



MARYLAND
MENTOR

**UPHOLDING
THE COVENANT:**
STATE OF MENTORING
IN MARYLAND

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MARYLAND MENTOR

Maryland MENTOR is the newest statewide affiliate of MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership. Our shared mission is to increase both the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships. This is accomplished through support to on-the-ground mentoring programs to improve their quality, effectiveness and scale, while coalescing stakeholders to expand engagement and investment locally.

With the intention of serving as the catalyst and leader for quality mentoring in Baltimore and in Maryland, Maryland MENTOR is uniquely positioned to work with local organizations to increase their capacity, effectiveness and provide relevant and customized evidence-based training, technical assistance and support. We are intent on making progress towards closing the mentoring gap and ensuring that all mentoring relationships in Baltimore and throughout Maryland are safe and effective.

The need for our work is clear. Mentoring, at its core, guarantees to young people that there is someone who cares about them, assures them they are not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges, and makes them feel like they matter. Research of programs with strong youth outcomes has shown that the consistent use of quality standards and training for youth workers are key to delivering the high-quality programs that all youth need and deserve.

While MENTOR affiliates' services and resources are typically reserved for programs and organizations serving school-aged youth, ages 18 and under, Maryland MENTOR is beginning to support more workforce development programs for opportunity youth that incorporate mentoring as a cornerstone.



MENTOR: THE NATIONAL MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) is the unifying champion for expanding quality youth mentoring relationships in the United States. For more than 25 years, MENTOR has served the mentoring field by providing a public voice; developing and delivering resources to mentoring programs nationwide; and promoting quality mentoring through evidence-based standards, innovative research and essential tools. MENTOR has developed and supports a national network of Affiliates that provide regional, state and local leadership and infrastructure necessary to support the expansion of quality mentoring relationships. Together, we engage with the private, public and nonprofit sectors to ensure that all youth have the support they need through mentoring relationships to succeed at home, school and, ultimately, work.



EQUIVOLVE CONSULTING

Equivolve is a consulting firm that is dedicated to achieving social equity. We believe that for organizations to be most effective, equity needs to be central to and reflected in each facet of their work. We support organizations to do this through data collection and analysis, cross-sector partnership development, project design and management, strategy consulting and much more.

*Cover photo by
Kyle Pompey / @NiceShotKyle*

*Photo courtesy of Southwest
Mentoring Partnership*

OUR MISSION

To fuel the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships for Maryland's young people and to close the mentoring gap.

OUR VISION

Every young person will have the supportive, caring adult relationships they need to grow and develop into thriving, productive, and engaged adults.



MARYLAND
MENTOR



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Maryland MENTOR would like to acknowledge and thank the dozens of program leaders, stakeholders and lovers of young people that showed up at our Mentoring Town Halls when invited. Your feedback, insight and passion were critical to the vision of the Listening Tour and foundational to this report being written accurately.

We thank the leadership of Baltimore's Promise, past and present, for the vision to feature mentoring as a chief strategy for youth achievement. We are also grateful for the creation of the Mentoring Action Team Workgroup, whose recommendations helped shape the relaunch of Maryland MENTOR. We also thank those Action Team Members for their valuable feedback during the pre-launch process.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank our initial Funders – Abell Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Bisciotti Foundation, Shelter Foundation, Under Armour, Crane Foundation, Knott Foundation, Dr. Ray DePaulo and the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Human Services – without whom our work to increase the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships across Maryland would not be possible. We also thank them for believing in our newly relaunched organization and the potential it has. Thank you!

We would be hugely remiss if we did not also thank and acknowledge our tremendous host site, the Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) and the passionate leadership of our Executive Director, Ellie Mitchell. Ellie worked tirelessly alongside the National Mentoring Partnership to bring the affiliate back to Maryland and remains dedicated to our success. We would also like to acknowledge the support of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) via AmeriCorps VISTA members stationed at Maryland MENTOR. Without VISTA support, Maryland MENTOR would be nowhere fast!

We acknowledge and thank our awesome report designer, Nikki Franklin of N.Franklin Designs, who we hope has made the reading of this report a bit easier on the eyes. We are also grateful to Glenn R. Love of Equivolve Consulting who not only wrote this wonderful report for us, but provided valuable counsel on the interpretation of the data and how we might make its findings a highlight of how we approach our work going forward.

Lastly, we acknowledge and thank you, the reader, for picking up this report and, hopefully, gleaning something from it that will spur you to do something to support a young person – today!



UPHOLDING THE COVENANT: THE STATE OF MENTORING IN MARYLAND 2018

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MARYLAND
MENTOR

“THE GREATEST
GOOD
YOU CAN DO FOR
ANOTHER
IS NOT JUST TO
SHARE YOUR
RICHERS
BUT
TO **REVEAL**
TO HIM OR HER
THEIR OWN.”

—

BENJAMIN DISRAELI



MARYLAND
MENTOR



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

In February of 2018, after being in role for a quick yet exciting 30 days, we came up with the very ambitious idea of visiting every part of the State of Maryland to get a feel for what was happening in the world of mentoring.

It would've been easy for us, as a newly launched affiliate (albeit a grave mistake), to simply assume we knew best what was happening and that we knew automatically how best to support the field. But we also knew from history that this is not a respectful way to honor the work that was happening before we arrived and would've been an all too familiar approach from too many organizations purporting to "support to the field" as their calling card.

It was too great an opportunity and too important a task for us to not ask and then asset map instead of guessing or assuming or leading with broken window theory and simply aiming to "fix" everyone's challenges. And ask is exactly what we decided to do. The method we chose was good old-fashioned town halls. But these town halls were different. There was music (yay!) and snacks (more yay!), and they were designed to do three major things: allow us the platform to listen to the field of mentoring stakeholders, facilitate sharing between the affiliate and the field and, ultimately, to connect on a deeper level to the programs and leaders doing awesome work that could benefit from additional resources. This report attempts to capture what was learned.

In just over 10 weeks and over the course of 15 town halls, we logged more than twelve hundred miles (roughly the distance between Maryland and Minnesota), ordered over 100 pizzas, heard personal hopes for young people from over 200 attendees and uttered the word "mentoring" about 100,000 times. Not a bad way to spend a few weeks!

But pizza aside, we were most excited to receive such a rich and warm welcome from the field in every part of the state. We're also excited, with the support of an independent consultant who helped author this report, to share with you all the findings we heard directly from the mentoring programs we support and are a part of the Maryland MENTOR family.

We hope you find their perspective enlightening but also take a moment to reflect on your own involvement in the mentoring ecosystem. You might even reflect on how you might do more to directly support a young person in your sphere or how you might support the mentoring field at large. Ultimately, though, we need everyone — and with a little from everyone, we can move mountains.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sadiq Ali".

SADIQ ALI
Director, Maryland MENTOR



In many ways, it both seems like yesterday and a long time ago, that we began a conversation with Baltimore's Promise and the Abell Foundation about developing a robust MENTOR Affiliate in Maryland. In the ensuing two years, we have laid the foundation with the local sweat equity, financial investment, and voices and expertise of young people, existing leaders in mentoring, youth development, education, and philanthropy.

From the national level, we seek to bring the framework, existing examples, and almost three decades of learning around what it takes to create a sustainable servant-leader backbone for the mentoring field at the local level --the rest takes shape locally. We have seen that so powerfully in Maryland from the role of the Maryland Out of School Time Network as the organizational host for Maryland MENTOR to the involvement of Baltimore City, corporate, philanthropic, and non-profit leaders. And of course, we have seen that in the building of a board and hiring of Sadiq Ali as the inaugural director. We did a lot of listening and responding to get to the point of launch. And I hope it's clear from the piece that follows and all that went into it, when it comes to a MENTOR affiliate, action-oriented listening never stops.

Ongoing, active listening is imperative for an organization to truly be a one-stop hub, unifying voice, capacity builder, and movement leader. We aim to do all of this to deliver on the promise of our experience and research: that all young people need quality and supportive relationships with adults to strive and thrive.

Maryland MENTOR, in only its first year in operation, has quickly become a leader and innovator in our network with its small and mighty team and its growing

number of stakeholders and constituents in the movement. Its touchstone will always be to convene, fill the gaps, connect the dots, and bolster existing infrastructure. With an eye to equity and clarity, the data that follows in this report and the investment of so many Marylanders' time in the town halls represented in the data provides a great road map to support the mentoring professionals who weave together these transformative relationships and build human bridges across the state. The following report offers a path for what it will take to shift mentoring from a nice-to-have to a need-to-have and maximize the impact of our collective quest to close the mentoring gap for our young people with all the collaboration, ingenuity, and rigor that we can bring to bear.

As the CEO of MENTOR, I am proud and appreciative of this latest milestone in building and growing the movement in Maryland. As a native Baltimorean, it is a privilege to be part of the creation of a locally held, responsive asset for the people of Maryland. Together, we seek to uphold our covenant to young people and continue to improve support and opportunity, so they can live out their purpose and continue to help move the state and our country forward.



DAVID SHAPIRO
CEO, National Mentoring Partnership



Welcome to Maryland MENTOR!

Most reports and studies mark the culmination of a process. This assessment, *Upholding the Covenant: The State of Mentoring in Maryland 2018* by Maryland MENTOR represents a new beginning for mentoring in Baltimore City and Maryland. The Abell Foundation is proud to be one of the supporters of the launch of the new Maryland MENTOR—a statewide affiliate of MENTOR: the National Mentoring Partnership. This one-stop mentoring resource center supports youth programs that include mentoring in Baltimore City and throughout the state, helping to improve program quality and capacity, and expanding the number of youth served. We collectively strive to see that every young person will have the caring relationships they need to thrive and transition to productive and engaged adults. There is little doubt of the transforming impact that is possible for both mentor and mentee in these relationships.

The work of Maryland MENTOR starts appropriately with listening—listening and responding to the needs of the dedicated staff and volunteers of mentoring programs on the ground. We welcome Maryland MENTOR, and encourage you to learn more about what they offer.

◆


BONNIE LEGRO
Senior Program Officer, Education, Abell Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The connections that programs can make to mentors for youth who may not otherwise know where to find support or guidance throughout life transitions make their existence vital. Between April and July of 2018, Maryland MENTOR hosted a total of 15 town hall meetings with mentoring providers throughout the state to learn more about their assets and challenges, the youth who they serve, and the types of support that could help strengthen programs. Fourteen town halls took place in-person, and one took place virtually. Each session lasted for between ninety minutes and two hours. A town hall meeting was hosted in each of the following regions or counties of Maryland, with a total of over 200 attendees:

- Baltimore City (3 town halls)
- Central Maryland, including Anne Arundel and Howard Counties (1 town hall)
- Lower Eastern Shore, including Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester Counties (1 town hall)
- Montgomery County (2 town halls)
- Northern Maryland, including Baltimore, Harford, Carroll, and Cecil Counties (1 town hall)
- Prince George's County (3 town halls)
- Southern Maryland, including Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties (1 town hall)
- Upper Eastern Shore, including Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, and Talbot Counties (1 town hall)
- Western Maryland, including Garrett, Allegheny, and Washington counties (1 town hall)

Across counties, mentoring providers described the populations they serve and highlighted several assets and challenges associated with running programs throughout the state of Maryland. Programs served a range of racial and ethnic and gender groups, with a focus often on black youth of all genders. Few programs tended to have a specific gender, racial or ethnic focus. Considering age groups being served, there appears to be a variety of programs primarily available for middle and high school-aged youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Though, there are some areas of the state that had a tendency to serve younger youth, like the Lower and Upper Eastern Shores, and some with a tendency to serve older youth, like Montgomery County.

Providers' saw their surrounding communities as significant assets to programs. Residents of communities, local schools, and other public spaces, such as libraries and recreation centers often provided programs with financial and in-kind resources or, for schools, positive working relationships. When providers discussed challenges, there was a strong focus on human and financial resources. Programs have limited staff sizes, struggled with recruiting, training, and retaining mentors, and saw a need for greater financial support.

Based on findings from the 15 town hall meetings, the following recommendations were formulated. They are intended to provide stakeholders with ideas on how to support mentoring programs across Maryland in ways that providers see as essential for their work and for providing quality mentoring to youth.

RECOMMENDATION FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

1. Be a mentor. Your professional and personal life experiences could help to enrich the life of a young person and help you to provide them with insight and support during important life transitions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARYLAND MENTOR

2. Develop a resource guide for mentoring programs and organizations that includes mental health and other services throughout Maryland's counties so that mentoring programs can easily refer youth and/or their families to local services when issues of trauma or other personal challenges emerge.
3. Facilitate a monthly community of practice for mentors and individuals who operate mentoring programs. Mentors could meet one month by phone or webinar to discuss their experiences with mentees and the programs, share insight on ways to engage youth, and inform one another about local activities or upcoming events that mentors could attend with mentees. On alternating months, program operators could join a call or webinar to discuss implementation and design challenges, highlight successes they have had with engaging mentors, youth, and/or their families; and share resources that could be helpful to the community of practitioners.
4. Develop a staged training approach that offers a series of sessions that are targeted toward programs that are new or developing and a series of sessions targeted toward programs that are mature. Topics may be of interest for both newer and more mature programs but might be primarily provided to one or the other.

