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EVALUATION
of the
JUVENILE MENTORING PROGRAM

(JUMP)

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 as Amended in 1992 (Pub. L.93-415: 42 U.S.C. 5667e *et seq.*)

OJJDP

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FOREWORD

Within the framework of the Comprehensive Strategy and Juvenile Justice Plan formulated nearly a decade ago, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has introduced a variety of creative and successful initiatives to benefit many of America's deserving and needy youth. The positive impact of these programs is readily apparent from recent data that has begun to show a pattern of reduced violent crime committed by juveniles, a reduction in adolescent births, and improved academic performances as evidenced in improved standardized test scores.

Important characteristics of many of these OJJDP programs include adequate supervision, the need and ability to recognize and cultivate individual potential, and an on-going relationship with a caring adult. Recognizing these factors, in 1992 the Congress amended the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to establish the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). From its inception in FY 1995 when 42 projects were funded, JUMP has evolved to now encompass 175 mentoring programs located in 41 states and territories providing services to more then 10,000 children.

In an earlier document, the *1998 Report to Congress*, we described initial plans to evaluate the JUMP program. This *Evaluation of the Juvenile Mentoring Program Report* contains information made available to JUMP project through the end of the 2000 academic year. In addition, it introduces four areas of expanded research that will investigate the long-term effects of mentoring, sustainability of JUMP projects, relationships with local educational agencies, and an assessment of findings from local mentoring evaluations.

The evaluation of the Juvenile Mentoring Program has proven valuable to OJJDP in a variety of ways. Lessons learned throughout the evaluation have enabled us to review more critically and realistically future applications from prospective JUMP projects. The national evaluation also has provided valuable insight to local projects in areas such as staffing, mentor recruitment, and program operations. We anticipate that our continuing research will improve our understanding of the longer-term impacts of mentoring in improved school attendance and academic performance, as well as reduced delinquency and gang participation.

John J. Wilson
Acting Administrator

EVALUATION

of the

JUVENILE

MENTORING

PROGRAM

(Based on data available from 10/01/1997 through 06/30/2000)

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

INTRODUCTION

Part G of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974, as amended in 1992 (Pub. L. 93-415: 42 U.S.C. 5667e *et seq.*), established a new delinquency prevention program – the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). Through the JUMP legislation, Congress authorized the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to competitively award three-year grants to community-based not-for-profit organizations or to local educational agencies to support implementation and expansion of collaborative mentoring projects. JUMP is designed to provide one-to-one mentoring for youth at risk of delinquency, gang involvement, educational failure, or dropping out of school. The Congress also instructed OJJDP to conduct an ongoing evaluation of JUMP to assess the nature, status, and successes of the Juvenile Mentoring Program.

The information upon which this report is based was obtained from documents, the JUMP Management Information System (JUMP MIS), telephone interviews, and site visits conducted by the evaluation staff at selected projects. Documents included grantee applications, contract amendments, quarterly narrative reports, information from a standardized questionnaire administered to participating youth 12 years of age and older upon entry and exit from the mentoring relationship, and exit forms completed by youth and mentors.

The JUMP MIS consists of data collection instruments, application software, and user documentation developed specifically for the OJJDP juvenile mentoring evaluation. Local JUMP projects use the instruments to collect data on their project, youth, mentors, and matches. They subsequently enter this information into their computer system using the application software provided by the evaluator. The grantees always have complete use of all mentoring information, and can generate various standardized reports at any time to support program operation, grant management, fund raising, mentor recruitment and retention, local evaluations, and project assessments. The JUMP MIS software abstracts selected data quarterly, which project staff then send to the evaluation team via e-mail or diskette. Once edited, this information is consolidated into an integrated database that is used to support the national evaluation. A copy of the integrated JUMP database also is provided each quarter to OJJDP, where Special Emphasis Division staff members use it to assist in grant administration, assessment, and management.

The evaluation team also visits a representative number of selected JUMP projects each year. These site visits afford an opportunity to interact with and obtain information and perceptions from agency management, JUMP project staff, mentors, youth, family members, and school administrators and teachers.

