



[00:00:04.340] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

All right. Hello, everybody. Thanks for coming to join us today. My name is Renee Angelo-Mauk. You are joining [MENTOR Maryland | DC](#) today for our workshop on inclusive mentoring for youth with disabilities. It is Disability Inclusion Month, which is why we felt it was so important to address this topic today. So we appreciate you joining us. And if you are not familiar with MENTOR Maryland | DC, we are one of the regional affiliates of the [National Mentoring Partnership](#). There are about 25-26 regional affiliates of the National Mentoring Partnership. And our goal, and every affiliate's goal, is to galvanize the mentoring movement and increase the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships across the country and close the mentoring gap and ensure that every young person has enough caring and supportive adults in their life. And the most recent research that Mentor National had done, a report that came out in January, which I'll make sure that you have in our follow up to this presentation, has shown that young people need more than one mentor in their life. They need multiple. So we know now, as far as our work, is to ensure that they have not only one mentor, not only one caring adult outside of their parents and internal family members, but multiple over the course of their lives.

[00:01:25.350] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So one of the things we want to do is to convene you guys, convene our program partners, and ensure that young people know that they can be connected to multiple programs in their communities and know what is available. One of the things we do is connect you with the National Mentoring Partnership, who produce resources like the one we'll be reviewing today, who reduce bodies of research for which you can base your programs off of evidence-based practices. So that's something that we take pride in doing, is getting that information to you so you can make sure your programs are of the best quality possible. And of course, we have our free, no cost [technical assistance via the National Mentoring Resource Center](#). We have a cadre of expert consultants of which you can apply for technical assistance and get your requests referred to them or to myself or to one of my colleagues, of which we'll work with you one on one for a certain number of hours based on your request. So whether you need help with mentor recruitment, with policies and procedures, with finding board members, whatever that might be, the whole scope, we will spend time with you on that project.

[00:02:36.940] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And we're coming up on the end of that fiscal year. That fiscal year will end or we'll stop that work in the middle of September, and the fiscal year ends September 30. So now is the time. Summer! Of course, we start that work right again October 1. But if you have time this summer to put in a request, we are happy to get that work started for you. Access to the mentoring connector. And we have an event coming up about that, so we'll talk a little bit more about that later. Training and professional development like this, the elements of effective practice and promoting mentoring best practices, which is of course what this training is about today. So we're excited about that. Access to the [National Quality Mentoring System](#). This is something that you can work on through technical assistance. National Quality Mentoring System is a standardized national system of which you can kind of audit your program and work on a program



improvement plan. This is a stamp of approval that you can earn for national recognition about your quality standards and you can continue to grow and grow within the National Quality Mentoring System. We're actually updating these standards soon so that will be forthcoming in the next fiscal year for the National Mentoring Resource Center.

[00:03:46.310] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So that is cool. New information that is coming out. So that is exciting. If you've already gone through it, there'll be new standards soon or updated standards. Connection to funding opportunities. When we say we want to make sure that you have everything to do your work, that includes things like funds. So be sure you're subscribed to our [newsletter](#), which is where we will quickly share out those things. But be sure that you are in touch with us because we want to make sure you guys have that information. And for people who are trying to set a program, we want to be in conversation with you and to help grassroots programs get started. So one of the many things that we do, if you have a question about mentoring or youth development, we aim to be the regional point of contact for that.

[00:04:29.680] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Webinar Logistics we're here, we're online. We are happy to be able to offer our services online so we can reach as many people as possible across the state. As we see, so many people are online here with us today. So again, we appreciate your space and grace in the virtual environment. Please interact as is comfortable and works best for you. But we do want to engage in a conversation today, particularly around this topic and about what's going on at your program. So we have many reaction buttons for you to interact with. Please raise your hand. Feel free to keep the chat lively. My colleague Andre is on with me today, so he will bring up anything that I miss in the chat. But I do have the chat open, so I will try not to miss any comments. You can send a message to everyone or if you need to troubleshoot, you can send a message to me. Or again, my colleague Andre Forrester is online. Just a note about our community standards. If you've been on webinars with us or at events with us, these are something that we hold for every space that we create.

[00:05:35.790] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And this is just about our goal of any training or gathering that we hold is to create community wherever we can. And we believe that community is a cure in the foundation of learning, being seen, being heard and being understood. And we know that this is what our youth crave from us, of course. So our community is open to all, but we acknowledge the deep seated racism, sexism, homo and trans-phobia, misogyny and ableism that is pervasive in our country. So we stand against these isms and actively work to this aim, especially with our youth. And this means that we must acknowledge that we approach our work differently and beautifully. We hope you will share openly and listen more openly. I always want programs to know that I'm not here to judge what your program may have done or where you're coming from before. This is about learning and getting these best practices and knowledge now. And I'm really happy for everybody who is here that you are here and want to learn about these things. So, yeah, please



share openly and let's have this conversation and I appreciate you being here for the conversation. Be generous and be your positive assumptions and don't be afraid to ask genuine questions.

[00:06:45.360] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And no matter your role here today, be a host. And if you move to a breakout room, you tend to be a host. It's just two of my colleagues here today, but we all want to have the ability for everybody to feel great and we want to approach each other with openness and warmth. We want this to be a community and fun learning experience that's supportive and educational, but we'd like to have fun. So please bring your full and present self as much as you can. And we want to say no fixing, saving, advising or correcting each other. This is taken directly from one of our favorite tools, the Touchstone for developing Trust framework. And it's somewhat self explanatory, but if you feel the need to deliver feedback to someone, we ask that you listen first and also ask for permission. So we appreciate you listening. And in the spirit of transparency, we want you to know that if myself or my colleague or if anyone else from Mentor Maryland DC, he comes on, if you feel there's a violation of these standards, we reserve the right to remove anybody who's violating our standards or to follow up with them to find resolution. If you feel as though the standards are being violated, please reach out to myself or Andre who are on this call or reach out to the Mentor, Maryland DC team afterwards. And we will be following up accordingly.

[00:08:04.990] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So, before we jump into our agenda, just who am I your presenter today? Just a little background about me, so you have some context about why I have any validity to talk about this topic. And I also want to just like to bring up these ideas because I also want to point out that nobody comes into this work without a lens, without personal bias and things like that. I think it's important to acknowledge those things up front. My only work experience is in nonprofit and youth development, so I do hope to bring that credibility to you all. I've been working in mentoring specifically for the past ten years and living in Baltimore for that time as well. I have service experience with the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps as far as my identity factors, I am a third generation Italian American. I am a gender non conforming woman and my pronouns are she, they. I am a queer person in a hetero marriage. And speaking of disabilities, I am a disabled person. I have unapparent and dynamic disabilities, which we'll kind of define later on. And I am also neurodiverse. I have disabilities that fall under the neurodiversity umbrella.

[00:09:20.750] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So we're going to jump right into our no, we're not going to jump right into our actually, no, we are going to jump into our agenda, and then we'll do a quick poll. So I don't know why the word agenda is missing. Well, up here it says agenda. So we're first going to get into what is the context for disabled young people in the mentoring space? What does it look like right now? What do their experiences look like right now? That there needs to be this whole separate supplement as far as we're talking about best practices and what are the key concepts that we all need to have a shared understanding of before we jump into talking about what? We need to do. We're then going to talk about the initial investment. We need to make,



programs need to make inclusive practices before we can even really get started. We'll then talk about program planning, leadership, and operations. Those first things, again, we need to do before we get into the EEP, the standards of mentoring practice. So if you recall the EEP (Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring), that's the standards which are recruitment, screening, training, matching, and closure. Then we'll get into a discussion about bounce experience and how we think we'll be able to take this back to our work.