Given that many of the programs seem to be fairly nascent, trainings that help them to build out infrastructure may be most beneficial. Topics may include gaining nonprofit or other organizational legal status, developing a strong mission, building out staff, financial management, and collecting program data. These newer programs may also be interested in learning about fundraising and grant-writing as well as strategies for recruiting mentors. Since they are in the planning or upstart phase, this would also be an ideal time

to help providers consider ways to engage youth and their families in program design, as members of a youth/family advisory council or by providing feedback on the types of supports that the local community believes mentoring could bring. Some of the training content could be informed by lessons from other organizations who already apply a youth-centered approach to their work.

More mature programs may benefit from trainings that are focused on helping them to scale existing efforts and have long-term sustainability. Potential topics for this group of providers include mentor retention, ways to expand programs' reach to engage younger and/or older youth and transgender and/or gender non-conforming youth. For programs that have an age-specific or gender-specific focus, they may want to consider ways that more youth within those groups could be reached, including new partnerships that could be formed to deepen programs' connections to specific populations.

5. Develop curriculum for mentor training to include content on how mentors can best engage youth in the mentor-mentee relationship and on preparing them to engage with mentees' families in a way that is appropriate, given the relationship, and beneficial to youth's mentoring experiences. Training could also include skills for communicating with youth and suggested meaningful activities or experiences that mentors and mentees can explore together.

RECOMMENDATION FOR PUBLIC & PRIVATE FUNDERS

6. Engage in a local or regional mentoring funder collaborative. This group could be a combination of national funders that support local programming; those focused on specific cities or regions in Maryland, such as community foundations; and funders from public agencies. Potential areas of support could include building out staffing sizes, training for program staff on issues described in recommendation number three, and providing general operating support so that programs can, for example, pay for resources like transportation, support the costs of meeting space, and provide incentives to mentors to help address mentor retention.
7. Recommend or refer past, current and potential mentoring grantees who may be suitable candidates for funding from your organization to Maryland MENTOR for no cost technical assistance and/or training for mentors and staff members.
8. Work with Maryland MENTOR to identify mentoring programs throughout the state who could benefit from additional support and clarify the types of support that could be needed (e.g., general operating support for staff salaries, capacity building for mentor recruitment and training). Maryland MENTOR could help to expand funder networks by brokering relationships between funders and mentoring providers.
9. Encourage employees, including state and local government employees, to mentor regularly with community-based organizations. Incentivize mentoring by providing employees with paid time-off to volunteer with a local community-based organization as a mentor.

RECOMMENDATION FOR MENTORING PROGRAMS & ORGANIZATIONS

10. Engage with Maryland MENTOR for no cost technical assistance, training and resources that could help to strengthen your program and build out your network.
11. Subscribe to the Maryland MENTOR newsletter to stay abreast of offerings, such as webinars, that could help you connect with other programs and organizations and share knowledge and resources to identify areas for collaboration and support of one another, i.e. fundraising, mentor recruitment, field trips, and other topics.
12. Become a Maryland MENTOR Quality Program Partner and commit to continuously improving your program offerings. Young people will benefit from your high-quality programs.

RECOMMENDATION FOR EDUCATION SYSTEMS

13. As a frequently mentioned partner to mentoring program throughout the state, schools could help Maryland MENTOR to better understand and support school-based mentoring programs. Local school systems could work with Maryland MENTOR to conduct a system wide inventory of all current school-based mentoring programming and its operations and identify opportunities for existing school-based programs to be strengthened and/or expanded within one school or across multiple schools.

RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CORPORATE COMMUNITY

14. Work with Maryland MENTOR to engage your staffs in ongoing and long-term volunteer opportunities via mentoring programs and organizations. Partner with community-based mentoring programs to recruit youth for paid internship opportunities, and, as part of the internship, encourage company staff to serve as mentors to interns. This could support opportunities for youth to obtain permanent employment in the future and learn more about the range of possible career opportunities.

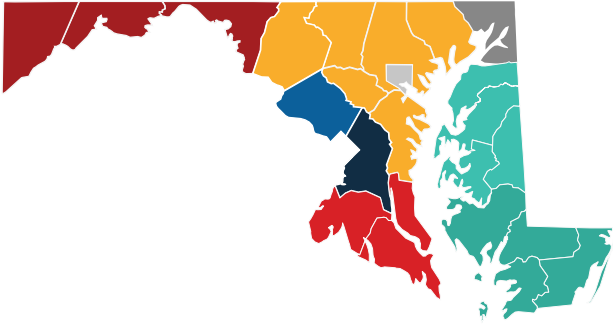
Maryland MENTOR endeavored to better understand the current state of mentoring practice in Maryland by conducting 15 town hall meetings with nearly 200 providers, totaling roughly 30 hours of discussion time. This report is Maryland MENTOR's effort to reflect back to you, the mentoring community and its supporters, what the organization heard. It is clear that many programs across Maryland are working diligently to create lasting connections that contribute to the overall wellbeing and success of youth and are often doing so with limited resources. In future efforts, mentoring programs and Maryland MENTOR would benefit from understanding youth's perspectives of mentoring and their experiences with programs. This could help shape programmatic offerings as well as the types of support that stakeholders provide to the mentoring community.



Photo of courtesy of Maryland MENTOR/Community Bridges

OVERVIEW

April - July 2018



INTRODUCTION

Think of someone who you see as successful. Chances are that person or the people who come to mind had a mentor. Depending on that person's background they may not have had to access a local program to connect with a caring adult who could provide guidance on life issues. Perhaps he/she found a mentor through a family friend or a parent's connections at work. For youth who may not have those connections already, mentoring programs help connect them to caring adults who may provide guidance and offer insight on major decisions about school, relationships, or career. The connections that programs can make to mentors for youth who may not otherwise know where to find that type of support or guidance make their existence critically important.

Maryland MENTOR sees the value of mentoring to children, youth and young adults and seeks to "fuel the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships for Maryland's young people." To ensure that the organization has a full understanding of the range of mentoring programs offered across Maryland, its staff journeyed on a listening tour, hosting town halls across various counties and regions of Maryland. What they heard during that listening tour is captured within this report, which will be used to help inform Maryland MENTOR's ongoing work and efforts to support mentoring programs. It is the intention that the

supports Maryland MENTOR provides going forward will be guided by the assets and needs that program administrators¹ shared during town halls and will help to build programs' capacities so that youth are receiving quality mentoring.

BACKGROUND & METHODS

Between April and July of 2018 Maryland MENTOR hosted a total of 15 town hall meetings with mentoring providers throughout the state. Fourteen town halls took place in-person, and one took place virtually.² Each session lasted for between ninety minutes and two hours. A town hall meeting was hosted in each of the following regions or counties of Maryland, with a total of nearly 200 attendees:

- Baltimore City (3 town halls)
- Central Maryland, including Anne Arundel and Howard Counties (1 town hall)³
- Lower Eastern Shore, including Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester Counties (1 town hall)
- Montgomery County (2 town halls)
- Northern Maryland, including Baltimore, Harford, Carroll, and Cecil Counties (1 town hall)
- Prince George's County (3 town halls)
- Southern Maryland, including Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties (1 town hall)
- Upper Eastern Shore, including Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, and Talbot Counties (1 town hall)
- Western Maryland, including Garrett, Allegheny, and Washington counties (1 town hall)⁴

During each town hall opening, the Maryland MENTOR team provided an overview of the organization and the resources it offers, and then shared the purpose of the town hall. To prepare for an open and community-focused discussion, all town hall members participated in a welcome circle. For the remainder of each town hall, providers engaged in discussion around opportunities and challenges related to program design and implementation, and 156 participants completed a survey that included questions related to program capacity, populations served, and technical assistance needs. Town hall discussions were documented by Maryland MENTOR staff. Maryland MENTOR

1. Throughout the report, program administrators are also referred to as providers. This includes individuals who attended the town halls and lead or work within a program or organization that provides mentoring to youth.
2. Data from the virtual town hall participants were included with the jurisdictions where their programs are located. For example, if a provider from Baltimore City participated in the virtual town hall, their data were included with the Baltimore City profile.

3. No one attended the Central Maryland town hall meeting, so no data on Central Maryland are included in this report.
4. One person attended the Western Maryland town hall. Data provided by this one person are included in the cross-cutting summary, but an individual Western Maryland profile was not included in the report.

commissioned Equivolve Consulting to develop the survey instrument, analyze the survey data and notes from the discussions, and to produce this report.

This report includes three sections: a state summary describing findings across all counties, county profiles, and recommendations. The summary provides themes that emerged from data collected across all the programs that were represented at the town hall meetings. Data from the survey and discussion notes are combined to capture themes across the two sources. The summary is followed by a series of profiles that describe capacities, challenges, and assets of mentoring programs within the counties and regions listed above. The report closes with recommendations and a conclusion summarizing key highlights from the report and next steps.

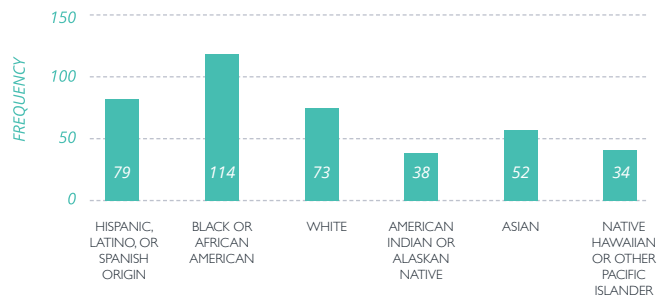
STATE SUMMARY

Programs across the state tend to serve youth who are Black or African American, between the ages of 12 and 17. The majority of programs are for both females and males or all genders and most often provide mentoring using a group model.

All except three survey respondents said that their programs serve Black or African American youth, and more than half each serve youth of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (n=79) or White youth (n=73). Regarding the age groups that programs serve, there tends to be a clustering of programs for youth between the ages of seven and 24. However, three-quarters or more of the respondents said their programs serve youth who are between the ages of 12 and 14 or 15 and 17. Fewer programs tend to be available for children between four and six years old (n=52), and just 27 out of 140 respondents' programs offer mentoring to young adults who are age 25 or older. Survey respondents were also asked to indicate whether their programs serve females, males, transgender youth, and/or gender non-conforming youth. Four out of every ten respondents said that their program serves females and males, and about a quarter said that their programs serve all genders. The following three graphs include demographic data on the populations served across Maryland mentoring programs.

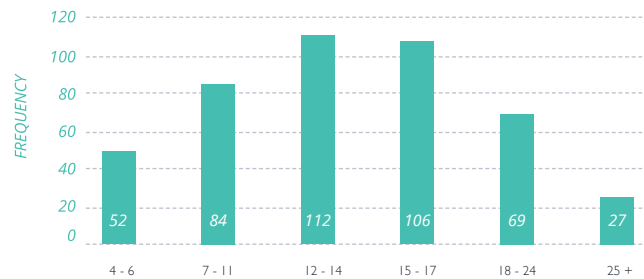
RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=117)



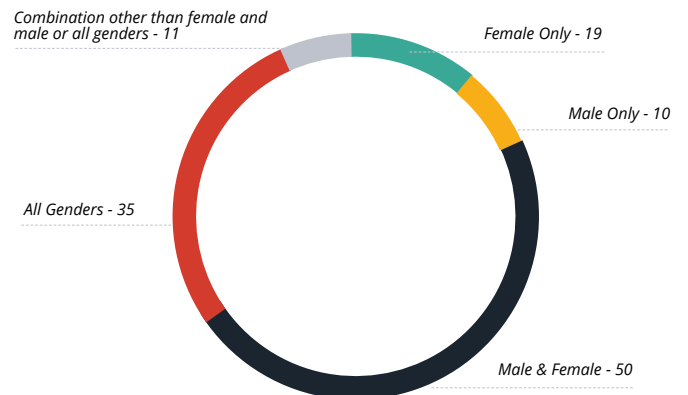
AGE OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=140)



GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=125)



To understand how the populations described above are receiving mentoring, survey respondents were asked to identify the mentoring models their programs use to serve youth. They were asked to select among the following models:

- One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee
- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team⁵

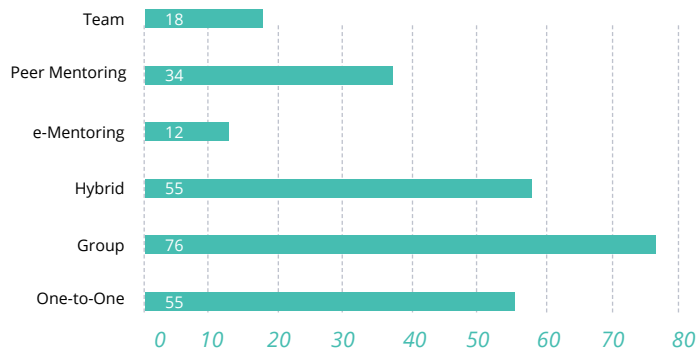
More than half of the respondents' programs provide mentoring using a group model. Given issues that were raised around mentor recruitment and retention, a group model where multiple mentees can work with the same mentor may help programs to serve more youth with fewer mentors. About 40 percent of the respondents said their programs provide mentoring using either a hybrid or one-to-one approach.

Inadequate funding and recruiting, training, and retaining mentors were among the most frequently mentioned challenges across mentoring programs.

In all of the town hall meeting discussions, providers mentioned challenges with accessing and securing adequate funding for their programs. Providers expressed needing additional funding to support recreational activities for mentees, transportation, and building out program infrastructure and capacity. Though, programs might desire additional funding, additional funding may come with expectations from funders that programs will expand their offerings or serve more youth. It is not clear whether the current staffing structures provide programs with the capacity needed to accommodate these potential expectations. On average, programs have four paid staff (n=86) and 12 unpaid staff (n=65). It could be the case that programs struggle to recruit, train, and retain mentors because there is limited staff capacity to provide supports to mentors that might help to further engage them in their mentoring role.

