

OREMI MENTORING PROGRAM EVALUATION

Prepared by students in SOCI90.7:
Community-Based Research
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The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily represent those of the University of California, Berkeley.



OBJECTIVES

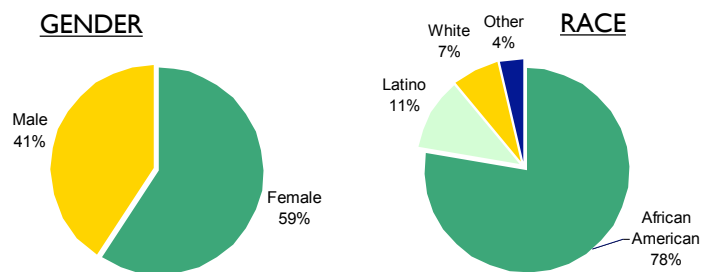
- To understand ways to improve the OreMi mentoring program.
 - **Evaluate existing program**
 - Mentors: benefits to being a mentor
 - Mentees: relationship quality
 - Matches: relevance of interest, race
 - Caregivers: evaluation of program
 - **Communication**
 - Between OreMi and mentors
 - Between OreMi and caregivers
 - For coordination between OreMi and its stakeholders
 - Provide evidence of program success for funding sources.
 - **Capacity-building**
 - Mentor recruitment strategies
 - Consistency and validity of forms
 - Processes around maintaining support to mentors and caregivers

DATA & METHODS

- Forms were collected by OreMi from caregivers regarding the children, and from mentors in their applications at the beginning of their relationship
- Forms collected later from mentor, caregivers about the OreMi program and about the children's progress at different points in time.
- Additional questions added for this evaluation project.
- A total of 27 matches, consisting of 26 mentors, and 15 guardians.

MENTEE CHARACTERISTICS

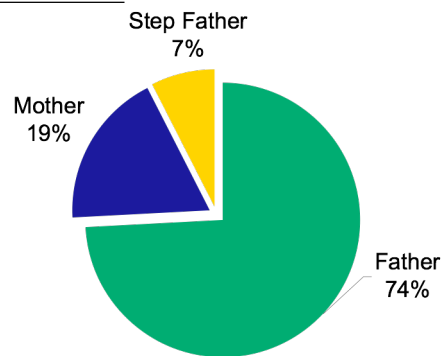
- Fewer than half the mentees are boys, indicating a shortage of male mentors.
- Most of the mentees are African-American. Nearly all of the mentees have a minority ethnic background.



MENTEE CHARACTERISTICS

- Most mentees have a father or step-father incarcerated.
- Over 80% of the adults missing from the home are males.

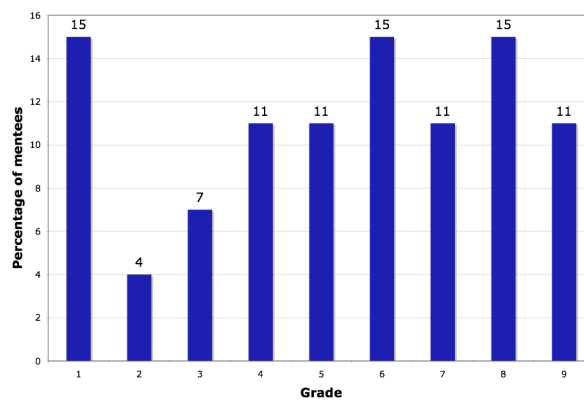
PARENT INCARCERATED



MENTEE CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentees range in age from 5 to 15 years old. (OreMi offers services to children 4 to 18 years old.)
- They are evenly distributed in grades K thru 8.

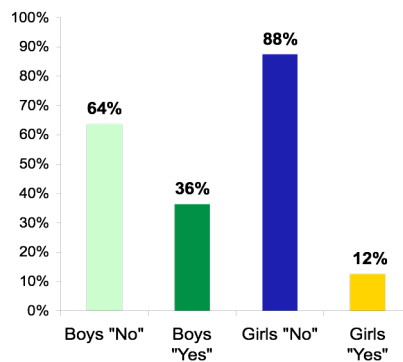
EDUCATION



MENTEE CHARACTERISTICS

- Nearly 25% of mentees answered “Yes” to having been suspended from school.
- Males were more likely than females to have behavior problems. This indicates a greater need for male mentors.