[00:10:30.030] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So now I'm going to launch a poll. Am I going to launch a poll? There's a button. Okay, so this poll is asking you. How many youth disabilities does your program service? So does your program exclusively serve youth with disabilities? Is it less than 5%, maybe 10%, maybe 15% to 20% or 25% or more, approximate? Now, if you don't know for sure and Andre, I think, is probably going to show you how many people have participated. So let me know when we have a majority of participation. If you can take a moment to again, we can kind of get a landscape of what it's looking right now at your programs, and then we'll talk about the kind of landscape across the USA.

[00:11:59.630] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

All right, what's our response rate looking like, Andre? Can you see that?

[00:12:12.160] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

All types of disabilities, Christopher.

[00:12:21.540] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Cool all right, I'm going to end our poll and share the result.

[00:12:29.600] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Okay. So we have I don't know. Why isn't this showing on my screen? I see it on my phone. Maybe one program that uses disabilities, about. A quarter, you do a little bit. More, are less than 5%, 41%, saying. Around 10%, 15, 20%. Abuse population is around 7% and 17% are saying 25% or more. So it kind of spread there. And probably the bulk are around 5% to 10%. That's almost 70%. So yeah, there is kind of a spread. And for the program that exclusively services youth with disabilities, can you name your program in the chat? That would be helpful out of curiosity. We won't go over them today, but there are specifics in this resource and we're talking about the Inclusive Mentoring for Youth with Disabilities supplement, the Element of Effective Practice resource. There are chapters that are just for programs who exclusively mentor for youth with disabilities. So know that those Blips of chapters are in this resource for-

[00:13:56.140] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Oh, and there's two programs

[00:13:59.980] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Yes, Victoria, there is.

[00:14:03.860] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So if you can actually drop the inclusivity resources Andre, that we're talking about today. So we're talking about the supplement for the EEP. So the Element of Effective Practice has these benchmarks that I was talking about, the benchmarks for recruitment, screening, training, matching, supporting relationships and closure. The best practices for programs. These supplements talk about kind of niche areas should there's a supplement regarding E mentoring, a supplement regarding group mentoring, workplace mentoring. So today we're talking about the Supplement for Inclusive Mentoring for Youth with Disabilities, the programs for exclusively serving disabilities

[00:14:41.840] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

The programs that are exclusively serving youth with disabilities are the Next Generation's College programs. And she is working in a special ed class as a paraeducator.

[00:14:49.410] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Wonderful.

[00:14:50.340] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Okay, great. And thank you for dropping those in the chat, Andre.

[00:14:55.680] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Wonderful, great.

[00:14:58.000] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So we're going to jump right into the context of what it's like for youth with disabilities in America. This resource is really geared towards programs in the USA. It's where a lot of the data comes from. Everyone here is from the USA, so know that's where our data and information is coming from today.

[00:15:21.560] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



So there are more than 3 million young people in America who are living with a disability that's 4.3% of all young people under the age of 18 living with a disability. And these are all areas um-

[00:15:36.380] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Hold on.

[00:15:45.100] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Okay, so we're talking about 3 million young people who are living with a disability. That's a lot as you saw in how I described this training and in our marketing. Mentoring providers have an ethical imperative to meet the unique needs of youth with disabilities and we want to ensure that their mentoring experience is both equitable and high quality. One of the other areas where there's an ethical imperative to ensure the unique needs of youth with disabilities. School. Right?

[00:16:11.430] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

She was talking about special education, working in a special education classroom, we believe. And the people who worked on this supplement who were mentor national, of course, our research director at Mentor National and Partners for Youth with Disabilities, which is a national organization in their name, Partners with Youth with Disabilities. They are kind of the experts on youth development and youth development specifically as it applies with youth with disabilities. So they know about how they work together to see how we can make this adaptation so we can adapt mentoring programs to work with youth with disabilities. What we do know is that mentoring research literature suggests that mentoring relationships, both in and out of mentoring programs can have a really positive impact on the lives of youth with disabilities, period.

[00:17:01.640] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And there is lots and lots of literature that says that, which is wonderful. It means mentoring programs work and have lots of positive impacts. But the reality is that it can be challenging for youth in mentoring programs, for disabled youth in mentoring programs to persist in matches to last the intended duration, right? We want young people to be in their mentoring relationships and to be in your programs for as long as possible. But there are more often than not. A lot of barriers that can affect participation. And our aim is that we are helping to remove those barriers and that the frequency and duration and richness for our disabled youth and their experience in the program is as rich as any other youth in the program. So that's what we're talking about when we're talking about defining inclusive mentoring and the recommendations we're going to talk about today. I'm missing one more.

[00:17:58.440] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So, when we look at this research by the National Mentoring Resource Center about the evidence of what mentoring can do for youth with disabilities, these are all areas that a mentor, that having a mentor as well



can help improve. So again, the possibilities are here about what a mentor can do for a young person with a disability. But again, we know that there will be barriers once a disabled young person gets into a mentoring program. And so we want to address those here. This is a supplement with directives for you all and how we can reduce those barriers and a next step for us. We also want to be mindful that one in four American adults report having a disability. So we want to keep that in mind as we are recruiting mentors, recruiting staff, thinking about our program parents. This resource will also provide insights that can help those groups feel welcomed into your program as well. So we're not just talking about our young people here.

[00:19:02.220] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So we're going to talk about, again, get into our key concepts so we have a kind of shared understanding of language and ideas before we jump into what actions we're going to take.

[00:19:14.320] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So, the [American Disabilities Act](#). This was a pivotal moment for those with disabilities. Passed in 1990, this law is meant to protect against discrimination, ensure equal access, and guarantee reasonable accommodations in the workplace for disabled people. So each year in July, the disability community hosts celebrations to reflect on the importance of this law and also consider the work left to do to ensure equal rights for people with disabilities. So it's not random that July is disability inclusion month.

[00:19:46.800] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So this is the ADA definition of disability. And since we're talking about school age youth, it's also worth noting that in the USA, 6.7 million young people age three to 21 receive special education services. So again, that's a lot of young people. And also remember that disability status is fluid. Always say like disability can happen to you. Not to be scary, but I mean, this is an identity that can change, it can be dynamic. So thinking about there's about 10 million people who are now dealing with long COVID systems that have become legally disabled and may not even realize their right or status under the ADA now.

[00:20:32.000] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So these subcategories of disability that some of which I mentioned earlier, there's visible disabilities, a disability that you could likely see, is there a limb difference or something that is literally apparent to the eye? A non apparent disability, something that may have previously been referred to as the invisible illness that you just literally might not have any idea about unless somebody told you about a dynamic disability. So this might be a disability that has flares where somebody feels worse or it comes on and it's not they feel the same or it's impacting their every second of every day that I have a disability like that. Intellectual disabilities. So things like learning disabilities, mental health conditions, I don't know why there's a slash there. And learning disabilities. So when we talk about your young people, school age



young people, young people being served by special education, learning disabilities would fall under there.

[00:21:38.260] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

I think I hear a puppy knocking on my door.