The evaluation team contacts each grantee shortly before its JUMP project is to end. These structured interviews document various issues including sustainability, recruitment, interaction with the local educational agency (LEA), and perceived goal attainment.

Each JUMP grantee, under the terms of the solicitation announcement published in the Federal Register, is required to submit data to support the evaluation of the national Juvenile Mentoring Program. The existing 175 JUMP grantees are quite diverse, and include school, site, and community-based programs that may target elementary, middle, or high school aged youth. Consequently, not all data utilized by the national evaluation will pertain to or be reported by each JUMP project. The data contained in this report reflects information reported by JUMP grantees through June 30, 2000.

The original research design proposed two basic analytical approaches. First, a Lagged-Stage design would attempt to detect positive change in participating youth by comparing those exiting the program with those entering it. The second approach was a best-practices approach, testing grantee features as predictors for match success and positive change. A structural equation modeling analysis was proposed for this second approach. These two approaches were proposed because they were appropriate for addressing specific research challenges faced by the JUMP program national evaluation. The specific challenges arise from the diversity of program models and objectives between JUMP grants, the sheer quantity of grantees, and the impracticality of constructing a nonmentored control group.

While we still believe that these approaches offer the best hope for a rigorous, quantitatively based evaluation of the effectiveness of JUMP programs, it is clear that the implementation of even these approaches is not without pitfalls. First, the Lagged-Stage design requires multiple years of program operation since outgoing youth are to be compared with the subsequent year's incoming youth. However, as will be shown in the growth-modeling analysis, JUMP grantees reach peak efficiency and capacity in their last year of operation as a JUMP-sponsored program. In fact, many programs have very few youth until well into their second year. This limits the analysis to comparing the handful of youth in Year 2 to the great number of youth in Year 3. Further, our data now show that a great number of the grantees do not restrict the youth in the programs to just one year. Therefore the youth do not appear to be exiting in Year 2, but additional youth are added during Year 3. This makes the comparison proposed problematic, since the treatment (i.e., mentoring) is still ongoing. We are attempting to overcome this unanticipated challenge by identifying grantees that fit this research model. Of course, this would limit the conclusions based on this analysis to only those selected grantees.

The second approach continues to be a viable research methodology. However, it is based upon the return of POSIT and Follow-Up POSIT questionnaires from grantees who have eligible youth. We currently have received sufficient POSIT questionnaires to begin the analysis; however, the Follow-Up POSITs (not surprisingly) have yet to be returned in sufficient numbers since they are administered at the end of the project years. As more are returned, we will attempt to conduct the analysis proposed.

The implementation and expansion of the JUMP program has been an evolutionary process, with the 82 projects funded in FY 1999 having significantly different directives and resources available than did the 41 projects funded in FY 1995. These changes, which include the creation of the National Mentoring Center and more explicit program announcements and reporting guidelines, continue to have a positive impact on the timeliness and completeness of data available for this national evaluation.

This *Evaluation of the Juvenile Mentoring Program Report* begins with an overview of the legislative intent and a brief summary of major JUMP program characteristics. The second chapter provides information about the diverse nature of the current 175 JUMP projects. Chapters Three, Four, and Five present specific information on youth, mentors, and mentoring relationships. The remaining chapters of the report document benefits perceived to date, characteristics of effective mentoring programs, and considerations of future program operations and oversight. Finally, the report concludes with a discussion of expanded evaluation activities.

Chapter One: Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of pertinent factors that were instrumental in determining the initial need for the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) and the extent to which these needs continue to exist. The relationship between these factors and the JUMP legislation is presented, and the legislation is discussed in detail. The chapter concludes with a summary of JUMP expenditures to date and the ways in which JUMP projects are addressing important legislative mandates to support mentoring across the country.

Background: America's Youth Often Face Many Challenges

The degree to which children are able to grow into productive, healthy, and happy adults is influenced by a number of variables such as family structure, community support, economic security, and educational opportunities. Each of these factors impacts childhood development. While many children grow up in environments that are rich with opportunity, large numbers of children are not as fortunate. For youth facing increased risk factors, The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has created a series of programs to help youth in the development of skills, support, and resources.

