this same attitude as teenagers, to find out what became of them as adults.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A! Mentor confronts Jamaal so he sees what will happen if this practice continues; mentor persuades Jamaal to do his own school work.</p> |
|---|--|



## General Directions

- STEP 1:** You have just written down your 4 mentoring preferences or choices for all 8 Situations. *Do not proceed until you have done this.*
- STEP 2:** Now you will **Calculate Your Preferred Mentoring Style** by following the Scoring Directions on pages 6 and 7.
- STEP 3:** Then, you will read pages 8 and 9 to **Understand Mentoring Style in the Mentor-Protege Relationship.**
- STEP 4:** To **Interpret Your Preferred Mentoring Style**, read the appropriate interpretation presented on pages 10-14.
- STEP 5:** **Compare Protege's and Mentor's Preferred Mentoring Styles** on page 15 by discussing how mentor-protege partners answered the 8 Situations in the *MSI*. You might do this during a workshop, or when you get together with your mentor or protege partner.
- STEP 6:** **Develop a Plan for Increasing Mentoring Style Appropriateness** on page 16.
- STEP 7:** Follow the directions on page 16 to **Find Out Your Mentoring Style Appropriateness.**

**STEP 2: Calculate Your Preferred Mentoring Style**

**Preferred Mentoring Style** refers to that style of help a mentor prefers to provide or a protege prefers to receive. There are four primary Mentoring Styles (**Prescriptive, Persuasive, Collaborative, Confirmative**). These mentoring styles are based on Gray's *Mentor-Protege Relationship Model* and on Anderson's *Style Shift Counseling Theory*. To calculate your Preferred Mentoring Style for providing help as a mentor or for receiving help as a protege, follow these steps:

**A. Record your responses onto the Response Sheet on the facing page in *Box A*.**

- Look at the 4 choices you made beneath *Situation 1*. Beside each choice is a letter (A, B, C, D) and symbol (\* ! % #). Record the *letter + symbol* of your 1st choice in *Box A* on the facing page – under the column labeled *1st Choice*. Under the appropriate column, record the *letter + symbol* for your 2nd, 3rd, and 4th choices for Situation 1.
- Follow this same procedure to record the *letter + symbol* of your 4 choices for the other 7 Situations.

**B. Calculate your Preferred Mentoring Style, using *Box B* on the facing page.**

- 1) Add up the \*s you recorded under *1st Choice* in Box A. Write this sum in *Box B* beside \*1st and multiply by 4.
- 2) Add up the \*s you recorded under *2nd Choice* in Box A. Write this sum in *Box B* beside \*2nd and multiply by 3.
- 3) Add up the \*s you recorded under *3rd Choice* in Box A. Write this sum in *Box B* beside \*3rd and multiply by 2.
- 4) Add up the \*s you recorded under *4th Choice* in Box A. Write this sum in *Box B* beside \*4th and multiply by 1.
- 5) Add the four products to get a \*Total. This indicates how much you prefer a **Prescriptive Mentoring Style**.

**Note:**

- Calculate your preference for a **Persuasive Mentoring Style** by repeating the five steps above for the symbol: !
- Calculate your preference for a **Collaborative Mentoring Style** by repeating these five steps for the symbol: %
- Calculate your preference for a **Confirmative Mentoring Style** by repeating these five steps for the symbol: #

*Important Scoring Check: Add \*Total + !Total + %Total + #Total. If your Grand Total score is not 80, search for errors in your calculations. Remember that zero times any number equals zero.*

**C. Graph your Preferred Mentoring Style Profile in *Box C* on the facing page.** To do this, *circle* your four Totals for \*, !, %, and #. A score above 25 indicates a strong preference for that mentoring style. Weakly preferred mentoring styles have scores below 15. When *all four scores* fall between 16 to 24, you have a *Balanced Mentoring Style*.

**To find out your Mentoring Style Appropriateness Score, photocopy page 7 and send it to ICM-International Centre for Mentoring. Follow the directions on page 16 and ICM will send you the results within 2-3 weeks.**

# MSI • Mentoring Style Indicator • Response Sheet 155

Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Protege's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you the mentor \_\_\_ or the protege \_\_\_? Your Institution: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Box A. Write Down the Letter+Symbol of Your 4 Choices for Each Situation.**

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
Situation 1	_____	_____	_____	_____
Situation 2	_____	_____	_____	_____
Situation 3	_____	_____	_____	_____
Situation 4	_____	_____	_____	_____
Situation 5	_____	_____	_____	_____
Situation 6	_____	_____	_____	_____
Situation 7	_____	_____	_____	_____
Situation 8	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Box B. Calculate Your Preferred Mentoring Style.**

*1st ___ x4= ___	!1st ___ x4= ___	%1st ___ x4= ___	#1st ___ x4= ___
*2nd ___ x3= ___	!2nd ___ x3= ___	%2nd ___ x3= ___	#2nd ___ x3= ___
*3rd ___ x2= ___	!3rd ___ x2= ___	%3rd ___ x2= ___	#3rd ___ x2= ___
*4th ___ x1= ___	!4th ___ x1= ___	%4th ___ x1= ___	#4th ___ x1= ___
*Total= ___ +	!Total= ___ +	%Total= ___ +	#Total= ___ = 80

