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LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
RIO RANCHO HIGH SCHOOL
21 JULY 2015

**INDIVIDUAL MENTORING OF THIRD GRADERS BY COLLEGE STUDENTS:
PRIMARY PREVENTION OF DROPOUT AND CREATING SUCCESS PATHWAYS**

Attachments to this presentation include:

- 2015 MATCH New Mexico Personnel
- 2011 Executive Summary on Mentoring and Tutoring Create Hope distributed to the Governor and all elected members of the 2012 Legislature
- FACTS ABOUT THIRD GRADE READING and THIRD GRADE READING INDIVIDUAL MENTORING distributed to the Governor and all elected members of the 2015 Legislature
- Outline of text and slide presentation this date
- Organizational Structure of MATCH New Mexico
- THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING WITH A FOCUS ON NEW MEXICO (2104)
-

On request with email note to undersigned:

- PREVENTIVE FACTORS FOR REDUCING DROPOUT AND ENSURING ACADEMIC SUCCESS
- ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE FOR MENTORING, 3rd EDITION Checklist for mentoring programs by MENTOR and endorsed by THE CHRONICLE OF EVIDENCE-BASED MENTORING
- The Quality of Mentoring Relationships and Mentoring Success, PERACH, Haifa
- MATCH New Mexico ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE (2015)
- Mentoring Worx: Evaluation Toolkit from Government of Western Australia
- Syllabus UNIV UNIV 391.013/498: MENTORING AND LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

For further information, access to educational materials including videotape materials, go to our website matchnm.org and contact us for regular newsletters and reporting.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, and consultants and with respect,

John R. Graham, MD CM FRCPC FAPA

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MATCH NEW MEXICO: MENTORING AND TUTORING CREATE HOPE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dropout rates and failure to graduate high school and college are increasing in New Mexico, with low income and ethnic (non-Caucasian) students at greatest risk. New Mexico college graduation rates are about 10% lower than the national average. Early signs of predisposition to dropout and failure to graduate high school appear in grade three and we support the new state government initiative to ensure competency in reading ability by the end of third grade. There is growing inequality in the educational system.

There is one successful global model countering dropout, creating readiness to promote and successful retention in the educational system: the innovation started in 1974 at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel is called PERACH which means 'flower' in Hebrew and is also the acronym for tutorial project. College students receive a partial scholarship in return for mentoring and tutoring children from disadvantaged groups, matching the college student's abilities with needs of the child. Each year 60,000 vulnerable Israeli children work with 30,000 Israeli college students in a Win-Win situation. PERACH has been adapted in 21 countries. Recently PERACH spawned programs at 45 Mexican colleges and universities. There is no American or African PERACH program.

Could New Mexico benefit from development of a responsive, responsible and rational mentoring and tutoring program? Early evaluation from a project in the College of Education at New Mexico State University using principles in parallel with PERACH says Yes in a resounding way.

MATCH NEW MEXICO believes gifted students recognized for merit, achievement or need should give something back to their community. Scholarships, foundation awards, governmental support, and other monies should be "reinvested" in the community through good works assisting others. The best of our capable college students can reward everyone.

The vulnerable child gains needed attention, individual stimulation and the opportunity to excel on multiple levels. The college student receives direct financial support, gains experience and meaning while learning about social needs, and may gain direct experience in a chosen professional field of study while completing college credit. The academic center is energized by the social involvement of the students and closes the gap between ivory tower isolation and direct service to the surrounding community. Community pride with strong social values and cooperative spirit allows everyone to feel better. On a long-term basis, all of the gains blend together with shared awareness of community responsibilities.

