

# **Mentor Training Package Program of Instruction**

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## Curriculum Rationale

As part of the Amachi Expansion of Military and Civilian Families (AEMCF) project, funded by a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Department of Defense, this initiative is designed to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for youth at risk of academic failure, truancy, or adjudication. The initiative specifically targets children from Military Families and those impacted by incarceration by developing and implementing ongoing training in both virtual and in-person formats for mentors who work with at-risk youth. Research has shown that volunteers who receive supplemental training are more successful as mentors and have longer match relationships, which, in turn, increases the likelihood that these mentored youth will achieve positive outcomes.

## Target Population

The target population is mentors from five pilot programs selected to implement this project:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters Lone Star (Dallas, TX)
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Rochester (Rochester, NY)
- Pima Prevention Partnership (Tucson, AZ)
- Urban Ventures Leadership Foundation (Minneapolis, MN)
- Philadelphia Leadership Foundation (Philadelphia, PA)

## Participant Pre-Requisites

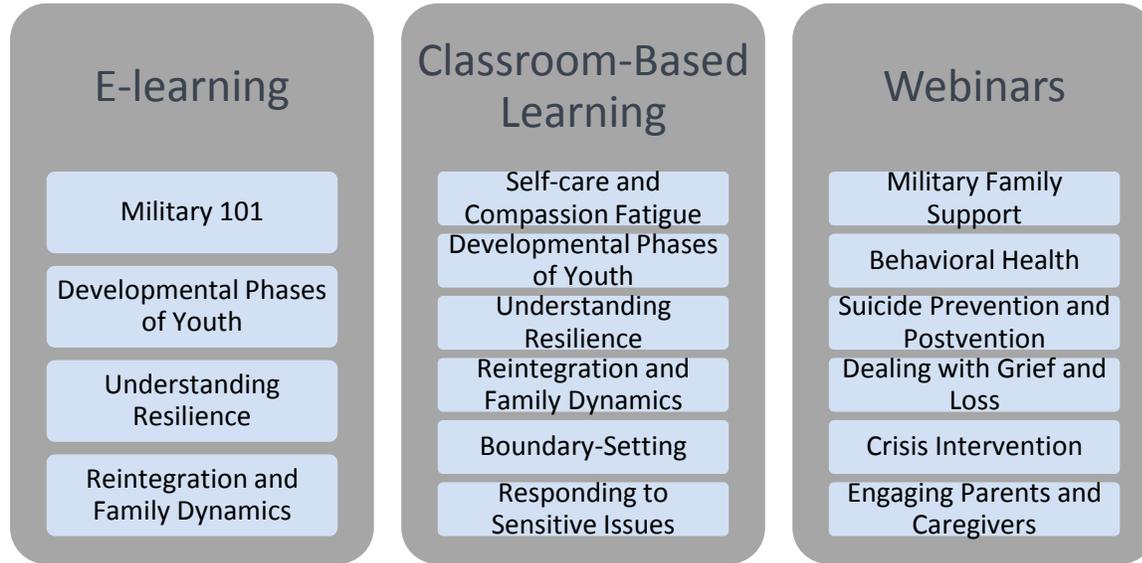
- Participants must be mentors
- Participants must have access to a phone, a fully functional computer with Microsoft applications and Adobe Reader, reliable access to the Internet, and their own email address

## Learning Platforms

Training topics are designed across multiple learning platforms, including e-learning, webinars, and classroom learning. E-learning provides a place in which users can access training at any time, return multiple times to refer to information, and experience guided simulations of real-life scenarios. Webinars provide more opportunities to interact and ask questions with an expert facilitator or peers, and classroom learning provides an opportunity for face-to-face interaction and hands-on application of skills.

## Training Offerings

The following provides a snapshot of all training offerings and match activity curricula for mentors. Some topics overlap from e-learning to classroom learning in order to provide an opportunity for face-to-face interaction and hands-on application of skills.



### Match Activity Toolkit

Match activity curricula for mentors includes a handbook of detailed instructions and collateral materials for ten facilitated match activities, including a menu of age-appropriate, culturally relevant, community-based activity options tied together thematically with Military-related elements:



### Access to Curriculum

E-learning offerings and the match activity toolkit are provided online at the AEMCF Resource Portal. Mentors can gain direct access via [www.aemcfresourcecenter.com](http://www.aemcfresourcecenter.com), with the user ID: **AEMCFmentor**, and password: **mentor1**.