**Box C. Graph Your Preferred Mentoring Style Profile by Circling Your 4 Scores.**

	Weak Preference	Moderate Preference	Strong Preference
* = Style 1: Prescriptive Mentoring (M)	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32
! = Style 2: Persuasive Mentoring (Mp)	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32
% = Style 3: Collaborative Mentoring (MP)	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32
# = Style 4: Confirmative Mentoring (mP)	8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32
	Midpoint		

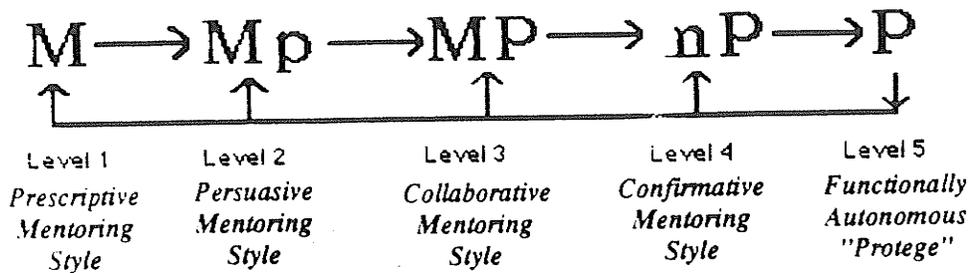
## STEP 3: Understand Mentoring Style in the Mentor-Protege Relationship

Mentoring Style refers to that style of *relationship* that exists between a mentor and protege at a particular point in time. Mentoring Style also refers to that style of *help* a mentor prefers to *provide* for a protege or a protege prefers to *receive* from a mentor at a certain point in time. Four distinct Mentoring Styles of relating and working together are shown below in *Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model*. Each Mentoring Style is appropriate at a certain point in time so the protege can effectively handle a particular situation. Effective mentors flexibly provide appropriate types of *situational help* that match a protege's present ability to handle each situation encountered. The concept of providing appropriate mentoring is also supported by *Anderson's Style Shift Counseling Theory*, which contends that *effective* counselors shift their style of counseling to *match* the client's ability to handle a problem or dilemma or a new challenge.

To better understand this, think of mentoring as a **dynamic helping relationship** between the more experienced mentor and the less experienced protege. Gray's Model illustrates the dynamic, changing nature of the relationship as the mentor equips and empowers the protege to develop the confidence and ability needed to function without need for mentor help (at Level 5). When the relationship is dynamic and the style of mentoring changes to take into account the protege's developing confidence and ability to handle unfamiliar or more challenging situations, mentoring is viewed by both mentor and protege as being *successful*. Proteges view mentoring as being *unsuccessful* if the mentor "gets stuck" at an inappropriate Level of providing mentoring. Mentors view mentoring as being unsuccessful if the protege "gets stuck" in wanting an inappropriate style of mentoring that doesn't match what is actually needed to handle a particular situation.

During the mentoring process, effective mentors *equip* proteges at Levels 1 and 2 in those skills and concepts needed to progress from being dependent on mentor help, and they *empower* proteges at Levels 3 and 4 so they become competent and functionally autonomous at Level 5. Proteges reach Level 5 by achieving two types of goals. A **short-range goal** might be for the protege to develop a *particular* competency, such as better time management, or acting more assertively, or developing new technical expertise. A **long-range goal** of the mentoring process might be for proteges to become generally better problem solvers or leaders, or mentors for others.

### Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model (copyright 1984)



Gray and Anderson's *MSI • Mentoring Style Indicator* indicates three categories of Preferred Mentoring Style:

- *One Single Dominant Mentoring Style* (preferring one Level in the MPR Model)
- *A Combination of 2 or 3 Mentoring Styles* (preferring 2 or 3 Levels of the MPR Model)
- *A Balanced Mentoring Style* (preferring all four Levels almost equally)

Following is a brief description of how mentors and proteges interact at the four Levels of Gray's MPR Model.

At Level 1 [=M] in Gray's MPR Model, proteges lack experience in the mentor's organization (college, place of work, etc.) and typically have unrealistic ideas and attitudes about its policies, procedures, culture, norms and standards. These proteges need direction and training to learn skills needed to perform unfamiliar or difficult tasks. Typically, these proteges need the mentor to be prescriptive and to structure procedures for them to follow since they do not know what to do to satisfy expected standards. Many of these proteges will need mentor help to correctly transfer what they have been taught in formal courses or training sessions into improved task performance. To truly benefit from the mentor's greater wisdom and expertise, Level 1 proteges must be willing recipients of the wise counsel, teaching, coaching, directive leadership, role modeling, and external motivation the mentor provides – and proteges must incorporate mentor direction and prescriptions into what they do. Level 1 mentoring gives proteges a sense of "roots" (i.e., a grounding in the organization's traditions and norms) and equips them "to fit in" – while making Level 1 mentors feel appreciated for sharing their experience and wisdom in prescriptive ways.

At Level 2 [=Mp], proteges are more experienced and realistic, capable and responsible than at Level 1. Level 2 proteges can contribute more to decision-making and problem-solving, but still need coaching to learn necessary skills as well as suggestions and persuasion from mentors. Thus, it is appropriate for mentors to lead discussions with proteges instead of prescribing what they should do. Mentors might make suggestions and persuade proteges to implement them. Or, they might offer suggestions from which proteges choose what to do. Mentors might ask questions that lead proteges to "come around to" the mentor's point of view or way of doing something. Mentors might also lead a dialogue to get the protege to come up with solutions to problems that the mentor could have suggested in the first place. If appropriate, mentors might confront proteges about how they persist in doing something which continues to perpetuate a problem, block an opportunity, or produce an unwanted consequence. To benefit from what mentors offer at Level 2, proteges must contribute greater input than they did at Level 1 and willingly respond to mentor suggestions and coaching.