MENTORING MODELS USED

(n=137)



Town hall participants also mentioned challenges related to recruiting, training, and retaining mentors. Sometimes this was described as programs having some mentors who are not consistently engaged in their mentor-mentee relationships. One provider said that “it has been difficult to get the right level of commitment” from mentors. Challenges related to training mentors was also raised during discussions about how programs measure their own performance. When thinking of mentor quality and their relationships with mentees, one provider expressed needing to feel more prepared and able to have the “tough” conversations with mentors when the relationship may not be going well. Providers across several town halls also mentioned the importance of mentors having the skills to build strong rapport and engaging relationships with mentees. Consistent with discussions, more than half of town hall participants (70/137) said they need support with mentor training, including curriculum development (see table below).

Mentoring providers across Maryland most often said they do well with connecting with their surrounding communities but struggled with engaging youth and their parents and family in the mentoring experience.

When asked what their programs do well, participants often said that they do well with connecting with their local community, including connecting with schools for their support and connecting with local organizations, such as libraries and recreation centers. Generally, programs tend to receive in-kind support, such as meeting space, from these organizations within their communities.

5. Typically, Maryland MENTOR would describe this as a sports-based model. For purposes of the survey, the term “team” was used.

Providers were also asked to consider the biggest challenges they face in operating a mentoring program and ways that youth could be better engaged in the programs' design and implementation. During these discussions, they most often indicated that engaging youth in the mentor-mentee relationship was challenging. One provider said that they struggle with "making a connection with the youth;" another said that "getting the kids to buy in and commit" can be challenging. Often, the providers mentioned that they wanted to find ways to support mentors in helping youth to engage in the mentoring experience.

Beyond the youth being engaged in mentoring, engaging youth's families was noted as challenging across most town halls. Providers wanted to see that they had support and buy-in from mentees' families so that the youth might maximize on the benefits of having a mentor. In line with the challenges that were raised throughout town hall discussions, the second most frequently selected type of support that survey respondents said they need is related to parent/family engagement (75/137) (see table below).

TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED

Frequency (n=137)

Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	53
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	64
Fundraising/grant writing	80
General program design	46
Integrating youth development principles	38
Parent/family engagement	75
Partnership development	73
Mentor training (including curriculum development)	70
Offering mentoring in rural setting	19
Making mentor-mentee matches	32
Mentor recruitment	64

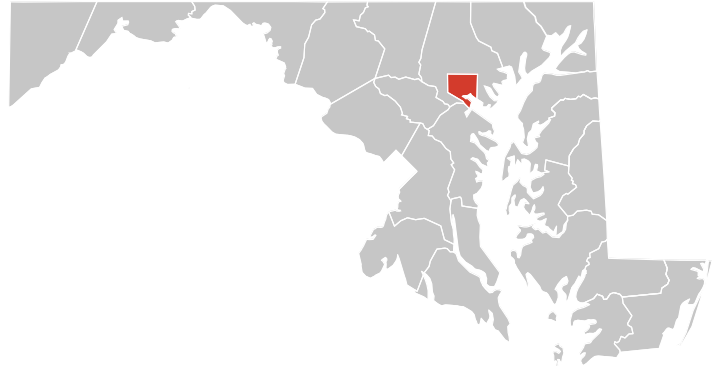
In the following section, we provide profiles that describe each county or region's mentoring programs and highlight their specific assets and challenges.



Photo of courtesy of Maryland MENTOR/Community Bridges



BALTIMORE CITY **PROFILE**



Maryland MENTOR hosted three town hall meetings throughout Baltimore City to solicit individuals' feedback on what is going well with local mentoring, resources that could be useful to local programs, and the types of resources that mentoring programs are already accessing. Participants engaged in small group discussions on their experiences providing or managing mentoring programs in or near Baltimore City and were asked to complete a survey at the end of each town hall. Information presented throughout this profile is based on those two data sources. This profile begins with some highlights, then provides a description of the types of organizations represented at the town hall meetings and a description of the mentoring approaches utilized across respondents. The profile concludes with a summary of program capacity, including gaps and assets identified through the survey and group discussions.

PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- Respondents tend to provide mentoring through community-based programs that have legal nonprofit status. The programs are typically two years or younger and have substantially more unpaid staff than paid staff.
- The majority of respondents said that their program has a specific neighborhood focus in east or west Baltimore. Programs most frequently serve a combination of females and males who are Black and between the ages of seven and 17. Formal mentoring does not appear to be as readily available for younger children or young adults, and none of the programs have a specific focus on youth who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming.
- Programs tend to utilize group, one-to-one, or a hybrid of the two for providing mentoring to young people.
- The vast majority of respondents believe that their programs do well with keeping youth safe, engaging youth in the program in ways they may not otherwise be engaged, and creating environments where youth feel valued and can be themselves. The community is supportive of mentoring efforts by providing financial support, helping to foster relationships between programs and families, and providing meeting space and other in-kind donations.
- Participants emphasize the importance of going beyond providing safe space to ensure that mentees have emotional support from caring adults and exposure to new or different experiences, such as exposure to other cultures.
- Respondents often identify fundraising/grant-writing, partnership development, parent/family engagement, and mentor training as areas where technical assistance is needed. About 40 percent of respondents had not accessed any type of technical assistance on their own.
- When thinking of ways to engage youth in program design, respondents suggested that they could develop youth advisory boards, providing incentives their contributions; and create a culture of inclusion and transparency with youth.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

The majority of participants indicated that they provide mentoring through a community-based program (n=29). Three response options were offered (i.e. community-based program, elementary, middle or high school; and higher education). Rather than selecting one of the existing response options, fifteen respondents described their organization as nonprofit, suggesting that they may not identify as community-based, but that they do operate as a program. The table below displays the number of individuals who selected each organization type.

ORGANIZATION TYPE	Frequency (n=64)
Community-based program	29
Elementary, middle or high school	8
Higher Education	5
Nonprofit	15
Other	7

When asked whether their organizations have 501c3 or some other nonprofit status, among the 29 individuals who answered the question, 20 did have nonprofit status. Six did not, and three respondents were unsure.

Respondents (n=60) were also asked to indicate the number of years that the programs or organizations where they work had been providing mentoring. Mentoring had been provided by programs/organizations for an average of seven years. Though, more than a third of respondents had been operating programs for two years or less, including some who had not started a program yet, but were in the planning process to get one off the ground. This tendency for the respondents' mentoring programs to be relatively new may be indicative of the staffing capacity. Given the tendency of local, smaller organizations to provide mentoring seasonally, respondents may have been indicating the cumulative amount of time that their programs had been providing mentoring. For example, if a program provides mentoring only during the summer between June and August and has done so for two summers, they may have said the program had been operating for a total of six months rather than two years. Across respondents, there's an average of three paid staff per program and an average of nine unpaid staff.

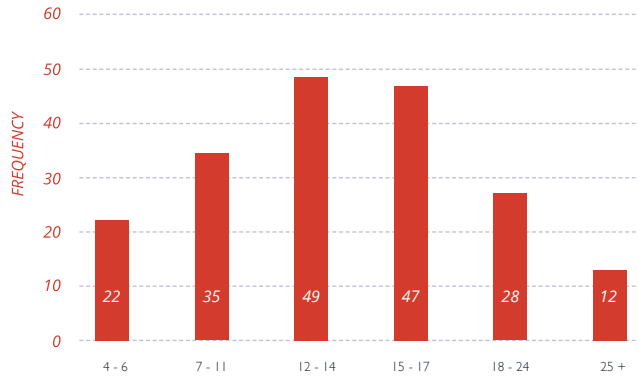
MENTORING APPROACHES

Survey respondents were asked several questions about their programs' approach to mentoring so that Maryland MENTOR could better understand the populations being served, whether programs focus in specific neighborhoods or areas of the city, how mentoring is being delivered across Baltimore City and whether any best practices are being incorporated.

POPULATIONS SERVED. Out of 42 individuals who responded to the question, 31 indicated having a specific neighborhood focus, primarily in either east or west Baltimore. Respondents were also asked to identify the racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups they serve through mentoring programs. Graphs below display the frequency of responses across those categories. Nearly all respondents serve Black or African American youth, and more than half serve youth who are of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. Programs focus most often on youth between the ages of 12 and 17, with fewer programs serving younger children (between ages 4 and 6) or young adults who are 18 and older. Fourteen respondents noted that their program has a specific gender focus on either females (n=8) or males (n=6). Most respondents serve both males and females.

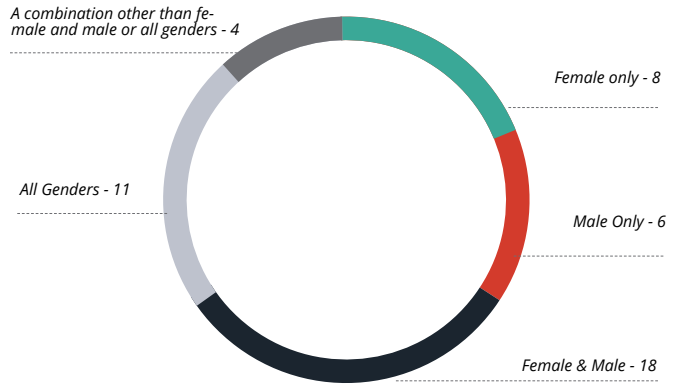
AGE OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=61)



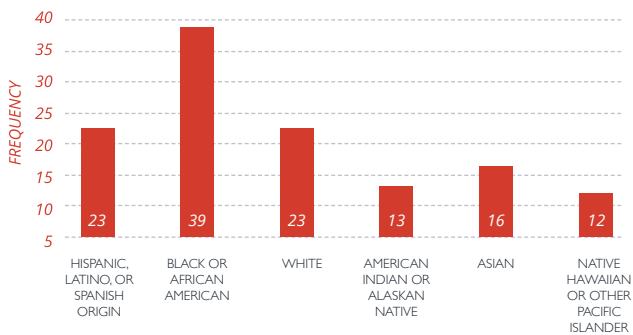
GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=47)



RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=40)



MENTORING MODELS USED

Respondents to the survey use a range of methods to deliver mentoring. They were asked to select among the following models:

- One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee
- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team

Of the 61 individuals who answered the question, nearly two-thirds provide group mentoring (38/61), more than a third provide one-to-one mentoring (24/61), and more than a third use a hybrid model to provide a combination of group and one-to-one mentoring (26/61). The table below displays models used across respondents' programs.

MENTORING MODEL	<i>Frequency (n=61)</i>
One-to-one	24
Group	38
Hybrid	26
e-Mentoring	6
Peer mentoring	18
Team	5

PROGRAM CAPACITY

ASSETS. During small group discussions, participants were asked, “what does your program do well?” The vast majority of respondents shared that their programs do well with keeping youth safe, engaging youth in the program and other experiences in ways that they may not otherwise be engaged, and creating environments where youth feel valued and can be themselves. Participants also lauded their holistic approach to mentoring, with a particular focus on providing youth with support around academic achievement and mental health.

When asked about the ways that participants' surrounding communities were supportive of mentoring efforts, providing financial support, helping to foster relationships between programs and families, and providing in-kind donations were noted. For example, one participant mentioned that “schools [within the community] connect our services to families, counselors, and other community programs.” Related to expanding the programs resources and capacity, participants often noted that community members provide space for the program to meet, serve as volunteers, and offer materials, such as school supplies and sports equipment, to mentees and the program. It appears that these community resources are essential for programs' operations.

A final dimension of program assets that was explored during town hall meeting discussions focused on the “real” reasons that the programs are in existence. Some participants said that their programs exist to provide a safe haven for youth. The majority of participants, though, perceive the “real” reason for their program's existence is to provide some sort of game changer for youth who are receiving mentoring. Participants emphasized going beyond providing safe space to ensure that mentees have exposure to new or different experiences and emotional support from caring adults. Some highlights that help to further describe what providers see as their program's reason for existence follow:

- “Hugs before homework”
- “Making cultural connections through similarities”
- “Changing mindset [to a] prosperous/wealth mindset.”

The ways that some participants are measuring progress toward these goals include pre- and post-

surveys, exit interviews, secondary data from schools, mentees’ personal mission statements, and video testimonies.

GAPS. Most programs represented in the survey serve youth between the ages of seven and 17, and, most often, these programs focus on youth between the ages of 12 and 17. This finding suggests that formal mentoring tends to become available around second grade up to grade 12 but is not as readily available for younger children or young adults. Regarding genders being served by Baltimore City mentoring programs, most seem to serve both females and males or all genders. None of the programs have a specific focus on youth who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming.

When discussing challenges related to program design and implementation, participants were first asked to share how they might better involve young people. Developing youth advisory boards to integrate youth in decision-making, providing incentives to youth, including stipends to compensate youth for their contributions; and creating a culture of inclusion and transparency were mentioned. One participant noted, “when youth are invested [in the program], they remain engaged.”

Thinking more generally about program implementation, participants identified challenges with:

- Accessing funding;
- Mentor training and preparedness;
- Parent/family and mentee engagement;
- Mentor recruitment and retention;
- Short- and long-term data collection; and
- Serving students and families with different needs.