> ### *A Note About Language*
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> For ease of reference, OJJDP has drawn a distinction between the terms, *JUMP Program* and *JUMP Project*. Throughout this document, the term *JUMP program* refers to the national program, including all of the community-based agencies, the evaluation team, and the technical assistance provider. The term *JUMP project* refers to individual, community-based JUMP grantees.

One of the most significant influences in a young person's life is the available social support system. Over the past decades, the family structures in which children live have changed dramatically. National statistics indicate that 77 percent of American children lived with two parents in 1980. In 1998, only about 68 percent of American children lived with both parents. More than half of African-American and Hispanic children live in single-parent households (*Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1999; America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*). While growing up in a single-parent family is not always problematic in itself, it is often the case that single-parent households must focus more time, attention, and energy on meeting basic subsistence needs and may have fewer resources to devote to enrichment activities.

In addition to seeing increased numbers of children growing up without the benefit of having both parents in the home, large numbers of American youth grow up in poverty. In 1997,

21 percent of children living in the United States were living in families with an income below the poverty line. Nine percent of America's children were classified as living in extreme poverty, defined as families with income less than 50 percent of the poverty line. Twenty-seven percent of American children lived with parents who did not have full-time, year round employment *(Kids Count Data Book, 2000, Annie E. Casey Foundation)*. Again, although many children who grow up in poverty are able to develop into healthy and productive adults, it is often the case that impoverished families may have fewer supports and enrichment activities to offer their children.

Available data regarding the educational and juvenile justice characteristics of America's youth are similarly troubling. In 1997, ten percent of American youth between the ages of 16 and 19 had dropped out of high school. An additional 10 percent of youth between the ages of 16 and 19 were neither in school nor working. While society in general has experienced great leaps in technology and communications, these benefits have been slow to reach some of our nation's children. In 1997, 9 percent of children lived in a household with no telephone. Forty-nine percent lived in households with no computer. Seventy-three percent lived in homes with no Internet access. It is clear that great numbers of American youth are being left behind as the technology that will shape the future races ahead.

Juvenile justice statistics continue to indicate disturbing levels of youth involvement in delinquent activities. In 1997, approximately 412 of every 100,000 youth were arrested for violent crimes. Approximately 2,338 of every 100,000 were arrested for property crimes. *(Kids Count Data Book, 2000, Annie E. Casey Foundation)*. Gang life is a factor for many youth. In 1995, 31,000 gangs operated in nearly 4,800 U.S. cities. Of the approximately 846,000 total gang members, more than half were under age 18 *(Snyder & Sickmund, 1999 OJJDP National Report and Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1999; America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being)*.

Taken individually, each category of risk factor presents significant challenges to today's youth. Compounding the issue is the fact that many youth face multiple risk factors throughout childhood and adolescence. Perhaps more troublesome than the risk factors themselves is the fact that a growing number of youth lack positive, influential social supports upon which they can rely. When children do not have family or other systems readily available to provide supervision and support, or when families and other community supports are overwhelmed by the task of meeting even basic needs alone, a mentor can help fill this gap.

The JUMP Legislation

Mentoring has existed in different forms, across cultures, for centuries. Although the nature and application of mentoring has varied over time, the term in American culture today is generally defined as a one-to-one relationship between a pair of unrelated individuals, usually of different ages. Current research is beginning to demonstrate that providing youth with consistent adult support through a supervised, long-term mentoring relationship may improve

grades and family relationships, and may help prevent initiation of drug and alcohol use (Tierney and Grossman, 1995). Studies such as these have lead to increasing recognition of mentoring as a promising intervention for enriching a young person's life.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has long recognized the fact that effective youth prevention and intervention programs must aim to reduce factors that increase risk and enhance protective factors that shield children from risk. In 1993, OJJDP published its *Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders* to assist states and local communities in their efforts to reduce juvenile crime and delinquency. To achieve the goals set forth within the *Comprehensive Strategy*, OJJDP initiated different programs to address the needs of young people living in America's communities. A comprehensive framework was established with programs ranging from prevention and early intervention to graduated sanctions for juveniles who enter the juvenile justice system. An important element of the *Comprehensive Strategy* is the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP). Part G of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act of 1974, as amended in 1992 (Pub. L. 93-415: 42 U.S.C. 5667e *et seq.*), established the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) as a new delinquency prevention program aimed at reducing factors that increase risk and enhancing protective factors that buffer children. The JUMP program is particularly interesting in that it was created in an effort to address the complexity of risk factors that influence today's youth, including family conflict, academic failure, negative peer relations/influences, and the availability of drugs and alcohol. This is in contrast with programs that target one specific behavior or risk factor alone.