NEXT STEPS

1. Identify and describe all existing mentoring and tutorial programs in New Mexico.
2. Begin work with the New Mexico Legislative Educational Study Committee to establish an independent coordinating office for mentoring and tutoring efforts.
3. Establish a collaborative network, linking all academic coordinators, organizations, leaders and interested individuals, to share information and shape programming.
4. Develop evaluation measures assessing program objectives from the outset.
5. Establish socially responsible curricular models for college credit.
6. Fund a reasonable number of selected New Mexico college students to be matched with vulnerable children identified by local school systems throughout New Mexico.
7. Launch MATCH NEW MEXICO.

Respectfully,
2011 Organizing Committee
HiddenFromView, a New Mexico nonprofit educational research organization

JULY 21, 2015



MATCH

New Mexico

Mentoring And Tutoring Create Hope
a 501(c)(3) organization registered in New Mexico

Connects the abilities
of bright and committed
college student mentors

with the needs
of third graders

within a mentoring program of proven success
With everyone working together

prevent dropout
grow individual potential

**PLEASE -
BEFORE THE QUICK FIXES**

- EDUCATIONAL REFORM WITHIN A
COMPLICATED
PSYCHOSOCIAL SYSTEM CAN CREATE HOT
MESS
- **COMPLEX**
INTERACTING FACTORS NOT DEFINED
AND UNCONTROLLED
- **ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION OF
PROBLEMS**
- **NATIONAL ISSUES IN EXTREMES**

ZIPCODES

- Communications
- Transportation
- Safety
- Lighting
- Education
- Recycling
- Environmental
- Jobs in the neighborhood
- Traffic
- Poverty
- Substance abuse
- Mental illness
- Health care services

**EDUCATIONAL
CHALLENGES**

**Low academic performance in third
grade, especially reading scores,
correlate with high rates of
detachment,
delinquency, and dropout,
in later childhood and adolescence,
even adult incarceration rates
for men and women**

**RESEARCH-BASED EARLY INDICATORS OF
GETTING OFF THE PATHWAY:
CHALLENGES IN PRIMARY PREVENTION**

- LACK OF DEVELOPING EARLY LANGUAGE SKILLS AND READING
READINESS DURING INFANCY AND PRE-SCHOOL YEARS
- LACK OF READING READINESS BY KINDERGARTEN
AND IN KINDERGARTEN
- FAMILY-RELATED AND NEIGHBORHOOD-RELATED STRESSORS
- CHRONIC ABSENCES FROM EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
EVEN IN EARLY YEARS
- INABILITY TO READ BY THE END OF THIRD GRADE
- SUMMER LEARNING LOSS OR "SUMMER SLIDE"
- ABSENCES, BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS, AND COURSE FAILURE IN
MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL (ABCs)

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

GETTING OFF THE PATHWAY

ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION
REPORTING 2010
AND CONFIRMED 2013

VALUE EVERY VOLUNTEER AND ORGANIZATION
WORKING TO PREVENT DROPOUT
AND DEVELOP INDIVIDUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
FROM PREGNANCY
THROUGH EARLY CHILDHOOD
TO GRADE THREE
AND THEREAFTER
IN
NEW ALLIANCES

Primary prevention
describes the attempts
to eliminate the conditions leading
to a dysfunctional situation or
disordered state
before it occurs

*THE EDUCATIONAL
(POLIO) VACCINATION*

- LEARNING TO READ BY THE END OF GRADE THREE
- READING TO LEARN BY GRADE FOUR, THEN A LIFETIME OF LEARNING
- TAKE THE VACCINE TO PREVENT ACUTE, LIFE THREATENING DISORDER AND GRADUAL DECLINE INTO LOWERED QUALITY OF LIFE AND POVERTY

Return on Investment

- Studies typically show that a dollar invested in primary prevention always carries high benefit
- \$7 invested in prevention leads to savings of \$17
- \$1 spent brings a \$3 return on the investment

**1964
Civil Rights Act
The War on Poverty
Deinstitutionalization
Educational Reform**

And 50 years later...

