

Lake Avenue Community Foundation
Mentor Training Manual - 2009

Preface

Welcome to the wonderful world of mentoring. This mentor manual is intended to provide you with resources which will assist you as your progress as a mentor over the course of your mentoring experience. We cannot overestimate the importance of three key practices as you interact with your student. Share from your heart, listen carefully, and pray. By doing these three things, you will help to create an environment where trust can be normative.

You are truly doing work called for by the Lord as you spend time with His children and seek to affirm what He is doing in the life. We pray that your prayer life will be strengthened during this time and that you will have discernment as you provide advice to the next generation of leaders.

Appreciation,

The Lake Avenue Community Foundation Mentoring Team
www.lakeave.org/mentoring

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Reality of Mentoring

WHAT IS MENTORING?

During the fourth century there was an Asiatic monk who spent most of his life in a remote community of prayer, studying and raising vegetables for the cloister kitchen. When he was not tending his garden spot, he was happily fulfilling his vocation of study and prayer. A mentor is a caring adult who intentionally spends time with a young person in order to help them become the person God intended.

A Mentor is a

- Friend
- Coach
- Teacher
- Role Model

A Mentor is not a

- Parent
- Professional counselor
- Peer
- Caretaker/enabler

A Mentor helps

- By listening and asking questions to draw out the youth.
- By encouraging and giving positive feedback.
- By looking for resources.
- By being an advocate.
- By being an adult who can be trusted.
- By challenging behavior that has negative consequences.
- By being honest and open about who they are.
- By resolving conflicts with the student as they arise.
- By teaching the youth about God and the Bible.

“Affirming words...are like light switches. Speak a word of affirmation at the right moment in a child’s life and it’s like lighting up a whole roomful of possibilities.”

-Gary Smalley and John Trent from *Leaving the Lights On*.

Mentoring is about

- Consistency not frequency
- Listening, not dictating
- Flexibility

Mentoring is relevant, meaningful and do-able

- Relevant...everyone needs someone to serve as a guide and model in order to live life successfully
- Meaningful...relationships have a life-long impact particularly when a life is young.

- Do-able...foundationally, human beings are social beings and interact with others on a daily basis. Relating to others as in mentoring, is a natural skill.

Additional ways to think about mentoring and how you can do it

- Mentoring is flexible enough to fit into anyone's life.
- Mentoring is time-sharing, not time-consuming. You can include in activities you already do.
- You have something of value to give to young people.
- You can prepare a young person for adulthood.

Mentoring an at-risk child brings value to your life

- You will be a good, trusting friend
- You will enrich your own life, expand your horizons, and contribute to your personal development.

Time Commitment

Each mentor is asked to make a commitment of at least 16 months, and commit to meeting with their student(s) two to five hours per week, communicate regularly with their mentor coach, attend trainings and twice-a-year training weekends.

Matching Students and Mentors

Students interested in participating in the mentoring program complete an application that gives them the opportunity to express themselves, their interests, and what they hope to glean from having a mentor. We then pair students with mentors that we believe will be compatible. The parents of the students are then contacted by a mentor coach, and an initial meeting is set. The mentor coach, mentor and student(s) meet together for a casual interaction, usually over dinner or small activity. The goal of this first meeting is to familiarize the student with the potential mentor, and verbalize expectations. If the student and mentor sense it's a good match and they are ready to pursue a mentoring relationship, they will move forward. It's typical for the mentor coach to be present in the initial get-togethers, until a sense of trust develops and the relationship flourishes.

What does it cost to be a mentor?

Being a mentor is not free. In terms of financial cost, Lake Avenue Community Foundation does not cover the costs of incidentals incurred while meeting with your student. It's very helpful (but not required) if you can contribute to cover training costs and materials.

Would I be a good mentor?

To be a good mentor, you must be willing to give of your time, learn from the student you are mentoring, have boundaries and know when to say "no," open up your heart, and push through struggles as your relationship grows.

Do I have to be a Christian to be a mentor?

As a faith-based organization, mentors with Lake Avenue Community Foundation are expected to be mature in their faith in Christ and meet the following criteria: You must be a follower of Christ. This will be evident not only in the testimony of your relationship with God, but by the fruits of your actions that indicate a genuine commitment and personal integrity. You must have an earnest desire to love and serve students. You are expected to recognize how God has blessed and uniquely gifted you, and use these blessings and gifts for equipping the student you are serving. You are also charged with encouraging your students to discover their unique gifts, and work to develop those gifts.

You must be an active participant of a local Church for at least one year prior to becoming a mentor. We ask that you agree to volunteer as a mentor for a minimum of one year, but prefer that your relationship with your students continue through adulthood. We place a high priority on equipping and training our mentors. You are expected to stay actively engaged with your mentor coach on a regular basis.

What if something comes up that I don't know how to deal with?

Call your mentor coach and they can talk you through it.

Leadership Principles

Be Respected	Make your aim respect, not popularity.
Be Expectant	Expect the best from your students.
Be Accepting of Differences	Avoid categorizing students.
Be a Teacher	Seek to stretch: balance the physical, mental, and spiritual.
Be Enthusiastic	Be supportive of program and activities.
Be Patient	Realize that trusting relationships take time to develop.
Be an In-Process Person	Help students know that you are still growing, maturing and discovering with them.
Be Honest	Be willing to admit that you were wrong.
Be a Listener	Listen for true feelings rather than surface words.
Be Understanding	Try to "feel with" a student, helping them feel understood and worthy.
Be Affirming	Offer positive reinforcement. Compliment positive behavior.
Be Shock Proof	Avoid shock reaction to personal "horror stories."
Be a Confidant	Keep the trust of those who share in confidence.
Be Fair	Make any discipline fit the misbehavior.

UNDERSTANDING URBAN YOUTH

(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory in psychology that Abraham Maslow proposed in his 1943 paper *A Theory of Human Motivation*, which he subsequently extended. His theory contends that as humans meet 'basic needs', they seek to satisfy successively 'higher needs' that occupy a set hierarchy. Maslow studied exemplary people such as Albert Einstein, Jane Addams, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Frederick Douglass rather than mentally ill or neurotic people, writing that "the study of crippled, stunted, immature, and unhealthy specimens can yield only a cripple psychology and a cripple philosophy." (*Motivation and Personality*, 1987)

Diagram of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

1. Physiological
2. Safety
3. Love/Belonging
4. Esteem
5. Actualization



Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often depicted as a pyramid consisting of five levels: the four lower levels are grouped together as deficiency needs associated with physiological needs, while the top level is termed growth needs associated with psychological needs. While our deficiency needs must be met, our being needs are continually shaping our behavior. The basic concept is that the higher needs in this hierarchy only come into focus once all the needs that are lower down in the pyramid are mainly or entirely satisfied. Growth forces create upward movement in the hierarchy, whereas regressive forces push proponent needs further down the hierarchy.

A Framework for Understanding Poverty

Ruby Payne states that in order to successfully change classes from poverty to middle or upper-class, people need to have five of these eight resources. Poverty is the #1 social determinant of high-risk behavior. Different classes value aspects of life differently. See the chart below.

Aspect of Life	Poverty/Lower Class	Middle Class	Upper Class
Money	use it and spend it	manage it	conserve & invest it
Food	quantity is important	quality is important	presentation is important
Time	live in the present	live in the future	live in the past through traditions
Education	abstractly valued	crucial for success	valuable for connections
Driving Force	survival, relationships & entertainment	work & achievement	financial, social, and political connection

(Adapted from “Framework for Understanding Poverty” by Ruby Payne)

What not to do

- A culturally unaware mentor is most likely to impose his own values and worldview onto others or to make negative value judgments of others.
- Success in a relationship recognizes that two individuals have each invested in the relationship.
- If a relationship fails, it is often the case that both individuals have not invested enough or that communication has not been optimum.
- Develop an awareness of values and biases and how they affect others.
- Cultural blindness can sometimes hurt a relationship because it negates the qualities and uniqueness of a person’s identity.

What to do

- Develop an awareness of the others history, experiences, cultural values and lifestyle.
- The greater the depth of knowledge that he/she has of other cultures, the more effective a mentor can be.

Family Culture

- Family is important in the urban setting.
- Youth often grow up in expanded types of families- types that extend beyond parents and siblings to include grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and even foster siblings and relatives.
- There is a strong bond and deep loyalty in these systems and should be respected.

- Oftentimes outsiders are not allowed to get close to the family until trust and loyalty is established.
- Youth learn early on to protect their families; sometimes this is the only thing that the family has control over.

Ways to build a relationship with your student's family

- Remember that most people are doing the best that they can.
- Emphasize the person and the relationship versus the culture that surrounds and shapes the person.
- Seek to know and develop a relationship with the family as well as the youth.
- Look for common ground with the youth and the family.
- Recognize that people of color and low-income individuals tend to be bi-cultural, not mono-cultural.
- Remember that in spite of cultural differences, you can still affect change in a student's life.

The Culture of Urban Youth: Creativity, Resilience & Resourcefulness

- Urban youth often have to make creative choices from seemingly impossible situations.
- They survive despite of poverty, abuse, violence and other bad things occurring regularly in their lives.

Carl S. Taylor

www.juyc.org

“Today urban youth culture is the dominating force in the life of most young people and this is not only true throughout the United States; it is true throughout the world. Young people are connected to each other in ways never seen before. Today's youth are not solely dependent on their parents or traditional means for their knowledge and opinions. More and more frequently they are independent and as adults many of us do a very poor job of understanding them or even trying to.

Young people today are defining themselves through hip-hop culture, new breeds of alternative music and a host of other methods. The young followers of today's musical genres are the voices of a new school. If America is to meet the challenges that now face our young people and our society, we must recognize the voices of our young people; we must understand their challenges and needs. If we are sincere in our endeavors to understand what is taking place with our young people, we must in earnest research youth culture and we must understand their language and their symbols. Just as Elvis was the face of rock 'n' roll and the personification of a generation, young people today have their own faces and those with whom they identify. To denigrate or demonize the symbols and voices of this generation only widens the gap between the old school and the new school, further exacerbating the problems.

You don't necessarily need to embrace hip-hop or other expressions of youth culture, but it's imperative that it be understood and respected. Failure of generations of parents and adults to attempt to understand and communicate with young people has led to countless incidents of suffering throughout communities. We must ask ourselves how many unfortunate circumstances and situations might have not occurred had the proper interventions been used with a child or young person throughout the years. Today we have the opportunity to begin a new method of thinking and engaging our young for the betterment of our society and ourselves."

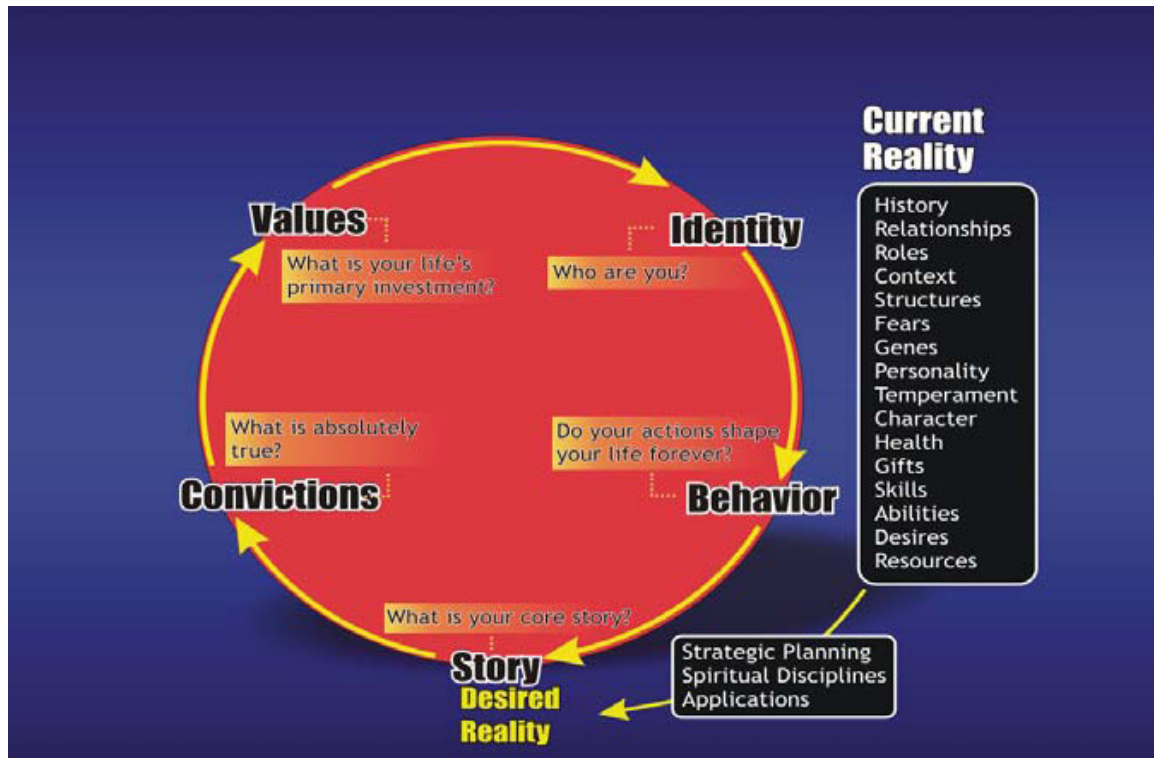
Questions to Ask

Obviously, this is not an exhaustive list of questions that you could ask your students, but hopefully these questions will spur you on into more profitable conversations which will enable you to understand them. Remember, the key to questioning is listening!

1. Tell me about your family.
2. What was your all-time favorite movie and why was it your favorite?
3. What is your favorite sport and why do you like it?
4. What is your favorite song?
5. What would you buy if you found \$5,000 in a vacant lot?
6. What's the toughest thing you have faced in junior high/high school so far?
7. Who is your best friend, and what do you like about him/her?
8. What makes you feel frustrated?
9. What four things are most important in your life right now?
10. Share a time in your life when you were embarrassed.
11. What do you dislike most about yourself?
12. What makes you laugh?
13. What is the most important possession you have?
14. How do you feel when someone laughs at you?
15. How do you feel about growing old?
16. If you were told you had one week to live, how would you spend it?
17. Share a time when your feelings were hurt?
18. What do you think your friends say about you when you're not around?
19. What T.V. or movie star would you like to invite to your house?
20. What do you feel like when you're alone?
21. What do you like most about yourself?
22. How would you define love?
23. What do you think your purpose in life is?
24. If you could make one long-distance phone call, who would you call?
25. What qualities do you look for in a friend?

CONVERSION MODEL

-Curt Gibson



The story conversion is fairly basic. It basically shows us the approach in which to create relationship and assist in conversion. In ministry, behavior is usually the starting place. It is thought that if you can change the behavior, you can change the person. This line of thinking results in lessons that say "You shouldn't do this" or "You should do this." But, how do you tell someone to forget their entire reality and make a behavioral change?

It is our belief that you should begin with someone's story and end with behavior. If you take the time to learn what a student's current reality is and how this shapes their convictions, you learn their values which in turn creates their identity and therefore their behavior. The change here comes as you understand the student. By establishing mentoring relationships with positive role models we focus on students at a convictional level, which brings about marked changes in a student's identity. In turn this affects their value system ultimately bringing about a positive change in their overall behavior and lifestyle.

Story

You begin with a student's story. What is their current reality? Find out who they are, where they have come from where they are now.

Convictions

In light of their story, talk to them about what their convictions are. What do they find is absolutely true? Find out what makes them say this is right and that is wrong.

Values

And from their convictions, what do they value? Friends, family, money, school, power? Have them outline what they spend the majority of their time investing in. Have them draw it out like a pie chart.

Identity

What you value makes up your identity. In light of the students values, who do they believe themselves to be?

Behavior

Behavior affects identity. Your actions shape your life. Are you happy with this? What does this mean for you?

SPIRIT-LED MINISTRY

-Dr. Gabe Veas

As we embark on our journey as mentors, we must understand that we are following a tradition that goes back to the New Testament. Jesus reached individuals where they were at, then sent these same folks out to make an impact on the world. Apart from a total reliance on God, a community of supportive people, and a healthy prayer life our mentoring ministry will fall short. We need to rely on God for direction as we provide guidance to the next generation or we will minister out of emptiness.

In Luke 10:1-24, Jesus outlines a model for us to go forward and make an impact on a community. Let's look to the passage to see what happened as Jesus sent folks out.

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.' But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.' I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

"Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

"He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing

will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."

Looking to the Passage

Just as back then, Jesus is our leader & provides us with our assignments both as individuals and as a organizations

- Jesus chooses who to send
- Jesus chooses where to send
- Jesus chooses what should be done
- Jesus chooses the direction that should be taken

Learning to hear God's voice is of the highest importance

- We need to know that God sent us when things get tough
- Therefore it is important to constantly be in the word & to pray in order to provide opportunities to hear what God desires for us

BOTTOM LINE: WE ARE NOT IN CHARGE!