At Level 3 [=MP], proteges have gained sufficient experience to be capable of collaborative problem-solving and decision-making with the mentor. Proteges show more initiative in carrying out tasks and solving problems than they did at Levels 1 or 2, but still need mentor guidance. This collaborative level of the MPR Model marks the transition point between being dependent on mentor help at Levels 1-2 to becoming increasingly more independent at Levels 4-5. Level 3 proteges view the kinds of mentor help that occurred at Levels 1 and 2 as being "too dominating." These more mature and capable proteges might engage in a power struggle (if need be) to gain greater recognition from the mentor and autonomy to become their own persons and to pursue their own goals and dreams. It is appropriate at Level 3 for a transformation to begin occurring in the mentor-protege relationship – beginning with collaboration and heading for functional autonomy at Level 5. At Levels 1 and 2, mentors equip proteges to start overcoming dependency on mentor help. At Levels 3 and 4, mentors empower proteges to become increasingly more functionally autonomous.

At Level 4 [=mP], proteges have become nearly self-sufficient, but still need mentor confirmation of their decisions and action plans (before functioning entirely on their own at Level 5). Level 4 proteges are able to propose how they would handle difficult or unfamiliar situations, or solve complex problems. These proteges no longer need mentor prescription, suggestion/persuasion, or collaboration. Some Level 4 proteges need a mentor's moral support and feedback before tackling a task on their own. Some need the mentor to be available for further consultation, when proteges request this. Some need an opportunity to discover whether their own ideas will work. Especially creative proteges need to bounce ideas off the mentor, and have the mentor listen empathetically to provide clarification, and then encourage them to try out their ideas. By encouraging and facilitating proteges' creativity and personal uniqueness, mentors help them become their own persons and develop their own styles for handling situations and getting things done. This ensures the organization does not become stagnant and mired in outdated traditions and practices. Level 4 mentoring empowers proteges by giving them "wings" to fly to new heights without withdrawing needed support too soon, and provides the kind of confirmation and blessing needed for capable proteges to venture out on their own.

At Level 5 [=P], proteges have now developed specific skills or more general ability needed to function autonomously without mentor help. These proteges typically want to redefine or transform the relationship with their mentors so it is more collegial. These proteges can serve as mentors for others who are less experienced and less capable. In this way, they "pay back" the investment of time and effort their mentors provided. By reaching Level 5, proteges and their mentors benefit, and so does the organization that encouraged mentoring to take place.

*Note: The five Levels in Gray's MPR Model are not stages.* One progresses through stages in a definite sequence, never to return to an earlier stage (e.g. infancy, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age, old age, death). According to Gray's MPR Model and Anderson's Style Shift Counseling Theory, effective mentoring begins at that particular Level which matches the protege's relevant experience and ability to handle the demands of a particular situation. If an inexperienced protege must immediately improve performance to handle an important situation, mentor-protege interactions might best occur at Levels 1 or 2. After a protege gains experience and specific skills needed to handle a particular task or problem, Level 3 or 4 interactions are appropriate. For each new situation the protege encounters, it is appropriate to start interacting with a mentor at that Level of help the protege needs. Doing this will produce successful mentoring which is:

- person-oriented in meeting protege needs in a given situation
- process-oriented in providing appropriate types of help which matches protege ability and situational demands
- goal-oriented in achieving a goal (such as developing a specific competency needed to handle a particular situation)
- task-oriented in carrying out an agreed upon action plan together to systematically achieve a broader goal

## STEP 4: Interpret Your Preferred Mentoring Style

You have responded to the 8 Situations in the first part of this *MSI* Booklet. You have calculated four Total Scores and graphed them to get a **Profile** of your Preferred Mentoring Style for helping proteges (if you are a mentor) or for being helped by a mentor (if you are a protege). You have been introduced to four Mentoring Styles that are illustrated in Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model. Now, you are ready to find out what *your* Preferred Mentoring Style means. There are three categories of mentoring style. Each is indicated by a different score on the *MSI*. Beside each mentoring style is the page number where an Interpretation is given.

### Three Categories of Preferred Mentoring Style

1. *Single Preferred Mentoring Style* (indicated by single high score – above 25 on the *MSI*)

- Prescriptive (M) see pages 10-11
- Persuasive (Mp) see page 11
- Collaborative (MP) see pages 11-12
- Confirmative (mP) see pages 12-13

2. *Combination of Mentoring Styles* (indicated by 2 or 3 high scores being above 25 on the *MSI*)

- Prescriptive-Persuasive (M+Mp) see page 13
- Persuasive-Collaborative (Mp+MP) see page 13
- Prescriptive-Persuasive-Collaborative (M+Mp+MP) see page 13
- Collaborative-Confirmative (MP+mP) see page 14
- Persuasive-Collaborative-Confirmative (Mp+MP+mP) see page 14

3. *Balanced Mentoring Style* (indicated by all 4 scores being between 16 - 24 on the *MSI*)

