



**Welcome to the Minnesota WIC Program  
Participant-Centered Webinar Series**

**As you enter the room, please mute your phone**

Please do not put the phone call on hold (we will all hear the music🎵)  
If your phone does not have a mute function, \*6 will mute your phone

Karen Deehy, MS, RD  
Senior Associate




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## Guidelines

- ▲ Phones on mute
- ▲ Raise hands
- ▲ Chat box



## The Plan

- ▲ **Topic area: Building Mentoring Relationships**
- ▲ **Mentoring challenges**
- ▲ **Attitudes to cultivate in mentoring**
- ▲ **Characteristics of mentoring relationships**
- ▲ **Actions to help build mentoring relationships**

## Challenges to Being a Mentor

- Meaningful mentoring requires extra time for staff to reflect, to enhance self-awareness, and allow time to see changes.
- Finding the time to meet; last-minute cancellations happen. Funding issues have cut down on the number of times we can meet.
- Not taking it seriously, or not interested. Staff do not see the immediate benefits. "Just another thing we have to do."
- Wanting to inject what I am thinking and would do.



## Challenges to Being a Mentor

- May be drawn into the conversation between CPA and participant due to being a presence in the room.
- Some mentees feel threatened/self-conscious about observations--how to alleviate this?
- Encouraging motivation, desire, and drive to strive towards excellence in work....rather than "same old, same old" attitudes.
- Helping newer staff with difficult WIC participant responses when observing appointments in a PCS way.



## Mentoring is a Relationship



Mentoring is a collaborative relationship between individuals that supports professional and/or personal development over time.



## Mentoring Allows for Self-Exploration



- Offering positive feedback and encourage my coworkers to see what they may wish to change without my telling them.
- Eliciting the mentee's ideas on what they would like to have feedback on during a session.



## Change Talk

- I wish participants would talk more. I feel like I have to do all the talking.
- I don't know how to bring up discussions around behavior change with postpartum women. I don't want to push.
- I hate conversations around weight. The parents always get so defensive.
- I want to get better at asking the questions that will bring out participants' motivations.



## Mentoring is Not About Correcting

- Open communication, no right or wrong.
- Don't be a know-it-all. Keep advice or comments to a minimum and to the most important items.
- Wanting to inject what I am thinking and would do.
- Being more interactive during the review after observation. Not telling the person what they did wrong or right but offering them an opportunity to provide that feedback first before adding my observations.



## Mentoring Builds on Strengths

Build upon strengths,  
and weaknesses will  
gradually take care of  
themselves.

- Joyce C. Lock



## Building on Strengths

- Observe the mentees strengths and point out what you see.
- Let staff know all that they do that's great!
- I have had the opportunity to observe and found it very rewarding to discuss the positive interactions noted during the observation.
- Being able to focus on one area of PCS at a time vs the "whole picture."
- Helping mentee set reasonable goals and then following through on checking in on those goals.



## You Don't Need All the Answers

- Build trust. Discuss and demonstrate that a mentor relationship is two-way and on the same plane--one does not have a stronger skill set than the other.
- Offering the mentor's time as just a time for the mentee to have feedback and feel valued in what they do, to celebrate what skills they have and use.



## Advice from a Mentor

“The thing that I need to work on is avoiding the “righting reflex”. Just listen, don’t look for things to fix. Allow yourself to be vulnerable and not have the answers. Try to avoid feeling pressure that I need to lead the conversation.”

*Minnesota PCS Mentor*



## Poll Question



## Characteristics of Mentoring Relationships



## Mentoring Builds Trust



## Relationships Take Time



- Don't rush the relationship.
- Each meeting, the person became more invested in the relationship.



## Every Relationship is Different



## Relationship Benefits...For Mentor

- Enhance your own skills
- Strengthen leadership and training skills



## Relationship Benefits...For Mentee

- Validation
- Voice
- Sounding board
- Job satisfaction
- Role model



## Celebrating Successes

- It's great to get feedback indicating that the PCS mentoring sessions are missed when we've taken a break from meeting.
- Engaging informal leaders to help program be the best it can-it's what we all want
- Explaining to newer staff that they don't have to try so hard to get participants to want to make changes. We can only do so much. They have to want to change and see it as a need.
- Teaching a staff how to tone down the tension in the room when a client had to wait and was becoming impatient with the process issues on Hubert)



## Actions to Support Mentoring Relationships



## Building A Structure

- Build trust. Set expectations early on. Have some kind of structure and plan in place.
- Create an environment of trust. What is purpose of mentoring-coaching feedback or performance evaluation or both. Need some times only for coaching and feedback that give staff a chance to make improvements, learn and experiment.
- Opportunity for mentees to provide feedback to mentors.
- Being more intentional and making time for it.



## The Initial Meeting

- Purpose of mentoring
- What to expect
- The mentee's goals
- The particulars
- Agreements



## The Initial Meeting

- Checking in with the mentees and listening to what they want to share, building rapport. Helping mentees know what to expect before the sessions.
- Assure the mentee that you will assist with your expertise and other resources on areas when he/she needs to develop skills



## Actively Working on Self-Improvement



## Poll Question



How often to mentor a new staff person?



## Let Mentors Watch You



## Other Modes of Training

- Facilitated discussions
- Activities
- Online learning
- Videos
- Books
- Working on skills together/ feedback



### Giving Everyone a Voice



### Assessing Change



### Cultivating New Mentors



### Time to Share

