At the Crossroads: Supporting Your YouthBuild Mentee after Graduation

Training Toolkit – A Guide for Staff

Version 1.0, July 2015

Brought to you by:

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

YouthBuild USA

US Department of Justice
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Introduction

Being successful in life has a lot to do with managing transitions. The mentees in the YouthBuild Program are facing a time of great transitions in their lives. Between adolescence and adulthood, these young people are at the cusp of entering college, the job market, or developing a trade; starting a family; and securing housing.

YouthBuild Mentoring was originally conceived as a 15-month program in order to help with this life transition and extend the support received through the formal 12-month YouthBuild program by an additional three months.¹ As program staff turn their attention to incoming students, mentors help bridge the gap between graduation and post-program placement.

The purpose of the *At the Crossroads* training is to equip mentors to successfully perform their critical bridge and support role during the 3 to 6 months after the mentee completes the YouthBuild program.

Components of the Toolkit

This toolkit consists of the following files and downloads, all of which are available at [http://youthbuildmentoringalliance.org/guidebooks](http://youthbuildmentoringalliance.org/guidebooks):

- PowerPoint slides for the training
- Facilitator Notes & Handouts

The *At the Crossroads* training is a full 90 minutes with one break in the middle. At the end of the PowerPoint slide stack is a Break slide that you can insert at the best point or points that work for you. Facilitators should schedule and sequence the training in whatever ways work best for their YouthBuild site, staff, and mentors.

Options include:

- 1 ninety-minute training (with one break in the middle)
- Two 45-minute sessions on two different days
- Three shorter half-hour sessions that highlight a few concepts or activities

Working with the Files

**PowerPoint slides.** The slides provided here are standard PowerPoint files that should work on any Windows or Mac computer. There is a master slide for the title slide and second-level slides that

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¹ In some YouthBuild programs, the formal programmatic period extends less than 12 months, in other cases longer.
facilitators can edit as they see fit. We have kept the fonts and colors to standard Windows/Power-Point options for ease of customization.

We encourage programs to add their own logos and contact information to the slides, insert photographs of their own students or mentees from previous years, and generally make these slides their own. What is important is that you feel comfortable with the presentation of the content and the way the slides visually represent your program and mentoring philosophy.

**Facilitator notes.** Starting on page 6 of this guide, you will find detailed notes for the person delivering the training sessions. Text in italics indicates content that the facilitator should say to the group. Training notes are grouped by the four sessions. For each slide you will present, we have provided:

– A thumbnail view of the slide  
– Slide title and number  
– Suggested timing to deliver the slide content or conduct the activity referenced  
– A list of handouts or materials  
– Tips for customizing the slide content  
– Instructions on delivering the content or activity (for some we have provided a sample script that you can follow; for others we simply recommend key points to emphasize with participants or options for altering the delivery to meet your audience needs)

We encourage you to review the trainer notes thoroughly and customize them to match your delivery and personal style. If you need to alter the trainer notes considerably, you may want to transfer the content to Word or another word processing program. You can do this easily by copying and pasting text out of this PDF or by using the Export Tool in Adobe Reader and converting the entire document to Word format.

**Handouts.** All of the handouts to deliver each session appear immediately after the facilitator notes. This should make it easy to find the materials you need to deliver each session. As with the slides and facilitator notes, you can customize the handouts to meet the needs (or match the branding) of your local YouthBuild program.
Please note: Throughout the facilitator notes below, *italics* indicates suggested wording for the presenter.

**Slide 1 – At the Crossroads: Supporting Your YouthBuild Mentee After Graduation**

DELIVERY TIME: 1 minute

SLIDE CUSTOMIZATION: Add your YouthBuild program name and logo on the slide where indicated.

You may also want to replace the photos here with some from your own program.

DELIVERY NOTES: This is a standard title slide and should be displayed until you begin the session. Thank participants for coming and for their personal investment in the lives of YouthBuild students.