Classroom and webinar trainings will be provided to program staff to implement with all related materials, including lesson plans, PowerPoint slides, handouts, and evaluations.

## Sample Agenda

### Pre-Requisite E-Learning

Military 101

Developmental Phases of Youth throughout the Deployment Cycle

Understanding Resilience

Reintegration and Family Dynamics

### Classroom Training

Day One	Day Two
Self-Care and Compassion Fatigue	Reintegration and Family Dynamics
Developmental Phases of Youth throughout the Deployment Cycle	Boundary-Setting
Understanding Resilience	Responding to Sensitive Issues

### Ongoing Training Support Webinars

Military Family Support

Behavioral Health

Suicide Prevention and Postvention

Dealing with Grief and Loss

Crisis Intervention

Engaging Parents and Caregivers

## The Learner Experience

### Mentor Training

Mentor training offerings are designed to increase the mentor’s knowledge and skills related to mentoring youth from Military Families. Some topics may overlap from e-learning to classroom learning in order to provide an opportunity for face-to-face interaction and application of skills. Topics selected for multiple learning platforms were rated as most important by staff and mentors in the training needs analysis and are most appropriate for hands-on application in a classroom setting. The following outlines the recommended training topics with respective lesson descriptions, learning outcomes, and learning platforms.

#### Military 101

Mentors may be new to the Military community or may have seen it only from the perspective of a Family member. In these cases, it is important for them to understand the environment in which they are serving youth from Military Families. In this lesson, mentors will be equipped with the foundation to appreciating Military culture and the unique challenges faced by Military Families. They will learn appropriate terminology, gain a basic understanding of the structure of Military components, and explore the phases of the deployment cycle.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> appropriate terminology to communicate with Military members, youth, and Families</li> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> the structure of Military components within the Department of Defense (DOD)</li> <li>▪ <b>Recognize</b> and describe the phases of the deployment cycle</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	E-learning	60 minutes

#### Developmental Phases of Youth throughout the Deployment Cycle

It is important for mentors to understand how youth will respond to the deployment of a parent. Emotional reactions will occur prior to deployment, during deployment, and through reintegration. This lesson will identify the multiple responses youth experience at various developmental stages. Participants will identify the array of “normal” responses of youth to stressful circumstances. By recognizing that the source of behavioral challenges in youth may be due to stress, anxiety, anger, or feelings of loss, mentors can respond in more empathic and effective ways. In the classroom component, participants will have an opportunity for face-to-face interaction and hands-on application of skills.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> responses of youth to the deployment cycle at various developmental stages</li> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> the connection between youth behavior and emotional responses</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies to appropriately respond</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	E-learning	60 minutes
	Classroom-based learning	120 minutes

### Understanding Resilience

Youth from Military Families may be exposed to stressors and situations, such as deployments, that non-Military youth do not face. Youth who are high in resilience can more easily adapt to and recover from these types of experiences. In this lesson, mentors will gain skills to help strengthen youth’s resilience by recognizing risk factors and focusing on identifying and increasing protective factors to build on their mentee’s strengths. In the classroom component, participants will have an opportunity for face-to-face interaction and hands-on application of skills.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Define</b> resilience and explain its importance for Military youth</li> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> protective factors and risk factors</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies to strengthen resilience within Military youth</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	E-learning	60 minutes
	Classroom-based learning	120 minutes

### Reintegration and Family Dynamics

Based on their stage of development, their individual temperament, the responsiveness of parents, and the level of stress at home, children may have a variety of responses to the return of a parent who was deployed. This lesson will identify the wide array of responses children of different ages can have during reintegration and will help mentors understand and plan for a child’s various needs during reintegration. Mentors will also learn about Family dynamics and the unique challenges faced by Military Families. In the classroom component, participants will have an opportunity for face-to-face interaction and hands-on application of skills.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> unique challenges faced by Military Families</li> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> child behavioral and emotional responses to reintegration</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies to enhance a positive reintegration experience</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	E-learning	60 minutes
	Classroom-based learning	120 minutes