Going through the passage, it is important to note what Jesus called for them to do

- Sends them in pairs so they will not be alone (v. 1)
- Asks them to pray for more workers to serve the community (v. 2)
- Warns them about challenges that will emerge (v. 3)
- Assures them that God will provide finances (v. 4)
- Calls for them not to be sidetracked (v. 4)
- Wants them to go into homes (v. 5)
- Find those who are receptive (v. 6)
- Be relational and stick with those who receive you (v. 7)
- Eat with them (v. 8)
- Pray for their healing (v. 9)
- Share the Gospel (v. 10)
- Be realistic but don't be discouraged (v. 11)

What were the results of the activity in this chapter?

-The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name" (v. 17)

What was Jesus' response?

-At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children." (v. 21)

-Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it." (v. 23-24)

God's heart is truly reflected in this passage and in others

-Jesus paints a great image of his compassion for the people of God

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how long have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings... (Luke 13:34)

-We need to view God's People as Jesus views them

Through intercession & interacting with the community, God will begin to transform our hearts

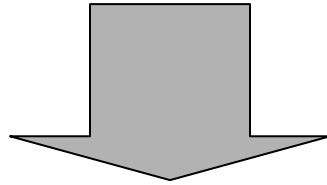
BOTTOM LINE: JESUS' HEART IS FOR THE LOST!

Practice of Mentoring

CONSTELLATION OF MENTORING

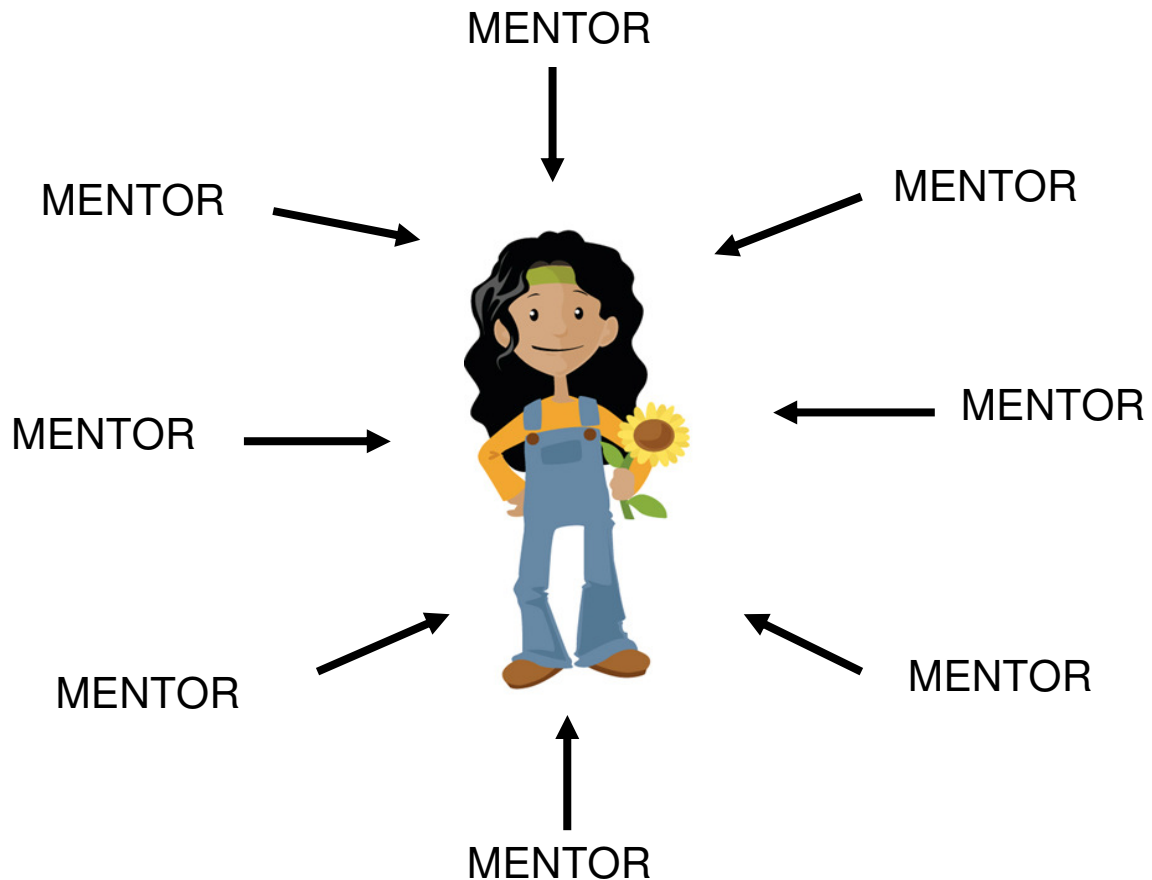
-Dr. Bobby Clinton

ALL-ENCOMPASSING MENTOR



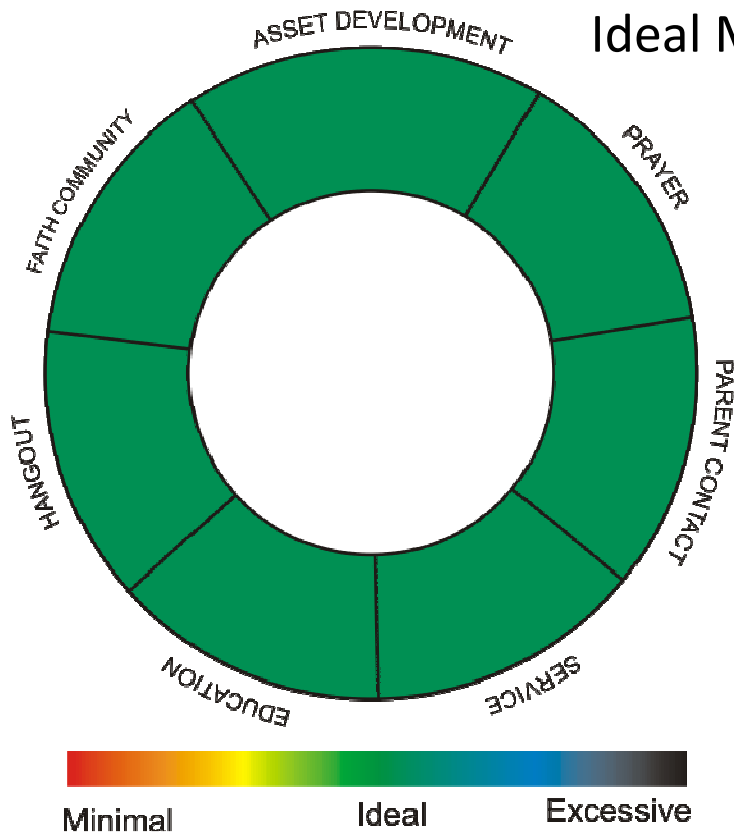
For many people, when they think about being a mentor, the first thing that comes to mind is the image of a guru. A guru is a person who is an end-all-be-all authority in life with all the resources and answers. This is best summarized with the image above of the all-encompassing mentor who is the sole individual in the student's life that is responsible for ensuring that their student is successful. This is not our vision for you as a mentor.

CONSTELLATION OF MENTORS



The image above better describes the vision that we as a mentoring program have in terms of your role as a mentor. You are in a sense a facilitator who is helping to bring additional caring adults into the life of your student. Instead of seeking to be the one person that your student has to go to in life, we are hoping that a community of caring adults will be cultivated around your student in order to help them become healthy adults.

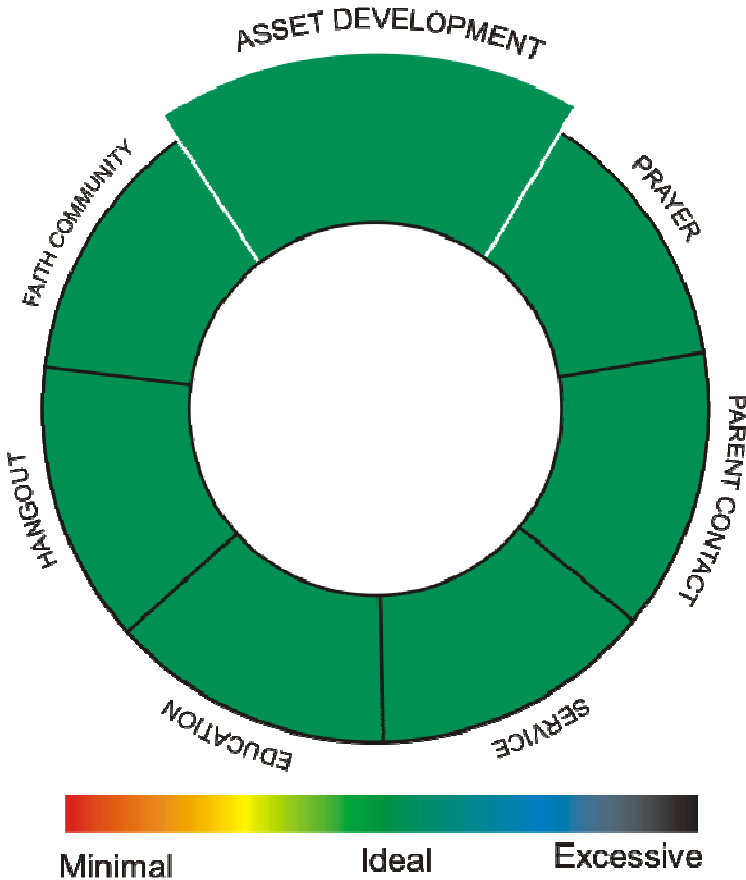
MENTOR WHEEL



Ideal Mentor Relationship

As a mentoring organization, we have sought to provide clear expectations on what we expect from mentors. It is from this perspective that we developed the Mentor Wheel, which illustrates seven areas which we desire for you to build upon in your mentoring relationship. Essentially, this brings into focus our perspective of holistic youth ministry. We desire that you play a role in helping to “round out” your student’s life and help them to develop into who God has called them to be.

ASSET DEVELOPMENT



Asset Development
Mentor values the 40 Developmental Assets and seeks to increase assets in student's life.

To evaluate LACF's Mentoring Program overall and individual success, we use the objectives of the Search Foundation's "40 Developmental Assets"¹ subscribed to us by The City of Pasadena, the Pasadena Unified School District, and LACF. The Search Institute has surveyed over two million youth across the United States and Canada since 1989. Researchers have learned about the experiences, attitudes, behaviors, and the number of Developmental Assets at work for these young people. Studies reveal strong and consistent relationships between the number of assets present in young people's lives and the degree to which they develop in positive and healthful ways. Results show that the greater the numbers of Developmental Assets are experienced by young people, the more positive and successful their development. The fewer the number of assets present, the greater the possibility youth will engage in risky behaviors such as drug use, unsafe sex, and violence.²

Upon entering the LACF Mentoring Program, each student's asset base of social and behavioral development is measured. On average, students that enter our program

¹ Attachment 1; Source: www.search-institute.org/assets

² <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/importance.html>

have an approximately 12 of the 40 assets. The average calculation of these measured assets allows us to accurately address the needs of our students and the community. Based on the individual results of each student's initial assessment, long-term and short-term goals are then established. Mentors invest a total of over 300 hours evaluating students quarterly to record individual progress through a survey and interview process. It is our goal for each student to gain at least four to eight assets per year. We are pleased to report that we are currently averaging an addition of 6 assets per student each year.

Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets are concrete, common sense, positive experiences and qualities essential to raising successful young people. These assets have the power during critical adolescent years to influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible adults.

Research shows mentoring makes a positive difference in academics, behaviors, and social development (Child Trends, 2002) and most parents want other adults to spend time with their kids (Building Strong Families, 2002). However, adults need permission and encouragement from parents (Grading Grown-Ups, 2002)

When you have great mentors you have great asset builders. The development assets are the science behind, **it takes a village to raise a child** philosophy. The 40 Developmental assets fall under 8 categories: support; empowerment; boundaries and expectations; constructive use of time; commitment to learning; positive values; social competencies; and positive identity.

The more developmental assets, the better in the promotion of thriving and in the reduction of risk behaviors. Survey shows that 41% of youth in grades 6-12 have between 11-20 assets. Only 9% maintain 31-40 assets and 15% of youth have 0-10 assets.

Building Assets through Mentoring

- Every adult has a responsibility to mentor
- Every youth needs a mentor
- Parents want and need other adults
- Both formal and informal mentoring matter
- Mentors can intentionally build many assets

It is all about knowing the assets and being intentional about implementing them. By connecting with just one mentor, a student automatically gains 3 assets.

Incorporating Assets into Your Mentor/ Student Relationship

Support

- Focus on developing a strong relationship.
ex. Be intentional and consistent. Do what you do and say what you mean.
- Build relationships with the students parents.
ex. Ask the parent(s)/guardian over for dinner.
ex. When picking up or dropping off a student, make a point to go to the door and say hello.

Empowerment

- Give opportunities for young people to make decisions in the relationship.
- Ask them what they want out of the relationship and respect their ideas.
- Serve others together as a mentor pair.
- A pair mentoring a pair create great perspective.

Boundaries and Expectations

- Set expectations and boundaries with your student.
- Talk through what each of you expect from the relationship; write them out if you need to.
- Limits and appropriate discipline are part of mentoring.
- Be consistent through healthy boundaries and consequences for actions.

Constructive Use of Time

- Introduce young people to opportunities that connect them to their interests.
- Expose them to various activities such as: sports, art, music, mechanics, woodworking, etc...
- Teach young people how to prioritize their time.
- Ex. homework, work, tv/video games, time with friends and extra curricular activities.

Commitment to Learning

- Make tutoring, reading and homework part of the mentoring relationship.
- If you can't do it yourself, find other tutoring options at their school or in the local community.
- Be interested in their school and school work.
- Talk with students as well as parents and teachers to keep up with how students are doing in school.

Positive Values

- Talk about (and model) shared values that are important to you.
- How you treat others & yourself, responsibilities, convictions, your relationship with God.

- Respect young people's perspective.
- LISTEN! Listen more than you talk and create a relationship where they shine, not you.

Social Competencies

- Give opportunities for young people to develop their own social skills.
- Teach appropriate behaviors in public places like a nice restaurant; be prepared for a challenge!
- Expose young people to people and places from other cultures.
- Experience different cultural places and discuss how other cultures compare to their own.

Positive Identity

- Celebrate young people's gifts and passions.
- Explore and encourage them in what they are good at.
- Learn about and support their dreams.
- Create opportunities and conversations to explore their dreams and how to achieve them.



40 Developmental Assets® for Adolescents (ages 12-18)

Search Institute® has identified the following building blocks of healthy development—known as Developmental Assets®—that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



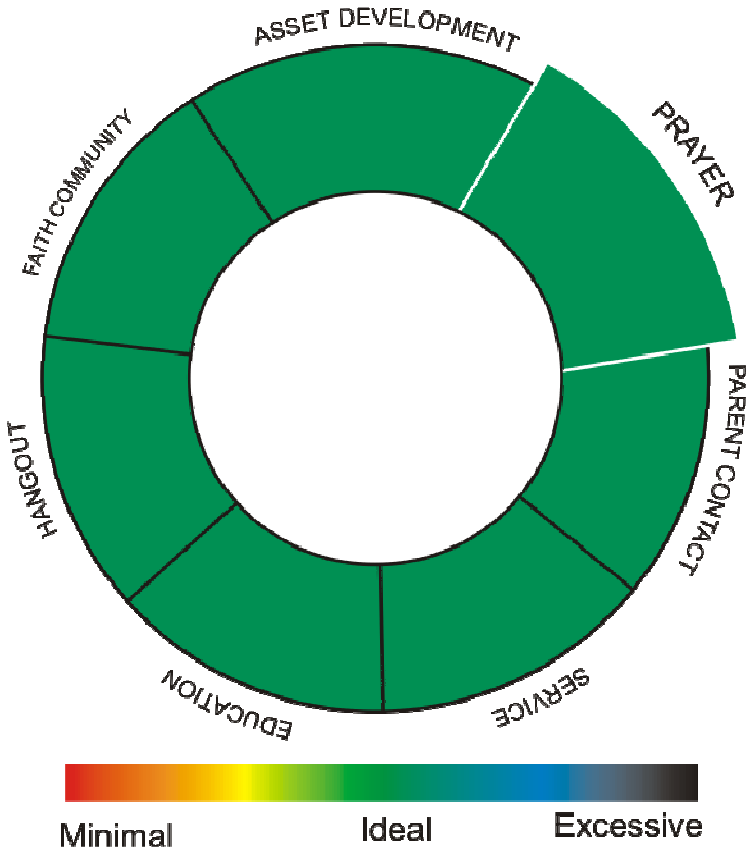
External Assets	Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive family communication—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other adult relationships—Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring neighborhood—Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring school climate—School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.
	Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community values youth—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as resources—Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to others—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood.
	Boundaries & Expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive peer influence—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High expectations—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.
	Constructive Use of Time	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative activities—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth programs—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious community—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at home—Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

Internal Assets	Commitment to Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation—Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement—Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
	Positive Values	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring—Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and social justice—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty—Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.” 30. Responsibility—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.
	Social Competencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and decision making—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance skills—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful conflict resolution—Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.
	Positive Identity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal power—Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.” 38. Self-esteem—Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of purpose—Young person reports that “my life has a purpose.” 40. Positive view of personal future—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

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PRAYER



Prayer

Mentor regularly prays for and with the student and teaches student how to pray. Mentor helps student develop a prayer network around them.