Go over “house-keeping” items, such as:

1. Turn off cell phones
2. Indicate where to find rest rooms
3. Let participants know when to expect a break

**Slide 2 – Today’s Objectives**

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Start by noting the following: *This session is intended to help you successfully perform your critical support role during the 3 to 6 months after your mentees complete the formal YouthBuild program.*

Briefly review the main goals for the training, by saying:

*As indicated on the slide, we hope that by the end of this time you will:*

- Gain greater understanding of crossroad challenges
• Be able to apply principles of skills-focused and relational mentoring to strengthen your mentoring relationship
• Become more effective in using your mentees’ Life Plans to support their transition after graduation
• Be on your way to developing a plan for staying connected and effective in your mentoring relationship through transition months

Also, indicate the following points:

Being successful in life has a lot to do with managing transitions. The mentees in the YouthBuild Program are facing a time of great transitions in their lives. Between adolescence and adulthood, these young people are at the cusp of entering college, the job market, or developing a trade; starting a family; and securing housing.

YouthBuild Mentoring was originally conceived as a 15-month program in order to help with this life transition and extend the support received through the formal YouthBuild program by an additional three months. As those of us on staff at the program turn our attention to incoming students, you mentors help to bridge that gap between graduation and post-program placement.

Slide 3 – Crossroad(s) definitions

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Point out the definitions for the word “Crossroad” on the slide. Indicate that the definitions that are bolded are what we mean by the crossroads that their mentees are going through at this time. They are at a point of vital decision-making and great activity. Further, say:

For YouthBuild graduates, the period between just before graduation and 3 to 6 months later can be full of a tremendous amount of activity. Key decisions are made that can change the trajectory of their lives, decisions about college, job, family, relationships, housing, and all of those things combined. This is indeed a “Crossroads” moment in their lives, and it is at this point where they a) will need the most support, and b) may be too distracted, busy, or otherwise “moved on” to access that support.

You may find this a challenging time to keep up or get in touch with your mentees, but don’t give up! They need your support more than ever!

[Ref: http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/crossroad?s=t]
Slide 4 – What was your last big life change?

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Ask mentors to think about their last big life change. Give them about a minute to jot down or just think about:

1. Did they know it was coming?
2. How did they prepare for it?
3. How did it feel going through it?
4. Who helped them through it and how?

Ask for volunteers to share some of their reflections.

[Image by william schenold via freeimages.com]

Slide 5 – Why focus on the crossroads

DELIVERY TIME: 3 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Ask: What’s happening when a young person graduates from the YouthBuild Program? What are they experiencing? What are they feeling?

Prompt for:

- Excitement
- Fear
- Alienation
- New challenges
- Moving on

Ask: What else? Not so different from the things you mentioned just now (last slide), right?

Share the following information from research studies:
The backgrounds and life circumstances for many of our YouthBuild students are similar to youth who are transitioning out of foster care. Research reports convincingly support the notion that older youth in foster care do not do well during the transition to adulthood. For example, The Midwest Study reported that when compared to a nationally-representative sample of same age youths, at 19-years old, former foster care youths were less likely to be currently employed, more likely to report poor overall health, and more likely to be disconnected to society and at age 21, the foster youths in this study were more likely to have been arrested. Other studies have reported high rates of depression and depression symptoms among older youth in foster care.

References:
Courtney et al., 2005  
Courtney et al., 2007  
McMillen et al., 2005; Barth, 1990

Slide 6 – Challenges of post-grad mentoring

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

In addition to the difficulties mentioned previously, there’s simply the challenge of where they are now.

Discuss the challenges listed on the slide.

- What if your mentee moves out of the area to go to college or start a new job?
- Maybe they are “moving on” mentally. They may feel they’re done with this YouthBuild mentoring thing since YouthBuild is now over. “Been there, done that” kind of feeling.
- You will likely need to be a bit more creative/thoughtful about adding value to life of mentee. What will be perceived by that mentee as worth the time/effort to meet?

Given these challenges, you probably can see why it might be important to have a plan in place for this transition period.
Slide 7 – Your Crossroads Mentoring Plan

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Throughout this session, we will have a series of eight reflection times for you to draft a crossroads mentoring plan for you to review and refine with your mentee. This will serve as a working agreement between you and your mentee. Let’s get started!

Handout At the Crossroads Planning Worksheet (next page).

As you respond to each reflection time, feel free to use the back of the sheet, if you run out of room on the front. We’re going to begin now with Reflection Time #1.