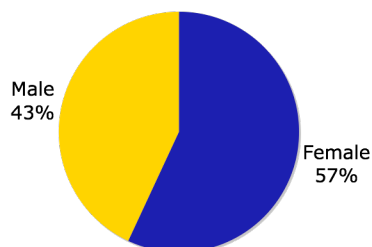
SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL



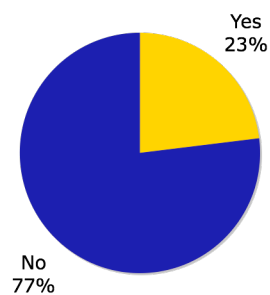
MENTOR CHARACTERISTICS

- The program faces a shortage of male mentors.
- Although 23% of mentors have their own children, the mentor evaluations indicate that mentors with and without children have experienced challenges with their mentees.

GENDER



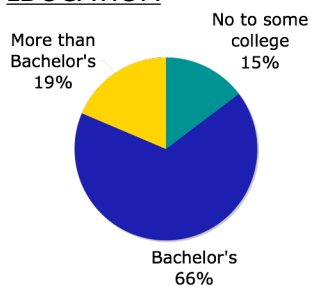
KIDS?



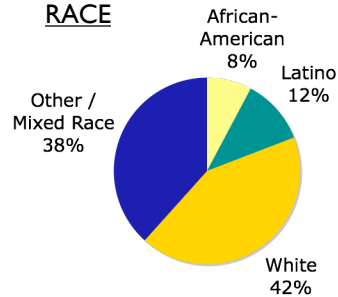
MENTOR CHARACTERISTICS

- Mentors appear to be well-educated and come from a variety of different jobs: About 30% of mentors work in an office or administrative support position. 18.5% work in computers or engineering, and 14.8% are students.
- African-American mentors are among the least represented ethnic/racial groups in OreMi's program, a strong contrast to the majority of mentees who are African-American.
- A shared racial/ethnic identity between mentor and mentee did not appear to affect Relationship Quality. The children (and caregivers) seemed happy just to have a mentor.

EDUCATION



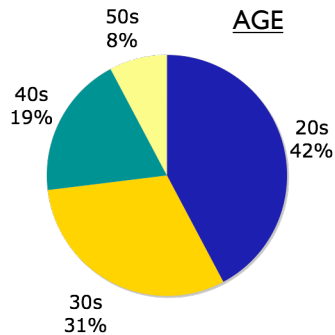
RACE



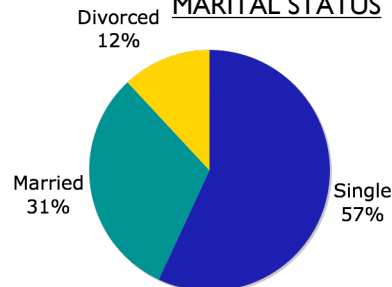
MENTOR CHARACTERISTICS

- About three-quarters of mentors are under 40, with over 40% in their 20s.
- More than half of mentors are single, while about 30% are married.
- The average OreMi mentor is a twenty-something, single working professional.

AGE



MARITAL STATUS

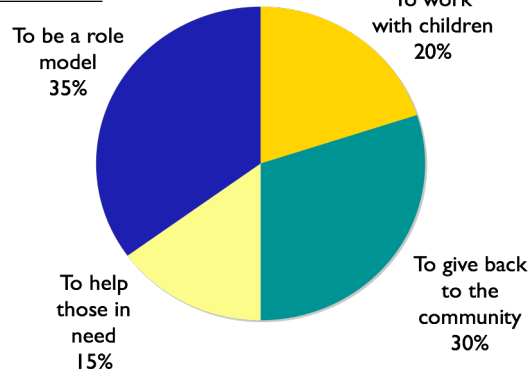


MENTOR CHARACTERISTICS

Mentors' motivations are also quite varied.