Questions to Ask

What should we pray about today?

Who do you think you could ask to begin praying for you regularly?

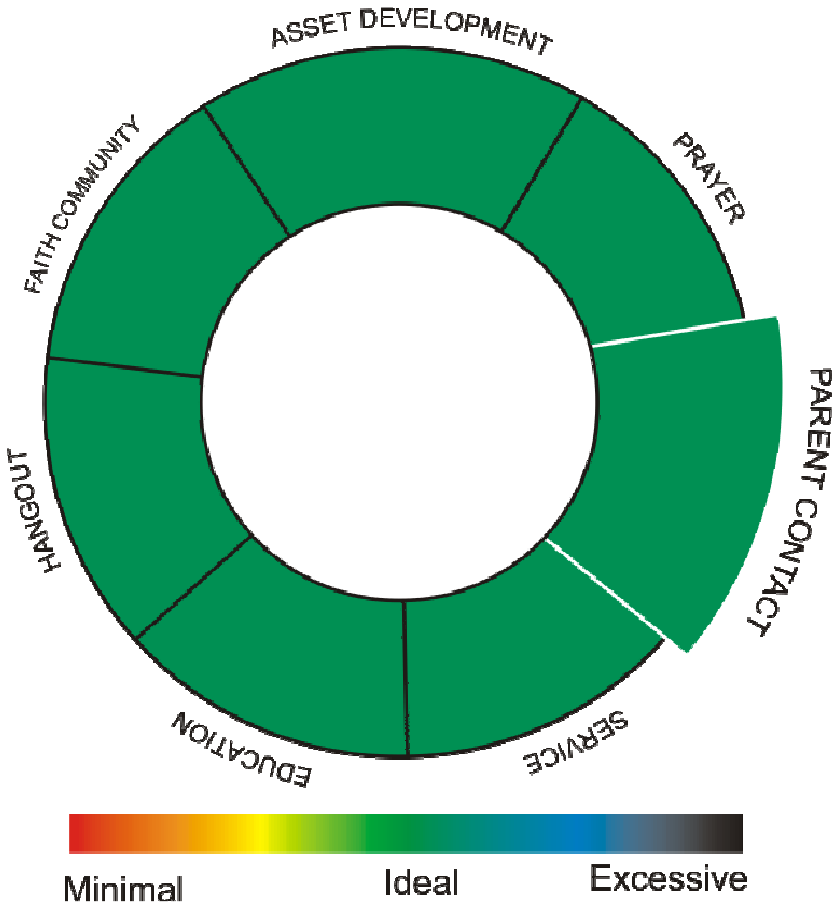
Activities to Do

Prayer walk

Pray before meals

Pray at the end of your time with your student

PARENTAL CONTACT



Parent Contact
Mentor knows and regularly communicates with student's parent(s) about the goals and progress of the student.

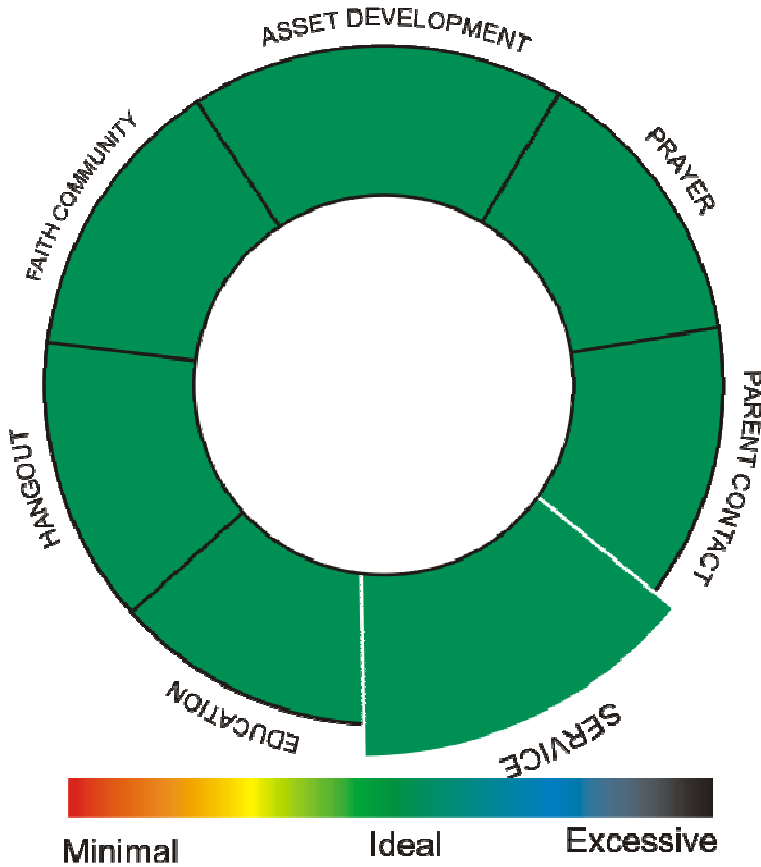
Questions to Ask

How are things going with you and your parents?

Activities to Do

- Have your student & their family over for dinner
- Say hello to parents when you pick-up student
- Say good bye to parents when you drop-off student

SERVICE



Service

Provides opportunities for the student to give of themselves to others in need. Help them develop a heart for service.

Questions to Ask

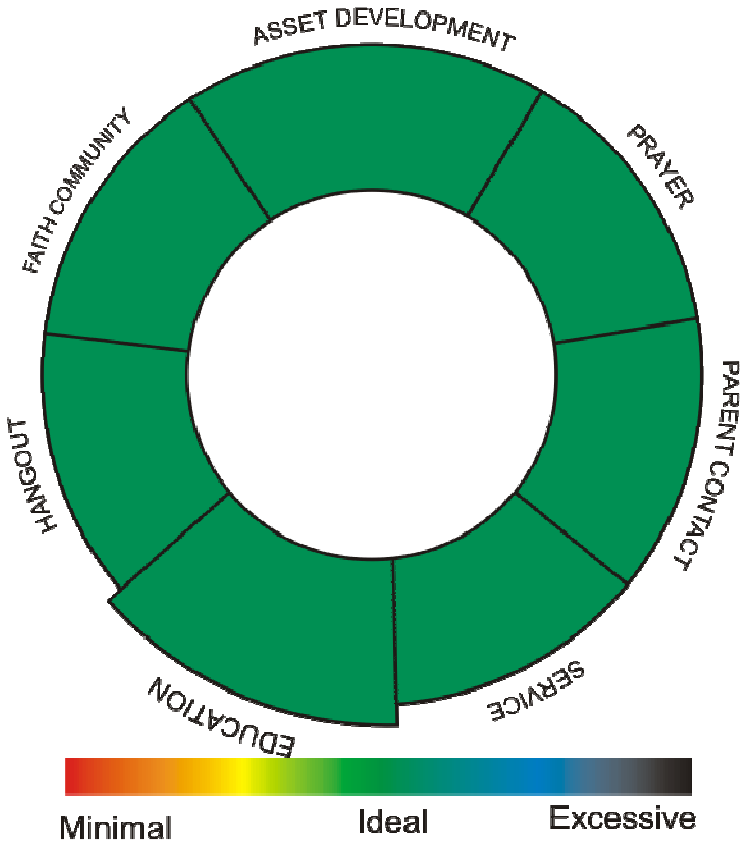
Who in the community do you think needs help?

Activities to Do

Complete a service project

Serve a meal to the homeless at Lake Avenue Church on a Sunday afternoon

EDUCATION



Education

Mentor helps build a positive view of college. Mentor helps student set academic goals and monitors student's progress. Mentor helps student develop the support structures to achieve those goals.

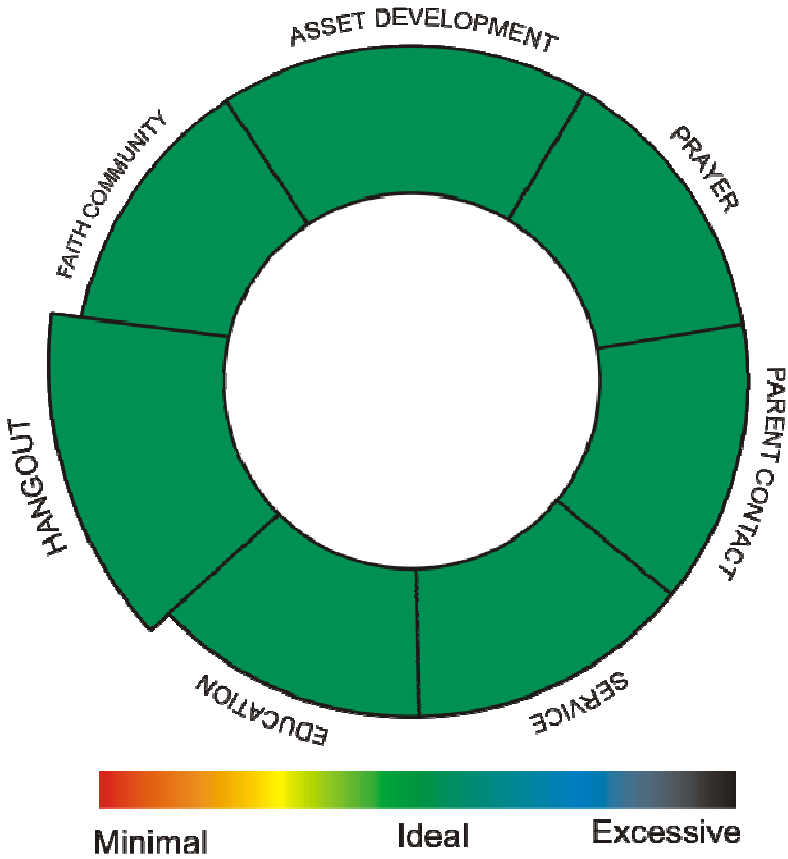
Questions to Ask

- What is your favorite subject?
- Who has been your favorite teacher?
- Why is what you are studying right now, important for your future?

Activities to Do

- Visit a college
- Have student over to do homework or a special project
- Go to a restaurant to celebrate an academic achievement
- Visit a museum
- Go to a cultural event
- Read the same book & discuss it
- Have student visit you at work to understand career opportunities

HANGOUT



Hangout

Student and mentor spend time together sharing life. Examples of these kinds of activities include cooking, gardening, walking the dog, video games, sports, errands, washing the car, etc. This would also include getting to know others in relationship with the mentor (family, friends, etc.).

Questions to Ask

What do you enjoy doing?

What would you like to do, that you haven't done before?

Activities to Do

Go bowling

Movie and discussion

Go for a hike

Play video games

Be a chauffeur on a date

Go fishing

Go work out

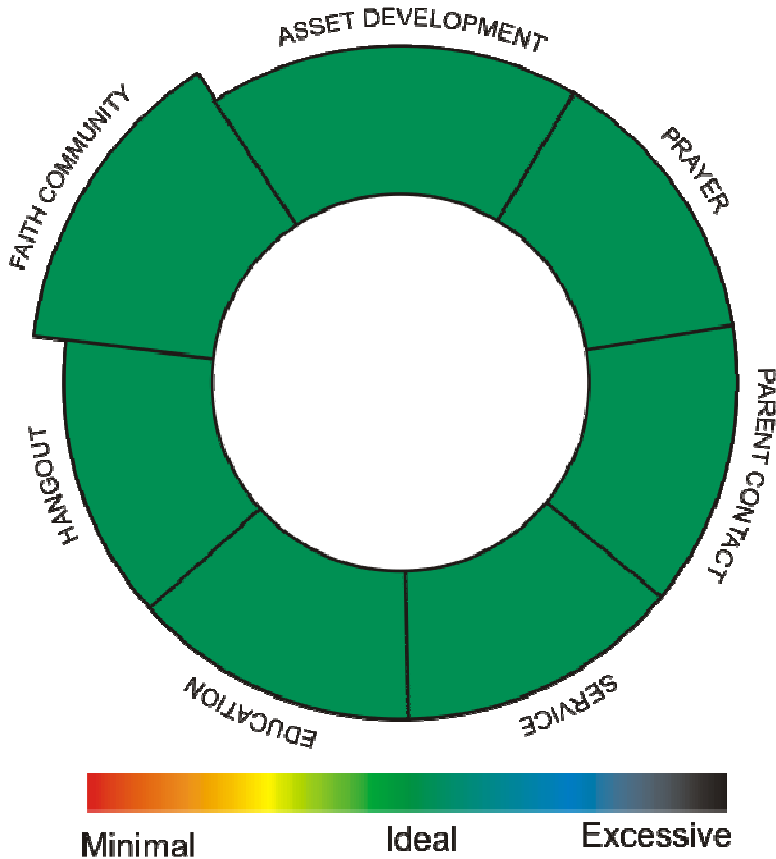
Go to the beach

Go job hunting

Go to a ball game

Chores, Errands

FAITH COMMUNITY



Faith Community

Student is actively involved in a church and the mentor has connected the student to a person in the church who is discipling them.

Questions to Ask Students

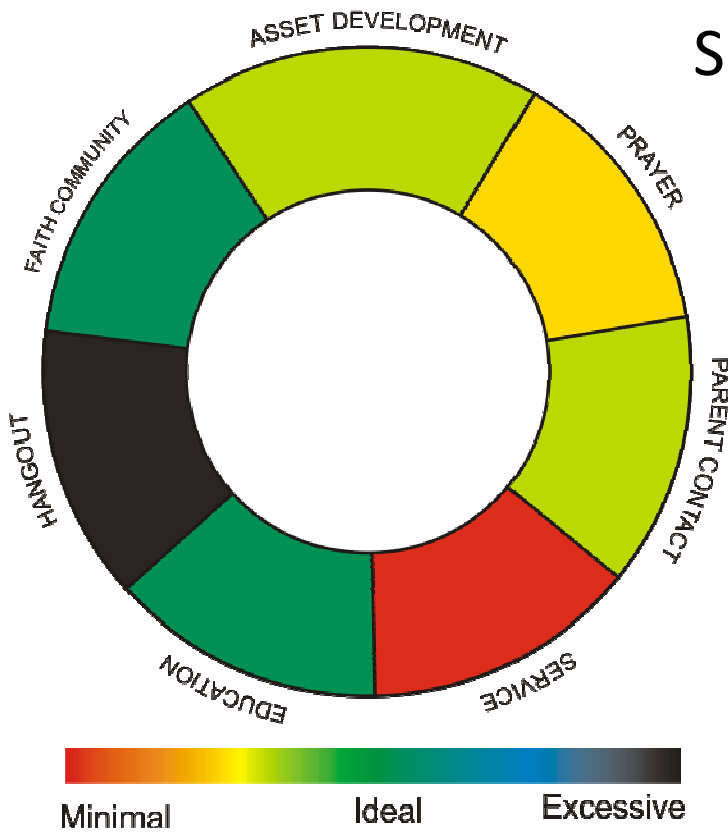
- How would you describe your relationship with God?
- What do you remember what you remember from out last meeting?
- Where did you see God move this past week?

Activities to Do

- Help student connect with a youth group leader
- Take student with you to your church

SAMPLE MENTOR

Sample Mentor



Based upon the image above, the sample mentor appears to be at various levels in each of the seven areas in the Mentoring Wheel. This is common, since mentoring relationships will go through an ebb-and-flow as time passes.

MENTOR-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP SNAPSHOT

Here at the Lake Avenue Community Foundation, we have been working hard to improve our programs and better serve our mentors and students. In this light, we created a brief survey that we have mentors take twice a year, once in the Fall and once in the Spring. The purpose of this survey is to help us get a snapshot of how things are progressing in your mentoring relationship. Again, this survey is intended to gain an accurate representation of where you are at in order to better assist you as a mentor and the organization as a whole. The following statements are provided in order to catch a glimpse of how things went over the past semester. You will be able to select from five choices in regards to most of the statements listed below:

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

MENTOR SATISFACTION

- I look forward to the time I spend with my student.
- My mentoring relationship is meeting my expectations.