Move to next slide.
## Handout 1: At the Crossroads Planning Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>1. What is your mentee’s top three most pressing challenges entering the crossroads?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What is his/her biggest opportunity over the next 3 to 6 months?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>3. List 2 to 5 specific ways you can help your mentee overcome his/her most pressing challenges.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>4. What are some ways to celebrate achievement or encourage your mentee with his/her opportunities that would be especially meaningful to him/her?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>5. Which of the Life Plan categories have been the most challenging for your mentee?</td>
<td>6. In which categories has your mentee excelled?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>7. Think about how your mentee’s schedule might change over the next few months after graduation. What about your schedule? How do you need to adjust your meeting times to accommodate new schedules and commitments?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>8. Reflect on when your mentoring relationship first “clicked.” What worked? How can you apply (or adapt) that same practice today?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>9. Write down 2 specific ways your mentee’s parents/guardians are allies in your mentoring relationship.</td>
<td>10. What is one way that you can strengthen the alliance with family in support of your mentee?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>11. What is your mentee’s preferred method of communication?</td>
<td>12. What social media does he/she use regularly?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slide 8 – Reflection Time #1

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Have mentors fill out Time One on the worksheet:

1. What is your mentee’s top three most pressing challenges entering the crossroads?

2. What is his/her biggest opportunity over the next 3 to 6 months?

Remind participants that the numbering works in conjunction with handout

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

Slide 9 – 2 Types of Mentoring Working Together

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Review definitions.

*These are a couple different types of mentoring that work together to benefit your mentee’s growth. Over the last several months, since you got started with mentoring, you and your mentee have probably been focused primarily on building the quality of your mentoring relationship. That’s the “relational mentoring” type of mentoring, and covers all the ways you are getting to know your mentees, support them, celebrate their achievements, and more.*

[Note: Relational mentoring is also referred to as “developmental” or “psychosocial mentoring.”]

*During the transition months, your mentee may be seeking even more specific assistance accomplishing certain skills or goals, resulting in the mentee’s personal development, as new opportunities and...*
challenges arise. This is skills-focused mentoring. The value of your relationship as mentor may go up in the eyes of your mentee if you can get ahead of some of these things.

But it’s rarely one type exclusively without some of the other. Some of the ways you worked on the quality of your relationship was through skill-based and learning activities that focus on life goals or specific skills (e.g. the “Life Plan”).

[Note: Skills-focused mentoring is also referred to as “instrumental mentoring.”]


Slide 10 – Skills-focused Opportunities

DElivery time: 2 minutes

DElivery notes:

There are many ways to focus on skills in your mentoring relationship. Depending on your mentee’s goals and specific near-term plans, you may support your mentee in any of these ways (for example):

- Explore Post-Secondary Education with your Mentee
- Help Mentee with Job Search
- Help your Mentee Apply to PSE
- Help Mentee with a Health Goal
- Help Your Mentee Connect with other Social Services
- Provide a Job Shadowing Opportunity for Your Mentee

Can you think of anything else you might do with your mentee during the transition months that would be goal- or skill-focused?
Slide 11 – Mentoring as Advocacy

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Another aspect of goal- or skill-focused mentoring is advocacy. By this time in the mentoring relationship, you will be very familiar with the mentee’s goals based on the Life Plan (more on that later). As an older and more experienced and connected person, you may be in a good position to help the mentee meet those goals, in very tangible ways.

Advocacy can take many forms, from a phone call placed on a young person’s behalf to help land a job to attending meetings with teachers and other school officials. What other ways might you serve as an advocate for your mentee?

Give a moment for responses.

But keep in mind, your mentee must have the opportunity to exercise their own abilities and strengths and achieve goals that are personally meaningful to them. Keep that balance in mind. Only attend a meeting on behalf of a mentee (as opposed to with the mentee) when absolutely necessary.

Slide 12 – Reflection Time #2

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Have mentors fill out Time Two on the worksheet:

3. List 2 to 5 specific ways you can help your mentee overcome his/her most pressing challenges.

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.
Slide 13 – Relational Opportunities

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Of course, the relational aspect of mentoring never goes away! Encouragement, listening, celebrating, being there through successes and challenges. Any one of these things fits:

- Encourage Mentee through Enrollment in PSE
- Celebrate Achievement of a Family Goal with Mentee
- Celebrate Mentee’s Successful Completion of Probation
- Celebrate Mentee’s New Job
- Celebrate Mentee’s Achievement of a Financial Goal
- Recognize Mentee’s Success in Overcoming a Challenge

What are some meaningful (to your mentee) ways that you encourage your mentee?