Gaps in

early growth and development

- Socioeconomic factors
- Instability of the family
- Geographic moves
- Migration
- Competition with older and stronger siblings
- Parent unable to provide closeness
- Sickness and social withdrawal
- Pre-kindergarten already scarred by deprivation yet wanting connection

On the personal level:

The cost of suffering that can be prevented
by developing life-saving
and life-changing interventions...
almost incalculable

WHY CHILDREN FAIL

John Holt (1964)

Rather than a good score on a test,
"the true test of intelligence
is not how much we know how to do,
but how we behave
when we don't know what to do."

Holt emphasized learner focus,
thinking about new situations or problems
in a bold, imaginative,
and resourceful way

**Self-Renewal: The Individual
And The Innovative Society**

*"The ultimate goal
of the educational system
is to shift to the individual,
the burden
of pursuing his own education."*

John Gardner (1964)

Learner-focused

- **What is to be learned by the learner,**
rather than what is to be taught by the system
- **An attitudinal shift**
- **Using all the strengths of our great educational resources**
- **Adding individualized attention**
- **Stimulate the learner's self-acquisition of what is needed to succeed on a personal level**

The downhill path

- If we do not grow creativity, resilience and trust, fuel confidence and scholarship,
- the failing individual and family may not be able to identify or express the need for help,
- despair giving way to social withdrawal and
- lost opportunity renewing positive life forces
- **When unrecognized or not reversed, the path to failure becomes a pattern of negative adjustment**

There's always the army!

- **The American military reports 75% of applicants cannot enlist because**
- **they have not graduated high school,**
- **have criminal records**
- **or are physically unfit**

**One out of four applicants
meet the minimal entry requirements**

***Though the future of America
rides on present
and successive generations
of our children,
we continue to lose ground
with an erosion of values
and fragmented thrusts
to fix the educational system***

Costs of social disruption

- Interference with learning in the classroom,
- the increasing budget for youth in the criminal justice system
- the lowered income of the individual failing in the system
- and the loss of vital and creative people in society

***How to put price tags
on lost opportunities?***

Annie E. Casey Foundation

- State by state evidence combining **education, employment, income, health, poverty and youth risk factors**
- New Mexico in 49th place in 2012,
- In 2013 NM moved to 50th place
- In 2014 returned to 49th place
- In 2015 reading proficiency at grade three level still 50th place

ONLY ONE DIRECTION TO GO

PERACH

Hebrew: to blossom or flower
1974 - Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel
50% of college tuition for 30,000 students annually
in return college students help 60,000 vulnerable children and youth annually
PERACH is the largest mentoring program in the world and is developing in more than 25 countries around the globe

And in New Mexico

- Based on the Israeli experience and confirmed by our observations
- bright and committed college students are interested in interacting with elementary school students as young as third grade

**MATCH New Mexico
 Creating Partnerships**

- Designed to **integrate** with other organizations seeking excellence
- Unique contribution to an educational system already in place, to be **used in any appropriate way** to heighten learning opportunities
 - Four hours per week of one-to-one **learning to read** during the crucial third grade transition
 - reading to learn** grade four level

Establishing Mentoring Connection
"BENIGN CLIMATE"

- **Respect**
- **Uninterrupted**
- **New experience**
- **Mentor as catalyst**
- **Guards autonomy**
- **Stands for reaching for the stars**

DEVELOPING THE MENTORING CONNECTION

- Explain the structure of the session
- Destination points daily, weekly and longer-term
- Flexibility. No single best way
- "Please bring me up to date"
- Structure of the interview
 - INTRODUCTION
 - PERIOD OF RECONNAISSANCE
 - DETAILED INQUIRY
 - NEXT STEPS