[00:21:40.800] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Accommodations. So, accommodations, modifications or adjustments that enable an equitable experience for an individual with a disability. So, reasonable accommodations are required by employers and should never be considered special treatment. There's a myth that this idea that accommodations are very expensive when the data says the majority of the time accommodations are free or extremely low resource, are extremely low cost. A great resource to check out accommodations is the Job Accommodations Network or JAN AskJAN.org where you can look, I mean you can literally askjan and there's trainings that you can attend there and webcast about the topic if you're considering how can I provide accommodations and things for my employees that I know need them. Or maybe you have a disability and you're like, what accommodations can I even ask for if you never asked for an accommodation before? It is a really great website and something that anybody with HR experience is probably familiar with. But a lot of us that small nonprofits don't have a full HR background. So things like that.

[00:22:54.670] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Victoria is changing her answer because right, she knows a lot of her kids are on IEPs. So again, as we kind of spread our awareness about what we know disabilities to be, we may realize that a lot of people fall under disabilities but don't necessarily relate to the disability identity, right?

[00:23:12.560] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Great point. Disability etiquette.

[00:23:16.460] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So the guidelines for respectful and inclusive ways to communicate with and about people with disabilities. This guide, of course, is for us to understand that I would say disability etiquette is like the floor of what we're doing, and we're going to go much beyond that about what we're going to achieve for the young people and other people may be incorporating into our program.

[00:23:41.080] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So I want to talk about, and this is covered in supplement as well, the social model of disability versus the medical model. So mentoring programs of course, are encouraging you to understand the social model of



disability. The social model of disability contrasts the medical model of disability, which views disability as an impairment in itself, something wrong with a person that can be identified and labeled or in some cases, cured. Moving away from this concept, we have the social model of disability which asserts that disability arises as a product of a person's social and physical environment. Disability is not something inherent to a person, but rather arises in relation to the environment that they are in and the extent to which that environment is enabling or disabling.

[00:24:25.820] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So we want programs to think of this social model because we want to be, when a young person gets to our program, be enabling right, enabling their participation, rather than a program that is putting up barriers, physical barriers, attitudinal barriers, information, communication barriers. We want to be reducing as many of these barriers as possible once a young person gets to our program. And that's why we want you guys to have an understanding about this social model of disability. Any questions about this idea?

[00:25:02.720] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Cool.

[00:25:09.680] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Universal design, which I know is a concept that a lot of people are familiar with because it applies beyond disability as well. But it's a design and composition of an environment so that it could be accessed, understood, used to the greatest extent possible by all people, regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. There's lots of examples of universal design. Closed captioning is a very common one because it's something that a lot of us access all the time, whether we have a disability or not. How this may apply to you all is this idea of universal design for learning, which is a framework developed by a disability organization called [CAST](#), which is to improve learning by leveraging research about how people learn. So universal design for learning's goal is to minimize the need for individualized accommodations and modifications by teaching and designing curriculum or programs in a way that reaches the widest range of students possible. So in the mentoring context, this applies to how your program is providing mentees flexibility in reaching their goals, methods and assessment options. So it's this idea again of how do we make our program wide reaching, how do we make our goals flexible and how we reach the goals. So again, how we make our program accessible in kind of every sense of the word.

[00:26:33.640] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Intersectionality. Another concept that I am very sure that many of you have heard before, but this is a key concept because disability is experienced by everyone, all races, ethnicities classes, gender, sexual orientation, et cetera. It is common that youth disabilities must navigate complex and overlapping systems



of oppression and barriers. And we also find that certain marginalized groups are overrepresented in the disabled population. So again talking about overlapping systems of oppression and barriers. So, really important to consider intersectionality as we start to talk about things like ableism, the discrimination and bias against disabled people and the way society is structured to favor abled people, able bodied people. So of course this is based on the belief that typical abilities are superior and rooted in the false narrative that people with disabilities cannot contribute or should be fixed.

[00:27:33.710] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So ableism can be seen everywhere in our environment from an impossible buildings to the lack of curb cuts and sidewalks. Ableism can be found in our language, policies and interactions. And again, since disability intersects every culture and race and racialized ableism, the intersectional discrimination based on racism and ableism is also an important concept. So again, we can't be talking about ableism without also talking about intersectionality.

[00:28:07.480] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then that naturally brings us right to internalized ableism. So our society subtly and not so subtly is biased in favor of able bodied and neurotypical people. So we have internalized ableism, disabled people viewing themselves in relation to others through the layers of systemic oppression. And how we relate this back to this idea of mentoring. A mentor could potentially help a young person identify and disrupt internalized ableism, right? This is when it's helpful to have somebody who is outside of you and has unconditional positive regard for you that can again disrupt this kind of narrative for you. Disability pride taking pride in one's whole self, including the disability. So again, another great opportunity for having a mentor who can help reinforce disability pride. Ensuring the mentee learns about disability history is introduced to successful individuals with disabilities. Which brings us also to the idea of a credible mentor. We've talked about credible messengers with other Identities, but as we're talking about young. People with disabilities, a credible mentor is just a mentor with a life experience similar to the mentee. So if we're talking about a disabled young person that might be a mentor with a disability as well, a credible messenger can be a powerful tool for a young person within the context of a mentoring program.

[00:29:39.220] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then self determination, which is a concept you're going to hear referred back to a lot throughout today. And this is a really important concept as it relates to youth disability. So self determination acting is going to sound kind of like a highfalutin concept in the definition, but really we're talking about the idea of a young person making their own choices and decisions for their own life, basically. And young people with disabilities often have lower levels of self determination and that may be for a lot of reasons, right, because health and other decisions were made, strategically made for them at a very young age by other people for their own safety, for their own well being. And as a result they have less self determination over time, right? They have often higher levels of parental involvement, so they have lower level opportunities to make choices.

[00:30:35.740] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So the idea here is that the young person, we want them to feel in charge and capable of steering the course of their own life and achievements. And we can imagine how a mentor can be really pivotal in helping build a young person's self determination. So again, you'll hear me talk about self determination a lot today and how a mentoring program can be really vital for a disabled person's self determination.

[00:31:07.120] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And lastly, as it relates to key concepts, I want to talk about person first and identity first language. And you've probably already heard me use both of these. So person first language is literally person first, person with a disability, person who is blind versus identity first, a disabled person, an autistic person. The reality is it's preference based. Both of these are considered correct in the disability community. Some people prefer person first, other people prefer an identity first. For me as a disabled person, I prefer identity first when talking about myself. Today, since we're talking about the Grand We, I'll use both as referring to disabled young people and mentors and other people with disabilities. But if you are in relationship with a disabled person, ask what kind of language they prefer. That's really just kind of a matter of fact.

[00:32:11.540] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Other forms of language not listed here we want to avoid. We want to avoid language that's condescending, euphemistic, belittling. Obviously I've had people ask me about what's appropriate for young people. Teachers are typically trained to use person first language. Especially young people are developing their identity. So to me that kind of makes sense developmentally as to why they would use person first language. Totally understandable. If you're setting a standard for your program about how you will speak about young people in the Grand We, I think that totally makes sense and it's up to you. But again, if you're talking about a specific young person or person that you're going to have in a relationship with, you can ask that. Disability etiquette is to ask someone what language they prefer.

[00:33:05.080] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Any questions about any of the concepts or language that we've talked about so far before we move into the next part of our agenda?

[00:33:21.350] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Great.

[00:33:23.750] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Miss anything on the chat?

[00:33:25.830] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Cool. So we're not getting into this proactive investment in inclusivity. And the advice and practices of this resources are help you all assess and improve the inclusivity of your services. And the one factor that will determine above all else how successful you will be in this effort is the commitment of your staff to take on the task at hand, because it involves work and then things to do, right? The experience of the researchers who wrote the supplement programs that improve the mentoring experience for youth with disabilities the most are those whose staff members commit to learning more, reflecting on their work and putting in the effort to make the changes in both the short and long term period. It's just kind of like that.