(Prompt for cards, calls, take out for coffee, plan a party with family, etc.)

Slide 14 – Reflection Time #3

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Have mentors fill out Time Three on the worksheet:

4. What are some ways to celebrate achievement or encourage your mentee with his/her opportunities that would be especially meaningful to him/her?

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.
Slide 15 – The Life Plan: Your ticket to transitional success!

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Remember this? It’s the Life Plan and it is your ticket to success in the post-graduation phase of your mentoring relationship!

This is why it is beneficial to your mentee, as well as helpful to you as a mentor, to check in often with your mentee during his/her YB experience, to ensure that they are keeping up with their Life Plan.

Review the Life Plan briefly with participants with the following:

Within the first few months of the YouthBuild program, each student, with the help of a counselor or other staff member, began a YouthBuild Life Plan, which requires the student to formally document his or her goals and brings those goals, hopes, and dreams into focus. A YouthBuild Life Plan requires young people to evaluate their leadership skills, engage in service opportunities, develop healthy relationships, and determine steps to building a positive social network.

Slide 16 – Life Plan Example

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Looking at this sample of YouthBuild Life Plan categories, it’s easy to see how these personal goals and objectives could lead to mentoring activity ideas.

Remember that YouthBuild Life Plans are subject to change over time, especially as graduation approaches and your mentee starts really thinking about next steps after YouthBuild. The emphasis may shift at this point to goals that are more short-term and immediate. Be flexible as you work with your mentees during YouthBuild Life Plan-related activities. Keep in mind that it is a planning skill you are helping your mentee to learn, even more than the specific goals and activities they may choose to pursue at any given time.
Now that you are nearing (or in) that transition period, it is a good time to sit down with your mentee to celebrate their achievements, and encourage them to review and set new short- and long-term goals.

**Slide 17 – Reflection Time #4**

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

These next questions assume mentors have a good understanding of the Life Plan and specifically the status of their mentees’ life plans.

Have mentors fill out Time Four on the worksheet:

5. Which of the Life Plan categories have been the most challenging for your mentee?

6. In which categories has your mentee excelled?

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

**Slide 18 – Helping Mentees Stay Focused**

DELIVERY TIME: 3 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

*Your role as a mentor is in part to help your mentee stay focused on his/her goals and continue to grow, develop, and progress. In order to do this, you need to stay connected. Work with your mentee to establish clear and realistic expectations post-graduation that take into account:*  

- **Schedule** – your schedule as well as your mentee’s. When can you meet and how often? Are quick weekly coffee meet-ups before or after work easier for both of you, or would it be better to practice a sport together once every other week more realistic?  
- **Interests/Hobbies** – What interests do you share that you can work on together?  
- **Life Planning Goals** – Become an expert on your mentee’s life plan status.
- Communication Style Preferences – Is your mentee a talker or a texter? Does he prefer an eye-to-eye heart-felt chat or shoulder to shoulder reflections? Does she use social media? Do you?
- Commitment – Make sure you’re both on the same page and committed to the what, wheres, and hows of your post-graduation mentoring plan.

Slide 19 – Reflection Time #5

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Have mentors fill out Time Five on the worksheet:

7. Think about how your mentee’s schedule might change over the next few months after graduation. What about your schedule? How do you need to adjust your meeting times (or locations) to accommodate new schedules and commitments?

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

Slide 20 – Work with what helped you click

DELIVERY TIME: 2 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

The quotes on this slide are from YouthBuild students who were interviewed about when they first felt they had bonded with their mentors. Some of these feelings may resonate with you in reflecting on your mentoring relationship.

When thinking about how to keep the light of your mentoring relationship burning – and how to transition to the next phase – think back to when you first “clicked” as a mentoring pair. Just like any relationship, you’re not going to always stay in that first light, but it is a good reminder of what may be enduring in your connection.

Slide 21 – Reflection Time #6

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Have mentors fill out Time Six on the worksheet:

8. Reflect on when your mentoring relationship first “clicked.” What worked? How can you apply (or adapt) that same practice today?

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

Slide 22 – Parents & Guardians

DELIVERY TIME: 3 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

By this point in your mentoring relationship, you will have gained some understanding of your mentee’s family situation. In some cases the parents/guardians are present, active, and positive influences. In other situations, the family structure may be less strong. Whatever the situation, you will want to maintain appropriate boundaries and serve as someone who will support the existing family structure.