- Prescriptive-Persuasive-Collaborative-Confirmative (M+Mp+MP+mP) see page 14

### 1. Single Preferred Mentoring Style — Four Varieties

#### Prescriptive Mentoring Style (Style 1 or "M")

**Interpretation:** When a mentor has a high score on Level 1 in Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model, this indicates a strong preference for prescribing what proteges are to do and how they are to do it. These mentors like to prescribe step-by-step procedures and give strong direction based on their greater experience, expertise and wisdom in the very situation facing the protege. They prefer one-way communication – such as giving insightful advice and praising acceptable performance – rather than engaging in a lot of person-to-person interaction and open discussion. Proteges who prefer Prescriptive Mentoring do not like to flounder around making mistakes while trying to discover what will work in an unfamiliar or complex or critical situation. Instead, they appreciate being given direct advice, direction or the structure needed to get a handle on the situation, or a strategy that will work.

**When Appropriate:** The Prescriptive Mentoring Style is an appropriate starting point for those proteges who need externally-provided structure and direction to deal wisely with unfamiliar situations – especially critically urgent situations – which they cannot handle on their own at this point in their development. Prescriptive Mentoring provides an efficient means of transmitting expertise and sharing the wisdom that comes from experience, instead of letting proteges sink or swim or letting them flounder around in a trial-and-error manner until they figure out how to handle the situation. This only

works, of course, if the protege heeds the mentor's wise counsel. (In non-urgent situations that permit personal discovery of wisdom, mentors should encourage this by using Mentoring Styles 3 and 4 in the ways discussed below.)

**Caution:** A high score on Prescriptive Mentoring indicates a mentor's disposition to be dominant or a protege's disposition to be dependent as a preferred style of relating and working together. Using this style most of the time with dependent-prone proteges will foster their dependence on the mentor's help. Just giving advice or solving the protege's problems does not equip dependent proteges to progress to higher levels of responsibility and decision-making on their own. Nor does this style empower them to think for themselves and to learn how to solve their own problems. As the old adage states: "If you give a hungry man a fish, you feed him for a day; if you teach him how to fish, he can feed himself every day." A Prescriptive Mentoring Style is also inappropriate as proteges develop greater capability and become less dependent on mentor expertise. When a Prescriptive Mentoring Style is used with highly capable proteges who like figuring things out for themselves and making their own decisions, a power struggle will often develop as these proteges strive for independence from being "dominated." A mentor's main task with self-reliant, strong-willed proteges is to get them to listen to sage advice.

## Persuasive Mentoring Style (Style 2 or "Mp")

**Interpretation:** A high score on Level 2 of Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model indicates a disposition towards a Persuasive Mentoring Style. As with Style 1, mentors tend to dominate the relationship and proteges tend to be dependent – but not as much as happens with Prescriptive Mentoring. Instead, mentors and proteges want to interact, with mentors leading the interaction. That is, mentors like to suggest alternative lines of action for proteges to take or to consider taking; they like to persuade proteges to act on these wise suggestions; and they sometimes like to confront proteges to realize what they are doing in a particular situation. Instead of telling proteges what to do or arranging things for them (as Prescriptive Mentors do), Persuasive Mentors acknowledge proteges' experience (even though this is still somewhat limited) by drawing out their ideas for making decisions and solving problems. Proteges who score high on this mentoring style like to be led to think for themselves. They appreciate the opportunity to interact with mentors who obviously know much more and are willing to share this by making suggestions and being persuasive or confrontive. Mentors do not prefer telling proteges what to do, and proteges do not want to be told what to do (as happens with Prescriptive Mentoring).

**When Appropriate:** Persuasive Mentoring involves less of a mentor-dominated and protege-dependent relationship than Prescriptive Mentoring because both persons have something to contribute. Mentors use their greater experience, expertise and wisdom to equip proteges in those skills and concepts needed ultimately to become more capable and autonomous. A Persuasive Mentoring Style is especially appropriate for leading proteges to arrive at realizations the mentor could have told them about, or to lead proteges to propose plans the mentor could have prescribed. Persuasive Mentoring is also appropriate as a starting point for working with proteges who have enough experience and ability to thoughtfully consider the alternatives a mentor suggests and then choose one or more of them to implement. This mentoring style is appropriate for confronting proteges about what they are doing ("What do you think might happen if you decide to...?") and leading them to make wiser decisions and choices ("Have you considered....?"). This mentoring style is more appropriate than Prescriptive Mentoring with self-reliant, strong-willed proteges.

**Caution:** Persuasive Mentors must guard against being so overly suggestive and persuasive that proteges aren't given the opportunity to learn how to make their own decisions and to solve their own problems so they can progress to a less dependent relationship. Persuasive Mentoring Style is not as appropriate as Collaborative or Confirmative Mentoring with already highly capable, autonomously functioning proteges (even though it is more appropriate than Prescriptive Mentoring because it acknowledges the protege's capability more and invites the protege's contribution more).