MENTOR HEALTH

- I meet with a group of friends who support my mentoring relationship.
- On a weekly basis, I am an active participant in a faith community.
- People close to me (family members, friends, ect.) are supportive of the time and energy that I spend in my mentoring relationship.

HANGOUT TIME

- My student is building relationships with other caring adults (friends, family members, community folks) through hangout time.

FAITH COMMUNITY

- I discuss my student's faith experience with them each month:
- I assist my student to connect with adults regarding their faith experience (pastors, bible study, mentors, church family, para-church organizations, ect.).
- The quality of my relationship with my student is based upon my faith experience.

SERVICE

- My student is building relationships with other caring adults through serving together in community service projects.

EDUCATION

-We discuss my student's academic progress and future goals on a regular basis each month for:

-I assist my student to intentionally communicate with other adults about his/her academic progress (teachers, tutors, college counselor, other professionals, ect.).

PRAYER

-I pray with my student.

-I assist my student in mobilizing a network of people to pray for them.

PARENTAL CONTACT

-I have an open line of communication with parents where we freely touch base with each other.

-I encourage the parents of the student I mentor to build a support system around themselves.

-I maintain my student's trust by not disclosing information to their parents about their student. If you have any questions about this feel free to contact your mentor coach.

ASSET DEVELOPMENT

-I choose specific assets to develop in my student, using the 40 Developmental Assets materials (mentor e-newsletter, Search Institute Website, ect.).

-I am helping my student develop a web of support by leveraging relationships in the community to build assets.

FINANCES PER WEEK

-On average, I spend the following amount of money on my student each time we meet:

FINANCES PER YEAR

-Annually I spend the following amount on gifts for my student:

BOUNDARIES

-I provide transportation to my student outside of the time that I meet with them.

-I have boundaries with my student (e.g. you say "no" necessary).

TIME

-The amount of time that I spend with my student per month is:

-List how your time is spent in the following areas, percentage-wise

HIGHLIGHT

-Please share a highlight from your mentoring relationship over the past few months.

ART OF MENTORING

HEALTHY MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Expectations

The biggest obstacles in mentoring relationships are the expectations of everyone involved. Mentors and students often have unrealistic expectations of each other.

Possible solutions to expectations

- Discuss what you and your student want from the relationship.
- Remember that change takes place over time.

Uneasiness

Everyone develops a worldview and value system to help interpret the world around them. We develop such views/values from the family and community we are born in. When we venture into a different culture, we often become uneasy socially and emotionally. Communication practices that were effective and natural may suddenly be met with resistance from the “other culture.” This culture clash can develop into barriers between the mentor and student.

Possible solutions to uneasiness

- Find common ground with your student
- Learn about and understand the cultural differences.
- Refer your feelings with your mentor coach.

Playing the role of a parent, not a mentor

- Your student has a parent(s)/guardian. Therefore, come alongside the REAL parent to support and empower a healthy role for both parent and child.
- You could harm the parent and child relationship by “taking over.”
- You may encounter resistance and resentment from the parent(s) which could be harmful to your relationship with your student.

Possible solutions to playing the role of a parent

- Establish personal boundaries in the beginning to avoid go beyond the mentor role.
- Forming a relationship with the parent(s) to help you remember you are the mentor.
- Maintain consistent communication with your mentor coach who will help you recognize when you have taken on the parental role.

Loss of contact

Due to financial difficulties, many families move frequently or have no phone for a period of time. The result is often loss of contact between the mentor/student.

Possible solutions to loss of contact

- Learn the habits of your student and who is significant in their life.
- When it is appropriate, ask for the telephone numbers of family or friends.

- Call your mentor coach, they may be able to help locate your students

Personal Circumstances

Personal circumstances often change (new job, relocation, new responsibilities at work, marriage). For some people the changes may make it impossible to continue the mentoring relationship. For others it may mean that they may need to make adjustments in order to continue mentoring.

Possible solutions to managing personal circumstances

- When ceasing a mentoring relationship discuss with your mentor coach since closure is important.
- If you need to make adjustments, talk to your mentor coach, then your student.
- In either case, you need to deal with the changes your personal circumstances make in your mentoring relationship.
- You are always a model for you student about how to deal with important issues in life. How you address and handle such issues serves as a “teaching moment” for your student.

Loving Youth is Never a Waste of Time

Mentoring urban youth is not an easy or fast-moving process.

Common frustrations include

- Your student doesn’t call you back
- Your student doesn’t seem motivated to change destructive behavior
- You don’t see results of your time or words
- Your hope for your student is miles away from your student’s hopes.
You may say to yourself, “Am I wasting my time?” The answer is “NO!”
- When you are discouraged or overwhelmed by the obstacles of your student, remember your assignment is to love this person God has placed in your life.
- You and your student are coming from two different places, so forming a close relationship is going to take time.
- Mentoring is a process, which can take many twists and turns.
- The most powerful agent of change is the love of Christ and prayer.
- God has chosen you to show His love to the youth you are mentoring.
- “There are three things that will endure- faith, hope and love – and the greatest of these is love” 1 Corinthians 13:13
- Experiencing God’s love through you will change their life.
- How much progress will occur is up to your student and God.

Don’t be discouraged, trust in the Lord. Celebrate the victories, and comfort in defeats realizing that these students are living life through a lens of what has been programmed in them since birth. But, we are all in his hands and through him change is possible.

Problem Solving

The goal of problem Solving is to reduce tension and teach healthy ways of communicating needs, wants and emotions. Problem solving also helps student recognize express their own feelings own.

1. Identify the problem:
Ask questions and gather information. Many times there is a deeper issue. Ask how what is going on makes them feel. Identifying emotions helps the student become aware of their emotions.
2. Identify possible solutions
Help your student sort out their options. Guide them in figuring out which solution is best and why.
3. Listening
There also may not be a solution to the problem. (ex. They are upset because a friend is in the hospital or Dad is in jail). Many of life's problems cannot be solved simply. In situations like this, students may just need you to listen. Be aware of possible lessons to talk about with the student but be careful not to trivialize the problem.

Conflict Management

If you have more than one student, we can guarantee that they will fight at some point. Below are a few things that may help you in this type of situation.

1. Get the Story
Let each student tell their side of the story one at a time. Ask the other student to be patient and not say anything while the other is telling you what happened.
2. Repeat
Retell what you feel that each are saying the problem is. Sometimes when someone says it back to them it sounds a lot different.
3. Identify Feelings
Ask each student how what the other student did made them feel.
4. Responsibility
Ask each student what they can take responsibility for. What is their fault and what isn't. This can bring the situation into perspective and defines what they can and cannot control.
5. Find a Solution
Ask each student what it would take to solve the problem. Ask each student if they would be willing to do what the other described to solve the problem. If they both agree carryout the solution.

Or

Agree to Disagree

Sometimes neither student is willing to solve the problem. If neither want to solve the problem, then they need to agree to disagree. Help them figure out how to carry this out in a peaceful way.

6. Identify feelings

After the solution is carried out or agreed upon, ask each student how they are feeling again. It may take a bit for another to get over the problem, so don't expect both students to walk away best friends. When you ask each student to identify how they are feeling, you will get a sense if there is something else to be discussed. This is also an important step for each student to recognize their emotions.

SELF-CARE

-Charles P. Morgan

The human dilemma is that which arises out of a man's capacity to experience himself as both subject and object at the same time. Both are necessary-for the science of psychology, for therapy, and for gratifying living.

-Personality & Social Psychology Review 2001, Vol. 5, No. 3, 230-241

"It is a princely thing for a man to overcome himself become he overcomes his enemies."

-Alexander the Great

Coping Skills for Serving High need Populations

In the field of psychology there are ethical principles that govern the behavior of practitioners in the field. Among these principles are two that are important to self care as well as the well being of others. The first principle is non-maleficence which means "do no harm." The other principle is beneficence and encompasses acts of mercy, kindness, and charity. In ethical theory it includes all forms of action intended to benefit or promote the good of other persons. From my perspective, it implies that we have an obligation to give others the best "us" we can possibly give them.

In order not to harm in order to benefit others, it behooves us to know ourselves, our limitations, our strengths, and tendencies. Self-Care then is an important and indispensable element in our journey to becoming a gift to others. In exercising a carefulness not to harm others while striving to be our best, it is equally important not to harm ourselves or diminish our abilities through a lack of balance and wisdom. Endeavoring to help others necessitates an effort to promote our own well being as we endeavor to promote the well being of those committed to our care.

Things You Need to Work in this Field

1. Intentionality – purposeful action, focused commitment
2. Persistence – going back to the place of failure and trying again
3. Self-Esteem – confidence in one's self to achieve desired end or goal
4. Communication – sound thinking translated into clear messages that are understood by those being communicated with
5. Ability – have potential or possession of those skills actually needed to achieve

Pitfalls

- Shock that impairs ability to function, being overwhelmed
- Personal guilt and self-depreciation, doubting one's own moral compass
- Development of a savior complex, becoming a rescuer
- Isolation, no one understands or is concerned

- Panic, I have no idea what I'm doing
- Social activism, without understanding its true motivation
- Personal redemption, undoing the wrongs of my life
- Power, to be indispensable to someone

Tools

Know Thyself – a wise saying among clinicians

Objective Self Awareness – the ability of an individual to intentionally become conscious of his/her self as the object of focus. It is the ability to stand outside of one's self while at the same time probing and assessing internal processes, emotions, and intentions with honesty and sobriety. Generally, people operate from a subjective point of view-the person experiences hi/her self as the source rather than the object of focus where attention is directed away from self and on to others.

Consensus Validation - In order to effectively process information derived from self assessments, one needs to have reliable feedback from trusted others who are intimate, knowledgeable, forthright, and brutally honest concerning their perceptions of you as a person. Ideally, the number to achieve viable consensus and feedback is three.

Understanding & Recognizing Projection - Attributing your own emotions, sentiments, and motivation to another person unconsciously. As a result of the unconscious process, there is a lack of awareness that one's reactions are more about one's on personal issues than the other person's. Recognizing projection is not only important to maintaining a personal health while working in high stress, high need areas, but is an important part of understanding and knowing one's self.

Transference - is the "transference" of past feelings, conflict, and attitudes into present realities, situations, and circumstances. According to psychoanalytic theory, transference evolves from unresolved or unsatisfactory childhood experiences in relationships with parents or other important figures (Wilson & Kneisl, 1996). As a mentor, being aware of a child's tendency to repeat previous experiences with historical persons in their new relationship with you will help avert unwarranted or negative reactions towards yourself or your self worth. Transference is an unconscious process and can be positive or negative.

Counter-transference - exaggerated positive or negative feelings, fantasies, and behavior in the mentor that are transferred from some earlier relationship(s) to the student. This is where consensus validation and relationships of close proximity and intimacy come into play. They are indispensable in effectively dealing with personal issues that arise from mentoring relationships that evoke profound and sometimes disturbing emotions. Having these relationships, where friends can be empathically

attuned to you as well as objective in their feedback, can prove invaluable in being effective in one's self care.

Understanding Confidentiality - there is a confidentiality as a professional ethical standard and confidentiality as a moral agreement between persons in either a formal or informal mentoring relationship. Both types of confidentiality are ethical and morally binding. In light of this, any mentor can deal appropriately with his/her personal feelings, intrapersonal conflict, personal anxiety, doubts, fears, hesitation, or any number of emotional and psychological challenges without violating confidentiality. The standards of moral, private, or privileged communication remain in force where appropriate. However, the mentor may deal with issues and emotions arising from a mentor/student relationship if the identity of the student is not implied or exposed. The personal responsibility of the mentor to properly assess his/her behavior and emotional state is paramount to maintaining self care and a healthy and efficacious mentoring relationship.

Developing Skills

- Become self-aware, develop personal objectivity
- Learn to objectify personal problems & issues
- Utilize a support system, share experiences that you have and how the experience affected you
- Learn and develop relaxation techniques that decrease anxiety
 - A warm unhurried bath while being sensitive and attentive to yourself
 - Intentional meditation on things that bring comfort in order to replace angst, tension, and thoughts that raise anxiety
 - Learn to spend time alone without any distractions such as TV, music, a book, games, ect. (Spend time with your thoughts & feelings)
 - Live your life in process, not in events & activities
 - Develop clear goals & strategy
 - Strategy: Doing Right Things, the goal determining process
 - Relevant & Sound, goals must be purposeful & rational
 - Consistently Constructed, must develop goals that are consistent with one another and appropriately prioritized
 - Consciously Committed, non-negotiable unless otherwise indicated
 - Applied, this process concerns goal implementation
- Be healthily dependent on others. We are created for union not isolation.
 1. Transparency
 2. Honesty
 3. Vulnerability

Spirituality

-Develop a devotional life

-Practice spiritual disciplines

Self-Discipline

Fasting

Prayer

Contemplation

Personal worship

Forgiveness

Study

Memorization

Solitude

Our Mentoring Program

SEVEN GOALS

- Provide trained, qualified mentors to students in our neighborhood.
- Improve academic performance among the students by encouraging a stronger connection and commitment to school.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for students to volunteer in their community and participate in life changing experiences.
- Provide appropriate training and/or intervention that will empower our students' parents to be more involved and effective in training their child to become a productive member of society.
- Walk students through their college experience and cultivate them as Christian leaders in our community.
- Increase assets in the lives of our students (see 40 Developmental Assets at www.search-institute.org).
- Prevent youth violence.

STEPS IN BECOMING A MENTOR

- STEP 1: Complete a written application with references
- STEP 2: Face-to-face interview with Volunteer Coordinator
- STEP 3: Pass a background check
- STEP 4: Participate in an introductory training
- STEP 5: Get matched with a student

TRAINING & SUPPORT

Mentor Coach

A mentor coach is an individual who provides support and accountability to mentors as they work with their students. Mentor coaches are here to help in the process cultivating the mentoring relationship between mentors and students. Mentor coaches also provide resources to mentors such as training, curriculum, information on upcoming events in the LA area, and events hosted by the Lake Avenue Community Foundation. Each mentor is assigned to a mentor coach that connects with them consistently over the phone, email, and in person every other week. The mentor coach serves to be a support for the mentor through prayer, encouragement and by providing resources.

Trainings

Upon entering this mentoring program, each mentor is provided with basic mentor training and a training manual for reference. There are also two one-day Saturday trainings held in the Fall & Spring each year.

Mentor Socials

Informal gatherings are hosted throughout the year in homes where mentors gather to share what has been taking place in their mentoring relationship and learn from each other.

LACF Monthly Mentoring E-Newsletter

Each month, mentors will receive an e-newsletter that will provide information on free or low cost events and activities that are taking place in the community.

The Legacy Commitment Ceremony

Annually, the Lake Avenue Community Foundation's Mentoring Program takes the time to celebrate the special relationships between mentors and students in the form of a banquet ceremony called The Legacy. This ceremony serves many purposes, one of which is to honor the relationships between our mentors, our students, and their families. At this banquet, we will hear from a few speakers who will challenge us to take our mentoring relationships to a new place. The event will culminate in the signing of a mentor covenant, where each student and mentor will either commit or recommit to their mentoring relationship for the next year.

Urban Youth Workers Institute RELOAD Trainings & West Coast Conference

UYWI exists to strengthen a new generation of global urban leaders for transformational ministry. UYWI training events serve to provide relevant workshops by urban ministry leaders, as well as opportunities to network with others who are volunteering in the field.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

LACF Spring Picnic – May

Each year we gather to spend the day together, having fun in the sun.

LACF End of the Year Celebration – June

The academic year is closed out with a time to celebrate as a community the faithfulness of God.

LACF Annual Costume Party - October

A popular parent led event that is filled with dancing, food, and good times.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner – November

A parent led event, where they provide a meal to the volunteers who faithfully serve the community as tutors & mentors.

Los Posada - December

A time to fellowship and reflect on the incarnation of God during this season.

LACF Annual Christmas Party - December

A time set aside to reflect on the incarnation and the past year.

Who We Are

LAKE AVENUE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION HISTORY

Lake Avenue Community Foundation (LACF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to developing and supporting initiatives in the areas of housing, education, literacy, hunger relief, healthcare, and economic development. Created in 2001 as an independent organization to serve community needs, LACF is the driving force behind numerous programs serving at-risk youth, the homeless, and the poor of Northwest Pasadena, often working in partnership with other community organizations. Should you desire more details on our programs, please review our website at www.lakeavefoundation.org. It is the primary goal of Lake Avenue Community Foundation to assist wherever possible in the development, partnership, financial support of programs, and initiatives that build bridges between faith and human experience, ultimately transforming our community. We provide direct funding, program development, administrative and technical support, stewardship and leadership development, and secure in-kind gifts (computers, vehicles, facility upgrades, etc.).