[00:34:16.730] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So truly to say that truly analyzing and changing practices and policies that may be excluding participants with disabilities can be both humbling and difficult. Which is why I want to remind that we're not here to judge anything that happened before we got here. And this is not a one and done where a small effort can make things perfect. This work is hard. Being an inclusive mentoring program will take efforts and resources and vigilance. And the best thing that you all can do to get this work started is to truly commit to the effort and adopt a mindset of continuous improvement. So starting with this kind of proactive investment mindset, so being intentional about the invitations to people with disabilities and that commitment to that outreach and these individuals may end up bringing connections to important organizations that support those with disabilities, making your network stronger. They may offer important feedback on how you can make your program better for youth and adults with disabilities. And that's exactly who you want your feedback from, people with disabilities directly from your target, emphasizing representation for those disabilities. Representation matters, period. And we're talking about representation at all levels of the organization staff, mentors, the board, leadership. This representation of course needs to also refer to the media your organization pours out. If a young person or a mentor cannot literally see themselves in your program. Then they won't feel welcome or see a place for themselves in your program. So literal media and representation there matters

[00:36:00.010] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Learning, especially for our leaders who may be on the call with us today leaders need to model the importance of continuous learning and prioritize it. Organizationally disability often gets overlooked in the dei conversation, in the social justice conversation, in the marginalized communities conversation. Simply taking the step to learn more is that proactive investment. And one of the opportunities to learn more is with the partner I mentioned earlier who helped write the supplement. The partners for what am I saying? PYD Partners for Youth with Disabilities. [PYD.org](https://www.pyd.org).

[00:36:37.750] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



Twice a year they put on a cohort to get certified in disability inclusive mentoring. We will announce it here at mentor when they do and Mentor National will announce it as well. They'll do an informational webinar so you can learn about the cohort. It is a really engaged online where there's some meetings and there's some coursework to do in their LMS learning management system, to do an organizational assessment, to see where you are to learn about all of these things in a model and to talk with your Cohort about what it really looks like and how to live it out. So it is a really great opportunities again learning from the best in the business. So this again is the best kind of next learning opportunity and commitment that you can really show that you're interested in learning and that you are interested in really committing, investing in inclusivity.

[00:37:43.610] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

The supplement has a great reading list in supplement to have a reading list and a watch list and a tools list. I want to pull two from that list that I've actually read. So this is now my personal recommendations that are also from the supplements recommendations. Demystifying Disability what to know, what to say and how to be an ally as it goes back to what we were saying about disability etiquette. This is like a great disability etiquette guide basically that answers any awkward questions that you may have ever wanted to ask. Like how do we talk about people in wheelchairs? How do we refer to people in wheelchairs and things like that. Like all kinds of questions that you may have asked that really kind of fall under that disability etiquette. It is a really great book and I feel really answers that question.

[00:38:33.160] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So I feel like it's not like so super long if that may be something you want to share with the rest of your team. Really great book. The Disability Visibility Project is a collection of first person stories, as the title suggests, from people with all different kinds of disabilities, all different kinds of experiences. It's incredible. Totally blew my mind. I really don't know how else to describe it, but you will be blown away shocked. And I just think it's something that so many people I listened to it and I thought it was great. Yeah, I think it's something that so many people need to hear. It's just one of the things we realize how little we hear the stories of disabled people because if people knew these people's stories, people would be taking action and talking about these things way more often.

[00:39:31.230] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

From this proactive investment to we're now talking about program planning, leadership and operations. Any questions so far? Cool. We will take a beat after program planning after this section to discuss as a group, but let's keep it moving. 315.

[00:39:59.280] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Okay, so where are we starting?

[00:40:02.960] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Our initial steps made our investment. We're like, we're trying, we're committed, we're going to do it. We've got the mindset. Now what do we do? We have to get buy in from our leaders, of course. If your leaders aren't here on this call, we need to figure out how we can get them, how we can get them engaged from what you're going to learn here today, from what you've learned in general. But leadership buy ins are necessary, and this work may require considerable training, considerable changes in policy and practice, and budgetary considerations. That's the reality of real inclusivity. So for those who aren't leaders, again, be thinking about how you're going to be able to share out what you're learning today, what's in the supplement, that you want to get to the people who have the power to change those things at your organization, because their buy in is absolutely essential for real organizational inclusivity.

[00:41:13.690] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Assess your current organizational climate around disability. To get started, we have to benchmark where our inclusion practices stand. PYD Partners for Youth with Disabilities, I remember now has a free organizational assessment tool at learn.pyd.org you can drop it in the chat. Andre, that's a free organizational assessment you can kind of see right, where are you kind of at, and the categories to reflect on include measuring or organizational accessibility, creativity, flexibility, communication, promotion of social skills, policies, and human resources. Questions involving creativity and flexibility may include do our staff and volunteers have the skills and commitment to adapt program activities, games and sports to offer right activities to engage all participants, things like that. So really see what's going on around here, how are we doing that? We can see where we're starting and where we need to go so we. Can take that first step.

[00:42:20.260] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then we also want to establish a baseline of how many young people with disabilities are here. Victoria changed her number. We might not even know. So in order to measure our progress, we want to intentionally be able to track how many mentees and mentors' disabilities are in our program. It's also, of course, important to note that disabled young people may or may not disclose their status. So it's likely that you are already serving more youth with disabilities than you may or may not be aware of. As your inclusion practices improve, an additional benefit is that individuals will feel comfortable disclosing their disability and then similarly, including disability as part of staff and board demographic surveys is important for establishing a baseline for your program to work to proactively, hire staff, recruit board members' disabilities, and measure progress. So you have to see where we're starting. And again, as you build practices and becomes a more inclusive praise, likely voluntary disclosure will go up, which again will just help you be able to a for those young people or mentors to ask for the accommodations that they do need and for you to be able to have the resources, ability and know how to offer them, which is a win win.

[00:43:36.860] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So first we're going to talk about policy and infrastructure self review, what we want to do there first, and we want to examine and revise program policies and to support inclusive practices. So developing a public inclusion statement, which to be clear, is different than an anti discrimination statement. I kind of want to make the point here that an anti discrimination statement, right, is like the floor. Obviously young people aren't coming to our programs to be discriminated against. So an inclusion statement proactively communicates your organization's commitment to inclusion, reflecting the values and practices within your organization. And there are examples in the supplement as well when you review it.

[00:44:20.570] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Examining and revising your policies around hiring staff and managing volunteers. So consider how your policies may impact individual disabilities. Is your hiring process accessible to individuals with disabilities? Are the websites where you post your applications accessible to individuals who use screen readers or other assisted technologies? These are things we have to think about when we think about true accessibility.

[00:44:42.090] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then of course, strengthening policies related to bullying and harassment. Ensure that your anti bullying and harassment policies include disability explicitly. Many assume that disability is included in these policies by default, but there is value in naming it specifically so those with disability can feel protected. So again, this is that self review, evaluating, making it explicit that we're protecting young people with disabilities, just like we mentioned other groups during disabilities race, class, gender, sexuality, et cetera.

[00:45:19.900] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So next, for policy and infrastructure, examining and ensuring physical accessibilities. So of course, physical accessibility is foundational but often overlooked.