Another Note About Language

It is important to recognize the importance of terminology as it applies to the population most directly affected by the JUMP legislation – those youth who are targeted to receive mentoring services.

Throughout this document, we use the term "at-risk" because it is the terminology used in the authorizing JUMP legislation. This is in an effort to represent, most accurately, the spirit and intent of the legislation and is not meant to reflect any one particular theory or philosophy of youth work.

Different agencies refer to this youth population using a variety of terms, with some agencies preferring to avoid terminology that may be considered negative or stigmatizing.

Through the JUMP legislation, Congress authorized OJJDP to award grants to community-based nonprofit organizations or local educational agencies to support the implementation or expansion of mentoring programs. A key element of the JUMP legislation, as authorized in 1992, is its support of one-to-one mentoring for youth who are at risk of delinquency, gang involvement, educational failure, and dropping out of school. Additionally, the legislation defines "mentoring" specifically as a one-to-one relationship between an adult age 21 or over (mentor) and a juvenile (mentee) that occurs over an extended period of time. A "mentor" is a person who works with an at-risk youth, by establishing a supportive relationship and providing the youth with academic assistance and exposure to new experiences. Mentors participate in the mentoring program as volunteers and are not paid. The term *at-risk youth* is used to identify a youth who is at risk of academic failure, dropping out of school, or

involvement in delinquent activities. Additionally, *at-risk youth* includes those attending schools in which 60 percent or more of the youth qualify to receive a free or reduced-price lunch.

In 1994, JUMP program guidelines were published to ensure adherence to the intent of the JUMP legislation and to provide the framework within which the grantee projects would operate. JUMP project guidelines emphasize the following:

- Collaboration with a local educational agency (LEA), if the grantee is not such an agency itself;
- Recruitment of appropriate adult (age 21 or older) mentors, including thorough background checks for all volunteer mentors;
- A plan for recruiting, training, supervising, and retaining volunteer mentors;
- Procedures to establish most appropriate matches between youth and mentor;
- Guidelines for youth and mentor project activities (i.e., frequency, duration, and nature of meetings);
- Definition of at-risk youth population to be served;
- Procedures for gathering and reporting data to support self-evaluation and a national JUMP evaluation.

Under the JUMP legislation, OJJDP funds a variety of services to support JUMP projects, including training and technical assistance, information and technology transfer, and program research and evaluation. To develop increased knowledge and determine the success of mentoring, funding for a national, cross-site evaluation was a provision of the legislation. All JUMP projects are required to participate in the ongoing research and national evaluation.

JUMP Expenditures

In fiscal year (FY) 1994 and 1995, OJJDP announced the availability of funds and competitively awarded grants of up to $180,000 each, for a three-year period to 41 recipients to implement mentoring projects. Another 52 agencies were awarded funds of up to $190,000 with combined FY 1996 and 1997 funds, for a total of 93 grant projects. In FY 1999, an

Cohort	Maximum Funding Available
Cohort I (1995)	$60,000 per year $180,000 total over three years
Cohort II (1997)	$63,333 per year $190,000 total over three years
Cohort III (1999)	$66,666 per year $200,000 total over three years
Cohort IV (1999)	$66,666 per year $200,000 total over three years
Cohort V (2000)	$70,000 per year $210,000 total over three years

Exhibit 1.1 – Summary of JUMP expenditures to date

additional 70 agencies were awarded funds of up to $200,000 each for a three-year period. The most recent announcement and award of JUMP funds came in FY 2000 when 12 agencies were awarded up to $210,000 each, to implement juvenile mentoring programs for at-risk youth. To date, OJJDP has distributed over $37 million in support of approximately 175 juvenile mentoring programs in 39 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

JUMP Legislation Provides Additional Support for Mentoring

In addition to providing financial support for local community-based mentoring projects, the JUMP Program supports youth mentoring across the country in a variety of ways. These activities include the establishment of the National Mentoring Center, the development of the Public/Private Mentoring Alliance, the OJJDP-hosted JUMP website, and partnerships with national youth mentoring organizations.

