



Quick Stats

Agency	Start Date	Number Served Annually	Annual Budget
Department of Youth and Community Development NYC Service	January 2012	300	\$1,000,000

Problem Statement

The educational and workforce outcomes for Black and Latino young men lag far behind their peers. These young men have alarmingly higher rates of poverty, unemployment, and teen parenthood, among other risk factors. Additionally, they are far more likely to drop out of high school. Many of these young people come from single-parent families who live in neighborhoods that offer few positive outlets. Research also has found that young people living in New York City public housing developments are at particular risk for poor educational outcomes. Often, these youth lack positive role models and relationships with caring adults, which can be critical to keeping them on track to graduate, pursue college, and go on to successful careers.

Research and Evidence

Recent studies indicate that youth who participate in quality mentoring programs are more likely to have positive attitudes toward school, less likely to initiate drug or alcohol use, and less likely to engage in negative behaviors related to delinquency.ⁱ Youth who are transitioning from elementary to middle school may be especially vulnerable. Some researchers suggest that these young adolescents struggle with self-esteem, competence, and self-concept and experience motivational decline.ⁱⁱ

Program Description

The goal of the Cornerstone Mentoring Program is to support youth in fifth through ninth grades during the transitions from elementary to middle school, and middle school to high school, by cultivating positive personal relationships and community involvement. YMI is enhancing DYCD Cornerstone programs located in 25 New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) community centers to support and implement a mentoring component as part of their programs.

Each site will serve mentees in fifth through ninth grades. Mentoring will take place in a group format, and programs will be supported by a technical assistance (TA) vendor that will provide training to the mentors and mentoring program coordinators. The TA vendor will also provide coaching and advice to the mentoring program coordinators at each Cornerstone site during the first calendar year of the program.

Activities will take place at the program site or other agreed upon locations and will be of at least one hour's duration. They will be scheduled during community center operating hours, during the week or on weekends. The scope of the activities will be determined by the program but may include group discussions on issues related to school transitions, sports, meals, trips, cultural events, arts and crafts, and academic help. Activities may be organized around a theme such as "College and Careers" or "Exploring New

Cornerstone Mentoring

	<p>York City.”</p> <p><u>Community Service Projects.</u> Each program will participate in 2-4 one-day community service projects per program year. Some may be a large event, planned by DYCD, with input from the providers that involve all mentors and mentees from the 25 sites. Others will be site based, involving the mentors and mentees at each individual site that are planned and implemented by the mentoring program coordinators with input from the mentors and mentees.</p>
Implementation Timeline	Training of sites and recruitment and screening of mentors began in January, 2012. Mentoring activities began in March.
Target Population	The program serves youth in grades 5 through 9 who participate in DYCD Cornerstone programs in NYCHA community centers throughout the City.
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful transition from middle school to high school • Youth exhibit positive changes in attitude toward self and others • Develop positive leadership skills • Cultivate an ethic of service

ⁱ Susan M. Jekielek, Kristin A. Moore, Elizabeth C. Hair, and Harriet J. Scarupa, “Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development,” *Child Trends Research Brief*, February 2002.

ⁱⁱ Audra K. Parker and Stacey Neuharth-Pritchett, “Calming Rough Waters: Teacher Strategies for Smoothing the Transition to Middle School,” *Childhood Education*, Fall 2009.