## Collaborative Mentoring Style (Style 3 or "MP")

**Interpretation:** A high score on Level 3 of Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model indicates a preference for a Collaborative Mentoring Style. This means that mentors and proteges prefer making decisions and solving problems jointly, so both persons make strong contributions to decision-making, problem-solving and action planning. To promote this kind of interaction, mentors and proteges like to utilize a give-and-take, open style of discussion. They prefer

## MSI • Mentoring Style Indicator • Interpretation<sup>160</sup>

brainstorming and other problem-solving strategies that permit both persons to contribute their experience and expertise. They like to agree on a contract that outlines what they will do together and separately to advance the protege's development. Such collaboration is not the same as true collegiality that comes much later in the relationship when proteges have reached Level 5 of Gray's Model and have become real peers (equals) with their mentors. The kind of collaboration we are describing for Level 3 is more a style of relating and working together than an equivalence of status or position based on comparable experience and expertise.

**When Appropriate:** A Collaborative Mentoring Style is appropriate with proteges who have more experience and capability than those proteges who need Prescriptive or Persuasive mentoring. Collaborative Mentoring occurs at Level 3 in Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model. This is the transitional or middle point on a continuum between Levels 1+2 (where mentors are more dominant and proteges are dependent on mentor help) and Levels 4+5 (where proteges are more capable of self-reliance). Thus, Collaborative Mentoring is a transitional style which is appropriate for those proteges who are ready to make the shift from being dependent on Prescriptive or Persuasive mentoring to becoming progressively more independent of mentor help. To determine if proteges are ready for Collaborative Mentoring, consider the urgency of the situation and the protege's relevant experience and ability to handle it. If the protege cannot brainstorm workable solutions to problems, or cannot engage in a two-way dialogue to plan strategies for getting involved in challenging opportunities, or will not take initiative or responsibility – the protege probably still needs Prescriptive or Persuasive mentoring. If the protege can do these things well enough to handle the situation successfully, Collaborative Mentoring seems appropriate.

**Caution:** A Collaborative Mentoring Style is not synonymous with true collegiality among real peers or "equals." When a mentor and protege relate and work together at Level 3 in Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model, it is not because they can equally share comparable experience, expertise and wisdom. Rather, they engage in Collaborative Mentoring because the protege is capable enough and is thus ready to handle the responsibility that the situation requires. It is inappropriate to prefer a Collaborative Mentoring Style simply because one believes in collegiality. True collegiality among real "equals" or peers occurs only when proteges reach Level 5 in Gray's Model, at which point they have developed the capability necessary to function without mentor help and their relationship can be transformed into a collegial one. Hence, Collaborative mentors do not view and treat Level 3 proteges as peers or "collegial equals" – but instead invite them to participate jointly in decision-making and to assume greater responsibilities because they are ready to do this in the situation at hand. This type of collaboration provides an important means for ultimately developing a transformed collegial relationship at Level 5 of Gray's Model. Such collegiality must eventually occur – or the existing mentor-protege relationship could end in bitterness as the protege engages in a power struggle to achieve independence, recognition, and a transformed relationship.

### Confirmative Mentoring Style (Style 4 or "mP")

**Interpretation:** A high score on Level 4 of Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model indicates a preference for a Confirmative Mentoring Style. Mentors who prefer this style like to listen empathically as proteges express their feelings and ideas, and they like to confirm proteges' decisions and solutions to problems. These mentors tend to believe that proteges are capable of figuring out their own solutions and making their own decisions, and should be responsible for doing these things. They may have an "open door" policy ("I am available to help you ... just let me know") and expect proteges to show initiative in coming to them for assistance. Confirmative Mentors give their blessing to the protege's "Dream" rather than prescribe what proteges should do or think, or persuade them to follow suggestions. They encourage proteges to take initiative in doing these things, while making themselves available to provide moral support and to serve as a sounding board when proteges request this. Proteges who prefer Confirmative Mentoring tend to be self-reliant, and sometimes strong-willed, in making decisions and dealing with problematic situations or challenging opportunities. These proteges may show entrepreneurial tendencies to "make things happen" the way they want them to happen instead of being dependent on circumstances or other people's help. They like learning by discovery rather than from direct instruction. They prefer to figure things out for themselves, which means that they do not readily appreciate other people having a major input into their plans or decisions.

**When Appropriate:** A Confirmative Mentoring Style is appropriate with those proteges who already have a lot of experience, maturity, confidence, and expertise – who have developed to Level 4 in Gray's Model – and just need someone



to listen and confirm their decisions or plans. These proteges will not likely appreciate a mentor who is disposed to a Prescriptive or Persuasive Mentoring Style. Mentors who prefer these styles will likely find the Level 4 protege to be non-receptive and non-responsive to advice or suggestions. If a mentor prefers playing a dominant role in the relationship, it would be better to do this while providing Collaborative Mentoring since this also enables a self-reliant, capable protege to have a major input as well.

**Caution:** Mentors who prefer a Confirmative Style sometimes mistakenly assume that proteges will come to them for help, or should come to them for help. Having an "open door" policy ("I am available to help you ... just let me know") will not necessarily attract either *very shy* proteges who do not want to infringe on the mentor's generosity or *highly self-reliant* proteges who prefer to figure out their own solutions rather than admit weakness. For either type of protege, it is more appropriate to actively intervene than wait for the protege to take initiative and seek out the mentor. The appropriate mentoring style to use will depend on the urgency of the situation facing the protege and the protege's receptivity, experience and capability. A Collaborative style might work best for the self-reliant protege whereas the shy protege might prefer the mentor to use Prescriptive or Persuasive Mentoring. When a protege is inexperienced and lacks competence to handle a critical situation, a Confirmative Mentoring Style is inappropriate because it does not provide enough initial structure, direction, or instruction to enable these proteges to deal with immediate, crucial problems.