The National Mentoring Center

One of the most significant ways in which the JUMP legislation supports mentoring is through the National Mentoring Center (NMC), which was created and is managed under contract to OJJDP by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories in Portland, OR. The NMC sponsors regional training sessions throughout the year based on a curriculum designed to assist agencies in designing and managing mentoring projects in a variety of settings. These trainings are open to JUMP and non-JUMP projects. The NMC is also able to provide some on-site technical assistance to projects that identify a specific need for more in-depth training. Often sites that receive this type of assistance invite other local mentoring projects to attend the specialized training, thus maximizing the benefits achieved. The NMC maintains an online lending library, posts valuable information on its website, and publishes a newsletter.

The Public/Private Mentoring Alliance

Recognizing the wealth of information that is available in the mentoring community from agencies with experience in the field, OJJDP has taken steps to collaborate with different groups for the purpose of information sharing. To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, OJJDP founded the Public/Private Mentoring Alliance in 1997. The mission of the alliance is *to maximize the coordination and dissemination of information, resources, and opportunities available through mentoring initiatives in this country for youth* . . . The Alliance accomplishes this mission by focusing on seven fundamental principles. The Alliance's membership of agencies continues to expand with representatives from these agencies meeting regularly to provide a forum for information sharing and an exchange of ideas.

Seven Principles of the Public/Private Mentoring Alliance

- **Networking** – through consistent and regular meetings and electronic listserve and web pages of mentoring organizations;
- **Fulfillment Database** – that will connect callers to toll-free telephone numbers for local mentoring opportunities;
- **Public Information Campaigns** – on the value of mentoring, outreach to national and local news journalists, engagement of the entertainment media, as well as recognition of mentors on a national level through various mentoring awards;
- **Local Capacity Building** – through a national mentoring training and technical assistance mechanism, to develop and enhance existing mentoring programs that work;
- **Advocacy/Policy** – efforts to more actively engage federal and state legislation and initiatives in mentoring;
- **Research/Evaluation** – statement on the impact of past evaluation, the direction of future ones, and the need to support local evaluation capacity;
- **National Mentoring Conference** – discuss obstacles and success both locally and nationally in mentoring. The conference will also serve to garner support and expand advocacy efforts at the federal level, and highlight state efforts that are working.

Information Via the Internet

One of the ways in which OJJDP makes information accessible to communities across the country is through the maintenance of an Internet website containing information about mentoring. This website, which includes links to a number of other related organizations, provides both JUMP and non-JUMP mentoring projects with invaluable resources for recruitment, training, funding, and program planning and management.
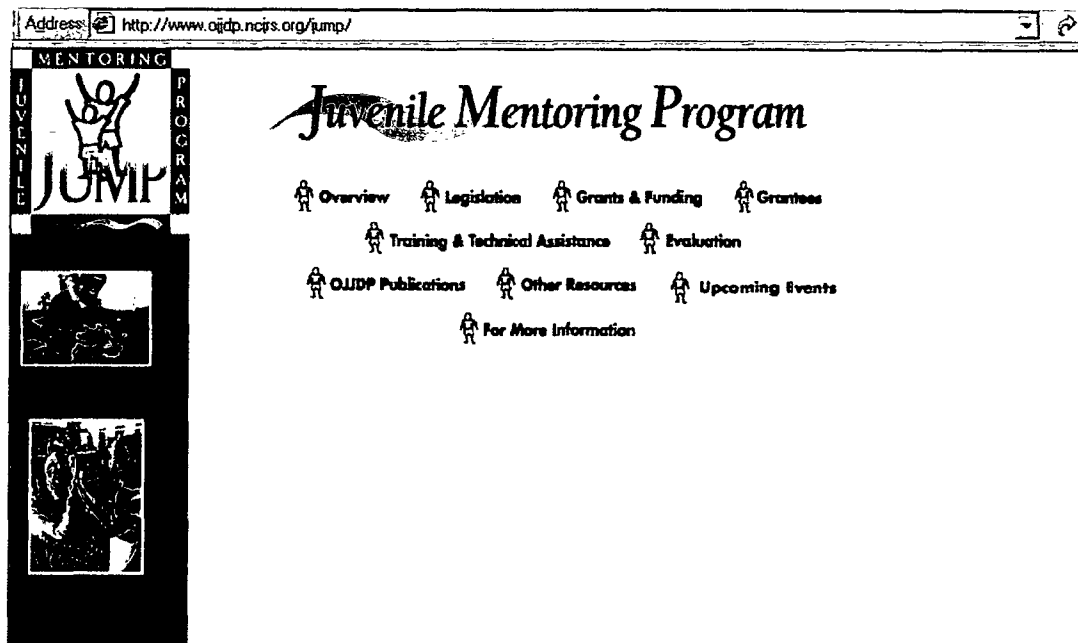
Exhibit 1.2 – OJJDP uses various forms of communication, including the Internet, to communicate with communities.