- The primary reason noted by mentors for wanting to participate is to “be a role model,” followed by “giving back to the community”.
- No notable correlation exists between age or education level and motivation for becoming a mentor.

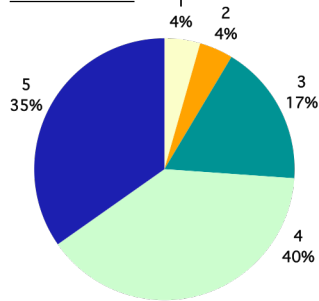
MOTIVATION



MENTOR TRAINING & SUPPORT

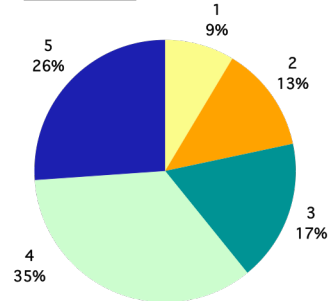
- Although most mentors found the initial training to be quite helpful, more felt the level of ongoing support needed improvements.

TRAINING



Mean = 4.0

SUPPORT



Mean = 3.6

MENTOR EVALUATION

- **Strong orientation:**
 - In general mentors found initial training to be effective:
 - Orientation
 - Workshops
 - OreMi staff
 - Orientation and workshops helped to acquire the basic foundation needed to establish positive relationships.
 - “I found the mentor training to be really helpful. There was a nice balance of statistic and hands-on tips.”

IMPROVING MENTOR EFFECTIVENESS

- **More ongoing support needed:**
 - One of the recurring issues expressed by mentors was a lack of consistent and reliable support from OreMi.
 - Communication and follow up declined after initial mentor trainings.
 - One person commented, *“I received little follow up support from this program during my mentorship period. There have been an extensive amount of changes in the staff and I don’t know who my main contact is anymore. I recently attempted to reschedule a meeting with my main contact and I don’t remember receiving a response regarding the scheduling of our talk.”*
 - They suggested:
 - Semi-regular phone check-ins, even if automated or voicemail.
 - OreMi take more initiative in following up with mentors.

IMPROVING MENTOR EFFECTIVENESS

- **More case-specific support and guidance.**
 - They suggested OreMi provide training narrowly tailored to assist them in working effectively with their mentees.
 - OreMi provide them more insight into mentee's background
 - Guidance regarding age-appropriate interactions and conversations
- **Mentors find it difficult to find activities they can share with mentees.**
 - They suggested OreMi continue to develop the list of pre-approved activities (affordable and age-appropriate).
- **Mentors want to connect and share their experiences with their peers (cohort experience).**
 - They suggested more gatherings where multiple mentors can discuss what is working; solutions others used to tackle problems that arise.
- **Approximately 25% of mentors wish they knew their match better.**
 - This, coupled with some mentors' wishing they could communicate better with their mentees, suggests OreMi should offer more training and support centered around interacting with the types of children in this program.

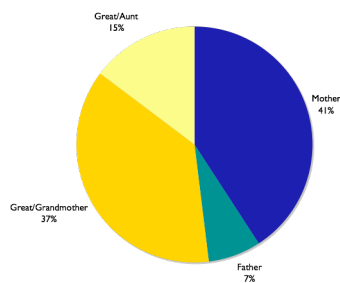
BENEFITS TO MENTORS

- **Mentors find their experience rewarding**
 - **Civic engagement:** serves as a respite for these adults, helps provide perspective by exposing many of them to diversity and by increasing empathy toward youth.
 - “Not only does it get me ‘outside of myself’ and my own little world (I’m rather insular) but mentoring is a reality check on the whole world.”
 - “The most valuable experiences come from negotiating when positive influence can cross into condescension, paternalism, or even outright racism. It is, then, the awkward moments and silences that have been the most valuable in my development as a person and mentor.”
 - **Gratification:** Mentors gain great joy from watching mentees show marked improvements and from mentees expressed appreciation of the mentor involvement.
 - “I get to see the impact I’m having –immediately and long-term. With kids you know when things are working (and not working) immediately.”