## **2. Combinations of Preferred Mentoring Styles**

*(Read the longer descriptions of each Mentor Style above for a fuller understanding of the following combinations.)*

### **Prescriptive + Persuasive Combined Mentoring Style (Style 1/2 Combination or "M+Mp")**

This combination of Prescriptive and Persuasive Mentoring Styles indicates a mentor's preference to lead, dominate or control most interactions with proteges. Dependent-prone proteges prefer this dominating style. This mentoring style is appropriate for those proteges whose present level of experience and capability requires external structuring and prescription (Mentoring Style 1) or suggestions and persuasion (Mentoring Style 2). However, if a mentor continues to employ Styles 1 and 2 with dependent-prone proteges instead of using Mentoring Styles 3 and 4 to progressively increase their participation in decision making and increase their responsibility for solving problems, these proteges will likely remain dependent on mentor prescription and persuasion. This will require a lot of the mentor's time to solve proteges' problems and will not teach them how to do this for themselves. Inappropriately using this Style 1/2 combination with more mature, confident, self-reliant, and capable proteges who really need Mentoring Style 3 or 4 will usually produce a power struggle as these proteges resist mentor domination and strive for autonomy.

### **Persuasive + Collaborative Combined Mentoring Style (Style 2/3 Combination or "Mp+MP")**

This combination of Persuasive and Collaborative Mentoring Styles indicates a mentor's preference to exert a major influence on proteges by interacting with them rather than unilaterally prescribing what they should do. This Style 2/3 combination enables proteges to make more decisions and to take more responsibility than when a Prescriptive Mentoring Style is used. This Style 2/3 combination is appropriate for those proteges who have sufficient maturity, experience and expertise not to need mentor prescriptions and structuring of events. Overly using Style 2/3 can exert so much influence on proteges that they do not learn how to make their own decisions, solve their own problems, and develop their own way of doing things. Using a Collaborative Style more than a Persuasive Style will help proteges progress towards greater competence and autonomous functioning.

### **Prescriptive + Persuasive + Collaborative Combined Mentoring Style (Style 1/2/3 Combination or "M+Mp+MP")**

What has been said above for Style 1/2 and Style 2/3 combinations also applies to this Style 1/2/3 combination. Mentors who prefer a Style 1/2/3 combination want to exert an active, major influence on proteges. Proteges who prefer this 1/2/3 Style welcome such mentoring. The danger lies in dominating proteges so they are hindered from developing greater capability and responsibility. This keeps them dependent on mentor help, or forces them to engage in a power struggle to attain the independence their confidence and capability warrant.

### Collaborative + Confirmative Combined Mentoring Style

(Style 3/4 Combination or "MP+mP")

This Style 3/4 combination indicates a preference for letting proteges play a major role in making decisions and solving problems, because of the belief that proteges are ultimately responsible for doing this or because they have shown that they can handle the situation in question. To facilitate this greater contribution from proteges, mentors invite their collaboration in decision making (Style 3) and listen empathically to their concerns and confirm their attempts to solve their own problems (Style 4). Using this Style 3/4 combination inappropriately with proteges who really do not know how to solve their own problems may contribute to these less capable proteges failing miserably in a crucial situation, with long-term disastrous consequences.

### Persuasive + Collaborative + Confirmative Combined Mentoring Style

(Style 2/3/4 Combination or "Mp+MP+mP")

This Style 2/3/4 combination indicates a preference for interacting with proteges rather than unilaterally prescribing what they should do (Style 1). Using this Style 2/3/4 combination can make proteges feel good about the input they have in making decisions and solving problems; however, this combination is inappropriate for proteges who need a lot of initial external structuring or a prescribed strategy for solving urgent problems quickly. Using Styles 2/3/4 in a *balanced* manner does not mean that a mentor is providing the *appropriate* kind of relationship or help a protege needs at any point in time, or that the mentor is equipping the protege to progress towards greater capability and independence from mentor help.

## 3. Balanced Mentoring Style

**Interpretation:** A Balanced Mentoring Style is indicated when *all four* Total Scores (for Prescriptive+Persuasive + Collaborative+Confirmative Mentoring) are between 16 and 24. These four mentoring styles and the common combinations of them are described above. A Balanced Mentoring Style suggests a strong preference for variety and flexibility – but this preference does not necessarily mean that the style of help a mentor prefers to give *appropriately matches* the style of mentoring a protege prefers to receive or actually needs in a particular situation. The flexibility and variety inherent in a Balanced Mentoring Style are necessary for achieving *Mentoring Style Appropriateness*. But preferring a Balanced Mentoring Style does not mean that one has a high Mentoring Style Appropriateness (that is, the style of mentoring preferred actually matches the style needed by a protege in a particular situation).

**When Appropriate:** Mentoring Style Appropriateness occurs when mentors become adept at employing Prescriptive, Persuasive, Collaborative or Confirmative mentoring styles in ways that match what proteges need and prefer. Mentoring Style Appropriateness occurs when proteges allow themselves to be mentored in appropriate ways that match their experience, capability and the urgency of the present situation.