LISTENING

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE MENTORING PRACTICES

- **DEVELOPING WORKING EDUCATIONAL CONNECTIONS**
 - **COMMUNITY-BASED COORDINATOR**
 - **COLLEGE STUDENT MENTOR COORDINATOR**
 - **RECRUITMENT OF COLLEGE MENTORS**
 - **ANNOUNCEMENT**
 - **INFORMATIONAL MEETING**
 - **APPLICATION**
 - **REFERENCES CHECK**
 - **INTERVIEW**
 - **ONLINE ADVANCE INFORMED CONSENT**
 - **SECURITY CHECK**
 - **CONTRACT AGREEMENT FOR TWO SEMESTER SERVICE**
 - **RECRUITMENT OF THIRD GRADERS**
 - **SECOND GRADE TEACHER OBSERVATION**
 - **ENTRY TO THIRD GRADE**
- SELECTING THE SPACE AND ON-SITE SUPERVISOR**
STARTING PARENTAL AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
RANDOMIZATION TO STUDY AND COMPARISON GROUP

**ELEMENTS OF
EFFECTIVE MENTORING PRACTICES**

- **MATCHING MENTOR AND MENTEE IN STUDY GROUP**
- **MENTOR TRAINING: MAKING A GOOD START**
- **STRUCTURE OF THE MENTORING SESSION**
- **CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING WITH INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP SUPERVISION**
- **MENTORING AND LEADERSHIP SEMINAR**
- **MONITORING THE MENTORING: AMERICA LEARNS SESSIONS ON SELF-RELECTION AND GOALS**
- **EVERYONE HAS A MENTOR**
- **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**
- **COLLEGE SITE VISIT**
- **TOWARD CLOSURE OF THE THIRD YEAR EXPERIENCE**
- **MY STORY**
- **LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE**
- **REFERRALS WHEN APPROPRIATE**
- **LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

START SMALL, THINK STATEWIDE

- 2008: SISTER CITIES FOUNDATION
- 2009: PERACH PARTNERSHIP
- 2010: NM RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
- 2011: MULTIDISCIPLINARY ORGANIZING AND ON SITE CONSULTATION
- 2012: LEGISLATIVE REPORTING AND MEMORIAL IN SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
- 2012: STARTED MENTORING PROGRAMMING IN SANTA FE AFTER STATEWIDE SITE VISITS
- 2013: DFA YOUTH MENTORING CONTRACT
- 2015: TO DATE 105 MENTORING MATCHES
- AUGUST 2015 START WITH 45 MATCHES IN SANTA FE, TAOS AND ALBUQUERQUE

Extending the Program

- **NEXT STAGES:**
- **100 MATCHES WITH COMPARISON GROUPS TO COMPLETE STATISTICAL “POWER ANALYSIS”**
- **THEN EXTEND TO 250 MATCHES IN 12 STATEWIDE SETTINGS**
- **THEN DOUBLING EVERY YEAR TO REACH 600 TITLE I SCHOOLS WITH 20,000 THIRD GRADERS AND 20,000 MENTORS**
- **SPECIAL RESEARCH AND SERVICE TO RURAL POPULATIONS**

EVALUATION MEASURES

STANDARDIZED DATABASE

- Attendance, Behavioral, and Course Performance:
ABCs of School District
- Mentorship Screening Tool:
Teacher Observations of Classroom
Adaptation-Checklist (TOCA)
- Dineen Simple Reading Test
- Match Characteristics Questionnaire (MCQ)
- Youth Mentoring Survey for 2nd and 3rd Grade Students (YMS)
- Parent Observation Questionnaire (PCQ)
- Checklist on Best Practices

INFORMAL QUALITATIVE NARRATIVES

- On Site Coordinator
- Mentor Self-Reflection (AL) Logs
- Mentee self-evaluation commentary
- Other

SPECIAL TOPICS AVAILABLE FOR INQUIRY

- Periodic Surveys Using Self-Reflection Log (AL)