Through the survey, town hall participants were provided a list of various types of support that may help to strengthen their programs and asked to identify up to four areas in which their mentoring programs needed additional assistance. The most commonly selected areas were fundraising/grant-writing (35/58), partnership development (32/58), parent/family engagement (31/58), and mentor training (30/58). The table below presents the full list of supports and the number of respondents who selected each. Fundraising/grant-writing, the type of support that was selected most often,

aligns with challenges that were raised during small group discussions around the need for more funding and the reliance on in-kind support from surrounding communities.

TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED	<i>Frequency (n=58)</i>
Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	23
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	26
Fundraising/grant writing	35
General program design	23
Integrating youth development principles	19
Parent/family engagement	31
Partnership development	32
Mentor training (including curriculum development)	30
Offering mentoring in a rural setting	6
Making mentor-mentee matches	14
Mentor recruitment	28

Consistent with the themes above, when town hall participants focused on activities that they would like to do more of, fundraising, mentor recruitment and training, and partnerships with other community programs were frequently mentioned. Though not frequently, new issues were also raised here regarding what programs would like to do more: anti-bullying efforts, anti-racism efforts, and accessing youth employment opportunities.

To gauge the extent that providers had accessed MENTOR or other resources to strengthen their own capacities, they were asked about familiarity with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring. Most respondents were either completely unfamiliar (27/59) or somewhat familiar (24/70) with this MENTOR resource. Some respondents had sought to strengthen their own capacity through the range of resources offered by The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) (n=4), the National Mentoring Resource Center (n=2), a consulting firm or independent consultant (n=6), or using some other resource (n=6). However, 32 out of the 47 respondents had not sought any type of technical assistance.

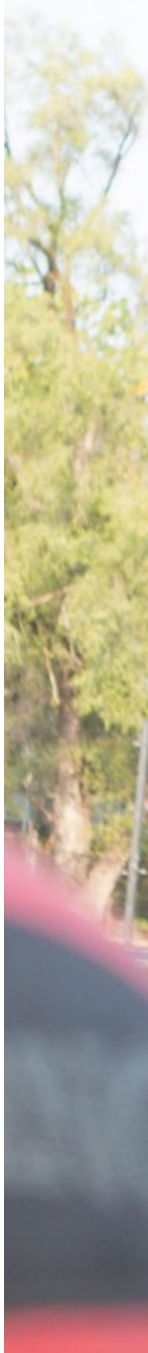


Photo courtesy of Midlands Mentoring Partnership



LOWER EASTERN SHORE PROFILE



Maryland MENTOR hosted one town hall meeting in the Lower Eastern Shore area of Maryland to solicit individuals' feedback on what is going well with local mentoring, resources that could be useful to local programs, and the types of resources that mentoring programs are already accessing. Lower Eastern Shore included Dorchester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Worcester Counties. Participants engaged in small group discussions on their experiences providing or managing mentoring programs in or near the Lower Eastern Shore area and were asked to complete a survey at the end of the town hall. Information presented throughout this profile is based on those two data sources. This profile begins with some highlights, then provides a description of the types of organizations represented at the town hall meetings and a description of the mentoring approaches utilized across respondents. The profile concludes with a summary of program capacity, including gaps and assets identified through the survey and group discussions.

PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- Most programs were community-based, nonprofit programs whose organizations have been providing mentoring for up to 105 years. Programs have, on average, equal numbers of paid and unpaid staff.
- Programs tend to serve youth who are Black or African American (n=9), American Indian and/or of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and between the ages of seven to 14. No programs served individuals 25 or older. More than half of the programs serve either all genders or some other combination, but none have a gender-specific focus.
- Mentoring is delivered to program participants usually using a group or hybrid (a combination of one-to-one and group mentoring) approach.
- Providers believe they do well at creating a safe space and providing ongoing support to youth, as well as peer-mentoring. Some have also been successful with building relationships with community foundations and mental health providers.
- Town hall participants expressed a clear desire to shift their organization's approach from adult- to youth-centered. Though, when asked about areas of support that are needed, providers most often said they could use support with incorporating cultural perspectives in service design and delivery, fundraising/grant writing, and parent/family engagement.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

Nearly all programs represented at the Lower Eastern Shore town hall were community-based programs. One respondent's program was based in an elementary, middle or high school.

Across all nine individuals who completed the survey, eight of their programs had legal nonprofit status. The remaining program did not have nonprofit status. The average number of years that respondents' programs or organizations had been offering mentoring was 43. Ages of the mentoring programs were widespread, with responses ranging from zero to 105 years.

ORGANIZATION TYPE

Frequency (n=7)

Community-based program	6
Elementary, middle or high school	1
Higher education	0
Other	0

Although there is a significant range, programs tended to say that their program had been offering mentoring for between 15 and 35 years. Four respondents shared how many paid staff their programs have, and five respondents shared how many unpaid staff their programs have. Across programs, there was an average of 3.5 paid staff and four unpaid staff.

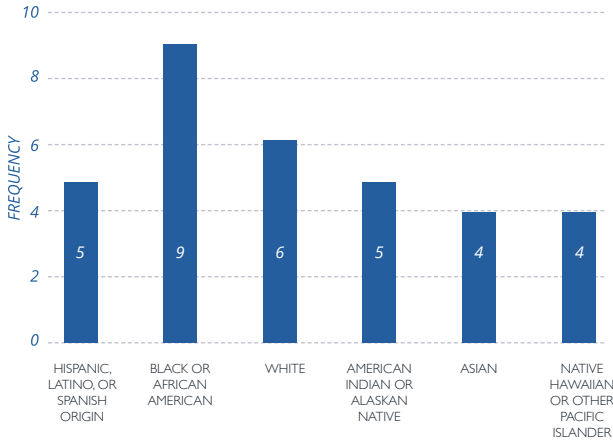
MENTORING APPROACHES

Survey respondents were also asked about their programs' approach to mentoring so that Maryland MENTOR could better understand the populations being served, whether programs focus in specific neighborhoods or areas of the county, how mentoring is being delivered across the Lower Eastern Shore and whether any best practices are being incorporated.

POPULATIONS SERVED. Four providers indicated that their programs have an area-specific focus, which tend to be specific counties, such as Wicomico and Worcester. Survey respondents were also asked to identify the racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups served through their mentoring programs. Frequencies of responses are displayed in the three following graphs. All of the respondents serve youth who are Black or African American (n=9), and more than half each serve youth who are of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin or American Indian (n=5, each). Programs tended to serve youth between the ages of seven and 17, with the greatest number of respondents identifying ages seven to 14 as the primary age groups served. No programs served individuals 25 or older. Respondents were asked to select the genders they serve among the following categories: female, male, transgender, and gender-nonconforming. More than half of the programs serve either all genders or some other combination.

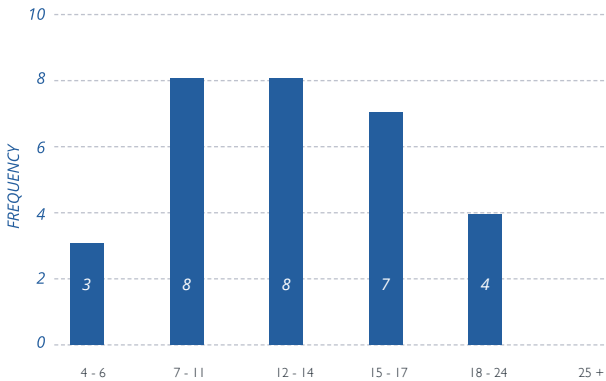
RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=9)



AGE OF POPULATION SERVED

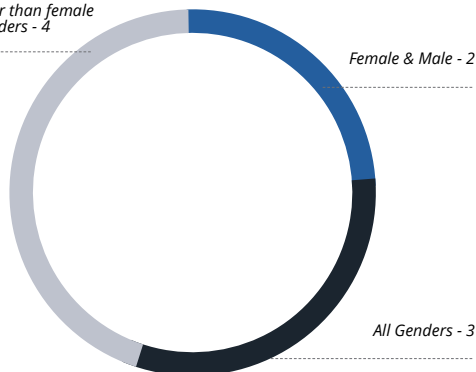
(n=9)



GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=9)

A combination other than female and male or all genders - 4



MENTORING MODELS USED

Respondents were asked to select among the following models to describe their approach to mentoring:

- One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee
- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team

The following table displays models used across respondents' programs.

MENTORING MODEL

Frequency (n=9)

One-to-one	3
Group	7
Hybrid	6
e-Mentoring	2
Peer mentoring	2
Team	1

While the mentoring models used across the Lower Eastern Shore programs represented here are widespread, group and hybrid models tend to be used most often (n=7 and n=6, respectively). E-mentoring, peer mentoring, and team-based mentoring models are not used as often.

PROGRAM CAPACITY

ASSETS. As providers engaged in a discussion about the ways that their programs did well, creating a safe space, providing ongoing support, and peer mentoring were often mentioned. When asked what the surrounding community does to support mentoring programming, participants indicated that developing partnerships with community foundations and mental health providers has been beneficial. More broadly, others suggested that the community has also been supportive of in-home mentoring.

Town hall participants were asked, “what’s the real reason your mentoring program or organization exists?” Providers said that their programs exist because they have a deep commitment to creating meaningful education and career pathways for youth. One participant offered that her program exists to keep kids safe, as she had lost her son to “the streets.” Town hall attendees did not discuss how they were measuring progress toward these broad goals.

GAPS. Given the small sample size for the survey (9 respondents), potential gaps in the populations being served by programs are not highlighted. However, during the town hall discussion, several program design and implementation gaps were raised.

Participants offered a number of ways that they could better involve young people in program design. Most notably, there was a clear desire to shift their organization’s approach from adult- to youth-centered. Another suggestion along this line of thinking was the need for organizations to be more receptive to youth’s needs and interests.

When considering some of the biggest challenges to running mentoring programs, participants identified the following:

- Staff consistency;
- Communication;
- The school system;
- Parental involvement;
- Understanding from all stakeholders; and
- Space for staff

Town hall survey respondents were provided a list of various types of support that may help to strengthen their programs and were asked to identify the four areas that they could benefit from the most. The following table presents the complete list of supports and the number of times each support was selected. Multiple respondents selected more than four types of support, and all were included in the table. The most commonly selected areas were: incorporating cultural perspectives in service design and delivery, fundraising/grant writing, and parent/family engagement (n=6 for each). Nearly half of respondents also indicated needing support with developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth and with mentor recruitment.

TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED	<i>Frequency (n=9)</i>
Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	6
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	4
Fundraising/grant writing	6
General program design	1
Integrating youth development principles	2
Parent/family engagement	6
Partnership development	3
Mentor training (including curriculum development)	2
Offering mentoring in a rural setting	3
Making mentor-mentee matches	2
Mentor recruitment	4

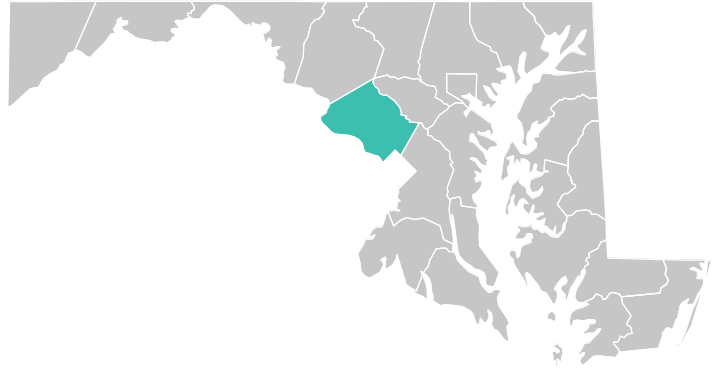
During the town hall discussion, participants explored what they currently do well but could be doing more. Career exposure during and after school, information sharing across databases, and transportation were highlighted as areas for improvement. Providers were also asked about their familiarity with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and access to any other resources, to help understand whether and how providers had worked to strengthen their own capacities. All respondents were either completely unfamiliar (5/9) or somewhat familiar (4/9) with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring. Some providers had worked to strengthen their program's capacity through the range of resources offered by The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) (n=2), the National Mentoring Resource Center (n=2), a consulting firm or independent consultant (n=1), or by using some other resource (n=1). Three individuals had not accessed any of the aforementioned resources for technical assistance.



Photo courtesy of Midlands Mentoring Partnership



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PROFILE



Maryland MENTOR hosted two town hall meetings throughout Montgomery County to solicit individuals' feedback on what is going well with local mentoring, resources that could be useful to local programs, and the types of resources that mentoring programs are already accessing. Participants engaged in small group discussions on their experiences providing or managing mentoring programs in or near Montgomery County and were asked to complete a survey at the end of each town hall. Information presented throughout this profile is based on those two data sources. This profile begins with some highlights, then provides a description of the types of organizations represented at the town hall meetings and a description of the mentoring approaches utilized across respondents. The profile concludes with a summary of program capacity, including gaps and assets identified through the survey and group discussions.

PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- Programs are mostly community-based with nonprofit status, having been in operation for between zero and 39 years.
- Populations served by the mentoring programs tend to include all genders, youth who are Black and/or of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin and between ages 12 and 24. These groups are typically provided mentoring using a hybrid or one-to-one model. Gender-specific populations and populations younger than six or older than 25 are served by the programs less frequently.
- Town hall participants believe their programs usually do well at providing training to mentors, mentees, and families; engaging with school and community leaders; and providing students with recreational opportunities.
- Recruiting and retaining mentors, having mentors who are present consistently, and knowing how to provide critical feedback that doesn't discourage mentors from being engaged were raised as challenges related to running mentoring programs.
- Programs expressed the need for additional support around parent/family engagement, developing partnerships with other organizations, mentor training, and developing meaningful activities for mentors and mentees.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

Most of the programs represented at the Montgomery County town halls were community-based programs (19/26). Less than a fifth of respondents indicated that their programs operate within an elementary, middle or high school setting or in some other setting, such as through a public program.