During this critical time after graduating from YB, the young person needs all resources available to support their transition toward PSE, job, or other “next steps.” The difference in outcomes between “disconnected youth” and all other youth in transition to adulthood are remarkable across all measurable outcomes (e.g. job, college, health, home ownership, etc.). Working with the parents/guardians and other family members in support of your mentee will help to ensure their connectedness. When possible, while maintaining appropriate boundaries:

- Coordinate college visits with parents
- Celebrate mentee achievements with family
- What else?
Slide 23 – Reflection Time #7

DEPLOY TIME: 5 minutes

DEPLOY NOTES:

Have mentors fill out Time Seven on worksheet:

9. Write down 2 specific ways your mentee’s parents/guardians are allies in your mentoring relationship.

10. What is one way that you can strengthen the alliance with family in support of your mentee?

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.

Slide 24 – Tips for Staying Connected

DEPLOY TIME: 3 minutes

DEPLOY NOTES:

As we talked about earlier, staying connected may become more challenging as mentees have new schedules or if they have moved to another neighborhood or even out of state.

Talk through bullet points on the slide:

- Ask mentee for suggestions on how he/she would like to communicate and stay in touch. If it’s something they suggested, they may be more likely to follow through on it. That’s just human nature, right?
- Provide value-added mentoring. Just referencing back to our earlier conversation – your mentee needs to perceive the time spent together as “worth it.”
- At the end of each visit, schedule the next. Pull out your smart phone and set up the meeting right then and there. This is very powerful in showing your seriousness.
- Vary communication methods. Calling, texting, emailing, connecting on social media, and other communication methods would not replace face to face meetings, but can be invaluable in reinforcing what you did discuss in person and can provide great motivation for keeping the next meeting.
• Use technology. If your mentee has moved away, it doesn’t have to be the end of your mentoring relationship. Tools such as Skype provide ways to have those face-to-face meetings even when you’re not in the same town.

What else?

Slide 25 – Reflection Time #8

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Have mentors fill out Time Eight on the worksheet:

11. What is your mentee’s preferred method of communication?

12. What social media does he/she use regularly?

Give them 3 to 5 minutes to fill out, then take a few minutes to discuss as a group.
Slide 28 – Reflection Time #9

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Handout “Your Mentoring at the Crossroads Plan” (next page).

Give mentors time to review their answers and pull together a working plan draft. They can work in pairs or small groups if that is helpful. Their crossroads plan should answer these basic questions:

1. What are the focus areas?
2. When and where will they meet? (And how often?)
3. How will they communicate when not in person?
4. What changes, what stays the same?
5. What is the value proposition for the mentee? For the mentor?
Handout 2: Your Mentoring At the Crossroads Plan

Refer to the notes you took throughout the training to begin work on your plan. Complete with your mentee.

1. What are the focus areas for your mentoring relationship during this transition period?

2. When and where will you and your mentee meet? (And how often?)

3. What are some other ways you can communicate when not face-to-face?

4. What changes, what stays the same?

5. What is the value of the mentoring relationship during this transition period for your mentee? For you? i.e. What makes it “worth it” for your mentee to take the time for mentoring?
Slide 29 – Training Evaluation

DELIVERY TIME: 5 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Hand out the Training Satisfaction Survey found on the next page. Give the training participants ample time to complete it before they leave.
Training Satisfaction Survey

Date:

1. What did you find to be most useful in this workshop?

2. What did you find to be least useful?

3. Was there anything you felt was missing from this session—anything you would have liked to learn more about?

4. In what other ways could we improve this session?

5. Please rate the following on a scale of 1–5, where 1 is Poor and 5 is Excellent:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of trainer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training room</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>Training materials</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall rating</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. List other topics or concerns you would like to have addressed in upcoming training sessions.

Please use the back of this form for any additional comments.
Slide 30 – Thank you for your service

DELIVERY TIME: 3 minutes

DELIVERY NOTES:

Thank the mentors for taking the time out of their day/evening and investing themselves mentally and emotionally in care for their mentees. Consider having a certificate prepared to distribute to mentors as recognition of completing this training. You might use the recognition badges available through the National Mentoring Alliance Community of Practice to customize a certificate for your mentors: http://youthbuildmentoringalliance.org/webfm_send/720