[00:45:33.600] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

We're talking about- no there we go- wherever we are, where offices are, where we host young people, where we're having events, any places that we are promoting as our mentoring program. This is actually harder than it seems. And Andre, if you can drop the tool for planning accessible events. Once you start really thinking about this, you will notice inaccessibility everywhere.

[00:46:11.620] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

I went to go vote last year. During the last election and the place I went to go vote at was actually quite inaccessible. Which to be clear, all voting locations are supposed to be accessible by law. So it's not



actually that great out there as far as accessibility, even for times and legal times where it's supposed to be explicitly accessible, like voting and elections and things like that. So when you again, this original investment, having this mindset, when you have this mindset and lens, when you're thinking about physical accessibility with every time you're planning an event or you're really looking at your program space and things like that, you will notice more and more in accessibility. I promise you will.

[00:47:06.640] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So we dropped in here an event planning guide as far as accessibility, which again, once you review that as well, we had that toolkit, we gave you that lens that will be really important and help you in this kind of self review process.

[00:47:23.140] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

We also want to mention here, as a lot of programs are doing hybrid and online things, we want to talk about the online space and how to make sure that the work that we do online is accessible as well.

[00:47:36.350] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So want to make sure that your website benchmark your website against the Web Content Accessibility Guideline standards. If you can drop that in the chat as well. Andre, this is what I'm referring to earlier about individuals using screen readers and other accessibility tools to read websites and things like that. This ensures that your website is readable and able to be used by those using assistive technology to get online. So this is all accessible online for you to get the accessibility of the Accessibility Guidelines and for you to make sure that your website essentially works for a whole population and that your information is accessible. And this will benefit you in a lot of ways. I mean, reaching the population, recruiting young people, recruiting mentors, recruiting board members, recruiting donors. This can open up your program to a whole population who may not be able to even reach your website. And then when I was kind of talking about activities and spaces needing to be examined through Disability Inclusion Lens, we want to apply that to all activities and events locations or participation locations. Obviously, we need to be thinking about accessibility, but participation also needs to be accessible both physically and cognitively, right?

[00:49:04.670] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So specific recommendations include building in a higher youth to staff ratio when possible, or at least a youth to adult ratio, right? Building extra time into the agenda when possible. Something I mean, any longtime youth development worker will always recommend building extra time into the agenda, but that can be especially helpful for young people with disabilities and accommodating them into your space. Building an extra physical space or having extra literally separate space for young people who need things like sensory breaks and things like that. Providing choices again, when we talk about a population that has less self determination, building choices as part of your program and activities can be really important. Communicating in multiple choices. Again, self determination and use what's known as plain



language. So plain language is writing in a concise, clear, familiar, and organized way and ensuring it is age appropriate for your audience and then communicating expectations thoroughly in advance. So particularly for our young people who may have cognitive disabilities or young people with disabilities who need greater lead time to get to an event or things like that, you never want time to be the thing that's going to hold back a young person from engaging into an event. So make any expectations as early as you can and as thoroughly as you can can be a really big, helpful tool in this area.

[00:50:56.590] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So next we're going to get into our staffing practices and what we can do here proactively hire staffing disabilities and how we do that when we talk about representation at every level, that includes staff, right? So how do we do that? What might that look like? What might accommodations during a job interview look like, right?

[00:51:16.000] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

That could include sending any requests ahead of time, ensuring of course that the new location is physically accessible, ensuring that any requested accommodations are provided and also remembering to ask if accommodations are needed and then posting the patient in locations that may attract applicants with disabilities. So there are a few examples given in the supplement but one that I know of and like is a website called inclusively.com which is specifically for employers looking for prospective employees with disabilities and for people with disabilities looking for jobs, obviously. And those applicants or people looking for jobs are able to put what their accommodations would be needed for a potential job or for a potential job interview and things like that and they can literally check that off as well. So it is a really great website, worth checking out even just to see what kind of accommodations are kind of out there and that makes sense and to do some learning as well. It's literally a newer website that came out in the past year or two, but they're really cool. So we think about staff with disabilities and where they are and how we accommodate them in this kind of process. This is again, where do we find the experts who are doing this kind of work? They're out there, this is where we want to do that partnering to get information.

[00:52:48.450] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then of course offering robust training and professional development on disability topics. Of course we want our staff to be trained and this eventually of course will trickle this down to our mentors. So on Learn.Pyd.org, there are individual self assessments where you can assess for your kind of personal perception and bias and for your knowledge gaps and it will kind of give you where your kind of learning gaps are so you can do your own learning. But some kind of foundational topics that we would want to increase staff confidence on would of course be things like inclusive communication, disability etiquette like I mentioned before, universal design. Like we were talking about understanding the history of the ADA, addressing challenge of behavior. Again, starting with your staff. And then we'll talk about when we get to the EEP. Of course getting this information to mentors but of course it starts with your staff.

[00:53:49.990] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then how do we sustain these inclusivity practices? Building an accessibility and accommodations budget which sounds scary because money is scary and always feels like there's not enough and things like that. But the reality is, and what we would tell any organization, business for profit, et cetera. If you are trying to really commit to your statement about inclusivity building in an accessibility and accommodation budget is doing that is how you can do that and is the most effective way to build this expense into your overall organization budget. Of course we want to keep the funds in a neutral place that is away from your direct program dollars. So that's not of course affecting your money, that has to do specifically with young people. But again, this makes it clear that it is an organizational priority. These are the things that will go towards accommodations for job interviews and things like that for when you have to train people that might need accommodations for posting on a site like Inclusively and things like that. And it's something that would be a part of your budget every single year, a permanent line item on your budget. And this is how inclusivity practices get sustained, right? It's that we are constantly it's a real literal investment

[00:55:32.610] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then form partnerships. We can't do this work alone and we wouldn't expect you to, nobody gets anywhere alone, right? So we think about our local disability organizations and agencies. There's so much opportunity there. This can be a valuable source of mentors people to do these trainings that we're talking about that you need to do referrals, referrals of young people and other support to your programs and your program's participants, right? It might end up being a referral of resources for young people in your program. They can be valuable sources of feedback, resources for ongoing assessments. As you're doing this work and seeing how you're improving and in general disability expertise, it's not likely that you guys will suddenly become the experts and that's not anybody's expectation, but to know where the experts are and where to get the expert information, that's going to be your power. And the next power is having the relationship with that information.

[00:56:35.430] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Speaking of relationships with the experts. [The National Disability Mentoring Coalition](#). This is a coalition of which your organization can be a member with and it is an opportunity to engage in resource sharing with other disability mentoring practitioners. So if again, an investment that your organization can invest in just said investment a bunch of times, but another opportunity for your organization to invest in, to be a member of the coalition and to do a lot of, again, cohort learning with other organizations who are invested in being inclusive and in doing this work, specifically disability mentoring work.

[00:57:21.490] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then again, we did our benchmark assessments and we're going to keep doing ongoing assessments including mentors and families about how it's going, what is their experience, what's their perception of your inclusion efforts. Of course, getting demographic information when possible. And we talked about



youth advisory boards, participant advisory boards in general. We want to ensure that of course, if there's disabled young people in your program that they're engaged on that board and then keeping up with this organizational assessment to see how you are improving.

[00:58:00.440] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then I think, okay, this is the last thing and we are going to have a conversation after this and then before we get into our EEP, addressing incidents of discrimination and exclusion quickly and thoroughly.