According to the 2000 US Census³, LACF serves a neighborhood containing the highest population density in Pasadena, the highest household density (4,715-7,639 per square mile), the highest household size (over 4 persons per household), and the highest Latino population density (64%, and thus the highest density of limited English proficiency students). Another 13% of our neighbors are African-American. LACF's neighborhood has an estimated 6,161 youths, ages 5-19 years, per square mile. According to the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD)⁴ of approximately 22,336 students in PUSD, an estimated 67.7% live below the Federal Poverty Level resulting in 15,120 students who are eligible for free or discounted lunch at school. Moreover, in 2005, only 32% (approx.) of juniors district-wide passed the California exit exam.

The Foundation serves as a means of generating financial resources, while simultaneously providing administrative support and staffing for a number of specific, select programs in the Northwest Pasadena area. Currently, Lake Avenue Community Foundation builds collaborative programs and works in partnership with existing urban programs and projects. This includes The Pasadena Bad Weather Shelter, Central City Community Outreach, Door of Hope, Elizabeth House, Harambee Center, Hope Again, Lighthouse Men's Christian Home, Living Well Medical Clinic, Neighborhood Urban Family Center, Northwest Neighbors of Pasadena, and Stepping Stones for Women.

³ Local Demographics, U.S. Census, 1999 – TM-P067 Census 2000 Summary File 3

⁴ & ³ Pasadena Unified School District; Demographic profile taken in the 2004/2005 school year. www.pusd.us

LAKE AVENUE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

STARS Tutoring Program

Students from k-12th grade receive tutoring throughout the school year. Elementary school students meet at Villa 500, while Middle School and High School students meet in the Warehouse at Lake Avenue Church.

College Prep Program

During the school year, High School students meet on Thursday evenings to receive tutoring, college prep courses, as well as SAT workshops. There is a minimum 3.0 GPA for students to participate in this program.

College & Career Track

Beginning student's 8th grade year, we introduce them to various options for college, assist them in getting ready for, applying, and enrolling in higher education.

Adopt-a-School

In November 2003, Lake Avenue Community Foundation launched the Blair High School Adopt-a-School Project. Our goal was to help provide supplies and volunteers to our adopted school so that we may fulfill our goal of providing an obstacle-free path from being a neighborhood student in Pasadena attending Pasadena Unified Schools to being a college-educated community leader. The project will provide volunteers, classroom resources and leadership assistance for clubs, as well as provide facilities for school meetings, special events and assemblies at Blair.

Royal Family Kids Camp/Department of Children and Family Services

Each year, Lake Avenue Church takes youth in the foster care system to camp. During this incredible week of camp, caring adults are connected with youth. At the end of this week, each counselor and staff member is given the opportunity to take this connection one step further and begin a consistent mentor relationship.

Teen MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)

The mission of Teen MOPS Pasadena is to provide a safe, encouraging place where young mothers can experience God's love and learn practical parenting skills through emotional support, practical resources, spiritual guidance, and parenting techniques.

Homeless Outreach

On Sunday afternoons, meals are served to homeless in the community at Lake Avenue Church.

NORTHWEST PASADENA DEMOGRAPHICS

The Neighborhood Student Mentoring program was created to provide neighborhood students in Northwest Pasadena an obstacle free opportunity to become college educated and responsible citizens of their community. Sixty students ranging in age between 10 and 19 years are currently served by NSM, most coming from middle and high schools with academic proficiency ratings that are among the lowest in California. LACF's neighborhood has an estimated 6,161 youths, ages 5-19 years, per square mile. According to the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) of approximately 22,336 students in PUSD, an estimated 67.7% live below the Federal Poverty Level resulting in 15, 120 students who are eligible for free or discounted lunch at school. Moreover, in 2005, only 32% (approx.) of juniors district-wide passed the California exit exam. Given the condition of the public school system and the poverty level in Pasadena, students are left with little opportunity. With a lack of opportunities and support, these students will graduate unaware of the resources available to them. We are especially thrilled with the academic success to-date of our students since the Mentoring program began. Since the 2002/2003 school year:

- 31 of 33 high school seniors graduated from high school.
- 20 of these students have gone on to attend Secondary Education at local and four year colleges.
- 6 students joined and received scholarships from the Ascending Lights Leadership Network

*Pasadena Unified School District; Demographic profile taken in the 2004/2005 school year. www.pusd.us
www.ascendinglights.org; Ascending Lights members receive financial support, academic & spiritual mentoring and urban leadership training.*

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are given to provide a framework for the Mentoring department of Lake Avenue Community Foundation. By accepting such a position of leadership the staff person will be agreeing to responsibly carry out the following guidelines in love.

Student Safety Guidelines

Safety First!: The greatest gift and asset people entrust us with is their children. It is imperative that safety be foremost in our minds as we minister to students anywhere and at any time. Those staff certified in First Aid and CPR will be pointed out at the beginning of trips and activities. Each department will supply a stocked first aid kit for use at all activities.

Medical Release Forms

Parent medical release forms must be obtained for every student for all high-risk, overnight, or activities 50 or more miles away. Release forms for one-day activities shall be obtained for as many students as is practical. In every case, the home phone number of each student shall be obtained.

Head Counts

When using transportation for activities, the number of students in each vehicle shall be counted before departure and again before returning to be sure no student is left behind. If a student absolutely must be left behind, a staff person will also remain and the parents notified.

“Buddy System”

Unless the situation allows for it, students are not permitted to go off away from the group by themselves. The “buddy system” of accountability shall be used. Individual departments will decide the minimum number of students in each “buddy” group.

Trip Details

Each parent or guardian will be informed of the trip details, including ending time, prior to departure. If the group needs to change the publicized times of an activity, someone will be appointed to meet arriving parents at the pick-up destination (or contact them by phone if possible) and inform them of the change. The ideal staff to student ratio on large group activities should be one staff for every eight students. A ratio of 1 staff to 14 students is acceptable

Staff Age Guidelines

The ideal age for a mentor is a minimum of 18 years old (21 years old for High School mentors) with no maximum age limit. Applicants below the minimum age will be considered on an individual basis and may be brought on for a trial period.

Scholarship Guidelines

We do not want a student to miss an activity due to insufficient funds. When students have a financial need we seek to meet this need by encouraging the student to earn the money needed for the activity on his/her own (i.e., babysitting, lawns, etc.) or by earning Credit (service hour points converted to dollars) by doing approved service projects. This teaches responsibility and develops ownership.

Discipline Guidelines

Our ministry seeks to assist the family in raising students. Our ministry has certain standards of conduct that we expect students to obey. Our rules are to be set out of the students' need for safety (emotional or physical) not out of our need to control. If students disobey the set limits, we need to respond appropriately. Frequently we will involve the parents in this so they are informed and so they can adequately take responsibility in helping their son or daughter. Keep these principles in mind as you discipline students:

- Discipline out of love
- Discipline when you are in control
- Discipline then debrief
- Make your expectations known
- Make the consequence fit the situation
- Try not to discipline or embarrass the student in front of others
- Forgive and forget
- Set a good example!!
- Three Strikes Method: Clearly state your expectations, Clearly communicate the consequences & Follow through with consistency

Counseling Confidentiality Guidelines

We recognize that a student belongs to God first and then to his or her parents. We have the privilege of ministering under the authority of the local church with permission of the parent. We want to recognize the primary responsibility for the student lies with the parent and our role is to help the parent in every way possible. Ours, therefore, is a secondary role as we carry on a concerned and loving ministry to each student. In the light of this, it will be policy of every mentor to work with the student to keep the parent informed of accomplishments and problems that may arise. Do not make promises of confidentiality to the student. The purpose of this is to act in love to help the student and aid the parent(s) in carrying out their responsibility.

Relationships

No staff person shall carry on or encourage, or give the appearance of carrying on, or engage in a dating relationship with a student in the youth group. This includes not spending time alone, physical contact, excessive communication/correspondence, or any element of romantic involvement.

Activities

Activities should be planned with safety in mind. All staff are responsible for knowing and abiding by this entire set of guidelines when having small group times. Be creative and be sensitive to financial restrictions that students may have.

Spouses and Families of Mentors

We recognize that mentoring will mean spending some time away from their families while working with students. We value stability in marriages and are always looking for ways that families can model a positive, healthy marriage and family life for students. Therefore, we encourage staff spouses to participate in the ministry of their spouse to the extent desired and/or possible due to family obligations.

Vehicle Guidelines

All drivers for NSM activities must submit a copy of their valid driving license and proof of insurance minimum liability required by law (\$15/\$30) to the Mentor Coordinator. The allowable occupancy of any vehicle is the number of seat belts available for use and all occupants must wear their seat belts properly at all times. All traffic laws will be obeyed, and the vehicle will be operated in a safe and normal driving fashion. At no time should anyone or anything hang out of the windows. LACF insurance will cover damages above and beyond the individual driver's insurance, but only as secondary insurance.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

All staff shall immediately report any suspicion of child abuse of which they have knowledge of or observe within the scope of their ministry responsibilities. They shall report the following, in addition to as well as any other indications that may suggest the occurrence of child abuse or neglect:

- Has an unexplained injury – a patch of hair missing, a burn, a limp, or bruises
- Has excessive “explained” injuries such as bruises over a period of time
- Drawings in conjunction with verbal testimony
- Prayer requests or written allusion
- Verbal testimony
- Exhibits an injury that is not adequately explained
- Complains about numerous beatings
- Complains about others “doing things to them when others are not at home”
- Is dirty and smells or has bad teeth, hair falling out or lice
- Is inadequately dressed for inclement weather
- Wears long-sleeved tops during summer to cover bruises on the arms

Procedure

If you have knowledge of or have any suspicion of abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional) or neglect you are required to submit a Child Abuse Report Form (next page) to the NSM Director. As a youth leader, you are a mandated reporter in the state of California. You can be prosecuted if you fail to report abuse. If possible find out when the abuse occurred (date and time), the circumstances surrounding it, and who was involved. Were there any past occurrences (when and who)? If there is physical abuse involved, find out how the child was hit (open hand or fist), where they were hit (physical location), and if it left any marks (bruises or cuts). Please remember you cannot promise anyone the information they give you will be kept confidential. One of the most important determinations will be deciding if we need to call 911 to make an emergency child abuse report (immediate intervention for safety of the child), so the more detailed the information, the better. The Pastor/Director will be responsible to make all calls to either 911 or the Social Services Department.

CHILD ABUSE REPORT FORM

Please fill out this form with as much detail as possible. One of the most important determinations will be deciding if we need to call 911 to make an emergency child abuse report (immediate intervention for safety of the child), so the more detailed the information, the better. The Pastor/Director will make all calls to either 911 or the Social Services Department.

Reporting Staff Info:

Today's Date:

Name:

Phone Number:

E-mail:

Student Information:

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Parents:

When did the abuse occur?

What were the circumstances surrounding it?

Who was involved?

Were there any past occurrences (when and who)?

If there is physical abuse involved, how was the child hit (open hand or fist), where they were hit (physical location), and did it leave any marks (bruises or cuts)?

My signature below indicates that I have received and acknowledge that I am responsible for, have read the Neighborhood Student Mentoring Guidelines (updated 01/2007) for Lake Avenue Community Foundation. I also agree to retain these guidelines for future reference.

I understand and will support these guidelines for the integrity of the ministry, the name of Christ, and our local church partner, Lake Avenue Church.

Mentor Signature

Date

Mentor Name (printed)

RESOURCES

Insert Asset Checklist Here...

OTHER MENTORING ORGANIZATIONS

Handbook for Mentors
The Abell Foundation
1116 Fidelity Building
210 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD
410.547.1300

Understanding Mentoring Relationships
Search Institute
700 S. 3rd St., Ste. 210
Minneapolis, MN 55415
612.376.8956

One to One: The Mentoring Partnership
Twin Cities One to One
81 South 9th Street, Ste. 200
Minneapolis, MN 55402
612.370.9162

Mentoring
Public/Private Ventures
One Commerce Square
2005 Market St., Ste. 900
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215.557.4400
www.ppv.org

Save Our Youth
3443 West Avenue
Denver, CO 80211
303.455.1126
info@soy.org

BOOKS

Hurt: Inside the world of today's teenagers

By Chap Clark

The Fabric of Faithfulness

By Steven Garber

Raising Up Young Heroes

By Efrem Smith

At Risk: Bringing Hope to Hurting Teenagers

By Dr. Scott Larson

Stand By Me

By Jean E. Rhodes

What Color Is Your Parachute?

By Richard N. Bolles

The Heart of Mentoring

By David A. Stoddard

The Miracles of Mentoring

By Thomas W. Dortch, Jr.

Fist Stick Knife Gun

By Geoffrey Canada

Mentoring Leaders: Wisdom for Developing Character, Calling, & Competency

By Carson Pue

Choose the Life: Exploring a Faith that Embraces Discipleship

By Bill Hull

Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need in Life

By Bobby Clinton

Deep Ministry in a Shallow World

By Chap Clark & Kara E. Powell

Reverse Mentoring

By Earl Creps

MOVIES

We recommend the following films in attempt to familiarize you with urban culture. Please be aware that some of the following movies are rated R. We highly suggest viewing the edited versions when available. (*All movie descripts/pics courtesy of www.blockbuster.com)

Training Day (2001)

Rated: R

Release Date: 03/19/2002



Ethan Hawke stars as Jake Hoyt, a fresh-faced Los Angeles Police Department rookie anxious to join the elite narcotics squad headed up by 13-year veteran Detective Sergeant Alonzo Harris (Denzel Washington). Harris has agreed to give Hoyt a shot at joining his team with a one-day ride-along during which Hoyt must prove his mettle. As the day wears on, however, it becomes increasingly clear to the greenhorn that his experienced mentor has blurred the line between right and wrong to an alarming degree, enforcing his own morally compromised code of ethics and street justice. As he struggles with his conscience, an increasingly alarmed Hoyt begins to suspect that he's not really being given an audition at all; he's being set up as the fall guy in an elaborate scheme.

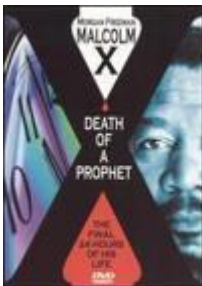
Starring: Denzel Washington, Ethan Hawke, Scott Glenn, More

Example of: Helps the viewer understand urban student's perspective of the police.

Malcolm X: Death of a Prophet (1981)

Rated: PG13

Release Date: 10/07/2003



Inspired by the life and death of African-American activist Malcolm X, book-ended by interviews with people who knew and worked with Malcolm X, the bulk of Death of a Prophet follows 24 hours in the life of a powerful but controversial civil rights spokesman referred to only as "the Prophet Minister." The minister has become a marked man since breaking ties with the religious group from which he rose, and after his family is threatened and his house is fire bombed, he knows his enemies will soon claim his life. Despite all this, the minister goes through the motions of his life on a Sunday, preparing for a speaking engagement, talking with friends and associates, and spending precious moments with his wife (Yolanda King).

Starring: Yusef Iman, Sam Singleton, Mansoor Najeeullah, More

Example of: Racial tension



Barbershop 2: Back in Business (2004)

Rated: PG13

Release Date: 06/29/2004

Owner Calvin Palmer (Ice Cube) tries to keep his family business alive in order to pass it on to his own son one day. However, the beloved neighborhood barber shop is threatened by a hair salon franchise called Nappy Cuts.

Starring:Ice Cube, Cedric the Entertainer, Sean Patrick Thomas, More

Example of: Gentrification

Antwone Fisher [WS] (2002)



Rated: PG13

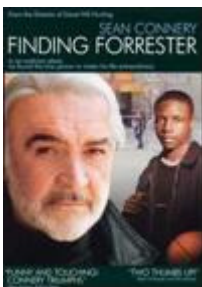
Release Date: 05/20/2003

Derek Luke, Antwone is a volatile young sailor in the Navy, getting into trouble for his constant fighting. When he gets appointed to see naval psychiatrist Dr. Jerome Davenport (Denzel Washington), he begins to reveal the emotional problems behind his rage. Through an introduction to anger management, Antwone is able to confront some secrets of his past and eventually search out his family for a confrontation.

Starring:Derek Luke, Joy Bryant, Denzel Washington, More

Example of: The result of abandonment and sexual abuse, underdeveloped intellect.

