

Match Monitoring: Questions to Guide Mentoring Professionals

Match monitoring is an essential component of successful mentoring programs and fulfills a variety of needs. Talking to mentors, mentees, and parents on a regular basis is an important tool for risk management and has been found to lead to stronger, longer lasting relationships. In fact, programs that do not have regular contact with mentors and mentees report the greatest percentage of failed matches.

This resource was created with input from mentoring professionals who attended *Matching, Monitoring, and Match Closure*, a full day professional development workshop offered by Mentor Michigan in partnership with Michigan State University Extension. These questions will help staff members in their efforts to make sure matches are meeting regularly and manage mentor and mentee expectations. If problems or concerns are identified they can be addressed and resolved. Staff members should not ask each of these questions at each check-in, rather, they should determine which questions will best help them assess the quality of the relationship, identify concerns, and provide an opportunity for youth, mentors, and parents to receive support.

Monitoring Questions to Ask Mentors

- How are things going?
- How do you feel about being a mentor? Are you having fun?
- How can I help or support you?
- What recent activities have you participated with your mentee in lately? How much time do you spend together and how often are you meeting?
- How is school going for your mentee?
- How do you think your relationship is developing?
- Do you talk on the telephone? If so, what do you talk about?
- What have you learned from your mentee?
- Is there anything you would change about your relationship with your mentee, and if so, what?
- Are there any challenges you are facing with scheduling, planning activities, accessing resources, etc?
- Do you have any concerns regarding your mentee or his/her family?
- How is your life outside of your match?
- Have you had any major life changes of which the program should be made aware?
- Do you have any questions or concerns about the program? Do you have any suggestions for program improvement?
- How does your mentee behave when you are in public together?
- What's the best part of your relationship? What areas do you see for possible growth or development?
- What goals do you and your mentee have for your relationship? How are those goals progressing?
- Talk me through the last three meetings you've had with your mentee.
- How much money do you spend when you meet with your mentee?
- Have you noticed any changes in your mentee (positive or negative)?

- Have your expectations about this relationship and your participation in our program changed at all? If so, why?
- What do you have planned for your next meeting with your mentee?

Monitoring Questions for Mentees

- Do you like your mentor? Why/ why not?
- What has been your favorite thing about having a mentor?
- What is your favorite thing that you have done together? Least favorite?
- How often do you meet?
- What, if anything, would you change about your mentoring relationship?
- What can you teach your mentor?
- What have you taught your mentor?
- What activity haven't you gotten to do yet with your mentor that you would like to try?
- How do you decide what you are going to do when you meet?
- Were there any times with your mentor where you felt uncomfortable, nervous, unsafe, or scared?
- How would you describe your mentor?
- If you went swimming during your meeting, where did you change into your bathing suit?
- What did you do during your last meeting?
- If you rode in the car with your mentor, did you wear a seat belt? Was your mentor a safe driver? Why or why not?
- When you meet with your mentor, does anyone else join you?
- What goals do you and your mentor have for your relationship? Is your mentor helping you work on any personal goals? If so, what? How are those goals progressing?
- How is school going? Does your mentor help you with school work?
- Are you having fun with your mentor? Why or why not?
- What is your favorite thing to do with your mentor and why?
- What do you like most about your mentor? What do you like least?
- Do you feel you are benefitting from having a mentor? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Would you like to continue this match?
- How comfortable with your mentor are you?
- Do you ever thank your mentor or show appreciation? How?
- Do you have any questions?
- Is there anything else that you want me to know?

Monitoring Questions for Parents/Guardians and Other Referring Parties

- How do you feel the mentoring relationship is going?
- How often does the mentor contact the child? How frequently do they meet?
- Are you communicating with the mentor?
- How do you feel about this match?
- Do you have any questions or feedback for me?
- Does your child seem to enjoy meeting with his/her mentor? Why or why not?
- How does your child behave or respond after meeting with his or her mentor?

- Have you noticed any positive signs of change in your child? Have you noticed any negative signs of change?
- Do you have any questions or concerns regarding the program? Do you have any suggestions for program improvement?
- Do you have any court/foster care/school updates of which the program should be made aware?
- Has your family experienced any major life changes of which the program should be made aware?
- Is there anything you would like us to share with your child's mentor?
- Have you seen any marked improvement in the youth? If so, what?
- Do you have any concerns?
- What has the youth said about the match?
- Is there appropriate communication between the mentor and yourself?
- Are there any other ways the program can assist your family?
- Are there certain topics/ activities you would like the mentor to explore with your child?
- Are there certain activities/ topics you would like the mentor to stop doing with your child?
- What is the best way to contact/ communicate with you?

Other Suggestions for Match Monitoring

- The bulk of match supervision should occur face-to-face or through phone calls.
- Provide positive reinforcement to mentors, mentees, and parents and thank them for their participation.
- Make sure there is a "cooling off" period if individuals are very emotional.
- Consider the pros and cons of electronic communication (email, text messages, etc) given the mentor, mentee, and parent's level of comfort and access to technology.
- Involve school/court/other contacts if appropriate.