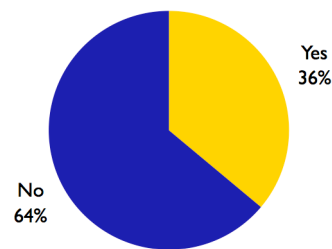
CAREGIVER CHARACTERISTICS

- Fewer than half of caregivers are biological parents, usually mothers. Most caregivers are extended family, often grandmothers.
- All caregivers have met their children's mentors at home, with three-quarters having met seven or more times.
- More than half of caregivers have also met the mentors at school.

CAREGIVER RELATIONSHIP



HAVE YOU MET CHILD'S MENTOR AT SCHOOL?



CAREGIVER EVALUATION

What they liked about OreMi

- Assistance with Christmas gifts
 - *"It's too hard for me to buy presents on my own."*
- The mentor-mentee match
 - *"I completely trust her [the mentor] with my daughter."*
- The positive impact the program has had on their children's lives.
 - *"The mentors just make me want to melt down and cry. They are awesome."*

What could be improved

- More communication with OreMi
 - *"Information as to what's going on"*
- Events with mentees, mentors, and families
 - *"More social events we [the caregivers] can come to with other mentor[s], kids, and families."*
- Access to family support services
 - *"More resource[s] for families in crisis."*
- More mentors, especially male mentors
 - *"I hope more men will step up as mentors. The kids I see could use someone to look up to."*

CAREGIVER EVALUATION

Benefits for caregivers

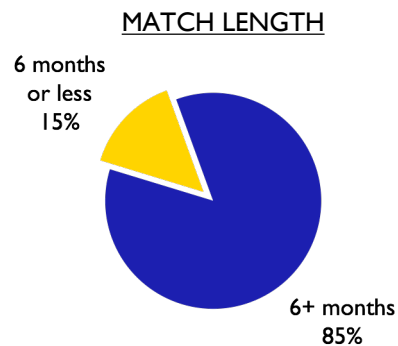
- Feeling of solidarity with others in similar situation
 - “Know that there are others like me out there.”
- Caregivers get time to relax
 - The program has helped with “peace of mind”.
- Support during difficult times
 - “In my times of need you have been there. Just the support that comes with knowing someone is out there.”

Benefits for mentees

- Improvement in child’s behavior
- Increase in self-esteem
- Exposure to new and different things
- A positive adult role model
- Someone to talk to

MATCH EVALUATION

- Almost all of the matches lasted over 6 months. On average, the match was 1 year and 2 months.
- Studies show that matches lasting less than six months are detrimental to the child. This would imply that a majority of mentees will benefit from longer lasting relationships.



MENTEE'S IMPROVEMENT

- The mentorship appears to have notable success for the mentees.
- In most areas the child's guardian reported improvements (for the 11 who completed both pre-and post- questions).
- The strongest were community skills (82%) and Self-esteem (75%), the weakest were Family support (47%) and Attitudes about school (44%).
- However, the precise meaning of these measures is unclear.

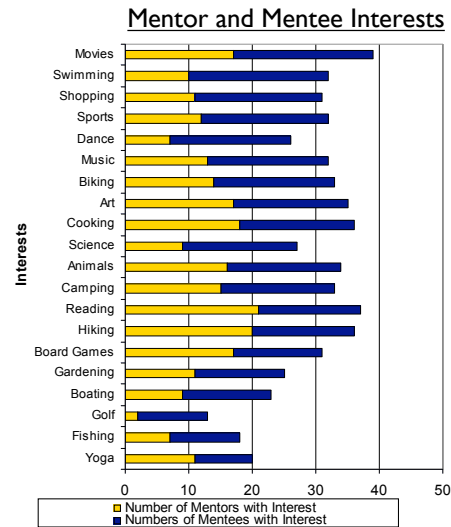
| Social-Behavioral Measure | % Improved |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Community skills | 82% |
| Self-esteem | 75% |
| Peer relationships | 73% |
| Academic performance - improvement | 71% |
| Contact with incarcerated parent | 70% |
| Adult relationships | 64% |
| Social skills | 56% |
| Family support | 47% |
| Attitude about school/education | 44% |