**Caution:** Preferring to employ Prescriptive, Persuasive, Collaborative and Confirmative Mentoring Styles in a balanced manner does not necessarily mean that a mentor is providing the *appropriate* kind of relationship or the *appropriate* kind of help a protege needs at any point in time. Nor does it mean that the mentor is *appropriately* equipping and empowering the protege to become progressively more capable of functioning autonomously. To be most effective, a mentor's style of relating to and helping a protege in a particular situation must match the protege's previous experience, present capability, and the urgency of the present situation. Similarly, if the protege prefers a Balanced Mentoring Style, this may not be appropriate either. A protege might need Prescriptive Mentoring to handle a totally unfamiliar situation or a very complex problem or an extremely challenging opportunity. On the other hand, a protege might be best assisted by Confirmative Mentoring to carry out his or her own strategy, when the protege is experienced and is capable of handling a particular situation. In sum, a Balanced Mentoring Style indicates that mentor and protege are disposed to work together at all Levels of Gray's Mentor-Protege Relationship Model. This is a necessary first step for developing *Mentoring Style Appropriateness* – a *match* between Mentoring Style, protege needs, and the urgency and requirements of the Situation.

## STEP 5: Compare Preferred Mentoring Styles

1. In the appropriate space below, record the letter + symbol (e.g., C#) of your four choices for Situation 1. *Do this for the other 7 Situations.*

Situation	Mentor's Preferred Style of Helping				Protege's Preferred Style of Mentoring			
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								

2. Compare your responses with those of your partner:

- Which Situations did you and your partner *disagree* most about? Discuss why. Was this disagreement due to the *urgency of the Situation?* to the *protege's ability* to handle the Situation? to *other factors?*
- How might this disagreement affect your mentor-protege relationship if you were really in the Situation? *Could you work together* successfully and harmoniously? Why or, why not?
- What would you both *need to do* to be better able to work together in those Situations where you most disagreed? How would you make the necessary changes?
- For those Situations where you and your partner *agreed*, why did this happen? Was this agreement due to the nature of the *Situation?* to the *protege's ability* to handle the Situation? to *other factors?*

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## STEP 6: Develop a Plan for Increasing Mentoring Style Appropriateness

1. I will do these things to increase the flexibility and appropriateness of my mentoring style:

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2. The following are signs that my mentoring style has become more flexible and appropriate:

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## STEP 7: Find Out Your Mentoring Style Appropriateness

Mentoring Style Appropriateness (MSA) refers to how appropriately the help a mentor *prefers providing* matches what a protege actually needs to handle a particular situation. MSA also refers to how appropriately the help a protege *prefers receiving* matches what the protege needs to handle that particular situation. The type of help needed depends on the protege's experience and ability to handle the situation, and how unfamiliar or difficult the situation is. If you want to find out how closely your ranking of the four Mentoring Styles *matches* protege needs and ability to handle the 8 Situations described in the front part of this booklet, contact the **International Centre for Mentoring**.

- We can computer score your responses on page 7 to calculate your **MSA Score** plus an **interpretation** of it.
- We can calculate how compatible the preferred mentoring style is for each Mentor-Protege pair. This **compatibility score** suggests which M-P pairs might experience difficulty relating and working together in a M-P relationship.
- We have developed a **Mentoring Style Appropriateness Scale** that mentors and proteges can use to rate the appropriateness of their partner's and their own **actual mentoring behaviors**.
- We can correlate scores on the **MSI** and the **MSA Scale** to determine how closely a mentor's (or protege's) **predisposition** to prefer a particular mentoring style corresponds to **actual behaviors**.

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## APPENDIX 5

## TEACHER MENTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Part One - Introductory

I would like to thank you for participating in this study on the teacher mentor program at the school. Your responses to these questions will be used to determine those positive practises that mentors use, the nature of the teacher mentor and student protege relationship, and what procedures need to be in place to develop an effective mentoring program. Your participation in this interview will be anonymous and your responses will not be linked to you. After the study is completed, if you wish, I will pass on to you my conclusions and recommendations. This interview should last no more than 45 minutes to one hour. If some questions are not clear, please let me know so that I can rephrase them for you. There are no right or wrong answers and you may not have a response to a particular question.

Perhaps we can begin with some background information.

1. How many years have you been teaching?
2. What is your general subject area?

3. What grade levels do you teach or come in contact with?
4. Now with specific reference to mentoring, What is mentoring, that is, what does mentoring mean to you?

- Probes:
- What is the purpose of mentoring?
  - What is the role of a mentor?
  - Have you had previous experience with mentoring?
    - Have you had a mentor yourself in the past?
    - Have you ever mentored anyone before?

5. What are your thoughts on the training that you were given concerning mentoring?

- Probes:
- How much did you receive?
  - How important do you think this is?

## Part Two - Relationships

1. How do you see your responsibility as compared to the responsibility of the student protege?

Probes: - What do you feel are your responsibilities?  
- What do you feel are the student's responsibilities?

2. How do you view the relationship that was established between you and your student proteges?

Probes: - Was it positive or negative?  
- How do you know that it was positive or negative?  
- What should be avoided?

3. What about the responsibilities of other parties in the program?

Probes: - The administration?  
- The parents?  
- Other teachers?  
- The program co-ordinator?  
- The teacher aide?

4. What about the students that you mentored? How do you feel they made out when considering all aspects of what took place during this past year?

Probes: - Do you feel that you made a difference in their lives?

- At school?

- Away from school?

- Did they become more self-reliant?

- Did their attendance improve?