[00:58:17.770] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So this is where you walk the walk, right? This is where you show that you are committed to the policy and procedures that you've written that you are committed to inclusivity and standing up for it literally, right? So when we think about the policies, procedures that you're writing, we want to be sure that they're clearly written, have clear responsibilities, protocols, and timelines of action. So if a young person who may be a victim in this situation, they know that what to expect from you all and can potentially hold you accountable to your own policies in that situation.

[00:59:01.420] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Be mindful of the ways that why young people specifically may be reluctant to bring up these issue based on power dynamics and past experiences at your program or even somewhere else. It's uncomfortable. And we're talking already about a marginalized and potentially double marginalized community. So be mindful of that as you are dealing with these situations and know that staying on top of incidents that run counter to your rules and values will require frequent check ins with your staff and participants.

[00:59:40.120] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So before we get into the standards, I want to give you guys time just to kind of reflect on everything we just talked about and how you're feeling about what will be easiest or most difficult about everything we just talked about, about this initial investment in- pardon me, in this initial investment in inclusivity and et cetera.

[01:00:09.950] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So I'm going to give you two minutes and I'm going to write really quickly just a few things that we talked about in the chat. So we talked about program planning, leadership and operations, policy and infrastructure review practices, staffing practices, and then sustaining inclusivity practices.

[01:00:56.150] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



We're going to do something called a waterfall, which is where everybody types into the chat, but we all press send at the same time, so everything comes at the same time, so there's no pressure that everybody's looking exactly at your message.

[01:01:15.850] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

I have a timer, let me figure out how to use it. Guys, I just got an Apple Watch and I'm figuring it out.

[01:01:22.270] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So look at the topics in the chat. Take the time starting now to think about what will be most difficult for your program to face, to deal with when we talk about this initial investment and why? And then I'll call on a few people and we will kind of talk it out together before we get into the standards. So I'm going to turn the music back on and give you two minutes to think about that. And I'll write the question in the chat.

[01:03:28.170] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

25 seconds.

[01:04:03.860] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Okay? I'm going to say three, two, one and then we all send our message. Three, two, one, go.

[01:04:16.910] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

All right, everybody, take your time and read through and I may call on some of you.

[01:04:26.510] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

"I think programming operation was typical due to nature of being partnered with teachers but not being actual teachers." "Sustaining practices" "Easier to write a policy than implement"

[01:04:54.680] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

a lot of people are saying Sustaining

[01:05:03.660] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Christopher "because I never had a student with the physical disability. I wonder if I've excluded by not thinking to include" that's a good point. When you lack the experience of someone who's never been there before, then you've not had to think about including, right?

[01:05:57.290] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

great.

[01:06:00.190] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Does anybody want to speak about sustaining inclusivity practices which came up a few times for people. What's the fear and concern there? Is it about cost effort? And again, this is no judgment. This is trying to figure out what's the genesis of that concern. You can come off you mute or let me know in the chat for those concerned with sustaining practices.

[01:07:21.160] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

"High expectations for all learners. Not changing expectations on perceived ability"

[01:07:39.940] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Yeah, working with school districts is tricky. I've been there. It is tough.

[01:07:55.800] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

It can also be tough when we think about accommodations that we are not used to implementing accommodations. That's when we can get confused with changing expectations or something like that. And that's where that idea of universal design for learning kind of comes in. Again, kind of making your learning as accessible that every program is learning or whatever, but making opportunity as accessible without singling young person out or having to just apply one accommodation to them.

[01:08:45.480] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

"Difficult to sustain when it isn't unified practice across all schools partnerships."

[01:08:52.380] - Speaker 2

Yeah, for sure. When you have partners and you are trying to be a leadership of the partnership, right. You're trying to do something that nobody else is doing that is hard. You may know a person has an IEP, young person has an IEP, but you're not really informed about them, which is tough, which I mean, ideally that would be an opportunity for partnership and things like that, but that might not be always available. But again, this is where there is opportunity to build relationships with organizations, disability specific organizations that may be outside of your current partnerships. They may have tools and resources that you don't even know about yet that may help you kind of navigate around some of these things. Cool.

[01:10:00.040] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



Well, thank you guys for sharing, keeping these things in mind as we talk about as we kind of change gears into our standards.

[01:10:08.780] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So Andre, I'm going to ask you to drop the checklist for the original EEP and for the inclusivity supplement. So as I mentioned, the benchmarks are recruitment, screening, training, et cetera. And the standards are the things that we're going to go over today. And the checklist is just the standards written out without any of the extra information that we'll talk about. The original EEP benchmarks and standards still hold. Of course, the supplement is for extra emphasizing and extra standards that apply specifically for inclusivity.

[01:10:54.300] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So we will start with recruitment. Some of these things we've kind of talked about and you'll see them repeated here as well. So of course, especially as relates to recruitment benchmarking, your program website, any online content against that, web content for accessibility guidelines. Of course, this is specific to recruitment because it's the first time young people or mentors are interacting with your program. So I always say like everything, the rest of the standards start at recruitment, screening, training, monitoring and support. So we're starting here.

[01:11:35.950] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

First thing you do is we got to make sure that your website works for everybody. Really important from the get go, something that you could do today, right? Well, maybe not you specifically, but somebody that you could check communicate with your webmaster, whoever that, ideally, you could do today at little to no cost, ensuring that youth with disabilities are represented in your recruitment materials. Getting genuine photographs. Maybe that might be difficult for you. And that may be where you communicate with a local organization or with your school and things like that. But again, authentic representation is important.

[01:12:21.560] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So speaking to that, offering recruitment materials in a variety of formats to accommodate those with disabilities. So again, we will kind of talk about these formats throughout because again, we're starting at recruitment. So this is the first thing, but we're talking about a variety of formats. Again, one of those formats being plain language, braille, large print, having interpreters in certain situations where one might be needed. There is assistive technology like [CART](#), the communication access real time translation captioning, even just becoming familiar with those tools and options and why they're important and when they apply and regularly utilizing them. Again, being familiar with these kinds of ways to be inclusive, it will become a practice, right? And something that you continue to do. So this is one way to start doing that in a variety of formats too, including your recruitment materials in other languages, right? That's one thing that a lot of programs where they may start.

[01:13:38.940] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Including information or materials about the program's commitment and practices designed to be welcoming and inclusive of mentors or mentors with disabilities. Of course. So you have your inclusion statement, but of course, for our families of young people with disabilities, hearing specifically about why it's important to your program to have mentors and mentors disabilities in your program. That specific targeted request, I was putting on a training the other week about recruitment. And what we know for sure, especially about mentor recruitment, is that targeted recruitment is the most successful recruitment. So make it clear about who you are targeting, right? If they're being spoken to, they will listen. So that can be a factor of your recruitment.

[01:14:19.640] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then if you are doing something like a recruitment presentation regarding mentoring, asking about accommodation needs prior to delivering recruitment presentations and just getting used to asking about accommodation needs in these kinds of situations, sharing information about the program in advance of recruitment presentations. Again, where we're talking about people who may, people with disabilities who may need more time to process information or who may need multimodal learning, being able to read and see a presentation, giving the information in advance of the presentation can be helpful.

[01:15:02.300] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And recruiting a mix of Mentors with or without all kinds of Disabilities there are all kinds of disabilities out there, as we kind of talked about earlier, apparent, inapparent, dynamic, et cetera. Recruit a mix just like when we talk about critical mentoring and diversity in mentoring, the aim is to expose our young people to all different kinds of people, and that includes within the disability intersection as well. And ideally, we're emphasizing the recruitment of mentors and staff who have prior experience working with youth with disabilities. That's a best case scenario. And hopefully when we talk about building relationship disability organizations, that may create a pipeline of mentors staff who had that prior experience.

