



NATIONAL  
**MENTORING**  
RESOURCE CENTER  
A Program of OJJDP

# Mentoring to Support Youth, Families, and Communities Impacted by the Opioid Crisis

RESOURCES FROM OJJDP AND THE NATIONAL MENTORING RESOURCE CENTER

## How We Support Opioid Prevention

In 2018, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded local, statewide and regional mentoring initiatives specifically for youth impacted by opioids. Examples of this work include:

- **The Mentor Connector**

The Mentor Connector has implemented youth and family mentoring for vulnerable populations across Rutland County, VT for 13 years. One of their mentoring initiatives is a family mentoring model focused on youth impacted by the opioid crisis, where every youth in an impacted family receives an individual mentor who meets with them weekly and works to increase protective factors. Each family also receives a “family mentor” focused on partnering with the family to connect them to needed social services.

- **Park and Recreation Mentorship for Rural Youth Impacted by Opioids in Central Appalachia**

As community-based providers of health, recreation, and social-emotional development services to youth, local park and recreation (P&R) agencies provide opportunities for youth to engage with mentors and role models. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is working to improve the capacity of local P&R agencies in rural central Appalachia to respond to the opioid epidemic through evidence-based mentorship activities. NRPA is partnering with local community stakeholders, conducting a needs assessment with five communities impacted by the opioid epidemic to inform a national mentorship framework that leverages P&R assets and focuses on substance misuse prevention and criminal activity reduction, which will be piloted and evaluated in those five communities.



## Apply for No-Cost Technical Assistance for Mentoring Programs

The National Mentoring Resource Center provides no-cost specialized technical assistance (TA) to mentoring programs to support their efforts in implementing evidence based mentoring practices. Specialized TA is available from expert TA Providers on mentoring strategies for youth impacted by substance use and misuse. Examples of TA include development of mentor training materials, guidance on mentor recruitment strategies, and assessment of mentor screening practices to ensure the quality and effectiveness of programming. Visit [nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org](https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org) to apply for technical assistance.

- **Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA): Opioid Prevention**

BGCA's Opioid Prevention program links youth with caring mentors and skill-building prevention programs, while engaging them more deeply in their communities. Six Boys & Girls Club organizations serving communities impacted by the opioid crisis are promoting positive outcomes and reducing risk factors for targeted youth, and increasing family and community supports to address opioid and substance abuse through the provision of mentoring and prevention services to youth and community engagement events including mentor training, youth-led prevention campaigns, and mentor-mentee group matching events.

- **Big Brothers Big Sisters of America (BBBSA): Mentoring Youth Impacted by Opioids**

Through the Mentoring Youth Impacted by Opioids initiative, BBBSA seeks to improve youth, mentor, and parent/caregiver knowledge of the risks of opioid abuse; provide opioid and substance abuse education to youth, mentors, staff, parents, and caregivers; and provide support and guidance to youth who have a parent or family member using opioids. In 2018-2019, BBBSA agencies will provide mentoring services to 650 youth impacted by opioid use, including those who live in communities with high rates of opioid use and overdoses, have a parent or other family member who is currently using or who has used opioids, are in foster care due to opioid use by a primary caregiver, or have a high risk for using opioids due to individual, family, and community risk factors.

## Resources from the OJJDP National Mentoring Resource Center

OJJDP's National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC) – a comprehensive resource hub for evidence-based practice information and technical assistance for mentoring programs across the nation – is also making targeted efforts to address the needs of mentoring programs serving youth, families and communities impacted by the opioid crisis. *To receive updates on the below resources and learning opportunities, visit the OJJDP National Mentoring Resource Center and sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, at [nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org](http://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org).*



- **Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series: Mentoring Youth Impacted by Opioids**

On **June 20, 2019 from 1:00 PM – 2:15 PM EDT**, the NMRC will offer a webinar for mentoring programs serving youth impacted by the opioid crisis. The effects of the opioid epidemic have been devastating to communities across the country. This webinar will focus on the role of mentoring in supporting youth impacted by opioid and substance abuse. Presenters will discuss risk and preventive factors for substance use and misuse, and mentoring strategies for youth and families who are at high risk for using, currently using, or in recovery, from the perspectives of clinicians and mentoring practitioners.

- **Resource Guide on Mentoring and the Opioid Crisis**

The NMRC will produce a practical resource guide that supports non-profit organizations, mentoring professionals, and mentors serving youth impacted by substance use and misuse, including opioids, from a trauma-informed lens.

- **Evidence Review: Mentoring for Preventing and Reducing Substance Use**

This deep evidence review by the NMRC's Research Board will examine the use of mentoring relationships and formal mentoring programs to prevent or disrupt youth engagement with substances that have the potential to lead to dependence, overuse and misuse, and associated psychological, social, academic, relational, and physical health problems. The impact of mentoring on preventing or intervening with opioid misuse will be a particular focus of this review, which will examine overall evidence of effectiveness, moderators and mediators of effectiveness, and the scaling of mentoring to address the crisis.

- **Measures of Opioid Use, Misuse, and Potential Use**

The NMRC Research Board will also add ready-to-use scales to the NMRC's *Measurement Guidance Toolkit* that will allow mentoring programs serving youth at-risk for opioid use, as well as youth who may be already using or in recovery, to assess their impact on key youth outcomes. Scale selection will support the measurement of current use, as well as potential for misuse based on relevant external factors. A webinar on application of these scales and on researching the intersection of mentoring and opioid abuse will also be offered.