When asked whether their organizations have 501c3 or some other nonprofit status, among the 29 individuals who answered the question, 20 did have nonprofit status. Six did not, and three respondents were unsure.

ORGANIZATION TYPE	Frequency (n=26)
Community-based program	19
Elementary, middle or high school	3
Higher education	0
Other	4

About two-thirds (n=25) of respondents said that their programs have nonprofit status. Regarding the number of years programs or organizations had been providing mentoring, responses ranged from zero years to 39 years, with an average of 8.8 years. Across respondents' programs, there was an average of seven paid staff and 22 unpaid staff.

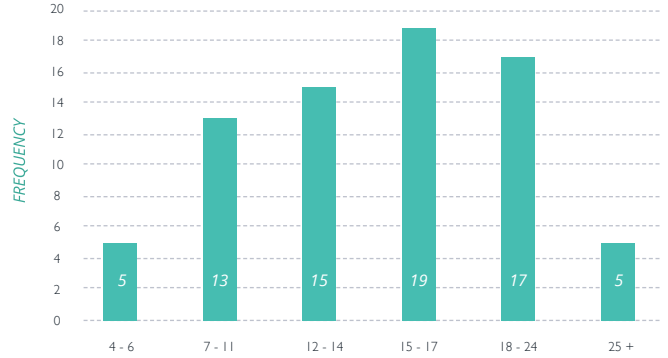
MENTORING APPROACHES

Survey respondents were also asked about their programs' approach to mentoring so that Maryland MENTOR could better understand the populations being served, whether programs focus in specific neighborhoods or areas of the county, how mentoring is being delivered across Montgomery County and whether any best practices are being incorporated.

POPULATIONS SERVED. Nine respondents noted a focus on a specific neighborhood or area within the county. These programs tended to focus their mentoring programs within a specific city in the county, with no particular pattern across the cities that were selected. Respondents were also asked to identify the racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups served through their mentoring programs. Graphs below display the frequency across responses. Nearly all respondents serve individuals who are of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (n=21) or Black or African American (n=23). Eighteen out of the 25 respondents serve individuals who are White. For age groups, programs primarily serve youth between the ages of 12 and 24. Relatively fewer programs serve younger children who are between ages four and six or individuals who are 25 or older. Nearly half of the programs serve all genders (n=11), and four serve females and males.

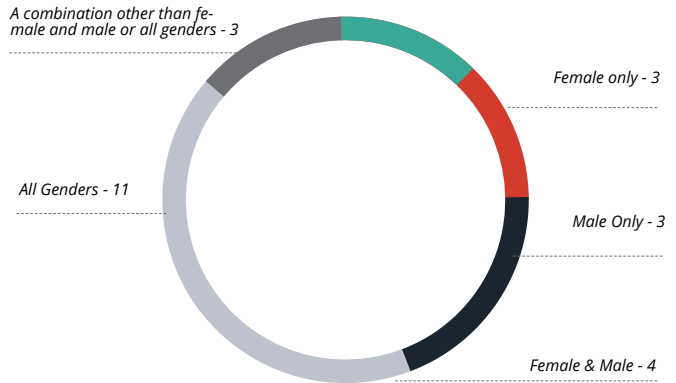
AGE OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=25)



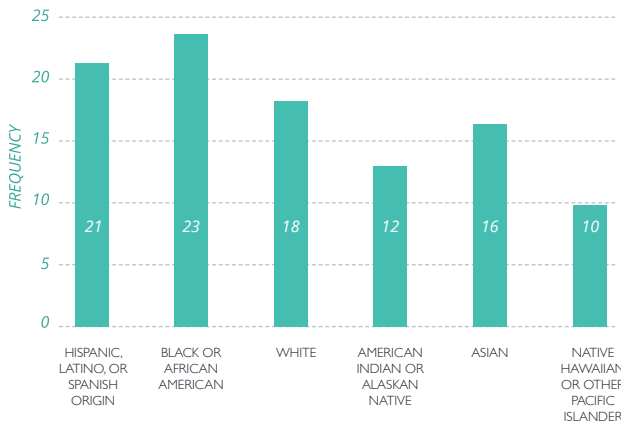
GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=24)



RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=25)



MENTORING MODELS USED

Respondents were asked to select among the following models to describe their approach to mentoring:

- One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee
- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team

The following table displays models used across respondents' programs.

MENTORING MODELS USED	(n=23)
One-to-one	10
Group	9
Hybrid	11
e-Mentoring	0
Peer mentoring	7
Team	3

PROGRAM CAPACITY

ASSETS. During small group discussions, participants were asked what their programs did well. Some themes include providing training to mentors, mentees, and families; engaging with school and community leaders; and providing students with recreational opportunities. The use of culturally responsive and trauma-informed approaches was also identified as strong points for some programs.

When asked, "what is the real reason your mentoring program or organization exists," participants noted a desire to provide mentees with opportunities for personal growth and development. This general sentiment is captured by one provider's comment: "[I want] young people to have an expanded view on life—to pay it forward, to be self-aware and purpose driven." A theme that emerged, though mentioned less frequently than other topics, was that programs wanted to provide resources to youth who have been overlooked as a result of stereotypes and pushed out by the community.

As the discussion shifted to thinking about the ways that programs are currently measuring how well they are doing, a number of methods were identified, such as using surveys, and tracking key indicators like rates of high school completion, standardized test scores, and students' grade point averages.

GAPS. The majority of programs represented in the survey serve youth between the ages of 12 and 24, and, most often, these programs focus on youth between the ages of 15 and 17. This suggests that there may be fewer mentoring programs available to younger children and young adults over age 25. There also appears to be few programs with a focus on specific gender groups; they tend to focus on all genders or both females and males.

As participants engaged in discussion about the ways that youth could be more involved in program design, they often mentioned applying strategies that help adults to share power with the youth. For example, providers suggested that youth could be engaged in the design of program logos and in shaping the programming and recommending the types of experiences youth in the program would have. Some other ways that providers said youth could be engaged included serving on an advisory council, recruiting their peers as mentees, and providing feedback to the program by completing surveys throughout the year.

Some of the biggest challenges for running a mentoring program that town hall participants raised included recruiting and retaining mentors, mentor consistency, and knowing how to provide critical feedback that doesn't discourage mentors from being engaged. Participants also mentioned several contextual factors that present challenges for running mentoring programs, such as substance abuse, unemployment, homelessness, gang involvement and young parenthood.

Also, during town hall discussions, providers were invited to think about the types of resources that they could use more.

If you could wave a magic wand, what would you get more of?

- “So many mentors - too many!”
- “Increased family engagement and teacher involvement”
- “Wrap-around supports”
- “Larger location to provide additional services and offer a comfortable space”
- “Funding to increase the ability to provide new experiences and hire more mentors”

Town hall survey respondents were provided a list of various types of support that may help to strengthen their programs and asked to identify the four areas that they could benefit from the most. The most commonly selected areas were parent/family engagement (16/26), partnership development (14/26), developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth (12/26), and mentor training (10/26). The table below presents the complete list of supports and the number of times each support was selected.

Intended to help gauge programmatic strengths, town hall participants were asked to consider what they already do well and could be doing more. Most responses tended to focus on many of the challenges that were noted above, suggesting that their answers were more in line with what resources and supports they need to be able to do their work more effectively. Some responses that were offered include creating a more streamlined process for recruiting and training mentors across organizations and developing a method for real-time information sharing about upcoming events and opportunities to network with other organizations.

MENTORING MODELS USED

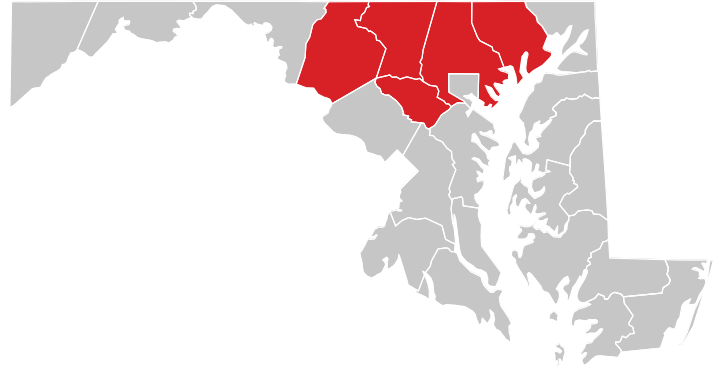
Frequency (n=26)

Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	6
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	12
Fundraising/grant writing	8
General program design	6
Integrating youth development principles	5
Parent/family engagement	16
Partnership development	14
Mentoring training (including curriculum development)	10
Offering mentoring in rural setting	1
Making mentor-mentee matches	4
Mentor recruitment	9

Providers were asked about their familiarity with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and access to any other resources, to help understand whether and how providers had worked to strengthen their own capacities. Most were either completely unfamiliar (11/29) or somewhat familiar (8/29) with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring. Six respondents were very familiar. Several providers had worked to strengthen their program's capacity through the range of resources offered by The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) (n=5), the National Mentoring Resource Center (n=3), a consulting firm or independent consultant (n=1), or by using some other resource (n=3). However, most (13/26) had not accessed any of the aforementioned resources for technical assistance.



NORTHERN MARYLAND PROFILE



Maryland MENTOR hosted one town hall meeting in Northern Maryland to solicit individuals' feedback on what is going well with local mentoring, resources that could be useful to local programs, and the types of resources that mentoring programs are already accessing. Northern Maryland included Baltimore, Harford, Carroll, and Cecil Counties. Participants engaged in small group discussions on their experiences providing or managing mentoring programs in Northern Maryland and were asked to complete a survey at the end of the town hall. Information presented throughout this profile is based on those two data sources. This profile begins with some highlights, then provides a description of the types of organizations represented at the town hall meetings and a description of the mentoring approaches utilized across respondents. The profile concludes with a summary of program capacity, including gaps and assets identified through the survey and group discussions.

PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- Respondents tend to provide mentoring through Mentoring programs are offered in community-based, non-profit organizational settings. They are mostly young programs, with half operating for three years or less, all with paid staff.
- The providers tend to serve Black, White, and youth with Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin between the ages of four and 17. Mentoring is delivered to these groups using a hybrid mentoring model (the combination of one-to-one and group mentoring).
- Programs do well at promoting the overall well-being of youth and their families, providing mentors for parents, using youth to recruit mentors, and inter-county outreach and communication.
- Some ways that program representatives suggest youth could be involved in program design include using youth to recruit their peers and involving youth in programmatic planning efforts.
- Some challenges that town hall participants noted around program implementation were related to recruiting and retaining mentors, keeping youth engaged, and a general lack of community support and access to funding. Aligning with these challenges, providers said they could use support with partnership development, fundraising, general program design, and training for their mentors.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

Respondents were asked to identify the type of setting in which their mentoring program was located. Among the programs represented, all of them were community-based programs.

Four individuals responded to the question of whether their program has legal nonprofit status. Among those four, half of the programs have nonprofit status, one does not, and one respondent was unsure. The average age of the programs represented at the town hall was 11.7 (n=3). Though, two of the three programs had been operating for three years or less. Two individuals shared the number of paid staff in their organizations. One program had 10 paid staff and the other had one paid staff member.

ORGANIZATION TYPE

Frequency (n=3)

Organization Type	Frequency (n=3)
Community-based program	3
Elementary, middle or high school	0
Higher education	0
Other	0

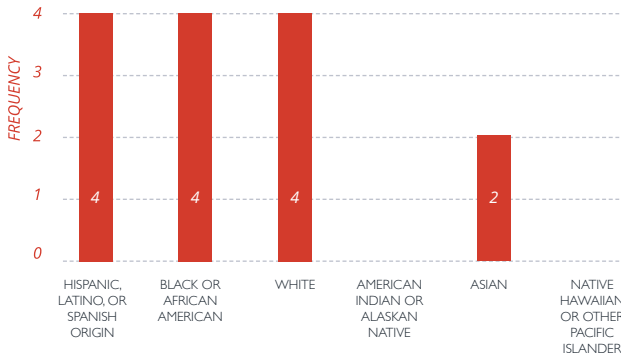
MENTORING APPROACHES

Survey respondents were asked about their programs' approach to mentoring so that Maryland MENTOR could better understand the populations being served, whether programs focus in specific neighborhoods or areas of the county, how mentoring is being delivered across Northern Maryland and whether any best practices are being incorporated.

POPULATIONS SERVED. None of the programs represented said they had a focus on a specific area within Northern Maryland. To understand who is being served by mentoring programs in Northern Maryland, survey respondents were also asked to identify the racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups of youth in their programs. Frequencies of responses are displayed in the three following graphs. All of the respondents serve youth who are Black or African American, White, and who are of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin (n=4). Half of the respondents said that their programs serve Asian youth. Programs represented at the Northern Maryland town hall tend to serve youth between the ages of four and six and 12 to 17. One of the programs each serve youth who are ages seven to 11, 18 to 24, or 25 and older. Respondents were asked to select among the following to identify which gender groups their programs serve: females, males, transgender, and gender non-conforming. One of the programs each serve females only, both females and males, and all genders.