[01:15:53.980] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then detailing the specific benefits to the disabilities and their parents and caregivers in the recruitment materials. So every parent who comes to hear about your program wants to know how their child will benefit, right? And how their child specifically will benefit, right? My child's like this, my child needs this. So you will want to be able to speak to how a child with disabilities will be able to benefit by being in your program and be able to speak to them. So ensure that you know the answer to that, because you know that your program is accommodating, that your staff are trained, that you are physically accessible, et cetera. So being able to speak to that when you are speaking to parents, et cetera, in this recruitment process of bringing young people into programs.



[01:16:43.900] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then if you have staff with disabilities, of course, inviting them to be a part of leading recruitment presentations, this has to do with, of course, increased representation, staff disabilities, leading recruitment presentations. Being visible helps kind of lead that cycle of recruiting more mentors with disabilities. And of course, mentioning this partner with local organizations will only be to your benefit as it relates to recruitment and your investment in this process. Any questions about recruitment?

[01:17:24.940] - Andre

Cool.

[01:17:26.620] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So next, what we call training. So, proactively gather information about disability needs and strengths when youth and mentors apply to the program. So, all participants, youth, mentors, parents, caregivers and staff should be asked about disability and accommodations on intake forms and as part of the screening process, so that the program, you, can be both aware and responsive to each individual's needs.

[01:17:56.550] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So, if someone may not be able to explain the disability or needs, especially for younger children, discuss what makes them comfortable navigating the community and being with people, right? So having a tool or form of evaluation to assess each youth's strengths, challenges, learning styles and preferences can also be helpful. So, PYD has a tool to offer called the [Boston Common Accessibility Assessment Tool](#). If you can drop that in the chat, andre so that tool is designed to assess student strengths, challenges, learning styles and preferences to ensure that content and program designs are accessible to those with hidden disabilities that may have never been diagnosed or not disclosed, or for whom an historical IEP isn't available for you. So, in addition to asking about disability related needs of mentees, it's important to learn about and document the strengths of prospective mentees with disabilities that come to the program. So, given that youth disabilities often experience stigma and include others having lower expectations of them, it's really important for us to also assess what their strengths are coming into the program.

[01:19:11.420] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Again offering accommodation around screening tests and applications, so filling out an application or a registration form and things like that, being mindful of what accommodations may be helpful in that situation and offering them as such.

[01:19:33.000] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



When we are talking about screening mentors and staff, asking questions and presenting scenarios about working with disabilities so you can suss out potential bias or prejudice. There's no room for ableism in your program. So this is just a red flag as no.

[01:19:58.790] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And of course for young people coming into the program, emphasizing your program's anti bullying and disability inclusion policies for mentors as well, but for young people as well. So, making sure that young people are serious about their commitment to abiding by the policy, that they sign a commitment form to abiding by the anti bullying policy as well as part of their commitment to being in the program.

[01:20:24.590] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Then getting young people's ascent to participating in the program experience, right? So again, when we know that young people with disabilities do not always have opportunities to develop self determination and independence, the ascending process offers a chance to practice that critical skill of self determination. So, ensuring that they are doing their ascent to being a part of the program experience and participating in the program. And it seems like a small thing, but it's bigger than that.

[01:20:59.600] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Moving on to training, acting on reasonable requests for accommodations during training. So again, this would be an area where you'd use that accommodation budget, where you might refer to JAN, the Job Accommodations Network. When we say a reasonable request, that's kind of the coded language for the ADA. A reasonable request just means that it is reasonable because it is related to the position that it's needed for them to do their position. Basically the position being a mentor or being a young person in the program. So even that kind of language is defined on askjan.org so when you're like, what does it mean, what does a reasonable request mean? That is defined there. But that is kind of, that the legal kind of lingo there.

[01:21:52.400] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Again, providing mentors with specific training topics that support their continued learning. And we know that continued learning is a really important part of this investment. So those kind of topics being again, inclusive communication, navigating challenging behaviors, guidance for mentors for finding accessible activities and events, specifically if you have community based mentoring, understanding the intersections of the queer and disability community, challenging racial and cultural biases and navigating disability where the challenges insisted in the match, right? So ongoing training is a benchmark or a part of the traditional EEP, so specific to disability, that would be ongoing training regarding certain disability topics

[01:22:41.840] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



And then offering disability specific orientation to parents and caregivers of youth of disability. So for our parents of young people with disabilities, they will likely have more questions and more logistical challenges regarding the program. So they may need more time with you and your fellow staff members to talk through what's going to get their child to program, what their child may need during program, accommodations during program and things like that. So that may be a time for you to create something or create a separate orientation or orientation time for your disability or disabled families to get oriented to your program so they have that time to talk with you about that. And this is training, it's under participant training orientation, a pre match training. This can be really important. Again, this is where when we talk about getting information to disabled individuals early, this is that time. So making sure that there is enough time, that it is long enough before the program starts and things like that, being clear about what your program is and isn't, about what mentorship is and is, what a mentor is and is not being very clear about that for parents and caregivers for youth with disabilities.

[01:24:14.300] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then matching, which often is what I hear from programs to be one of the more difficult parts of the EP and this is something here as well that I feel can be a little bit difficult as well. So ideally you want to honor the preferences of the mentees in the program to the degree that is possible during the matching process. Again, this is where we're coming back to self determination. Programs should solicit young people's opinions about their preferences for a particular mentor and when those preferences are denied, discuss the reasons for the decision about a mentor assignment with the young person directly.

[01:24:55.000] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Experience shows that matching mentor matching based on shared values, interests and outlook is most effective. They're matching solely based on a shared identity characteristic. Shared identity can be a meaningful factor, but we find that shared values are what makes it meaningful for both mentor and mentee. So shared identity shouldn't be the only factor. Parental and caregiver involvement is of course a part of any mentoring relationship and mentoring program. I know family involvement is really important. Programs can and should consider parents preferences for a mentor, but again, it's particularly based on mentee's age and developmental level, of course. But as we kind of talked about earlier, some disabled young people experience heightened level of parental involvement in everything that they do. And this may be a space where they're seeing the opportunity to have an independent relationship with a caring, supporting adult and they may be preferring less parental involvement. And this may be brilliant itself to be that opportunity.

[01:25:58.460] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So note that this can be tricky to navigate, right? But remember, the goal of any mentoring program should be to empower the youth's self determined lives, ideally, and just to kind of keep that in mind as you're navigating this process that you may expect it to be a little bit more difficult than what is already difficult matching mentors. But to keep these different factors in mind.

[01:26:30.920] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

When we talk about just logistics and things like that. Considering transportation issues and other logistical factors for arranging meetings, particularly for community based programs. And then before making a match for mentees and mentors' disabilities, if you have the information about their disability, ask each party what they are comfortable sharing in advance with their prospective match partner. Oh, let me go back

[01:26:57.830] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Then this is where I'll ask you to drop that fact sheet. Andre. So PYD also has kind of fact sheets about different disabilities. So if a young person consents to sharing their disability identity with their mentor, these little sheets can be just kind of like one pagers about ADHD or autism and things like that. So a mentor can kind of learn about their disability in advance of meeting their young person and get to know them a little bit.

[01:27:35.180] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then supporting mentoring relationships or what is often called monitoring and support in the EEP. All of these are built on the general EEP guidance and are really here just to emphasize fur importance, obviously checking with the mentee and mentor on a consistent basis. Again, you're doing this anyway because it's in the regular EEP emphasized for importance. This is likely a group that needs to debrief and needs that feedback with you all as well.