Data Collection Schedule for 2015-2016

- **August, 2015: POQ Parent pre-assessment of mentees and comparison students**
- **October, 2015: Collection of pre-3rd Grade ABC data from schools**
- **November, 2015: MCQ for mentors
YMS for Mentees**
- **March, 2016: Collection of mentor interview data**
- **April, 2016: TOCA 2nd Grade teacher pre-assessment of mentee candidates
TOCA 3rd Grade teacher post-assessment of mentees & comparison students
POQ Parent post-assessment of mentee & comparison 3rd Grade students**
- **May, 2016: Collection of post-3rd Grade ABC data from schools**
- **September, 2015 – June, 2016: Collection of process data via America Learns**

MENTORING MATCH COSTS

CENTRAL COORDINATING STAFF

Approx. \$200,000 yearly

MENTORING COST PER MATCH

- **\$5,000** per MENTORING MATCH/YEAR

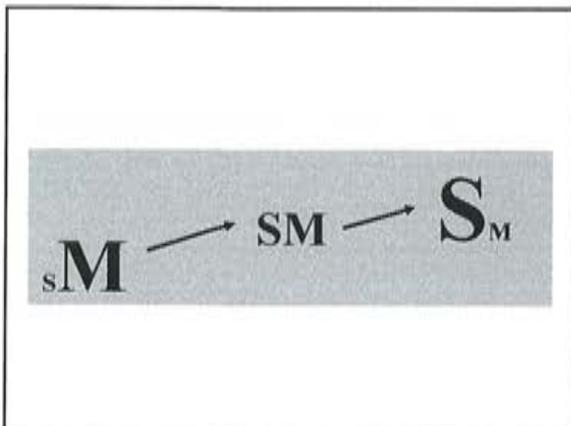
College student stipend : \$ 3,000

Project Support approx. \$ 2,000

**Security Clearance, Transportation, Insurance,
Supervision on site, Mentor Coordinator,
Community-based Coordinator,
Educational materials,
Monitoring and evaluation materials,
Research data collection,
Parental programming and informed consents,
Fluids and nutrition each session,
Educational supplies, Site visits, etc.**

SOURCES OF FUTURE FUNDING

- GOVERNMENT
 - COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
 - ALL SCHOLARSHIPS WITH *COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT*
 - DFA
 - NM ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS
 - RELIGIOUS COALITIONS
 - EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AND RESEARCH FOUNDATIONS
 - SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS
 - PRIORITIZED TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS
 - PHILANTHROPIC INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS
 - INNOVATIONS
 - PUBLIC FUNDRAISING EVENTS
 - CONSULTATION FEES
 - PRODUCT SALES
- COMMUNITY BY COMMUNITY
 - COUNTY
 - TRIBAL
 - STATE
 - REGIONAL
 - FEDERAL
 - FUNDING TRENDS TO STATE
 - COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS
 - CIVIC AND PROGRESSIVE SERVICE ORGS
 - INTEGRATED NONPROFIT PARTNERSHIPS
 - BUSINESS, LABOR AND TRADE UNIONS, PROFESSIONS
 - CORPORATIONS



Program Evaluation and Goals

- With valid and reliable evidence on program effectiveness
- professional leadership
- and community response with funding the mentoring model will extend to about twelve communities around New Mexico settings over the next three years to total 250 mentoring matches

**TOWARD A STATEWIDE MODEL
RESPONSIVE, RESPONSIBLE, RATIONAL**

Responsive, Responsible and Rational

- LESC comprised of the best and most concerned legislators, highly motivated to collecting evidence-based
- Your study can influence best outcomes and create a political climate for change
- Appoint three technical professionals to assess needs, outline an implementation plan, determine the fiscal impact of a primary prevention plan, and suggest measureable outcome data to you.
- Review the draft in September, comment; hear the revised report in October; finalize in November, for December reporting out of LESC.
- By working together create learning opportunities changing lives.