Finding Forrester (2000)



Rated: PG13

Release Date: 04/24/2001

When Jamal (Rob Brown) is forced to adapt to an environment far from his South Bronx upbringing, and a small mishap leads him to the eccentric, uneasy Forrester, an aging, reclusive novelist named Forrester (Sean Connery). After their initial apprehension of each other, they begin to fuel each other's fire for writing, and become unlikely friends despite their ages and backgrounds.

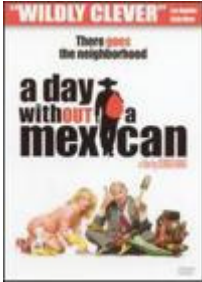
Starring:Sean Connery, Rob Brown, F. Murray Abraham, More

Example of: The tensions and triumphs of the mentoring relationship

Day Without a Mexican (2004)

Rated: R

Release Date: 11/09/2004



A Day Without a Mexican ponders the potentially catastrophic results that would occur if California-based Mexicans, who make up over a third of the state's population, were to suddenly disappear. The mockumentary postulates that the lack of Latino gardeners, nannies, cooks, policeman, maids, teachers, farm workers, construction crews, entertainers, athletes, and the world's largest growing consumer market would create a social, political, and economic disaster, leaving the concept of the "California Dream" in shambles.

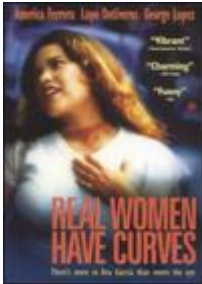
Starring:Yareli Arizmendi, John Getz, Maureen Flannigan, More

Example of: Stereotypes, Issues that the illegal immigrants face

Real Women Have Curves (2002)

Rated: PG13

Release Date: 04/22/2003



Ana (America Ferrera) is a bright and ambitious 18-year-old Latina who has just graduated from high school in East LA. Ana wants to broaden her horizons and go on to college, but her mother Carmen (Lupe Ontiveros) has other ideas; Ana's older sister Estela (Ingrid Oliu) oversees the family business, a dress factory, and Carmen decides that Ana should put higher education on hold and work instead.

Starring:America Ferrera, Lupe Ontiveros, Ingrid Oliu, More

Example of: The culture of the Latino family and the tension between the 1st and 2nd generation

Save the Last Dance (2001)

Rated: PG13

Release Date: 06/19/2001

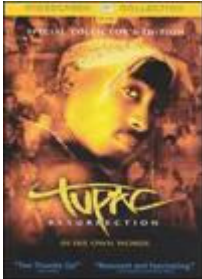


Sarah (Julia Stiles) moves to Chicago to live with her father. Sarah has trouble adjusting to her new gritty, inner-city high school, but soon befriends Derek (Sean Patrick Thomas), who has talent and street smarts but a checkered past of a thug life. Their mutual love of dance leads their friendship into something deeper but since Sarah is white and Derek is black, they have more to contend with than the average high school couple.

Starring:Julia Stiles, Sean Patrick Thomas, Kerry Washington, More

Example of: The cultural divide, the urban struggle to rise above and succeed, the culture of Hip-Hop.

Tupac: Resurrection (2003)



Rated: R

Release Date: 06/15/2004

Tupac: Resurrection is executive produced by his mother, former Black Panther Afeni Shakur. Using voice-overs, interviews, and other vocal tracks recorded by the late artist himself, the film explores his life, music, and death from fatal gunshot wounds in 1996. Includes rare footage, home movies, private photographs, and excerpts from his personal poetry, journals, and letters.

Starring:Tupac Shakur, More

Example of: African American Bravado vs. Humanity; hero of the streets. The “Code” of the streets, and the culture of hip-hop

Crash(2005)



Enhanced Widescreen Letterbox, Color DVD

All Editions

Add to Queue

Member Rating



Rated: R

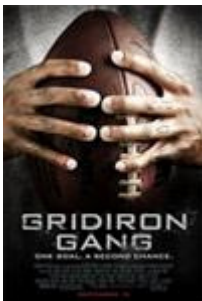
Release Date: 09/06/2005

Issues of race and gender cause a group of strangers in Los Angeles to physically and emotionally collide.

Starring:Sandra Bullock, Don Cheadle, Jennifer Esposito, More

Example of: Racial tension, humanity and stereotypes.

Gridiron Gang (2006)



Rated: PG13

In Theaters now

Inspired by filmmaker Jac Flanders' 1993

documentary, Gridiron Gang

Sean Porter (The Rock) a detention camp probation officer at Camp Kilpatrick believes that second chances can make a difference through discipline, self-respect and social responsibility on the gridiron. A true story of a football team that proves even convicted criminals can acquire the tools needed to build a brighter future when given the proper motivation and the means of doing so.

Starring:The Rock, Jade Yorker, Xzibit, More

Example of: 40 Developmental Assets

ARTICLES

The Code of the Streets

In this essay in urban anthropology a social scientist takes us inside a world most of us only glimpse in grisly headlines--"Teen Killed in Drive By Shooting"--to show us how a desperate search for respect governs social relations among many African-American young men

by Elijah Anderson (May 1994)

Of all the problems besetting the poor inner-city black community, none is more pressing than that of interpersonal violence and aggression. It wreaks havoc daily with the lives of community residents and increasingly spills over into downtown and residential middle-class areas. Muggings, burglaries, carjackings, and drug-related shootings, all of which may leave their victims or innocent bystanders dead, are now common enough to concern all urban and many suburban residents. The inclination to violence springs from the circumstances of life among the ghetto poor--the lack of jobs that pay a living wage, the stigma of race, the fallout from rampant drug use and drug trafficking, and the resulting alienation and lack of hope for the future.

Simply living in such an environment places young people at special risk of falling victim to aggressive behavior. Although there are often forces in the community which can counteract the negative influences, by far the most powerful being a strong, loving, "decent" (as inner-city residents put it) family committed to middle-class values, the despair is pervasive enough to have spawned an oppositional culture, that of "the streets," whose norms are often consciously opposed to those of mainstream society. These two orientations--decent and street--socially organize the community, and their coexistence has important consequences for residents, particularly children growing up in the inner city. Above all, this environment means that even youngsters whose home lives reflect mainstream values--and the majority of homes in the community do-- must be able to handle themselves in a street-oriented environment.

This is because the street culture has evolved what may be called a code of the streets, which amounts to a set of informal rules governing interpersonal public behavior, including violence. The rules prescribe both a proper comportment and a proper way to respond if challenged. They regulate the use of violence and so allow those who are inclined to aggression to precipitate violent encounters in an approved way. The rules have been established and are enforced mainly by the street-oriented, but on the streets the distinction between street and decent is often irrelevant; everybody knows that if the rules are violated, there are penalties. Knowledge of the code is thus largely defensive; it is literally necessary for operating in public. Therefore, even though families with a decency orientation are usually opposed to the values of the code, they often reluctantly encourage their children's familiarity with it to enable them to negotiate the inner-city environment.

At the heart of the code is the issue of respect--loosely defined as being treated "right," or granted the deference one deserves. However, in the troublesome public environment of the inner city, as people increasingly feel buffeted by forces beyond their control, what one deserves in the way of respect becomes more and more problematic and uncertain. This in turn further opens the issue of respect to sometimes intense interpersonal negotiation. In the street culture, especially among young people, respect is viewed as almost an external entity that is hard-won but easily lost, and so must constantly be guarded. The rules of the code in fact provide a framework for negotiating respect. The person whose very appearance-- including his clothing, demeanor, and way of moving--deters transgressions feels that he possesses, and may be considered by others to possess, a measure of respect. With the right amount of respect, for instance, he can avoid "being bothered" in public. If he is bothered, not only may he be in physical danger but he has been disgraced or "dissed" (disrespected). Many of the forms that dissing can take might seem petty to middle-class people (maintaining eye contact for too long, for example), but to those invested in the street code, these actions become serious indications of the other person's intentions. Consequently, such people become very sensitive to advances and slights, which could well serve as warnings of imminent physical confrontation.

This hard reality can be traced to the profound sense of alienation from mainstream society and its institutions felt by many poor inner-city black people, particularly the young. The code of the streets is actually a cultural adaptation to a profound lack of faith in the police and the judicial system. The police are most often seen as representing the dominant white society and not caring to protect inner-city residents. When called, they may not respond, which is one reason many residents feel they must be prepared to take extraordinary measures to defend themselves and their loved ones against those who are inclined to aggression. Lack of police accountability has in fact been incorporated into the status system: the person who is believed capable of "taking care of himself" is accorded a certain deference, which translates into a sense of physical and psychological control. Thus the street code emerges where the influence of the police ends and personal responsibility for one's safety is felt to begin. Exacerbated by the proliferation of drugs and easy access to guns, this volatile situation results in the ability of the street oriented minority (or those who effectively "go for bad") to dominate the public spaces.

DECENT AND STREET FAMILIES

ALTHOUGH almost everyone in poor inner-city neighborhoods is struggling financially and therefore feels a certain distance from the rest of America, the decent and the street family in a real sense represent two poles of value orientation, two contrasting conceptual categories. The labels "decent" and "street," which the residents themselves use, amount to evaluative judgments that confer status on local residents. The labeling is often the result of a social contest among individuals and families of the neighborhood. Individuals of the two orientations often coexist in the same extended

family. Decent residents judge themselves to be so while judging others to be of the street, and street individuals often present themselves as decent, drawing distinctions between themselves and other people. In addition, there is quite a bit of circumstantial behavior--that is, one person may at different times exhibit both decent and street orientations, depending on the circumstances. Although these designations result from so much social jockeying, there do exist concrete features that define each conceptual category.

Generally, so-called decent families tend to accept mainstream values more fully and attempt to instill them in their children. Whether married couples with children or single-parent (usually female) households, they are generally "working poor" and so tend to be better off financially than their street-oriented neighbors. They value hard work and self-reliance and are willing to sacrifice for their children. Because they have a certain amount of faith in mainstream society, they harbor hopes for a better future for their children, if not for themselves. Many of them go to church and take a strong interest in their children's schooling. Rather than dwelling on the real hardships and inequities facing them, many such decent people, particularly the increasing number of grandmothers raising grandchildren, see their difficult situation as a test from God and derive great support from their faith and from the church community.

Extremely aware of the problematic and often dangerous environment in which they reside, decent parents tend to be strict in their child-rearing practices, encouraging children to respect authority and walk a straight moral line. They have an almost obsessive concern about trouble of any kind and remind their children to be on the lookout for people and situations that might lead to it. At the same time, they are themselves polite and considerate of others, and teach their children to be the same way. At home, at work, and in church, they strive hard to maintain a positive mental attitude and a spirit of cooperation.

So-called street parents, in contrast, often show a lack of consideration for other people and have a rather superficial sense of family and community. Though they may love their children, many of them are unable to cope with the physical and emotional demands of parenthood, and find it difficult to reconcile their needs with those of their children. These families, who are more fully invested in the code of the streets than the decent people are, may aggressively socialize their children into it in a normative way. They believe in the code and judge themselves and others according to its values.

In fact the overwhelming majority of families in the inner-city community try to approximate the decent-family model, but there are many others who clearly represent the worst fears of the decent family. Not only are their financial resources extremely limited, but what little they have may easily be misused. The lives of the street-oriented are often marked by disorganization. In the most desperate circumstances people frequently have a limited understanding of priorities and consequences, and so frustrations mount over bills, food, and, at times, drink, cigarettes, and drugs. Some

tend toward self-destructive behavior; many street-oriented women are crack-addicted ("on the pipe"), alcoholic, or involved in complicated relationships with men who abuse them. In addition, the seeming intractability of their situation, caused in large part by the lack of well-paying jobs and the persistence of racial discrimination, has engendered deep-seated bitterness and anger in many of the most desperate and poorest blacks, especially young people. The need both to exercise a measure of control and to lash out at somebody is often reflected in the adults' relations with their children. At the least, the frustrations of persistent poverty shorten the fuse in such people-- contributing to a lack of patience with anyone, child or adult, who irritates them.

In these circumstances a woman--or a man, although men are less consistently present in children's lives--can be quite aggressive with children, yelling at and striking them for the least little infraction of the rules she has set down. Often little if any serious explanation follows the verbal and physical punishment. This response teaches children a particular lesson. They learn that to solve any kind of interpersonal problem one must quickly resort to hitting or other violent behavior. Actual peace and quiet, and also the appearance of calm, respectful children conveyed to her neighbors and friends, are often what the young mother most desires, but at times she will be very aggressive in trying to get them. Thus she may be quick to beat her children, especially if they defy her law, not because she hates them but because this is the way she knows to control them. In fact, many street-oriented women love their children dearly. Many mothers in the community subscribe to the notion that there is a "devil in the boy" that must be beaten out of him or that socially "fast girls need to be whipped." Thus much of what borders on child abuse in the view of social authorities is acceptable parental punishment in the view of these mothers.

Many street-oriented women are sporadic mothers whose children learn to fend for themselves when necessary, foraging for food and money any way they can get it. The children are sometimes employed by drug dealers or become addicted themselves. These children of the street, growing up with little supervision, are said to "come up hard." They often learn to fight at an early age, sometimes using short-tempered adults around them as role models. The street-oriented home may be fraught with anger, verbal disputes, physical aggression, and even mayhem. The children observe these goings-on, learning the lesson that might makes right. They quickly learn to hit those who cross them, and the dog-eat-dog mentality prevails. In order to survive, to protect oneself, it is necessary to marshal inner resources and be ready to deal with adversity in a hands-on way. In these circumstances physical prowess takes on great significance.

In some of the most desperate cases, a street-oriented mother may simply leave her young children alone and unattended while she goes out. The most irresponsible women can be found at local bars and crack houses, getting high and socializing with other adults. Sometimes a troubled woman will leave very young children alone for days at a time. Reports of crack addicts abandoning their children have become common in drug infested inner-city communities. Neighbors or relatives discover the abandoned

children, often hungry and distraught over the absence of their mother. After repeated absences, a friend or relative, particularly a grandmother, will often step in to care for the young children, sometimes petitioning the authorities to send her, as guardian of the children, the mother's welfare check, if the mother gets one. By this time, however, the children may well have learned the first lesson of the streets: survival itself, let alone respect, cannot be taken for granted; you have to fight for your place in the world.

CAMPAIGNING FOR RESPECT

THESE realities of inner-city life are largely absorbed on the streets. At an early age, often even before they start school, children from street oriented homes gravitate to the streets, where they "hang"--socialize with their peers. Children from these generally permissive homes have a great deal of latitude and are allowed to "rip and run" up and down the street. They often come home from school, put their books down, and go right back out the door. On school nights eight- and nine-year-olds remain out until nine or ten o'clock (and teenagers typically come in whenever they want to). On the streets they play in groups that often become the source of their primary social bonds. Children from decent homes tend to be more carefully supervised and are thus likely to have curfews and to be taught how to stay out of trouble.

When decent and street kids come together, a kind of social shuffle occurs in which children have a chance to go either way. Tension builds as a child comes to realize that he must choose an orientation. The kind of home he comes from influences but does not determine the way he will ultimately turn out--although it is unlikely that a child from a thoroughly street oriented family will easily absorb decent values on the streets. Youths who emerge from street-oriented families but develop a decency orientation almost always learn those values in another setting--in school, in a youth group, in church. Often it is the result of their involvement with a caring "old head" (adult role model).

In the street, through their play, children pour their individual life experiences into a common knowledge pool, affirming, confirming, and elaborating on what they have observed in the home and matching their skills against those of others. And they learn to fight. Even small children test one another, pushing and shoving, and are ready to hit other children over circumstances not to their liking. In turn, they are readily hit by other children, and the child who is toughest prevails. Thus the violent resolution of disputes, the hitting and cursing, gains social reinforcement. The child in effect is initiated into a system that is really a way of campaigning for respect.

In addition, younger children witness the disputes of older children, which are often resolved through cursing and abusive talk, if not aggression or outright violence. They see that one child succumbs to the greater physical and mental abilities of the other. They are also alert and attentive witnesses to the verbal and physical fights of adults, after which they compare notes and share their interpretations of the event. In almost

every case the victor is the person who physically won the altercation, and this person often enjoys the esteem and respect of onlookers. These experiences reinforce the lessons the children have learned at home: might makes right, and toughness is a virtue, while humility is not. In effect they learn the social meaning of fighting. When it is left virtually unchallenged, this understanding becomes an ever more important part of the child's working conception of the world. Over time the code of the streets becomes refined.

Those street-oriented adults with whom children come in contact-- including mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, boyfriends, cousins, neighbors, and friends--help them along in forming this understanding by verbalizing the messages they are getting through experience: "Watch your back." "Protect yourself." "Don't punk out." "If somebody messes with you, you got to pay them back." "If someone disses you, you got to straighten them out." Many parents actually impose sanctions if a child is not sufficiently aggressive. For example, if a child loses a fight and comes home upset, the parent might respond, "Don't you come in here crying that somebody beat you up; you better get back out there and whup his ass. I didn't raise no punks! Get back out there and whup his ass. If you don't whup his ass, I'll whup your ass when you come home." Thus the child obtains reinforcement for being tough and showing nerve.