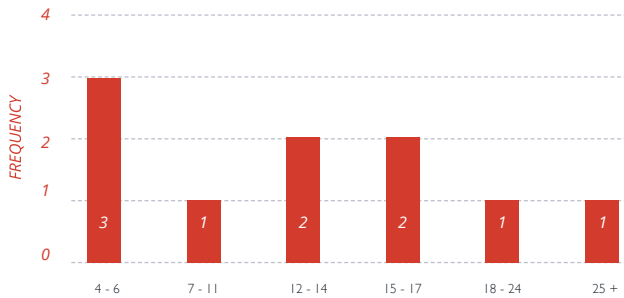
RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=4)



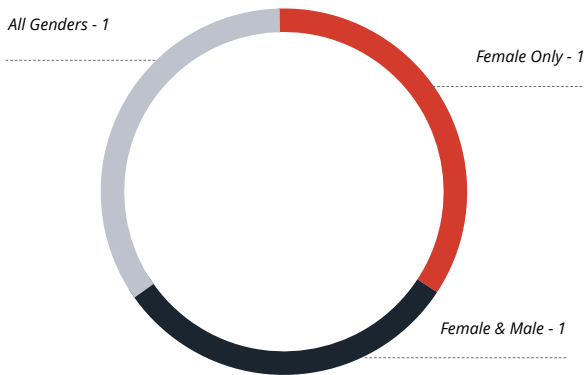
AGE OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=4)



GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=3)



MENTORING MODELS USED.

Respondents were asked to select among the following models to describe their approach to mentoring:

- One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee
- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team

The following table displays models used across respondents' programs.

Respondents' programs tend to provide mentoring using a hybrid approach. The one-to-one and group mentoring models are used by one program each.

MENTORING MODEL

Frequency (n=3)

One-to-one	1
Group	1
Hybrid	3
e-Mentoring	0
Peer mentoring	0
Team	0

PROGRAM CAPACITY

ASSETS. As participants were asked what their programs do well, themes emerged that focused on promoting the overall well-being of youth and their families, providing mentors for parents, using youth to recruit mentors, and inter-county outreach and communication. When asked about the ways that the surrounding community was supportive of mentoring, respondents said they had not received much support from the broader community but did feel supported by local school leaders.

GAPS. Because of the small sample size for the survey (5 respondents), potential gaps in the populations being served by programs are not included. Though, during the town hall discussion, several program design and implementation gaps were raised.

Many ideas were identified as participants explored the ways that they could better involve youth in program design. Offering youth incentives to participate in mentoring activities, using youth to recruit their peers, and involving youth in planning were all mentioned as ways that youth could be engaged. When thinking about some of the biggest challenges to running their mentoring programs, the themes that were most consistently mentioned were recruiting and retaining mentors, keeping youth engaged, and a general lack of community support and access to funding.

Town hall survey respondents were provided a list of various types of support that may help to strengthen their programs and asked to identify the four areas that they could benefit from the most. The table below presents the complete list of supports and the number of times each support was selected. When respondents selected more than four types of support, all were included in the table. The types of support that were identified most often include partnership development (n=5), and fundraising, general program design, and mentor training were each selected four times.

To understand ways that respondents had sought to strengthen their own mentoring programs' capacities, they were asked about their familiarity with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and any other resources that they might have accessed for technical assistance. Half of the respondents were completely unfamiliar (2/4)

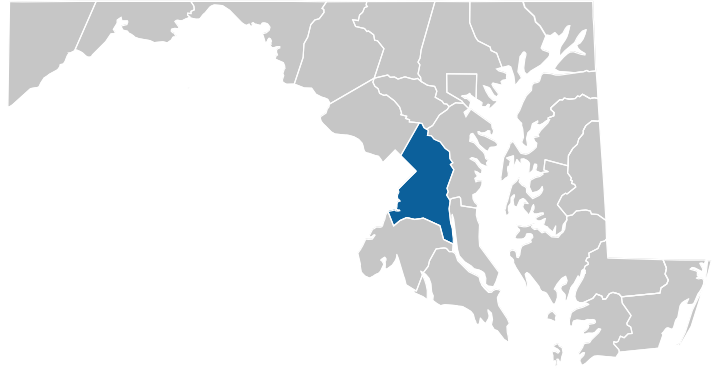
and half were somewhat familiar with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring. When asked about resources or other intermediaries whose resource providers may have accessed - including MENTOR, the National Mentoring Resource Center, external consultants, or other resources - two said they had not accessed any. One person had utilized resources from the YMCA to strengthen their program capacity.

TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED

Frequency (n=5)

Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	2
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	2
Fundraising/grant writing	4
General program design	4
Integrating youth development principles	1
Parent/family engagement	3
Partnership development	5
Mentor training (including curriculum development)	4
Offering mentoring in a rural setting	2
Making mentor-mentee matches	2
Mentor recruitment	2

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PROFILE



Maryland MENTOR hosted three town hall meetings throughout Prince George's County to solicit individuals' feedback on what is going well with local mentoring, resources that could be useful to local programs, and the types of resources that mentoring programs are already accessing. Participants engaged in small group discussions on their experiences providing or managing mentoring programs in or near Prince George's County and were asked to complete a survey at the end of each town hall. Information presented throughout this profile is based on those two data sources. This profile begins with some highlights, then provides a description of the types of organizations represented at the town hall meetings and a description of the mentoring approaches utilized across respondents. The profile concludes with a summary of program capacity, including gaps and assets identified through the survey and group discussions.

PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- Most programs are community-based with legal nonprofit status. The majority had been operating for five years or less, some even for zero years, and have staff that are primarily unpaid.
- Very few indicated a focus on a specific neighborhood or areas within Prince George's County. A majority of programs serve both females and males who are between the ages of 12 and 17. Mentoring is delivered to these populations usually using a group or one-to-one mentoring model.
- Since most program focus on youth ages 12 to 17, elementary-aged children and young adults may not have as many mentoring programs available to them. No programs have a specific focus on youth who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming.
- Providers see their program's reason for existence as developing youth's leadership capabilities. Some providers say that their programs devote significant attention to preparing mentors through training and provided ongoing support for mentors by offering them professional development opportunities.
- As town hall participants were asked to think about ways that the young people who they mentor could be better engaged in program design, meeting the youth where they are, finding out what youth's interests are, and identifying how adults can be supportive in those interests were mentioned. Related to additional support needed, providers identified fundraising/grant-writing, mentor training and recruitment, and parent/family engagement.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

The majority of programs represented at the Prince George's County town halls were community-based programs. Nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated that they provide mentoring through a community-based program (n=19). Six individuals provide mentoring through an elementary, middle, or high school-based program. Four selected other, indicating that they work in government or some other setting.

ORGANIZATION TYPE

Frequency (n=29)

Community-based program	19
Elementary, middle or high school	6
Higher education	0
Other	4

About two-thirds (n=20) of respondents said that their programs have nonprofit status. When asked how many years their program or organization had been providing mentoring, the responses ranged from zero years to 16 years, with an average of 6.5 years. Given that many of the programs are relatively new, they are likely still building out their staff. Across respondents' programs, there was an average of three paid staff and 15 unpaid staff.

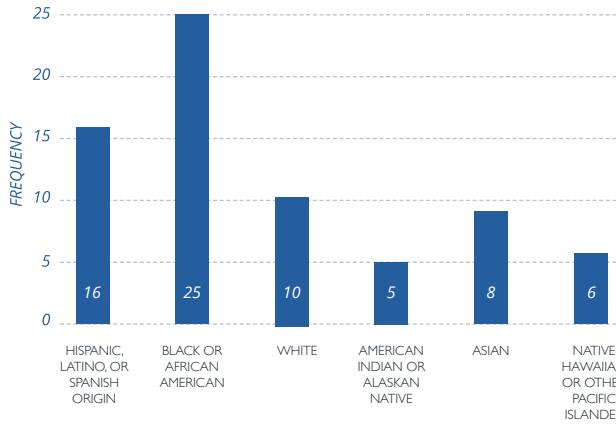
MENTORING APPROACHES

Survey respondents were asked multiple questions about their programs' approach to mentoring so that Maryland MENTOR could better understand the populations being served, whether programs focus in specific neighborhoods or areas of the county, how mentoring is being delivered across Prince George's County and whether any best practices are being incorporated.

POPULATIONS SERVED. Two respondents noted a focus on a specific neighborhood or city in Prince George's County. These programs were being operated through a school or church, and they seemed to be serving youth who live within the school zone or the community surrounding the church. Respondents were also asked to identify the racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups served through their mentoring programs. Below, the frequency of responses across those categories are displayed in graphs. All who responded indicated that they serve individuals who are Black or African American (n=25). Sixteen out of the 25 respondents serve individuals of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin. Regarding age groups, programs primarily serve youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Relatively fewer programs serve younger children between ages four and six or young adults ages 25 and older. More than half of the programs serve both females and males (n=14). Six of the programs serve all genders (n=6), and an equal number serve females only.

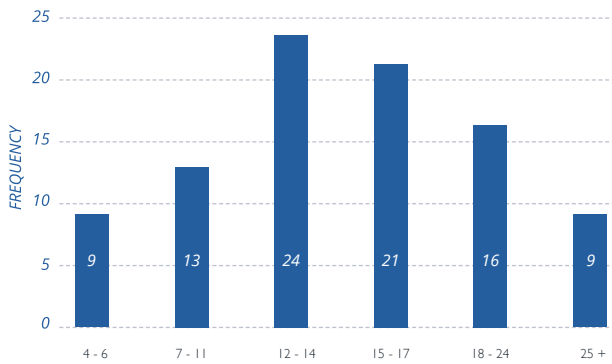
RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=40)



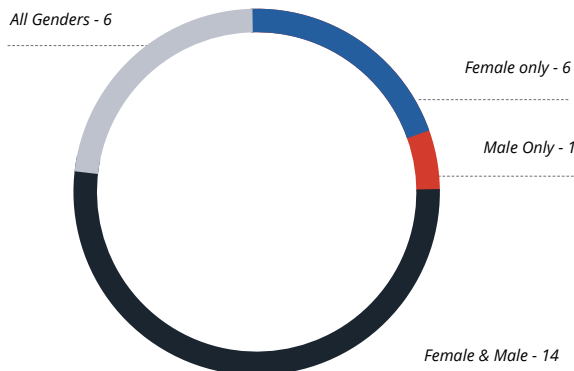
RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=28)



GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=27)



MENTORING MODELS USED

Respondents were asked to select among the following models to describe their approach to mentoring:

- One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee
- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team

The following table displays models used across respondents' programs.

MENTORING MODEL

Frequency (n=3)

Mentoring Model	Frequency
One-to-one	9
Group	13
Hybrid	8
e-Mentoring	3
Peer mentoring	7
Team	5

More than half of respondents' programs provide group mentoring (13/25), and more than a third provide one-to-one mentoring (9/25). Nearly a third provide a hybrid of one-to-one and group mentoring to youth.

PROGRAM CAPACITY

ASSETS. During small group discussions, participants were asked, “what does your program do well?” Several participants noted that their programs devoted significant attention to preparing mentors through training and provided ongoing support for mentors by offering professional development opportunities. Respondents also offered some methods by which they engaged youth, including establishing rapport and building trust, working to identify root causes of issues, and using strengths-based approaches to mentoring. One participant mentioned that, “[We] put youth in positions of leadership to lead now and facilitate events, such as board meetings.” Though not frequently mentioned, the following are notable highlights of other areas that respondents say their programs do well: unbiased feedback to attorneys in court, community outreach, and mentees training mentors.

When participants shared their thoughts about the ways that the surrounding community had been supportive, providing meeting space to facilitate sessions or events, serving as volunteers, and offering donations were mentioned.

Another area of program assets that was explored during town hall discussions focused on what providers see as the “real” reasons that the programs are in existence. Many participants noted that providing mentoring to others afforded them an opportunity to reciprocate what they had gained from personal mentoring experiences throughout their own childhood. However, the majority of responses focused on helping youth to develop as leaders, for example:

- “[We exist to] develop leaders that will go further in life than we have and will.”
- “[We ensure] that students can advocate for themselves.”
- “[We] show students that they can achieve success.”

When asked “how do you measure how well you are doing as a program,” participants mentioned using several modes of tracking progress toward program outcomes, such as high school graduation rates, and receiving feedback through online surveys, and conducting focus groups with mentees.

GAPS. Most programs represented in the survey provide mentoring to youth between the ages of 12 and 17, which may indicate that formal mentoring tends to be available for youth around middle and high school. Elementary aged children and young adults may not have as many mentoring programs available to them. In the Prince George’s County mentoring programs represented at the town halls, females and males are most commonly served. Fewer programs have a gender-specific focus, and none have a specific focus on youth who identify as transgender or gender non-conforming.

As town hall participants were asked to think about ways that the young people who they mentor could be better engaged in program design, meeting the youth where they are, finding out what youth’s interests are, and identifying how adults can be supportive were mentioned. Together, this suggests that programs could be more intentional about creating a youth-, rather than an adult-centered culture. Consistent with this thread, developing youth advisory councils, inviting youth to participate in board meetings, and providing youth with a sense of belonging and connectedness were also mentioned.

TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED	Frequency (n=26)
Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	12
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	12
Fundraising/grant writing	19
General program design	7
Integrating youth development principles	7
Parent/family engagement	13
Partnership development	10
Mentor training (including curriculum development)	14
Offering mentoring in a rural setting	2
Making mentor-mentee matches	6
Mentor recruitment	14

Then, when thinking more broadly about program design and implementation, providers said that identifying and retaining suitable mentors, securing funding, and keeping youth engaged were among the biggest challenges that they faced. A couple other challenges mentioned included family engagement and programs “assuming what the community needs rather than finding out what it needs.”