Your leadership

- Serving the neediest •
- Working with the best •
- Involving all parties •
- Continue guidance & support •
- Using external incentives •
- Providing maximum mentoring hours •

Respectfully,

MATCH
New Mexico

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MATCH

New Mexico

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COLLEGE  ELEMENTARY

COMMUNITY-BASED COORDINATORS

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Garcia
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Lavaland
Elementary

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Chavez
Elementary

Sweeney
Elementary

Ramirez
Thomas
Elementary



THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING WITH A FOCUS ON NEW MEXICO

INTRODUCTION

In the 2013 Data Book of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, New Mexico's rankings on **National Trends in Key Indicators of Child Well-Being** are low:

- * New Mexico has moved to the bottom, ranked #50 of the 50 states.
- * Only 21% of 4th graders are proficient reading at grade level, ranking #50.
- * Low academic performance in 3rd grade, especially regarding reading scores, correlates with high rates of detachment, delinquency, and dropping out of school. It also correlates with adult incarceration rates for both men and women.
- * Over 40% of the students in Santa Fe Public Schools leave school without a diploma.

New Mexico also ranks #50 of the states regarding the growth of new jobs.

The devastating effects of the failure to graduate an educated workforce and the eroding quality of life for New Mexicans can no longer be tolerated.

There are three approaches to problem-solving:

Primary prevention: Elimination of the factors creating the condition, reaction or disease.

Secondary prevention: Early detection and prompt treatment at the first presentation.

Tertiary prevention: Treatment and rehabilitation after acute presentation to lessen or eliminate the condition, reaction, or disease.

MATCH New Mexico, with its emphasis on establishing mentoring relationships between college students and 3rd graders, is approaching these issues using the primary prevention model and focusing on improving reading skills.

BACKGROUND ON THE NEED FOR MENTORING TO IMPROVE READING SKILLS

In the United States, there have been concerns about the lack of equal educational opportunities for decades. In part, this lack of equality relates to the fact that children from lower income homes have less access to early health care, quality early education programs, and other resources that middle and higher income homes have as a matter of course. In addition, school systems in poor regions receive less funding, hence less programming and staff, than those from regions that are not poor.

Data in the mid-1990s showed the following: *"In outcomes, American students vary substantially according to social class and ethnicity. For example, on the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Campbell et al. 1996), 71 percent of white 4th graders scored at or above the basic level in reading. Only 31 percent of*

African-American and 36 percent of Latino students scored that well. These differences correspond closely with differences in social class.”¹

A 2001 report showed that nationwide only 53% of Hispanic, 51% of Native Americans, and 50% of African-American students graduated high school. Regarding males, it was 48% Hispanic, 47% Native American, and 43% African-American students graduating.²

The trend is worsening. In March 2011, the United Way initiated an Education Volunteer Call to Action to help cut the high school dropout rate in half by 2018.³ Research shows that two-thirds of American 4th graders do not read at grade level, and it is even more significant for low income African-American and Latino students. Children from poor backgrounds begin school two years behind their classmates in pre-reading skills.⁴

A January 31, 2014 article in the Albuquerque Journal reported that the New Mexico Public Education Department released data showing that the 2013 graduation rate was 70.3%, and also noted a gap between males (65.9%) and females (74.9%). The article stated that high school dropouts in New Mexico face a 13% unemployment rate with an average income of \$11,426. <http://ped.state.nm.us/Graduation/index.html>

Without a diploma and a job or further education, the likelihood of ending up in the criminal justice system increases. There are 2.4 million people in American prisons and poor reading scores prevail. 2007 research of The Literacy Project Foundation noted that 3 out of 5 people in American prisons can't read and that 85% of juvenile offenders have reading problems. Some states project prison beds based on elementary school reading scores. <http://literacyprojectfoundation.org/community/statistics/>

Federal prisoners cost the taxpayer an average of \$22,000 to \$34,000 annually.⁵ For those in state prison systems, the cost is approximately \$31,000 annually.⁶

¹ Slavin (1997). *Can Education Reduce Social Inequality?*. Baltimore, Md: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

² Orfield, G., Losen, D., Wald, J., & Swanson, C. (2004). *Losing Our Future: How Minority Youth are Being Left Behind by the Graduation Rate Crisis*, Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University. Contributors: Advocates for Children of New York, The Civil Society Institute.

