



2014 Midlands Mentoring Partnership Annual Summit – Breakout Session Schedule

At-a-glance:

8:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Registration

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM – Breakout Session I

- Youth Initiated Mentoring: Benefits, Challenges & Opportunities
- Building Bridges: Public, Private & Corporate Partnerships

10:15 AM – 11:15 AM – Breakout Session II

- Mentoring Youth Reentering Our Communities
- Building Relationships with Other People's Children

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM – Luncheon in Grand Ballroom

1:15 PM – 2:15 PM – Breakout Session III

- How to Draw Your Mentees Out of Their Shells
- Understanding Early Childhood Education: The Building Blocks of a Successful Life

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM – Breakout Session IV

- Making Your Case, Without Breaking Your Bank: Evaluation and Research Strategies for Grassroots Mentoring Programs
- Advocacy 101

3:45 PM – 4:30 PM – Afternoon Plenary (for Mentoring Programs affiliated with IMP and MMP only)

Full Details:

Registration – 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM

Breakout Session I – 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Youth Initiated Mentoring: Benefits, Challenges & Opportunities

Presenter: Michael Garringer, Education Northwest

This session will teach practitioners about a promising new strategy for creating strong, lasting matches in mentoring programs: Youth-Initiated Mentoring (YIM). This approach can empower youth, change the way your program thinks about recruitment, and extend your reach into the community. But there are challenges and special considerations to be addressed as well when using this approach. Participants will learn about the structure of YIM, research on prior implementations of this approach, and tips and best practices that can help programs figure out how to employ this exciting new way of creating matches. There will also be time for discussing the nuances of this approach, asking questions, and reflecting on how well it might fit into existing program structures.

Building Bridges: Public, Private & Corporate Partnerships

Presenters: Matt Darling, Omaha Community Foundation; Rob Trebilcock, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska; Mary Schissel, Mason City Youth Task Force

Today, community partnerships are essential for the success of youth serving programs. In this session, three leaders in the public, private, and foundation realm will share best practices with attendees how to build successful, meaningful and long lasting partnerships with these sectors. The session will be in the format of a panel discussion, with opportunities for audience Q & A.

Breakout Session II – 10:15 AM – 11:15 AM

Mentoring Youth Reentering Our Communities

Presenter: Dr. Anne Hobbs, University of Nebraska

A number of studies have demonstrated that mentors can play a key role in youth transitioning back to a community after a stay in a correctional or detention facility. In fact, mentees reported that mentors had played a supportive and critical role during their reentry (Todis, Bullis, Waintrup, Schultz, & D'Ambrosio, 2001). Other research found that youth who participated in mentoring programs in which they met with a mentor at least once a week were less likely to recidivate following release (Drake and Barnowski (2006). To achieve these results, mentoring efforts must be *very intentional*, must be willing to supervise intensely and it helps to be fully aware of the challenges ahead of time. To this end, Dr. Hobbs will discuss the mentoring efforts within the UNL Reentry project. She will describe the match process, background checks, and work within the facility. She has then asked some of her mentors to discuss the specific challenges they have faced working with their youth – and will close with some promising preliminary findings.

Building Relationships with Other People's Children

Presenter: Dr. Sarah Edwards, University of Nebraska

While we know it is important to honor the cultural perspectives of children and their families, what might this look like? How can we build a relationship with kids that respects the knowledge they have gained from their

families? Come join in a discussion of ways to treat families as something other than an afterthought when we work with their children.

Luncheon – 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Breakout Session III – 1:15 PM – 2:15 PM

How to Draw Your Mentees Out of Their Shells

Presenters: Leah Uko, Fox 42; Roberta Wilhelm, Girls Inc. Omaha

In this session, program staff and mentors will learn practical skills for drawing a mentee out of their shell and having those tough conversations. Roberta Wilhelm will utilize principles of improvisation as a tool for engaging with mentees. Leah Uko will explain how she has used interview tactics learned from her career as a television reporter to train mentors to more effectively start conversations with their mentees.

Understanding Early Childhood Education: The Building Blocks of a Successful Life

Presenter: Dr. Debora Wisneski, University of Nebraska

This presentation will include an overview of the unique features of the development and learning of young children between the ages of birth through age 8. Suggestions will be given on how adults can help provide the most beneficial experiences for young children to thrive and how community organizations can collaborate to assure that all children are given the best chances to succeed in life. This session will also discuss how early childhood factors impact youth later in life, with a special focus on youth behaviors encountered by mentors, mentoring staff, and other youth development professionals.

Breakout Session IV – 2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Making Your Case, Without Breaking Your Bank: Evaluation and Research Strategies for Grassroots Mentoring Programs

Presenter: Michael Garringer, Education Northwest

Human service providers of all types, including mentoring programs, are increasingly being asked by funders and stakeholders to demonstrate the value of their services, with a special emphasis these days on expensive “gold-standard” program evaluations. But that type of “evidence” is expensive, time-consuming, and a poor fit for small local programs serving small numbers of youth. This session will explore some ways that smaller, grassroots mentoring programs can still demonstrate their impact and value, emphasizing creative ways programs can use the data they are already collecting. Topics covered include developing a solid theory of change, the value of qualitative data, and aligning your data with other initiatives in your community. If you are a local program that’s trying to prove your true worth, this session provides ideas that practitioners can act on without paying for expensive evaluation services.

Advocacy 101

Presenters: Becky Gould, Nebraska Appleseed; Anne Hindery, Nonprofit Association of the Midlands; Shanell Wagler; Early Childhood Iowa

How can we best advocate for our programs and the youth we serve? How can we increase support for our programs? This session will discuss what advocacy means, and how it differs from lobbying. It will also detail the best way to reach our local, state, and national representatives, with a focus on the issues that impact mentoring, youth development, and the populations served by our programs.

Afternoon Plenary – 3:45 PM – 4:30 PM (MMP & IMP MEMBERS ONLY)

Presenters: Mary Sheka, Iowa Mentoring Partnership; Whitney Mastin, Midlands Mentoring Partnership

This session, for mentoring programs formally affiliated with the Midlands Mentoring Partnership & the Iowa Mentoring Partnership only, will provide an opportunity to network and reflect on the conference. In addition, we will discuss how to best celebrate mentoring in our communities. The session will wrap up with best practices around how to best work together to celebrate and promote mentoring in our communities.