Town hall survey respondents were provided a list of various types of support that may help to strengthen their programs and asked to identify the four areas that they could benefit from the most. The most commonly selected areas were fundraising/grant-writing (n=19/26), mentor training (n=14/26) and recruitment (14/26), and parent/family engagement (n=13/26). The table below presents the complete list of supports and the corresponding number of respondents. The most frequently selected needs - fundraising/grant-writing and mentor recruitment and training - align with challenges that were raised during small group discussions around the need for more funding and more mentors.

Participants believe that they are doing well, but could be doing better at mentor training, fundraising, and building partnerships. They also mentioned wanting to explore effective ways to engage and recruit younger adults as mentors. To gauge the extent that providers had worked to strengthen their own capacities, they were asked about familiarity with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and access to any other resources. Most respondents were either completely unfamiliar (14/29) or somewhat familiar (9/29) with this MENTOR resource. Six were very familiar. Several respondents had sought to strengthen their program’s capacity through the range of resources offered by The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) (n=6), the National Mentoring Resource Center (n=2), a consulting firm or independent consultant (n=5), or by using some other resource (n=5). Ten out of the 23 respondents had not sought any type of technical assistance.





SOUTHERN MARYLAND PROFILE



Maryland MENTOR hosted one town hall meeting in Southern Maryland to solicit individuals' feedback on what is going well with local mentoring, resources that could be useful to local programs, and the types of resources that mentoring programs are already accessing. Southern Maryland included Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties. Participants engaged in small group discussions on their experiences providing or managing mentoring programs in Southern Maryland and were asked to complete a survey at the end of the town hall. Information presented throughout this profile is based on those two data sources. This profile begins with some highlights, then provides a description of the types of organizations represented at the town hall meeting and a description of the mentoring approaches utilized across respondents. The profile concludes with a summary of program capacity, including gaps and assets identified through the survey and group discussions.

*Photo courtesy of
Midlands Mentoring
Partnership*

PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- All programs are community-based programs with legal nonprofit status. They have an average paid staff size of 2.7, and an average unpaid staff size of 2.7.
- Programs most frequently serve females and males who are black and between the ages of seven and 14, using a group-based mentoring model.
- Providers believe they do well with improving youth's decision-making skills and improving overall social interactions among youth.
- When considering ways youth could be engaged in program design, town hall participants said that young interns could co-facilitate sessions, programs could solicit feedback on the program from interns at the end of the school year, and interns could serve as peer mentors.
- Some of the greatest challenges that providers face in running mentoring programs include recruiting and retaining mentors, transportation for mentees, and securing meeting space. The kinds of support that providers said would be most helpful to overcome some of the challenges include help with fundraising, partnership development, mentor training, and developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

Respondents were asked to identify the type of setting in which their mentoring program was located. Among the programs represented, all of them were community-based programs.

ORGANIZATION TYPE	Frequency (n=26)
Community-based program	3
Elementary, middle or high school	0
Higher Education	0
Other	0

Three individuals responded to the question on whether their program has legal nonprofit status, and all of them have nonprofit status. Programs had been offering mentoring for an average of 3.3 years (n=3). Across the three respondents who shared the number of paid staff, the average paid staff size was 2.7. It is important to note, though, that two of the three respondents said their programs had no paid staff. Those two programs were fully staffed by team members who are unpaid. The average unpaid staff size was 2.7.

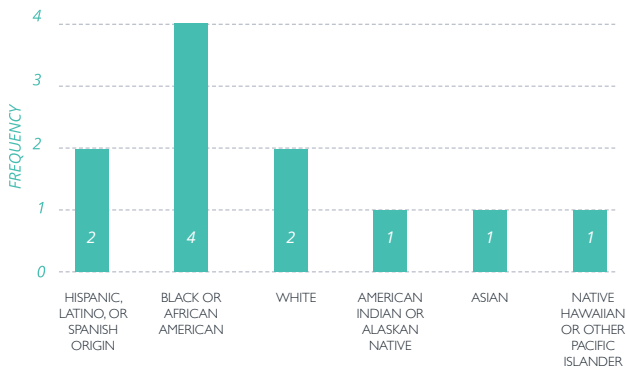
MENTORING APPROACHES

Survey respondents were asked about their programs' approach to mentoring so that Maryland MENTOR could better understand the populations being served, whether programs focus in specific neighborhoods or areas of the county, how mentoring is being delivered across Southern Maryland and whether any best practices are being incorporated.

POPULATIONS SERVED. None of the programs represented said they had a focus on a specific area within Southern Maryland. To help gauge who is being served through mentoring programs in Southern Maryland, survey respondents were also asked to share the racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups of youth in their programs. Frequencies of responses are displayed in the three following graphs. All of the respondents serve White youth and youth who are of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (n=2 for each). Regarding age groups, programs tend to serve youth between the ages of four and 14. When asked to select among females, males, transgender, and gender non-conforming to identify which gender groups programs serve, all said they serve both females and males.

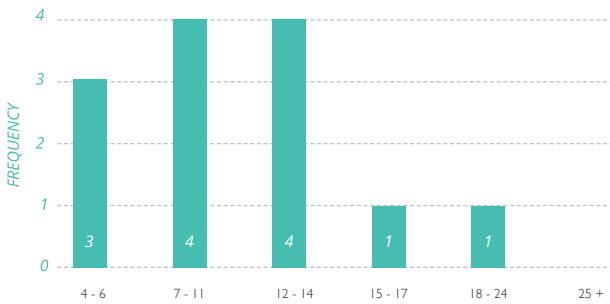
RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=4)



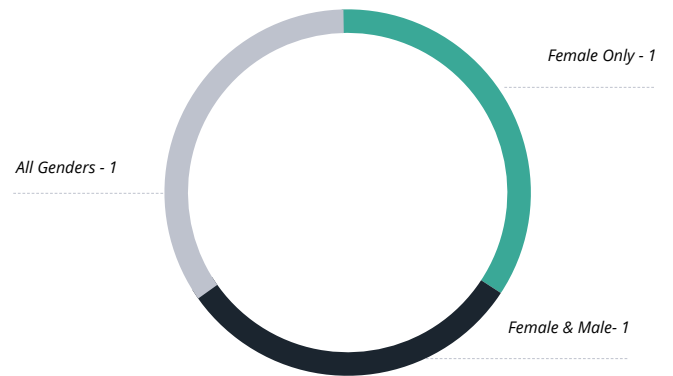
AGE OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=4)



GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=3)



MENTORING MODELS USED

Respondents were asked to select among the following models to describe their approach to mentoring:

One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee

- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team

The following table displays models used across respondents' programs. All of the programs use either a group (n=3) or one-to-one model (n=1) for mentoring youth.

MENTORING MODEL

Frequency (n=3)

One-to-one	1
Group	3
Hybrid	0
e-Mentoring	0
Peer mentoring	0
Team	0

PROGRAM CAPACITY

ASSETS. As participants engaged in dialogue about what their programs did well, they specifically referenced improving youth's decision-making skills, based on parents' feedback, and improving overall social interactions among youth. Town hall participants are able to use meeting space and received other in-kind donations from their local community. One respondent said that they benefit from advocacy support from their local management board.

GAPS. Since there is a small sample size for the survey (4 respondents), potential gaps in the populations being served by programs are not included. Participants did, however, identify program design and implementation gaps during the town hall discussion.

Some of the ways that providers suggested that youth could be engaged in program design are using young interns to co-facilitate sessions, receiving feedback from interns on their experience in the program at the end of the school year, and having interns serve as peer-to-peer mentors.

When thinking about the biggest challenges that providers face in running mentoring programs, recruiting and retaining mentors, transportation for mentees, and securing meeting space were highlighted. Not surprisingly, respondents also say that they could use additional support in those areas.

TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED

Frequency (n=26)

Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	1
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	2
Fundraising/grant writing	3
General program design	1
Integrating youth development principles	1
Parent/family engagement	2
Partnership development	3
Mentor training (including curriculum development)	2
Offering mentoring in a rural setting	1
Making mentor-mentee matches	1
Mentor recruitment	0

To provide insight into the ways that respondents had sought to strengthen their own mentoring programs' capacities, they were asked about their familiarity with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and any other resources that had been accessed for technical assistance. Two out of the four respondents were not familiar with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring at all, one was somewhat familiar, and one was very familiar. Considering resources or other intermediaries whose resource providers may have accessed, such as resources from MENTOR, the National Mentoring Resource Center, external consultants, or other resources, two said that they had not accessed any. One person had utilized resources from the Maryland Mentor Resource Center to strengthen their program capacity.

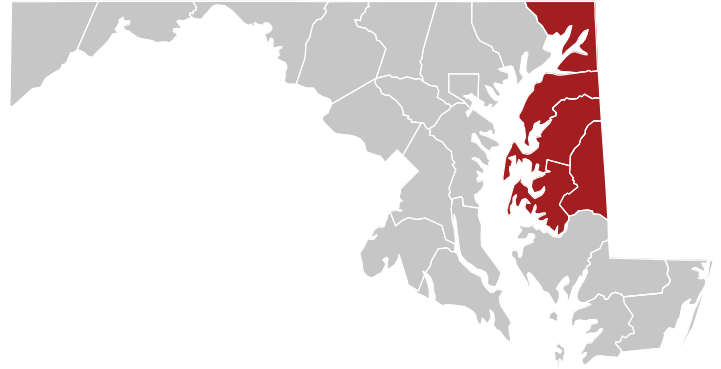
Town hall survey respondents were provided a list of various types of support that may help to strengthen their programs and asked to identify the four areas that they could benefit from the most. The table below presents the complete list of supports and the number of times each support was selected. When respondents selected more than four types of support, all were included in the table. The types of support that were identified most often by Southern Maryland town hall participants include fundraising (n=3), developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth, parent/family engagement, and mentor training (n=2 for each).



MARYLAND
MENTOR

UPHOLDING THE COVENANT:
THE STATE OF MENTORING IN MARYLAND 2018

EASTERN UPPER **SHORE PROFILE**



Maryland MENTOR hosted one town hall meeting in the Upper Eastern Shore area of Maryland to solicit individuals' feedback on what is going well with local mentoring, resources that could be useful to local programs, and the types of resources that mentoring programs are already accessing. Upper Eastern Shore included Kent, Queen Anne's, Caroline, and Talbot Counties. Participants engaged in small group discussions on their experiences providing or managing mentoring programs in or near the Upper Eastern Shore area and were asked to complete a survey at the end of the town hall. Information presented throughout this profile is based on those two data sources. This profile begins with some highlights, then provides a description of the types of organizations represented at the town hall meeting and a description of the mentoring approaches utilized across respondents. The profile concludes with a summary of program capacity, including gaps and assets identified through the survey and group discussions.

*Courtesy of Midlands
Mentoring Partnership*

PROFILE HIGHLIGHTS

- Mentoring tends to be offered through community-based, non-profit programs that have been offering mentoring for an average of 15 years.
- Female and male youth who are White, Black, and who are of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin and between the ages of four and 17 are served by the programs. None of the programs serve young adults who are 25 or older. Mentoring is usually provided to these groups using a one-to-one, group, or team mentoring model.
- Programs tend to do well with matching mentors and mentees, offering a variety of activities that provide exposure to youth, and group mentoring. Their local communities have helped with funding and staying connected to the school system.
- The providers desired to strengthen youth involvement in program design by inviting youth to join boards, holding focus groups to hear what they'd like to see in the programs, and ensuring that they are included in decision-making.
- The types of support that the Upper Eastern Shore programs said they need most are mentor training, mentor recruitment, and help with developing partnerships.

DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED

Respondents were asked to identify the type of setting in which their mentoring program was located. Among the programs represented, all except two were community-based programs. One respondent's program was based in an elementary, middle or high school.

ORGANIZATION TYPE

Frequency (n=9)

Community-based program	7
Elementary, middle or high school	1
Higher education	0
Other	1

Across all nine individuals who completed the survey, five of their programs had legal nonprofit status, and four did not. On average, the programs or organizations had been offering mentoring for 15 years, with program lengths ranging from zero to 36 years. Six of the town hall participants shared how many paid staff their programs have, and four shared the number of unpaid staff in their programs. Programs have an average of six paid and 1.5 unpaid staff.

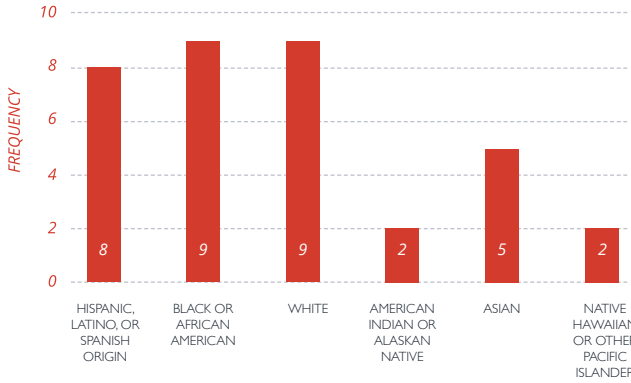
MENTORING APPROACHES

Survey respondents were also asked about their programs' approach to mentoring so that Maryland MENTOR could better understand the populations being served, whether programs focus in specific neighborhoods or areas of the county, how mentoring is being delivered across the Upper Eastern Shore and whether any best practices are being incorporated.