While fighting, some children cry as though they are doing something they are ambivalent about. The fight may be against their wishes, yet they may feel constrained to fight or face the consequences--not just from peers but also from caretakers or parents, who may administer another beating if they back down. Some adults recall receiving such lessons from their own parents and justify repeating them to their children as a way to toughen them up. Looking capable of taking care of oneself as a form of self-defense is a dominant theme among both street-oriented and decent adults who worry about the safety of their children. There is thus at times a convergence in their child-rearing practices, although the rationales behind them may differ.

SELF-IMAGE BASED ON "JUICE"

BY the time they are teenagers, most youths have either internalized the code of the streets or at least learned the need to comport themselves in accordance with its rules, which chiefly have to do with interpersonal communication. The code revolves around the presentation of self. Its basic requirement is the display of a certain predisposition to violence. Accordingly, one's bearing must send the unmistakable if sometimes subtle message to "the next person" in public that one is capable of violence and mayhem when the situation requires it, that one can take care of oneself. The nature of this communication is largely determined by the demands of the circumstances but can include facial expressions, gait, and verbal expressions--all of which are geared mainly to deterring aggression. Physical appearance, including clothes, jewelry, and grooming, also plays an important part in how a person is viewed; to be respected, it is important to have the right look.

Even so, there are no guarantees against challenges, because there are always people around looking for a fight to increase their share of respect--or "juice," as it is sometimes called on the street. Moreover, if a person is assaulted, it is important, not only in the eyes of his opponent but also in the eyes of his "running buddies," for him to avenge himself. Otherwise he risks being "tried" (challenged) or "moved on" by any number of others. To maintain his honor he must show he is not someone to be "messed with" or "dissed." In general, the person must "keep himself straight" by managing his position of respect among others; this involves in part his self-image, which is shaped by what he thinks others are thinking of him in relation to his peers.

Objects play an important and complicated role in establishing self image. Jackets, sneakers, gold jewelry, reflect not just a person's taste, which tends to be tightly regulated among adolescents of all social classes, but also a willingness to possess things that may require defending. A boy wearing a fashionable, expensive jacket, for example, is vulnerable to attack by another who covets the jacket and either cannot afford to buy one or wants the added satisfaction of depriving someone else of his. However, if the boy forgoes the desirable jacket and wears one that isn't "hip," he runs the risk of being teased and possibly even assaulted as an unworthy person. To be allowed to hang with certain prestigious crowds, a boy must wear a different set of expensive clothes -- sneakers and athletic suit--every day. Not to be able to do so might make him appear socially deficient. The youth comes to covet such items-- especially when he sees easy prey wearing them.

In acquiring valued things, therefore, a person shores up his identity--but since it is an identity based on having things, it is highly precarious. This very precariousness gives a heightened sense of urgency to staying even with peers, with whom the person is actually competing. Young men and women who are able to command respect through their presentation of self--by allowing their possessions and their body language to speak for them--may not have to campaign for regard but may, rather, gain it by the force of their manner. Those who are unable to command respect in this way must actively campaign for it--and are thus particularly alive to slights.

One way of campaigning for status is by taking the possessions of others. In this context, seemingly ordinary objects can become trophies imbued with symbolic value that far exceeds their monetary worth. Possession of the trophy can symbolize the ability to violate somebody--to "get in his face," to take something of value from him, to "dis" him, and thus to enhance one's own worth by stealing someone else's. The trophy does not have to be something material. It can be another person's sense of honor, snatched away with a derogatory remark. It can be the outcome of a fight. It can be the imposition of a certain standard, such as a girl's getting herself recognized as the most beautiful. Material things, however, fit easily into the pattern. Sneakers, a pistol, even somebody else's girlfriend, can become a trophy. When a person can take something from another and then flaunt it, he gains a certain regard by being the owner, or the controller, of that thing. But this display of ownership can then provoke other people to

challenge him. This game of who controls what is thus constantly being played out on inner-city streets, and the trophy-- extrinsic or intrinsic, tangible or intangible--identifies the current winner.

An important aspect of this often violent give-and-take is its zero-sum quality. That is, the extent to which one person can raise himself up depends on his ability to put another person down. This underscores the alienation that permeates the inner-city ghetto community. There is a generalized sense that very little respect is to be had, and therefore everyone competes to get what affirmation he can of the little that is available. The craving for respect that results gives people thin skins. Shows of deference by others can be highly soothing, contributing to a sense of security, comfort, self-confidence, and self-respect. Transgressions by others which go unanswered diminish these feelings and are believed to encourage further transgressions. Hence one must be ever vigilant against the transgressions of others or even appearing as if transgressions will be tolerated. Among young people, whose sense of self-esteem is particularly vulnerable, there is an especially heightened concern with being disrespected. Many inner-city young men in particular crave respect to such a degree that they will risk their lives to attain and maintain it.

The issue of respect is thus closely tied to whether a person has an inclination to be violent, even as a victim. In the wider society people may not feel required to retaliate physically after an attack, even though they are aware that they have been degraded or taken advantage of. They may feel a great need to defend themselves during an attack, or to behave in such a way as to deter aggression (middle-class people certainly can and do become victims of street-oriented youths), but they are much more likely than street-oriented people to feel that they can walk away from a possible altercation with their self-esteem intact. Some people may even have the strength of character to flee, without any thought that their self-respect or esteem will be diminished.

In impoverished inner-city black communities, however, particularly among young males and perhaps increasingly among females, such flight would be extremely difficult. To run away would likely leave one's self esteem in tatters. Hence people often feel constrained not only to stand up and at least attempt to resist during an assault but also to "pay back"--to seek revenge--after a successful assault on their person. This may include going to get a weapon or even getting relatives involved. Their very identity and self-respect, their honor, is often intricately tied up with the way they perform on the streets during and after such encounters. This outlook reflects the circumscribed opportunities of the inner-city poor. Generally people outside the ghetto have other ways of gaining status and regard, and thus do not feel so dependent on such physical displays.

BY TRIAL OF MANHOOD

ON the street, among males these concerns about things and identity have come to be expressed in the concept of "manhood." Manhood in the inner city means taking the prerogatives of men with respect to strangers, other men, and women--being distinguished as a man. It implies physicality and a certain ruthlessness. Regard and respect are associated with this concept in large part because of its practical application: if others have little or no regard for a person's manhood, his very life and those of his loved ones could be in jeopardy. But there is a chicken-and egg aspect to this situation: one's physical safety is more likely to be jeopardized in public because manhood is associated with respect. In other words, an existential link has been created between the idea of manhood and one's self-esteem, so that it has become hard to say which is primary. For many inner-city youths, manhood and respect are flip sides of the same coin; physical and psychological well-being are inseparable, and both require a sense of control, of being in charge.

The operating assumption is that a man, especially a real man, knows what other men know--the code of the streets. And if one is not a real man, one is somehow diminished as a person, and there are certain valued things one simply does not deserve. There is thus believed to be a certain justice to the code, since it is considered that everyone has the opportunity to know it. Implicit in this is that everybody is held responsible for being familiar with the code. If the victim of a mugging, for example, does not know the code and so responds "wrong," the perpetrator may feel justified even in killing him and may feel no remorse. He may think, "Too bad, but it's his fault. He should have known better."

So when a person ventures outside, he must adopt the code--a kind of shield, really--to prevent others from "messing with" him. In these circumstances it is easy for people to think they are being tried or tested by others even when this is not the case. For it is sensed that something extremely valuable is at stake in every interaction, and people are encouraged to rise to the occasion, particularly with strangers. For people who are unfamiliar with the code--generally people who live outside the inner city--the concern with respect in the most ordinary interactions can be frightening and incomprehensible. But for those who are invested in the code, the clear object of their demeanor is to discourage strangers from even thinking about testing their manhood. And the sense of power that attends the ability to deter others can be alluring even to those who know the code without being heavily invested in it--the decent inner-city youths. Thus a boy who has been leading a basically decent life can, in trying circumstances, suddenly resort to deadly force.

Central to the issue of manhood is the widespread belief that one of the most effective ways of gaining respect is to manifest "nerve." Nerve is shown when one takes another person's possessions (the more valuable the better), "messes with" someone's woman, throws the first punch, "gets in someone's face," or pulls a trigger. Its proper display helps on the spot to check others who would violate one's person and also helps to build a reputation that works to prevent future challenges. But since such a show of

nerve is a forceful expression of disrespect toward the person on the receiving end, the victim may be greatly offended and seek to retaliate with equal or greater force. A display of nerve, therefore, can easily provoke a life-threatening response, and the background knowledge of that possibility has often been incorporated into the concept of nerve.

True nerve exposes a lack of fear of dying. Many feel that it is acceptable to risk dying over the principle of respect. In fact, among the hard-core street-oriented, the clear risk of violent death may be preferable to being "dissed" by another. The youths who have internalized this attitude and convincingly display it in their public bearing are among the most threatening people of all, for it is commonly assumed that they fear no man. As the people of the community say, "They are the baddest dudes on the street." They often lead an existential life that may acquire meaning only when they are faced with the possibility of imminent death. Not to be afraid to die is by implication to have few compunctions about taking another's life. Not to be afraid to die is the quid pro quo of being able to take somebody else's life--for the right reasons, if the situation demands it. When others believe this is one's position, it gives one a real sense of power on the streets. Such credibility is what many inner-city youths strive to achieve, whether they are decent or street-oriented, both because of its practical defensive value and because of the positive way it makes them feel about themselves. The difference between the decent and the street-oriented youth is often that the decent youth makes a conscious decision to appear tough and manly; in another setting--with teachers, say, or at his part-time job--he can be polite and deferential. The street-oriented youth, on the other hand, has made the concept of manhood a part of his very identity; he has difficulty manipulating it--it often controls him.

GIRLS AND BOYS

INCREASINGLY, teenage girls are mimicking the boys and trying to have their own version of "manhood." Their goal is the same--to get respect, to be recognized as capable of setting or maintaining a certain standard. They try to achieve this end in the ways that have been established by the boys, including posturing, abusive language, and the use of violence to resolve disputes, but the issues for the girls are different. Although conflicts over turf and status exist among the girls, the majority of disputes seem rooted in assessments of beauty (which girl in a group is "the cutest"), competition over boyfriends, and attempts to regulate other people's knowledge of and opinions about a girl's behavior or that of someone close to her, especially her mother.

A major cause of conflicts among girls is "he say, she say." This practice begins in the early school years and continues through high school. It occurs when "people," particularly girls, talk about others, thus putting their "business in the streets." Usually one girl will say something negative about another in the group, most often behind the person's back. The remark will then get back to the person talked about. She may retaliate or her friends may feel required to "take up for" her. In essence this is a form

of group gossiping in which individuals are negatively assessed and evaluated. As with much gossip, the things said may or may not be true, but the point is that such imputations can cast aspersions on a person's good name.

The accused is required to defend herself against the slander, which can result in arguments and fights, often over little of real substance. Here again is the problem of low self-esteem, which encourages youngsters to be highly sensitive to slights and to be vulnerable to feeling easily "dissed." To avenge the dissing, a fight is usually necessary.

Because boys are believed to control violence, girls tend to defer to them in situations of conflict. Often if a girl is attacked or feels slighted, she will get a brother, uncle, or cousin to do her fighting for her. Increasingly, however, girls are doing their own fighting and are even asking their male relatives to teach them how to fight. Some girls form groups that attack other girls or take things from them. A hard-core segment of inner-city girls inclined toward violence seems to be developing. As one thirteen year-old girl in a detention center for youths who have committed violent acts told me, "To get people to leave you alone, you gotta fight. Talking don't always get you out of stuff." One major difference between girls and boys: girls rarely use guns. Their fights are therefore not life-or-death struggles. Girls are not often willing to put their lives on the line for "manhood." The ultimate form of respect on the male-dominated inner-city street is thus reserved for men.

"GOING FOR BAD"

IN the most fearsome youths such a cavalier attitude toward death grows out of a very limited view of life. Many are uncertain about how long they are going to live and believe they could die violently at any time. They accept this fate; they live on the edge. Their manner conveys the message that nothing intimidates them; whatever turn the encounter takes, they maintain their attack--rather like a pit bull, whose spirit many such boys admire. The demonstration of such tenacity "shows heart" and earns their respect.

This fearlessness has implications for law enforcement. Many street oriented boys are much more concerned about the threat of "justice" at the hands of a peer than at the hands of the police. Moreover, many feel not only that they have little to lose by going to prison but that they have something to gain. The toughening-up one experiences in prison can actually enhance one's reputation on the streets. Hence the system loses influence over the hard core who are without jobs, with little perceptible stake in the system. If mainstream society has done nothing for them, they counter by making sure it can do nothing to them.

At the same time, however, a competing view maintains that true nerve consists in backing down, walking away from a fight, and going on with one's business. One fights only in self-defense. This view emerges from the decent philosophy that life is precious,

and it is an important part of the socialization process common in decent homes. It discourages violence as the primary means of resolving disputes and encourages youngsters to accept nonviolence and talk as confrontational strategies. But "if the deal goes down," self-defense is greatly encouraged. When there is enough positive support for this orientation, either in the home or among one's peers, then nonviolence has a chance to prevail. But it prevails at the cost of relinquishing a claim to being bad and tough, and therefore sets a young person up as at the very least alienated from street-oriented peers and quite possibly a target of derision or even violence.

Although the nonviolent orientation rarely overcomes the impulse to strike back in an encounter, it does introduce a certain confusion and so can prompt a measure of soul-searching, or even profound ambivalence. Did the person back down with his respect intact or did he back down only to be judged a "punk"--a person lacking manhood? Should he or she have acted? Should he or she have hit the other person in the mouth? These questions beset many young men and women during public confrontations. What is the "right" thing to do? In the quest for honor, respect, and local status--which few young people are uninterested in--common sense most often prevails, which leads many to opt for the tough approach, enacting their own particular versions of the display of nerve. The presentation of oneself as rough and tough is very often quite acceptable until one is tested. And then that presentation may help the person pass the test, because it will cause fewer questions to be asked about what he did and why. It is hard for a person to explain why he lost the fight or why he backed down. Hence many will strive to appear to "go for bad," while hoping they will never be tested. But when they are tested, the outcome of the situation may quickly be out of their hands, as they become wrapped up in the circumstances of the moment.

AN OPPOSITIONAL CULTURE

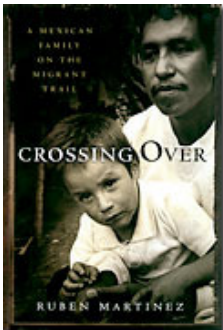
THE attitudes of the wider society are deeply implicated in the code of the streets. Most people in inner-city communities are not totally invested in the code, but the significant minority of hard-core street youths who are have to maintain the code in order to establish reputations, because they have--or feel they have--few other ways to assert themselves. For these young people the standards of the street code are the only game in town. The extent to which some children--particularly those who through upbringing have become most alienated and those lacking in strong and conventional social support--experience, feel, and internalize racist rejection and contempt from mainstream society may strongly encourage them to express contempt for the more conventional society in turn. In dealing with this contempt and rejection, some youngsters will consciously invest themselves and their considerable mental resources in what amounts to an oppositional culture to preserve themselves and their self-respect. Once they do, any respect they might be able to garner in the wider system pales in comparison with the respect available in the local system; thus they often lose interest in even attempting to negotiate the mainstream system.

At the same time, many less alienated young blacks have assumed a street-oriented demeanor as a way of expressing their blackness while really embracing a much more moderate way of life; they, too, want a nonviolent setting in which to live and raise a family. These decent people are trying hard to be part of the mainstream culture, but the racism, real and perceived, that they encounter helps to legitimate the oppositional culture. And so on occasion they adopt street behavior. In fact, depending on the demands of the situation, many people in the community slip back and forth between decent and street behavior.

A vicious cycle has thus been formed. The hopelessness and alienation many young inner-city black men and women feel, largely as a result of endemic joblessness and persistent racism, fuels the violence they engage in. This violence serves to confirm the negative feelings many whites and some middle-class blacks harbor toward the ghetto poor, further legitimating the oppositional culture and the code of the streets in the eyes of many poor young blacks. Unless this cycle is broken, attitudes on both sides will become increasingly entrenched, and the violence, which claims victims black and white, poor and affluent, will only escalate.