- The Relationship Quality Index is used by the Federal government for all child mentorship programs.
- RQI measures show that parents are not inherently better at dealing with children than non-parents.

| Relationship Quality Measure | Mean |
|---|------|
| My Mentor makes fun of me in ways I don't like* | 3.9 |
| When I'm with my mentor, I feel ignored* | 3.9 |
| When I'm with my mentor I feel disappointed* | 3.9 |
| When something is bugging me, my mentor listens while I talk about it | 3.8 |
| When I'm with my mentor I feel bored* | 3.8 |
| When my mentor gives me advice, it makes me feel kind of stupid | 3.8 |
| When I'm with my mentor I feel mad* | 3.8 |
| When I'm with my mentor I feel happy | 3.8 |
| My mentor has lots of good ideas about how to solve a problem | 3.8 |
| I wish my mentor was different* | 3.7 |
| When I'm with my mentor I feel important | 3.7 |
| My mentor helps me take my mind off things by doing something with me | 3.7 |
| My mentor and I like to do a lot of the same things | 3.7 |
| My mentor is always interested in what I want to do | 3.6 |
| My mentor shows up when (s)he is supposed to | 3.5 |
| I feel I can't trust my mentor with secrets because my mentor would tell my parent/guardian | 3.4 |
| Sometimes my mentor promises we will do something then we don't do it* | 3.3 |
| I wish my mentor knew me better* | 3.2 |
| I wish my mentor asked me more about what I think* | 3 |
| I wish my mentor spent more time with me* | 2 |

MATCH EVALUATION

- The number of shared interests was not a factor in predicting a high RQI.



QUALITY OF ADULT RELATIONSHIPS

- The RQI analysis yielded similar results to the comparison of shared interests and adult relationship quality.
- The mentoring program is helping children build better relationships with adults, but common interests do not matter as much as the time spent together.
- A majority of mentees reported an improvement in their relationships with adults, but interests did not impact the changes.
- This implies matches are based on more than interests. A match made on a similar interest-to-interest basis does not positively influence the mentee's adult relationships.

CONCLUSIONS: CAREGIVERS

- Caregivers want to meet with other matches to know that they have a shared experience.
- They are very satisfied and just want more of it.
- Would like more communication between caregivers and OreMi.
- Since they are often in need, would benefit from access to other support resources, including self-improvement guidance.

CONCLUSIONS: MENTEES

- The interests per se don't seem to matter to the quality of the child, but rather it's just the mentorship itself that improves the well-being of the child.
- We found the measures employed were not as precise in understanding a child's performance or behavior.
- Nevertheless, what measures do exist show a very strong pattern of satisfaction with the mentorship program. Children want more of their mentor, and of data show that caregivers report improvements in nearly all behavioral metrics.

CONCLUSIONS: MENTORS

- Mentors find the orientation and initial training to be very effective.
- They express positive gratification, satisfaction and reward from the mentoring experience.
- Mentors find that ongoing communication and support with OreMi to be lacking.
- They also were interested in more between match contact and events that were not just on weekdays.
- There are not enough male mentors, which leaves an unmet need for boys at risk for the cycle of intergenerational incarceration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- OreMi should formalize processes around communications with mentors and caregivers regarding ongoing support, shared events.
- Since male mentors are so necessary, OreMi can take the messages from these forms to develop more effective messaging.
 - Promote the male bonding over masculine activities with pictures.
- Reaching out to local employers and their Human Resources departments.
- Likely pools of potential mentors are houses of worship, fraternities, especially the 'honors' (e.g., pre-law) fraternities, the 'helping profession' graduate schools.
- We are submitting a redesign of the registration and evaluation forms for greater consistency and validity.
- More open-ended questions for the children in their own evaluations would be appropriate.

IN SUMMARY

- This evaluation has found that the OreMi Mentoring Program is doing a successful job in pairing mentees with mentors who are having a positive effect on their lives.
- The caregivers of the mentees are very appreciative and supportive of the existing program and would like to see its expansion.
- The mentors seemed to be happy with the mentoring experience, but expressed a desire for more support and structure.

“This program is awesome! I wish every kid in the neighborhood could have a mentor!”

-Caregiver