### Military Family Support

In this lesson, mentors will be provided with an overview of the various types of support available to Military Families, including reintegration, career, family, finances, behavioral health, sexual assault prevention, and transition support. They will learn about the various programs and resources available to Military Families and learn strategies to increase family involvement.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> the types of support provided to Military Families</li> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> resources available to Military Families</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Webinar	60 minutes

### Behavioral Health

In this lesson, mentors will have an opportunity to explore the different ways youth communicate their needs and feelings in response to stressful situations, in addition to some of the unique challenges they face during the deployment cycle. Mentors will develop skills to assist youth in managing the challenges they face when dealing with the deployment of a parent or caregiver. This lesson will also address the incidence of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression and the ways that it can impact family functioning.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> the variety of typical responses to stressful situations and the ways youth are impacted at different stages of the deployment cycle</li> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> the ways that behavioral health issues can impact Family functioning</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Webinar	60 minutes

### Suicide Prevention and Postvention

Suicide within the Military community is increasingly prevalent. From 2005 to 2010, Service members took their own lives at a rate of approximately one every 36 hours.<sup>1</sup> Studies have also shown that youth with a deployed parent are more likely to be depressed or have thoughts of suicide than teens of civilian parents.<sup>2</sup> In this lesson, mentors will learn about Military specific suicide prevention and postvention efforts, learn to recognize warning signs and risk factors of suicide, and learn to manage suicide ideation for Military youth and Families. They will also learn how to appropriately intervene, seek support, and utilize resources.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> warning signs and risk factors of suicide for Military youth and Families</li> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> resources available for suicide prevention and postvention</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies to appropriately intervene</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Webinar	60 minutes

### Dealing with Grief and Loss

Many of the maladaptive behaviors a youth may exhibit can stem from feelings of grief or loss. There are many different types of loss inherent in the lives of Military Families. While the obvious loss is death, there are types of loss that can be more ambiguous. The loss of physical or emotional functioning following combat, the loss of a parent during deployment, and the loss of stability inherent in making stressful changes are just a few examples. This lesson will challenge mentors to increase awareness and identify the stages of grief, the multiple types of loss that can occur, and typical responses. They will also identify a variety of interventions to support youth who are coping with grief and loss.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> the types of loss experienced by Military Families</li> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> the five stages of grief</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies to help youth cope with grief and loss</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Webinar	60 minutes

<sup>1</sup> October, 2011. Losing the Battle: The Challenge of Military Suicide.  
[http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS\\_LosingTheBattle\\_HarrellBerglass.pdf](http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_LosingTheBattle_HarrellBerglass.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cfah.org/hbns/archives/getDocument.cfm?documentID=22417>

### Crisis Intervention

In this lesson, mentors will review the types of crisis situations that are typically mandated to address, including child abuse, neglect, domestic violence, threats of harm to self, and threats of harm to others. The purpose is to prepare mentors to recognize their responsibilities to report and respond to potentially dangerous situations. By focusing on the signs and symptoms of crisis situations, participants will learn how to recognize a crisis and take appropriate action. Beyond the appropriate response protocol, participants will also be exposed to self-care strategies that will help them process their feelings regarding the traumatic experience.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> types of crisis situations requiring an emergency response</li> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> strategies to recognize and respond to crisis situations</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> crisis intervention strategies in realistic scenarios</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Webinar	60 minutes

### Engaging Parents and Caregivers

Engaging parents and caregivers is crucial to improving the success of mentoring matches, particularly for Families who have experienced the sudden separation of one parent while the remaining parent or caregiver experiences higher levels of stress and additional burdens of household responsibility. If the caregiver is unable or unwilling to support the mentoring relationship, the match is more likely to terminate early, which ultimately harms the child. To create mentoring matches that are longer in duration and stronger in quality, engaging caregiver support must be a top priority. In this lesson, mentors will learn strategies to engage parents and caregivers and enhance cultural competence and communication skills in order to increase involvement of parents/caregivers in supporting the mentoring relationship. They will also identify and learn strategies to overcome potential obstacles.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> strategies for engaging parents and caregivers</li> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> strategies to overcome obstacles</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies to enhance cultural competence and communication skills</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Webinar	60 minutes