³ The Research Case for the United Way Education Volunteer Call to Action: Recruiting One Million Volunteer Readers, Tutors and Mentors (March 2011). <http://www.unitedway.org/page/-/documents/volunteer/Making%20the%20Case%20for%20Readers,%20Tutors%20and%20Mentors.pdf>

⁴ Zill, L and West, J. (2001). *Entering Kindergarten: A Portrait of American Children When They Begin School: Findings from the Condition of Education 2000*, Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

⁵ LaVigne, Nancy and Samuels, Julie. (2012). *The Growth & Increasing Cost of the Federal Prison System: Drivers and Potential Solutions*, Washington, DC:Urban Institute Justice Policy Center.

⁶Henrichson, Christian and Delaney, Ruth. (2012). *The Prison of Prisons. What Incarceration Costs Taxpayers*. New York, NY: Center on Sentencing and Corrections, Vera Institute of Justice.

With regard to juveniles, a January 2010 report of the National Evaluation and Technical Assistance Center⁷ reported the following regarding literacy and youth involved in the juvenile justice system:

- * 2.18 million youth are arrested each year.
- * 93,000 youth are in detention and correctional institutions, 85% male.
- * 65% of these 93,000 are minorities (40% Black, 20% Hispanic, 1% Native American).
- * 32% have disabilities (emotional disturbance, learning disabilities, mental retardation).
- * Costs average \$240.99 daily.
- * Baseline reading levels varied from Grade 1 to Grade 6.
- * 37% of long-term students in federally-funded corrections programs tested below grade level.

Mentoring has been shown to be an effective method to assist students in improving reading skills.

RESEARCH ON THE VALUE OF MENTORING PROGRAMS

The National Mentoring Partnership called MENTOR (www.mentoring.org) - an organization that promotes mentoring and is a resource for mentoring organizations - has studied the value of mentoring. In 2009, MENTOR issued its 3rd edition of *Elements for Effective Practices for Mentoring*. In a nutshell, it concluded that responsible mentoring:

- **Is a structured, one-to-one relationship that focuses on the needs of youth.
- **Fosters caring and supportive relationships.
- **Encourages individuals to develop to their fullest potential.
- **Helps the youth to develop his or her own vision for the future.
- **Is a strategy to develop active community partnerships.

Effective recruitment (of mentors and mentees), training, matching to ensure compatibility, supervision, and proper closure are critical to the success of the mentoring relationship. In addition, relationships lasting at least a year with regular meetings and that take into account the individual youth's interests and needs along with some of his or her family's input, are the most successful. The mentoring should take place in the context of the community. Community resources need to be considered and drawn upon when appropriate and necessary.

In January 2014, the first survey results were published by MENTOR in which the youth who had been mentored (and are now ages 18-21) were surveyed. The research showed that mentoring helped the youth do better in school and their communities, made them more likely to participate in activities like sports and other extracurricular

⁷ O'Cummins, M, Bardack, S and Gonsoulin, S. (2010). Issue brief: The Importance of Literacy for Youth Involved in the Juvenile Justice System. Washington, DC: NDTAC for the Education of Children and Youth who are Neglected, Delinquent or At Risk.

activities, gave them an interest in assuming leadership roles, and had them thinking realistically about going to college. It also inspired them to be mentors one day. For each \$1 invested in quality youth mentoring programs, there was a \$3 return in benefits to society. A negative, though, was that the research showed that one-third of youth have not had a mentor (structured or "naturally occurring") and that there is a substantial gap for mentors for at-risk youth (9 million).⁸

Specifically, the one-to-one relationship matters. The regularity and frequency of meetings (averaging three times per month for four hours over a year) - plus the relationship as mentor (not as teacher or preacher) are important factors. In addition, a partnership with the mentee, an interactive relationship between the mentor and the staff, and a memorandum of understanding between the organization and the school all contributed to the success of the mentoring relationship.