POPULATIONS SERVED. Two providers indicated that their programs have a specific focus on towns or cities within the region, such as Denton, Easton and Federalsburg. Survey respondents were also asked to identify the racial/ethnic, age, and gender groups served through their mentoring programs. Frequencies of responses are displayed in the three following graphs. All of the respondents serve youth who are Black or African American or White (n=9), and all except one serve youth who are of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. Slightly more than half of the respondents said their programs serve Asian youth. Programs serve a wide range of youth, from ages four to 17, with the majority of programs providing mentoring to youth between ages seven and 14. No programs served individuals 25 or older. Respondents were asked to select the genders they serve among the following categories: female, male, transgender, and gender-nonconforming. All of the programs serve either females and males (n=6) or all genders (n=3).

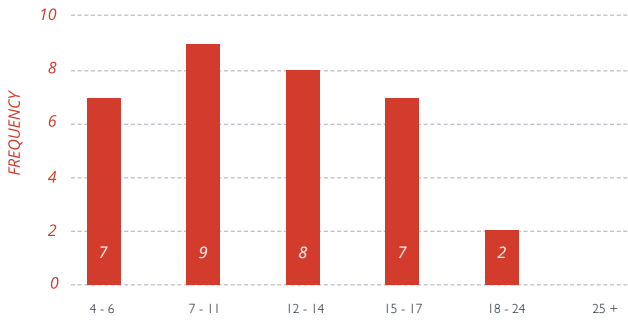
RACE & ETHNICITY OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=9)



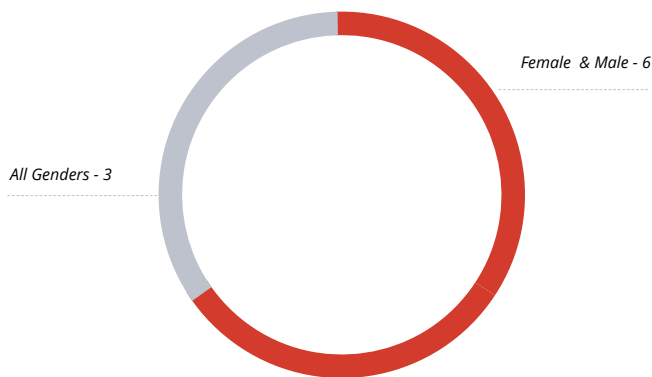
AGE OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=9)



GENDER OF POPULATION SERVED

(n=9)



MENTORING MODELS USED

Respondents were asked to select among the following models to describe their approach to mentoring:

- One-to-one: One mentor with one mentee
- Group: One or several mentors working with a group of mentees
- Hybrid: A mixture of group and one-to-one mentoring
- e-Mentoring: Virtual mentoring, phone or internet-based
- Peer mentoring: Individuals in similar age groups or with a shared experience mentoring one another
- Team: Coaches working with a sports team or some other type of team

The following table displays models used across respondents' programs.

MENTORING MODEL

Frequency (n=9)

One-to-one	6
Group	4
Hybrid	1
e-Mentoring	1
Peer mentoring	0
Team	4

Mentoring models used across the Upper Eastern Shore area programs represented here tend to use one-to-one, group, and team mentoring models. Hybrid and e-mentoring are used less frequently by the mentoring programs.

PROGRAM CAPACITY

ASSETS. According to town hall participants, programs tend to do well with matching mentors and mentees, offering a variety of activities that provide exposure to youth, and group mentoring. The discussion continued with examining the ways in which the surrounding community has been supportive. Town hall members said that their local communities provided funding, and the local school system was also supportive of programs. When town hall participants were asked to identify the “real” reason their programs exist, they said they exist to provide youth with support, meaningful relationships and new experiences. Some ways that the providers currently measure progress toward these goals include surveys, conversations with mentees, and journals composed by mentees.

GAPS. Because of the small sample size for the survey (9 respondents), potential gaps in the populations being served by programs are not included. However, during the town hall discussion, several program design and implementation gaps were raised.

Participants offered an extensive list of ways that they could better involve youth in program design. Inviting youth to join boards, holding focus groups with youth to hear what they would like to see in programs, and ensuring that they are included in decision-making were most commonly noted. Some of the biggest challenges to running mentoring programs offered by participants were recruiting mentors, building trust and establishing rapport with mentees, and operating within an organization that does not focus primarily on mentoring.

Town hall survey respondents were provided a list of various types of support that may help to strengthen their programs and asked to identify the four areas that they could benefit from the most. The table below presents the complete list of supports and the number of times each support was selected. Multiple respondents selected more than four types of support, and all were included in the table. The types of support that were identified most often include mentor training (n=7), mentor recruitment (n=6), and partnership development (n=5). Almost half of respondents also indicated needing support with developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth, fundraising, and parent/family engagement.

TYPES OF SUPPORT NEEDED

Frequency (n=9)


Cultural perspectives in service design and delivery	3
Developing meaningful activities for mentors and youth	4
Fundraising/grant writing	4
General program design	4
Integrating youth development principles	2
Parent/family engagement	4
Partnership development	5
Mentor training (including curriculum development)	7
Offering mentoring in a rural setting	3
Making mentor-mentee matches	3
Mentor recruitment	6

As the discussion shifted to exploring what providers needed to do more of that they already do well, most responses tended to focus on building mentors’ and staff capacity. While some participants mentioned that one way to do this could be to increase the number and quality of trainings offered, others felt that a vital component that has been missing is more direct support for mentors, such as offering them a safe space to decompress and recharge.

Through the survey, town hall attendees were also asked about their familiarity with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring and any other resources that they might have accessed to strengthen their own capacities. Nearly all respondents were either completely unfamiliar (3/9) or somewhat familiar (5/9) with Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring. One was very familiar. A few of the town hall participants had worked to strengthen their program’s capacity through the range of resources offered by The National Mentoring Partnership (MENTOR) (n=2), the National Mentoring Resource Center (n=2), or Big Brother Big Sister (n=1). Six participants had not accessed any outside resources for technical assistance.

FINDINGS SYNOPSIS





Across counties, mentoring providers described the populations they serve and highlighted several assets and challenges associated with running programs throughout the state of Maryland. Programs served a range of racial and ethnic and gender groups, with a focus often on black youth of all genders. Few programs tended to have a specific gender, racial or ethnic focus. Considering age groups being served, there appears to be a variety of programs primarily available for middle and high school-aged youth between the ages of 12 and 17. Though there are some areas of the state that had a tendency to serve younger youth, like the Lower and Upper Eastern Shores, and some with a tendency to serve older youth, like Montgomery County.

Providers' saw their surrounding communities as significant assets to programs. Residents of communities, local schools, and other public spaces, such as libraries and recreation centers often provided programs with financial and in-kind resources or, for schools, positive working relationships. When providers discussed challenges, there was a strong focus on human and financial resources. Programs have limited staff sizes, struggled with recruiting, training, and retaining mentors, and saw a need for greater financial support.

In the following section, recommendations that are informed by the findings recapped here and described throughout the report are provided.

RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS



MARYLAND
MENTOR



RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS

- Be a mentor. Your professional and personal life experiences could help to enrich the life a young person and help you to provide them with insight and support during important life transitions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARYLAND MENTOR

- Develop a resource guide for mentoring programs and organizations that includes mental health and other services throughout Maryland's counties so that mentoring programs can easily refer youth and/or their families to local services when issues of trauma or other personal challenges emerge.
- Facilitate a monthly community of practice for mentors and individuals who operate mentoring programs. Mentors could meet one month by phone or webinar to discuss their experiences with mentees and the programs, share insight on ways to engage youth, and inform one another about local activities or upcoming events that mentors could attend with mentees. On alternating months, program operators could join a call or webinar to discuss implementation and design challenges, highlight successes they have had with engaging mentors, youth, and/or their families; and share resources that could be helpful to the community of practitioners.

Develop a staged training approach that offers a series of sessions that are targeted toward programs that are new or developing and a series of sessions targeted toward programs that are mature. Topics may be of interest for both newer and more mature programs but might be primarily provided to one or the other.

Given that many of the programs seem to be fairly nascent, trainings that help them to build out infrastructure may be most beneficial. Topics may include gaining nonprofit or other organizational legal status, developing a strong mission, building out staff, financial management, and collecting program data. These newer programs may also be interested in learning about fundraising and grant-writing as well as strategies for recruiting mentors. Since they are in the planning or upstart phase, this would also be an ideal time to help providers consider ways to engage youth and their families in program design, as members of a youth/family advisory council or by providing feedback on the types of supports that the local community believes mentoring could bring. Some of the training content could be informed by lessons from other organizations who already apply a youth-centered approach to their work.

More mature programs may benefit from trainings that are focused on helping them to scale existing efforts and have long-term sustainability. Potential topics for this group of providers include mentor retention, ways to expand programs' reach to engage

younger and/or older youth and transgender and/or gender non-conforming youth. For programs that have an age-specific or gender-specific focus, they may want to consider ways that more youth within those groups could be reached, including new partnerships that could be formed to deepen programs' connections to specific populations.

- Develop curriculum for mentor training to include content on how mentors can best engage youth in the mentor-mentee relationship and on preparing them to engage with mentees' families in a way that is appropriate, given the relationship, and beneficial to youth's mentoring experiences. Training could also include skills for communicating with youth and suggested meaningful activities or experiences that mentors and mentees can explore together.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC & PRIVATE FUNDERS

- Engage in a local or regional mentoring funder collaborative. This group could be a combination of national funders that support local programming; those focused on specific cities or regions in Maryland, such as community foundations; and funders from public agencies. Potential areas of support could include building out staffing sizes, training for program staff on issues described in recommendation number three, and providing general operating support so that programs can, for example, pay for resources like transportation, support the costs of meeting space, and provide incentives to mentors to help address mentor retention.
- Recommend or refer past, current and potential mentoring grantees who may be suitable candidates for funding from your organization to Maryland MENTOR for no cost technical assistance and/or training for mentors and staff members.
- Work with Maryland MENTOR to identify mentoring programs throughout the state who could benefit from additional support and clarify the types of support that could be needed (e.g., general operating support for staff salaries, capacity building for mentor recruitment and training). Maryland MENTOR

could help to expand funder networks by brokering relationships between funders and mentoring providers.

- Encourage employees, including state and local government employees, to mentor regularly with community-based organizations. Incentivize mentoring by providing employees with paid time-off to volunteer with a local community-based organization as a mentor.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MENTORING PROGRAMS/ORGANIZATIONS

- Engage with Maryland MENTOR for no cost technical assistance, training and resources that could help to strengthen your program and build out your network.
- Subscribe to the Maryland MENTOR newsletter to stay abreast of offerings, such as webinars, that could help you connect with other programs and organizations and share knowledge and resources to identify areas for collaboration and support of one another, i.e. fundraising, mentor recruitment, field trips, and other topics.
- Become a Maryland MENTOR Quality Program Partner and commit to continuously improving your program offerings. Young people will benefit from your high-quality programs.

RECOMMENDATION FOR EDUCATION SYSTEMS

- As a frequently mentioned partner to mentoring program throughout the state, schools could help Maryland MENTOR to better understand and support school-based mentoring programs. Local school systems could work with Maryland MENTOR to conduct a system wide inventory of all current school-based mentoring programming and its operations and identify opportunities for existing school-based programs to be strengthened and/or expanded within one school or across multiple schools.

RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CORPORATE COMMUNITY

- Work with Maryland MENTOR to engage your staffs in ongoing and long-term volunteer

NEXT STEPS

The findings and recommendations included in this report are being used immediately by Maryland MENTOR to inform their strategic planning process. This process will be undertaken in partnership with the organization's Board of Directors and community partners. Since providers raised multiple issues that could be addressed via training, Maryland MENTOR will be developing and implementing a targeted training plan to build upon assets and help to address challenges that were shared.

To help expand the reach of Maryland MENTOR's existing resources, the organization will be increasing marketing of: its no-cost mentoring program consulting offerings that are based on the fourth edition of the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring; in-person and web-based trainings in partnership with the Maryland Mentoring Resource Center at the Y of Central Maryland; and The Mentoring Connector, a national searchable database to connect youth in search of a mentor with volunteer mentors and mentoring programs.

Maryland MENTOR will also be offering two new resources. One is the Quality Program Partner Initiative to incentivize programs to continuously improve and make it easier for funders to navigate the mentoring field. Second, it will begin work to create Regional Mentoring Coalitions. These coalitions will function as regional communities of practice where stakeholders can connect with one another to learn about each other's work, share tools and tips, and learn about available resources.

CONCLUSION

Maryland MENTOR endeavored to better understand the current state of mentoring practice in Maryland by conducting 15 town hall meetings with nearly 200 providers, totaling roughly 30 hours of discussion time. This report is Maryland MENTOR's effort to reflect back to you, the mentoring community and its supporters what the organization heard. It is clear that many programs across Maryland are working diligently to create lasting connections that contribute to the overall wellbeing and success of youth and are often doing so with limited resources. In future efforts, mentoring programs and Maryland MENTOR would benefit from understanding youth's perspectives of mentoring and their experiences with programs. This could help shape programmatic offerings as well as the types of support that stakeholders provide to the mentoring community.



MARYLAND
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“THE ULTIMATE
TEST
OF YOUR
CHARACTER
IS HOW SECURE
YOU FEEL
IN HELPING
OTHERS
SUCCEED
AND **COME UP**
HIGHER.”

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