- Did their grades improve?

- Did their participation in school activities improve?



## Part Three - Conclusion

1. How do you feel in general about your experience as a teacher mentor?

Probes: - How did your experience as a mentor go this year?

- What satisfactions have you experienced?
- Do you have any regrets?
- Could you give me an example?
- Is this a worthwhile program?
- Should all schools have this program?

2. What characteristics do you consider to be essential for you as a mentor to accomplish the goals of the mentoring program?

Probes: - What are the good strategies?

- What should not be done?

3. What aspects of the program would you change or alter to make it more effective?

Probes: - What changes would make your job as a mentor easier?

- Can you give me examples?

I would like to thank you for giving me your time today for this interview. Your responses will be very helpful for me in my study. Once again I want to tell you that your responses will not be associated with you and that you will remain anonymous. Thank you again for your help.

## STUDENT PROTEGE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Part One - Introductory

I would like to thank you for participating in this study on the teacher mentor program at the school. Your responses to these questions will be used to determine those things that teachers do that make them good teacher advisors and mentors. Your participation in this interview will be anonymous and your responses will not be linked to you. The interview should last less than an hour. If a question is not clear, please let me know so that I can rephrase it for you. There are no right or wrong answers and you may not have a response for a particular question.

Perhaps we could begin with some background information.

1. What was your grade level this past year?
2. What subjects did you take last year?
3. What were your grades at the end of the year?
4. Is this your first year at the school?

5. Were you experiencing any particular difficulties at your previous school?

6. Did your Teacher Advisor inform you at the start of the year that you were in the Mentoring Program?

Probes: - When was this done?

- Do you know why you were selected?

- How do you feel about it?

7. Do you consider yourself to be at risk of not completing high school?

Probes: - Why do you say that?

- Do you work as hard as you can?

- Do you get much help from others?

- Who are they?

## Part Two - Relationships

1. Did you have anyone at the school last year that you felt you could talk freely with without the fear or worry about punishment for what you said or how you said it?

Probes: - What types of things did you talk about?

- Why do you feel that you could talk to him/her?

- What was it about him/her that made it easy for you to talk?

- What about your teacher advisor?

- Why do you feel that you could/could not do the same with him/her?

2. When you meet with your teacher advisor and mentor, what do you talk about?

Probes: - Do you consider yourself a person that is easy to talk to?

- What about your teacher advisor?

- Is he/she easy to talk to?

3. What qualities do you think that a teacher mentor should have in order to make these meeting go smoothly and be of help to you?

Probes: - What should he/she do?

- What should he/she not do?

- Should the teacher mentor give advice?

- What are some of the things that the teacher mentor does or could do to make you feel comfortable?
- Are there any other ways of describing a good teacher mentor?

4. What do you think are the responsibilities of the student as compared to the responsibilities of the teacher in this teacher mentoring procedure?

- Prompts:
- What do you feel are your responsibilities?
  - What are the responsibilities of the teacher mentor?

5. How did the relationship that you had with your teacher mentor this past year help you?

- Prompts:
- How did it help you in school?
  - In your own personal life?

## Part Three - Conclusion

1. As far as you are concerned personally, how do you feel about the program and contacts with your teacher mentor?

Probes: - What was the most satisfying experience?

- Why do you say that?

- What was the least satisfying?

- Why do you say that?

2. What about those matters that are school related? Did you improve in those during the year?

Prompts: - In attendance?

- In grades?

- In assignments and homework?

- In participation in school activities?

3. Now that the school year is over, what do you feel are the good things that came out of your meetings with your teacher mentor?

Prompts: - What are the things that you feel good about?

- Do you feel any differently about school now than at the start of the year?

- How do you feel about next year?

4. If you could change something in the program for next year, what would it be?

Probes: - Are you satisfied with the way the school tries to do things as they relate to students in this program?

- Do you feel that the school is inviting to students?

I would like to thank you for giving me your time today for this interview. Your responses will be very helpful for me in my study. Once again I want to tell you that your responses will not be associated with you and that you will remain anonymous. Thank you again for your help.



## APPENDIX 6

## Parent's Letter of Permission

Mr. R.L. Blais

June 18, 1991

R

Dear Mr. Blais,

I give permission for my son/daughter \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in your research study based upon an interview of between 45 minutes and 1 hour. I understand the content of the interview will relate to his/her experiences in, and perceptions of, the teacher advisor mentoring program that took place during the 1990 - 91 school year. I am aware that this research has the support of the School Division and the school. I also understand that \_\_\_\_\_'s participation will be anonymous, that no responses will be identified with him/her, and that he/she may withdraw from the study at any time.

I request / do not request (please circle) a copy of the results of the study.

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(Signature of Researcher)

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(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

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(Date)

## APPENDIX 7

## Participant's Consent to Participate

Mr. R.L. Blais

June 18, 1991

R

Dear Mr. Blais,

I agree to participate in your research study of the teacher advisor mentoring program that took place at the school during the 1990 - 91 school year. My participation will involve one interview of approximately one hour, taking place at a pre-arranged location and time. I am aware that this research has the support of the School Division and the school. I understand that my participation in the study will be anonymous, that no responses will be associated with me and that I may withdraw from the study at any time.

I request / do not request (please circle) a copy of the results of the study.

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(Signature of Researcher)

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(Signature of Participant)

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(Date)