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THE HEARTS OF STRANGERS

Ruben Martinez, the author of *Crossing Over*, describes the Mexican migrant experience, and reminds native-born Americans that they, too, were once strangers in a strange land

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Every year hundreds of thousands of Mexicans make their way north to America in search of jobs and opportunity. For most, the border-crossing is perilous and illegal, and the work they find is demeaning and poorly paid. Some bring their earnings back with them to Mexico, while others strive to build futures for themselves on this side of the border. Though U.S. policy does not officially recognize Mexicans living and working here without proper certification, this country in fact relies heavily on their labor, and

for the most part tacitly allows their illegal entry and presence—especially during times, such as fruit-picking season, when cheap, unskilled manpower is in high demand.

For the migrants, the decision to leave Mexico behind is usually a wrenching one. It means saying goodbye to loved ones and a familiar lifestyle and landscape to strike out for an uncertain future in a more impersonal and not always welcoming land. Many Americans are barely aware of the migrant subculture, encountering Mexican migrants perhaps only as unobtrusive emptiers of wastebaskets or sweepers of floors. Others, who must compete with them for living space and employment, feel threatened by their intrusion into what were once mostly white or black neighborhoods and workplaces.

In 1996 the writer Ruben Martinez decided that the Mexican migrant story should be told, so that the large subgroup of Mexican migrants in America might be better understood. After spending four years talking to and living among Mexican migrants on both sides of the border, Martinez wrote *Crossing Over* (October 2001), a portrait of the lives and aspirations of several migrant families.

The book centers primarily around the Chávez family, who lost three adult brothers in a tragic border-crossing car accident in April, 1996. Martinez tracked down the deceased brothers' surviving relatives in the dusty, dead-end town of Cherán, Mexico, where they had grown up. The mens' mother, their wives and children, and their younger, married sister were living together in a tiny shack-like house at the edge of town. He came to know the Chávезes and many of their fellow townspeople quite well, and describes their lives in Cherán as a peculiar mix of hopelessness, thwarted ambition, supportive family networks, tradition, religious faith, cultural pride, and encroachments from American pop culture imported by returning migrants. Anyone who wants to make something of themselves or offer a better future for their children, he explains, must leave for America, which is why most inhabitants of Cherán have family members in the U.S., or live there themselves part-time.

While Martinez was in Cherán researching the book, the Chávez brothers' younger sister Rosa and her husband Wense decided to try their luck in America. So Martinez followed their story up north, detailing Rosa's border crossing (she crossed separately from Wense) and their lives as illegals in Wisconsin. Martinez sought out other Cherán families north of the border as well, and describes each family's disparate experiences in their neighborhoods and workplaces, interviewing not only the migrants themselves, but their American neighbors and co-workers. Most, he discovers, work grueling hours for little pay, and, to the dismay of their American neighbors, crowd extended families into single-family houses. A few, however, have attained impressive levels of success—progressing from pickers of strawberries to owners of their own strawberry fields, or sending their children on to college and graduate school in fields like accounting and biomedical engineering.

Regardless of the place each migrant has found for him or herself in America, all seem to share an uneasy feeling of divided identity—of being no longer quite Mexican or quite American, and of having had to make excruciating choices and sacrifices. The experience of Reyna Guzman, a Mexican-born California property-owner whom Martinez interviewed is representative:

This is Reyna's life: she is physically present in Watsonville but conjuring up Cherán at her altars and in her meals and in the lessons of tradition she teaches her kids, even as influences of their new home inexorably pull at them. It's a classic immigrant story: she has lost some precious things and gained some others. It would be hard right now for Reyna Guzman to easily answer the question of whether the bargain was worth it. But then again, who can?

Ruben Martinez is the son of first-generation immigrants from Mexico and El Salvador. He is an associate editor at Pacific News Service, a correspondent for PBS's *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly*, and the author of *The Other Side* (1992), a book about Latino culture in Los Angeles. He is the 2001-2 Loeb Fellow at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design.

Martinez recently spoke with me by telephone from Los Angeles:



Wendy Werris

Ruben Martinez

How did this project develop for you? Did you set out knowing the general outline of what you would accomplish—that you would interview many families and follow them over the border to visit with them again up north? Or did it start out as a smaller project specifically about the tragedy of the Chávez brothers?

I moved to Mexico City in early 1996 because I knew I wanted to write a book about migrants in general and about the relationship between the United States and Mexico. And shortly after my arrival, the car crash that begins the Chávez family's story in my book occurred. I knew from the beginning that that story was going to figure somehow in the book. But I didn't know I would end up spending the next four years following them back and forth across the border.

In the course of your research for this book you crawled through pitch-black sewage-filled tunnels to understand the experience of homeless teenagers, and even made efforts to accompany one of your subjects on her border crossing. Is it unusual for you to go to such extremes for your writing projects?

Yes. I probably went further in trying to be a participant-observer in this project than on any other previous occasion. I did spend a lot of time in Central America in the 1980s during the civil wars, and did my fair share of trekking through the jungles

accompanying army patrols or guerrilla units and stuff like that. In Los Angeles over the years I've spent a lot of time with gang kids and been in some relatively dangerous, edgy situations, but this was on a whole new level for me. With this project I think I finally found the type of intimacy that I'd always yearned for as a documentary writer.

But even with this project there were some things that I missed. I wasn't with Rosa when she crossed the border, which is one of my biggest regrets. I still feel this guilt as a documentary writer for not having been there. Right around the time that Rosa was about to go on her journey I was ambivalent about whether to go back home for Christmas. And ultimately I made the decision to be with my family. It was that decision that precluded my journey across the border with Rosa, although I didn't know that at the time.

You describe the southern side of the border as representing family, community, and rootedness in the past; and the northern side as representing opportunity, orientation toward the future, and a kind of cold impersonality. You even describe the crossing itself as a baptism into a new life. Given that the border is so laden with symbolism for so many people, has it come to figure significantly in Mexican literature and arts?

Yes. Over the last twenty years there has been a very strong contribution to Mexican literature and art in general from people who live in the border region. In Tijuana, for example, there is something called the Border Arts Workshop, founded in the mid-eighties. It's a collective of journalists and visual artists and filmmakers who seek to document this extraordinary space where so many forces come together and contest one another, and where cultures clash and meld and where life and death situations arise all the time.

Many of the people whose lives you followed seemed almost like different people when they were north of the border versus south of the border. Is that your own experience as well? As a Mexican-American, do you have a different sense of yourself when you're in Mexico than when you're in America?

Very much so. It's not just in the midst of this project that I felt different on one side or the other. I grew up feeling different depending on which side of the line I was on. As a kid, in my mother's El Salvador I was a polite and proper Latin American boy—a Catholic kid. In the United States I was a rock 'n roller. In the context of this project I've always tried to fit in no matter which side of the border I'm on—you know, do as the Romans do. If I was hanging out with the migrants I would pretty much occupy the Latin-American side of my own identity linguistically and culturally. But in the presence of, say, the boss of the meat-packing plant in Norwalk, Wisconsin—a heartland American type—I would summon whatever notions of American popular culture that are part of my identity. I feel like I'm conversant on that side as well. It's a matter of swimming in these different currents culturally and linguistically. That's not to say that I feel completely comfortable in these different roles. Ultimately I feel like slightly the

outsider no matter where I am. But I think I've honed enough tools to not be seen as some totally exotic foreign presence. I try to have as normal a conversation as possible with whomever I'm with in the moment.

Of your and your father's mixed identities as both Mexican and American you write, "we are neither, we are both.... we cannot be one, must always be two and more than two: the sum of our parts will always be greater than the whole." That reminded me of W.E.B. DuBois's description of the "double-consciousness" that African-Americans feel in the United States. ("One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings.") You observed that some of the migrants' children were more relaxed than their parents about socializing with blacks. Is it your impression that future generations of blacks and Hispanics will become more aware of their commonalities, rather than avoiding and resenting one another as so many whom you observed seem to do now?

I think that's very true. With the demographic changes we've seen, documented by Census 2000, African-Americans and Latinos share the inner-city space more than ever before. We're going to see more hip-hop in Spanish and we're going to see more mixed-race marriages. We're going to see more intimacy on all levels between these two populations. Does that mean it's going to be a smooth relationship? Not at all. Because by its very nature, life in the American inner city is a tumultuous one. It's a place of meagre resources and lots of competition for those resources. So I think it will continue to be a relationship characterized both by collaboration and intimacy on the one hand and distrust and conflict on the other.

You emphasize that migrants arriving in the U.S. need to earn dignity and respect in order to achieve social mobility, but you point out that this hasn't happened so far: "Mexicans from earlier waves of migration have seen their children mostly remain in the barrio, educated in inferior schools, vulnerable to gangs and drugs, the fate of people who have no future, of families who have no mobility." Is there reason to believe that this will change?

Depending on the day of the week or where I am geographically—in the city or in the country—I'll be either optimistic or pessimistic on this question. You could go to a newly arrived immigrant neighborhood, like Pico Union in Los Angeles, or Mount Pleasant in Washington D.C., and see a really tough neighborhood with a lot of problems and a lot of issues like lack of access to quality education and health care and so on. And yet, if you speak to the families there, you find them incredibly optimistic about the future as a result of their move from a situation that was even worse than what they have now. The first migrant generation, by its very definition, has achieved some mobility, socially and otherwise. I don't want to overgeneralize, but if you go to an older Mexican barrio where second or third generation families live, say East Los Angeles, or one of the poor wards in Houston or San Antonio, you'll find just the opposite. Some families feel that their route to the future has been blocked. You'll see a family of three generations in

one neighborhood where none of the kids have gone to college yet. You'll see kids plagued by the typical problems of the American inner city—youth gangs, drugs, etcetera, with avenues toward the future basically closed. In the end I want to feel optimistic—I want to feel like there's a future here for all of us, because if there's not, then that just chops the American dream down. What is the American project if the avenues are blocked for certain people and open for others?

In the future, depending on which way the winds of the economy blow, I think you may see a renewed sense of struggle when the kids of the generation that's recently arrived get a little older. Like Rosa Chávez's daughter. I'll be very interested to see how she does over the next several years—how she does in school, whether she goes to college, and what the job market is like for her. Is she just going to be in the service economy flipping burgers for the rest of her life? And then will her daughter do the same thing? Or can we construct a society in which mobility is not just the goal but the reality for all of us?

Is there a big difference between how legal as opposed to illegal immigrants fare once they get here?

Absolutely. There's no doubt about that. But even Americans who've been here going back five or ten generations have difficulty accessing good health care and good public education. If it's hard for them, then it's doubly hard for a migrant. In the end, the way we see migrants struggling tells us a lot about ourselves as a society and what our institutions are like, and how strong or how weak they are.

Several times you mention that were it not for the release valve of access to the United States, the pent-up frustration in Mexico's rural provinces would explode into revolution. If there were, in fact, no access to the United States, what form would a revolution take? Are there specific groups that would be seen as accountable for the general poverty and lack of opportunity?

That's a great question. I think you've already seen some change in Mexico that might not seem revolutionary outside the Mexican context, but within the historical context of Mexico you could qualify it as revolutionary. The recent presidential elections that brought Vicente Fox into power, for example, was a revolutionary change in Mexican society precisely because there have been seventy years of one-party rule that was anti-democratic. One's vote really did not count. There was tremendous corruption. And there was no possibility of real democratic change. That changed overnight with the first really truly clean elections and an open political process in which political parties were able to access the media in an open and democratic fashion. It remains to be seen whether this administration lives up to the tremendous expectations that have been heaped upon it.

Another quasi-revolutionary sign is the rebellion by the Zapatistas down in Chiapas which began in 1994 and is still ongoing. The fact that this rebellion occurred precisely in

a non-migrant area buttresses the theory of the migrant flow as a social release valve. The areas in Mexico that are the most contested politically today are places like Guerrero and Chiapas and Veracruz—states that are not only poor, but also don't have migrant traditions. It's the type of poverty where you can't even imagine moving anymore.

And as for those who would be targeted by people's frustrations, there are plenty of actors in Mexican politics and the economy whom people hold accountable. There's been a tremendous amount of activism over the last several years. There's a middle-class movement against creditors, for example, called *El Barzon*. These are debtors who have gotten together and have been fighting creditors that charge insane interest rates. A tremendous amount of energy has also been mobilized against corruption in government in Mexico. And there's a fair amount of anti-American sentiment in Mexico as well. It's kind of like that schizophrenic relationship that many migrants themselves have with the United States. They're totally infatuated with American pop and the idea of an American-dream type of future, but they want to hold onto their Mexican past. And virtually every Mexican remembers in a race-memory way the Mexican-American War in which they lost half their territory. And there is also resentment of the absolute dominance of the American economy in the hemisphere. So I think it's a complicated landscape.

Do you hold out any hope that one day Mexico itself might become prosperous and equitable enough that those seeking more than a bare subsistence won't have to leave their homeland behind?

Mexico has always had the potential to have a strong economy. And it shows signs of that every now and again. Mexico is a place with a very strong work ethic. It's actually very ironic. The stereotype always used to be the lazy Mexican sitting under a cactus in the sun. But that old stereotype has been rewritten to a significant extent in the last twenty years in the United States, precisely because Mexicans are now resented for the opposite thing—for working so hard for so little money. So it has never been a problem of laziness. It's always been a matter of geopolitics and endemic poverty and corrupt institutions. Mexico has a tremendous amount of natural resources—a tremendous amount of potential as an economic power. And indeed, in the region of Latin America, Mexico, alongside Chile and Brazil, is one of the three powerhouse economies. So I think Mexico does have a tremendous future ahead. Within the context of the Free Trade Agreement, I think it will continue to grow economically. And I think that as the economy grows, it will affect the migration situation.

You write that when Mexican migrants "are denied their Americanness by U.S. immigration policy, I feel that my own is denied as well." Does this mean that you would prefer to see the border abolished altogether?

In some ways I think we have already moved toward opening the border. We have done it through our hypocritical and highly selective enforcement of the border over the years. It can be a life and death proposition but, by and large, if you want to cross it, you can. The United States government and the United States labor economy are very, very well aware of that. That's why it's hypocritical, I think, for politicians to rattle their sabres about closing the border when they very well know that you can't possibly do that and still maintain the type of economy that you have in the United States right now, which is basically a huge middle class being supported by an even bigger service sector. Of course, right now we're in a very particular situation. Everybody's really concerned about what comes across that border in terms of security threats to the United States. Those threats are very real. Nobody would contest that. But right before September 11, President Fox and President Bush were edging ever closer to reforming immigration laws—talking very seriously about a guest-worker program, and, in essence, recognizing that the border is already pretty much open.

We have a Free Trade Agreement already—so there are no tariffs between us. We have a strong migratory flow. And Mexico is the United States's biggest trading partner. So history has very clearly pushed in the direction of having an open border. The reality is that in terms of culture and commerce and actual people, the border has been open for a long time.

What audience do you hope that *Crossing Over* will reach? Are there any kinds of specific social or political repercussions that you hope the book will have?

There are several different audiences I'd like to reach. I would love for everybody in a small, heartland town that's received migrants from Mexico to read this book. Hopefully I can provide some context for people who are experiencing this surrealistic change from being an all-white, or all-white and black community, to suddenly having people from another land in their midst.

The book is going to be translated into Spanish also. So I hope Mexicans will read it and see their narrative and their point of view represented. It would be of interest to people who want to learn more about migration in the global sense as well. Because I do believe we live in the "Age of Migration." Migration is an essential part of globalization. And I think the book contributes to a discussion of the human element of globalization.

If the book's theme can be summed up briefly, I think it's very basic: I mention in the text how the Rio Grande in many ways seems like the River Jordan—how the United States can seem like Canaan; how Mexico can seem like Egypt in an epic mythical sense. And there's a passage in the Old Testament, in the book of Exodus, that talks about how strangers should be received: "Thou shalt not molest a stranger for you know the hearts of strangers, for you were once strangers also in the land of Egypt." I think Americans by and large do know how to receive strangers. We've been doing it all along. And this migration is like every other in some fundamental way. But we haven't always received

Mexicans—or Chinese or Japanese, depending on the chapter of migration history we're talking about—generously. Certainly Mexicans have seen their share of discrimination and really tough circumstances. But they're strangers in our midst who come offering their good will and wanting to be part of our society—wanting to work hard, and wanting to do the right thing and play by the rules. And I think they need to be received with respect and with compassion.

At one point you describe this project as a "pilgrimage" for you. Was there insight or understanding you gained (or hoped to gain) from the project on a personal level?

Yes. I think every documentary writer or filmmaker—anybody working in this genre called the documentary—always goes on a personal journey alongside the journey of his or her subjects. And I certainly had one. I think my journey brought me to terms with where I come from as an American, that I am the progeny of migrants—the product of the journey of my parents and my grandparents before me. My sense of mixed parentage, my sense that my family comes from somewhere else, but is here now—to me, that's what being an American is all about.

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