### Self-care and Compassion Fatigue

Mentors seek to make a positive impact on the lives of others and while this can be satisfying work, they must also learn how to manage their own well-being and maintain their emotional strength. Compassion fatigue is said to be an occupational hazard for those in helper roles. There are many names for this, including secondary trauma, vicarious trauma, and burnout. In this lesson, mentors will be introduced to the notion of trauma stewardship and trauma resilience and learn to recognize the signs of compassion fatigue and the delicate balancing act of serving and caring for others in a helping capacity while managing one's ability to recognize one's own needs for stress relief and self-care.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Identify</b> signs of compassion fatigue</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies to provide self-care and avoid burnout</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Classroom-based learning	120 minutes

### Boundary-Setting

In this lesson, mentors will explore the nuances of establishing and maintaining productive relationships with youth. They will focus on skill acquisition and problem solving in areas such as setting clear and consistent expectations; maintaining appropriate boundaries, including situational (time, money), physical, and verbal behaviors; and managing challenging situations, such as engaging young people with behavioral issues and attachment disorders.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> strategies for setting consistent and clear expectations</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> tactical strategies for setting and maintaining appropriate physical and verbal boundaries with youth</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Classroom-based learning	120 minutes

### Responding to Sensitive Issues

Mentors may face situations with youth that do not fall under mandated reporting requirements, but are gray areas that present challenges for them in determining the appropriate course of action. In this lesson, participants will learn how to manage sensitive issues (e.g., sexuality-based, bullying, pregnancy) in which they must make difficult decisions, learn strategies for making the most appropriate decision, and gain an understanding of when it is most appropriate to seek support or assistance.

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recall</b> decision-making skills for determining an appropriate course of action</li> <li>▪ <b>Apply</b> strategies for managing sensitive issues</li> </ul>	
<b>Platform/Time</b>	Classroom-based learning	120 minutes

## Match Activity Curricula

Match activity curricula for mentors includes a handbook of detailed instructions and collateral materials for ten facilitated match activities, including a menu of age-appropriate, culturally relevant, community-based activity options tied together thematically with Military-related elements. Each activity includes ideas for implementation, tips for dos and don'ts, strategies for tying in Military elements, and strategies to leverage developmental assets, encourage positive youth development, and create teaching moments. The following outlines the recommended match activities, as well as a brief description.

Match Activity	Description
Outdoor/Indoor Sports	Various implementation ideas for outdoor and indoor sports and strategies to connect sports with Military culture
Sporting Events	Types of Military-related sporting events (e.g., air show, football) and strategies to teach about various Military branches and history
Arts and Crafts	Types of arts and crafts that can help children understand Military and other cultures where the parent was deployed
Youth Development Workshops	Various workshops or community supports that can help youth from Military Families
Cooking	Types of cuisine that can help child understand Military and other cultures where the parent was deployed
College Preparation	Searching for schools, application process, and types of financial support for children from Military families
Career Exploration	General career exploration and Military-specific careers, as well as identifying strengths, narrowing interests, resume development, and interview skills
Academic Support	Tips to provide tutoring and help with homework, as well as increase motivation; tips on how academics are applied in the Military environment and assistance tapping academic resources within the Military environment
Music/Concerts	Music and concert events related to various Military elements (instruments for cultures where parent was deployed, concert events to support troops, drill and ceremony, color guard)
History/Museums	Museums or historical sites related to Military events or culture

## Evaluation Techniques

### Post-Tests

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After completion of each lesson, participants will take a post-test to measure the increase in knowledge and to test whether or not participants can meet the stated objectives.

### Outcome Measurement

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Information will be collected by participating programs through supervision of matches (youth, mentor, and parent/caregiver) and through an internal database that tracks and records all active and closed matches, case notes, etc. The outcome measures listed below will be used to establish a monitoring mechanism to evaluate and record results achieved.

- Enhance services for 6,500 children in existing mentoring relationships, including children of Military Families
- Develop 1,500 new matches for youth 9–18 years of age
- Improve academic and behavioral outcomes for underserved and at-risk youth through high-quality mentoring
- Create a replicable model for successfully engaging Military Families and meeting the needs of youth with a parent in the Military