[01:28:06.040] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Honoring accommodation requests and participation needs during these check ins and things like that. Remember that disabilities are dynamic, so these accommodation requests may need to be adapted and changed over time.

[01:28:21.900] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And sharing information about upcoming activities, especially outings and things well in advance. Again, you don't want time to be the reason that a young person is excluded from an event. It can be a real. Just having enough time to make arrangements is a really important factor for accessibility. So when possible, getting information to those young people as early as well in advance to ensure they can be properly included. Consider all the work that you're going to be doing to be inclusive. This is like the easiest thing that you can do is just getting the information in advance and trying to avoid making last minute changes and things like that.

[01:29:04.440] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



And then of course, facilitating ongoing learning activities, not just for the mentors, but for the young people as well, right? For them to do joint learning together. So there's lots of opportunities there for them to do some things together, for them to put on training for the other young people in your program.

[01:29:27.760] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then lastly, we're going to talk about closure.

[01:29:32.240] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Match closure is a really sensitive and emotional process and can be especially so for young people with disabilities. As noted in the core EPM, all mentoring programs should have a framework in place for handling both anticipated and unanticipated closures. The various options and decision points around closures should be communicated to mentees, parents and caregivers and mentors both during onboarding and at other points during the match progress. It's never too early to communicate about closure and set participant expectations as to how it's handled. This is why I say everything starts at recruitment. A mentor coming into your program is already worried about how a match might end to talk about your very kind and sensible closure program, about what happens if a relationship ends, like how it is handled, how it's not going to be the worst thing ever, right? So as it relates to disabilities, when possible, of course, giving that lead time for the transition. And remember as well that I use the word transition there because it is a transition.

[01:30:42.020] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Closure doesn't always have to mean, in the EEP and elsewhere, closure doesn't always necessarily mean that a relationship is literally ending. It can be the transition of a relationship. So if your program stops regular meetings for the summer, we would consider that closure and you have a procedure for how you close transition out of a relationship for the summer and that a young person knows. June 15 we're going to stop our weekly meetings because it's summer now and you'll see each other again. August 29 and again, young people are getting this information with lead time. So there is that emotional preparation, et cetera, that is related to closure. Closure is not always literally about relationships ending. So being mindful about that is really important.

[01:31:34.120] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And then, of course, closure, even these transitions, not just literal closure, is an opportunity for us to celebrate and reflect, right? There should always be a celebration at the end of the year for mentors and mentees. It can also often, of course, make those transitions a bit easier and hold young people over as well. When possible, if a young person is kind of graduating from a program, making a transition from middle school to high school, et cetera, when appropriate, making a referral or a handoff to another program can be another meaningful way to make closure a transition. So thinking about that as well, if a relationship is truly closure, there's going to be an ending of a relationship. Of course you have a policy



and procedures for that. But be mindful that those should include things like an opportunity to gather feedback for making space for validating young people's feelings and for encouraging, of course, their continued participation in the program. The worst thing happened is that you have an unhappy young person that cuts off all their relationships, their relationships with their mentor, but also their relationships with you and your lovely staff.

[01:32:53.920] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

So that is it for our EEP benchmarks. What I'm going to do now is. I'm going to write in the chat the benchmarks again, recruitment, Training, matching, Relationship Support, and Closure.

[01:33:23.420] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

I'm going to break you into breakout just for seven to nine minutes, just to talk about when you look at those benchmarks, kind of what do you think will be the easiest for you to tackle and the hardest for you to tackle as a program when it comes to these inclusivity steps of action to kind of take? I'm going to open those now and again. I've dropped those in the chat for your reference.

[01:33:59.800] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Welcome back, everybody. Hope those conversations found you well. Let's start off with the tough stuff. What do you think of our benchmarks will be most difficult for your organization to take action on first? You can drop in the chat. Feel free to come off mute. When we think about recruitment, screening, training, matching, relationship support, closure we think about those and inclusivity. What do you think will be most difficult for your organization to take pointed action on first?

[01:34:45.080] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

"Recruiting mentors."

[01:34:46.580] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Actually, that's a good point. Recruiting in general is difficult.

[01:35:05.380] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

What else came up?

[01:35:18.860] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

"Having the equipment necessary for disabled children."

[01:35:21.900] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Yeah.

[01:35:23.420] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

When we talk about things, about having a budget, which we talked about so long ago, right? In that planning and leadership and in additional investment and where hopefully when we think about partnering with organizations with disability expertise, maybe. This is where we can find resources, about how we get these things right. Because I'm not an expert on that for sure. Or how we fundraise for these things, how we write grants for these things because I know that you all and I are the only people investing in young people with disabilities. So how do we find that funding to support the work? Marketing your program said it feels inviting to folks with disabilities. Yeah. And doing so in a way that doesn't feel that feels right and authentic, right? That can be difficult.

[01:36:34.960] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Great point, Victoria.

[01:36:40.080] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And so we can end on a feeling powerful note. What do you guys think you're going to just knock out of the park? What's going to be the easiest step to take or the most actionable step that you can take back to your team and be like, we can do this right now and make a step towards inclusivity and sustaining inclusivity relationship general knowledge. Yes. Right, guys, we can.

[01:37:17.930] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

And I'll tell you, too, about both those books I read. I borrowed them from the library. Free. Students go borrow a book from the library right now and learn for free, boom.

[01:37:31.520] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

All those links we read. Networking with businesses for these individuals. Yes. Right. We know that there are organizations out there that support them now I have to reach out.

[01:37:44.260] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Yeah. Relationship closure and getting that out there.

[01:37:49.530] - Renee Angelo-Mauk



Right. Another thing, too, if you're realizing what's a benchmark that you know you need to work on, apply for technical assistance, which is also free we're happy to help with that. And if it's specifically you want to work on inclusivity, putting that into your technical assistance request as well, we will. Get you the right person to work with you on it.

[01:38:17.250] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Awesome. Well, I want to thank you guys for coming on today and talking about this topic and I hope to yeah, Christopher, stay on. I hope that those of you who are in the middle of this work, starting this work, that you please keep in touch about how it goes and invite us to witness it so we can highlight you and celebrate you. We want to hear about it. Yeah, celebrate it and acknowledge your work in Maryland and DC I want to tell you about one thing that we have coming up. I will pass it to my colleague. Andre to tell you more, everyone.

[01:39:18.090] - Andre

So coming up, we have a Mentor Mania week. Basically during the last week in August, we're going to do a whole social media campaign just trying to inspire people to get out and volunteer with different programs in the Maryland | DC area and to sign up for the [Mentoring Connector](#), which is the largest and I believe the only electronic database of mentoring programs across the nation. So that will be taking place, I believe, August 28th through September 1st.

[01:39:59.350] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Victoria. We will send them in our follow up email as well. So no problem there. We will get you links, slides, the recording, which will eventually be on our YouTube channel as well, which is a great way to keep up with our trainings. The link, if you're not already subscribed to our newsletter, will be in the follow up email as well. All those things will likely come to you. It'll come to you before the end of the week, I promise. And they will come from me.

[01:40:33.990] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Thank you so much for everybody for logging on. We will see you next time and I appreciate you all very much. Christopher, stay on. So we're going to talk to you about technical distance, but bye everybody.

[01:40:47.240] - Andre

Bye.

[01:40:48.920] - Renee Angelo-Mauk

Thank you very much.



[01:40:50.430] - Andre

Thank you guys.