MATCH New Mexico's goal of mentoring 3rd graders - and then continuing to mentor them over the summer months to avoid a summer slide - is a significant step to keeping on track those students with reading problems. **MATCH New Mexico** utilizes all the best practices. College students who are recruited as mentors are trained, screened, carefully matched with the mentee, monitored, and evaluated. The 3rd graders are also selected based on specific criteria and their interests are considered when the match is made. Academic performance is measured and longitudinal data base is being developed. Plans to continue mentoring over summer months and the development of book clubs from 4th grade forward are planned. The sustainability of the program is assisted as community and neighborhood support is nurtured.

CONCLUSION

Below is a quote from the United Way's website that summarizes all of the reasons why **MATCH New Mexico's** focus on 3rd grade readers is significant:

Many of us may not realize that reading is a critical bridge to success in school, work and life. Children generally are learning to read until third grade. By the fourth grade, they should be reading to learn. After that, coursework gets harder and reading becomes more challenging.... This can lead to bad grades, disengaging from school, and dropping out. In fact, children who aren't reading at grade level by the end of third grade are four times as likely to drop out of high school..... But nationally, two-thirds of students are not reading on grade level by fourth grade, the earliest year of testing in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). That proportion rises to four-fifths for children from low-wage families..... And extrapolating from other data, experts estimate that at least six million children in first through third grades are likely to be reading below grade level as well.⁹

⁸ Bruce, Mary and Bridgeland, John. (2014). The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring, Washington, DC: Civic Enterprises with Hart Research

⁹ Quote is from United Way's website, an article titled Read Proficiently by 4th Grade at <http://www.unitedway.org/our-work/read-proficiently-by-4th-grade>

MENTOR's *SNAPSHOT: Youth Mentoring Research and Outcomes* (2012) states that for every dollar invested in an effective mentoring program, there is a return of \$2.72. http://www.mentoring.org/get_involved/advocate/funding_for_mentoring

Further, there are improvements in self-confidence, self-sufficiency, and the growth of positive attitudes towards the future, citing a 2007 article from University of Minnesota by P. Wilder et al., *Social Return on Investment in Youth Mentoring Programs*.

SNAPSHOT also reports that effective mentoring assists with improvement in social-emotional development and academic performance and reduces risk-related behavior.¹⁰

MATCH New Mexico assists 3rd graders with reading skills so that they can be at grade level for future learning, and provides them with a caring, consistent mentor to assist with their learning deficits and give them positive feedback. A continuation of mentoring by adding a summer component will strengthen the skills and self-esteem of these youth and prevent the summer slide. Involvement and support from their schools, families, and neighborhoods will lead these high needs/at risk students to a more positive path and eventual graduation from high school.

MATCH New Mexico operates with volunteers and a centralized program development team with very low overhead costs. Staff members use home-based offices. Below are the costs of this mentoring program, which to date has partnered with Ramirez Thomas but is expanding in 2014-2015 to add two other Santa Fe schools (Caesar Chavez, and Sweeney) plus schools in Albuquerque. Costs total \$5,000 per match per year:

- * Stipends to student through the college (\$1,500 per semester)
- * Selection, training, and supervision of the students on site and continuing education
- * Transportation
- * Educational materials
- * Support services, which include monitoring and evaluation
- * Educational and research consultants on occasion

New Working Alliances - As **MATCH New Mexico** partners with others in the community with the same or similar goals - there will be a positive collective impact. We can work together to solve these problems of our youth to prevent detachment, delinquency, and dropping out of school.

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¹⁰ D.L. Dubois, et al. (2011). How Effective are Mentoring Programs for Youth? Washington, DC: Association for Psychological Science.