Solicitations for Community-based Mentoring Projects

While OJJDP provides support to the broader mentoring community through the NMC, the Public/Private Mentoring Alliance, and various means of information sharing, by far the most substantial focused support is in the form of operating funds that are distributed to local agencies. Since 1994, OJJDP has released four solicitations for new JUMP projects. Each announcement has resulted in hundreds of applications from communities across the country. Since the initial solicitation, OJJDP has learned much about the ways the agencies design and implement mentoring projects. Subsequent JUMP Requests for Proposals (RFPs) have evolved to delineate more clearly the goals, expectations, and requirements of the enabling legislation. The increased level of detail in the RFP has allowed potential projects to structure their programs in keeping with the spirit of the JUMP legislation in several key areas, including local education agency cooperation, participation in evaluation activities, emphasis on one-to-one relationships, and adherence to guidelines for mentor selection. Each of these aspects of the JUMP program is discussed below.

LEA Cooperation
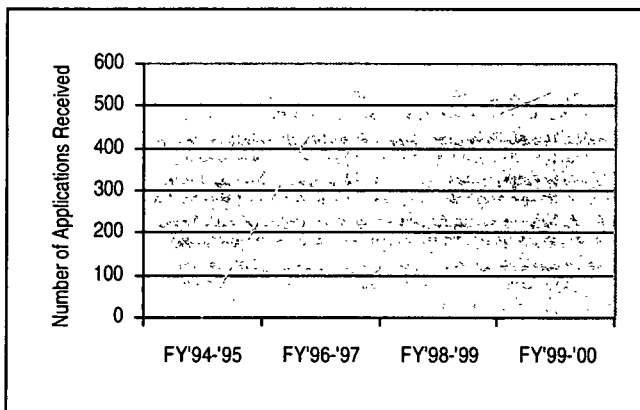
Exhibit 1.3 – JUMP RFPs have evoked a great response across the country.

The enabling legislation for JUMP emphasizes the importance of LEAs in creating and sustaining effective JUMP mentoring projects. Specifically, the legislation states that grants will be made to "*local educational agencies (each of which agency shall be in partnership with a public or private agency, institution, or business)*" (*42 U.S.C.§ 5667e-2*). Therefore, each JUMP grantee is required either to be an LEA itself, or to be a public or private nonprofit agency that has formed a partnership with an LEA to implement the JUMP project.

Approximately 89 percent or 156 of the currently funded JUMP projects are public or private nonprofit organizations that have formed partnerships with LEAs. The remaining grantees are LEAs themselves. The LEA relationships are critical to the JUMP projects in terms of both project operation and national evaluation. From a project management perspective, schools represent an environment in which large numbers of students are concentrated for a large period of time. Therefore, they are natural settings for youth recruitment and for project activities. The school environment may also provide a safe and familiar place for youth

recruitment. Parents may also be more comfortable having their children participate in a project that is associated with the local school. Finally, many projects find that the adults they target to be mentors are more comfortable meeting with youth in a school setting. Mentors may feel that they have more resources and support within the school setting than they do in the community. The schools then become a familiar and supportive environment for the mentors, ultimately strengthening the mentor/mentee relationship.
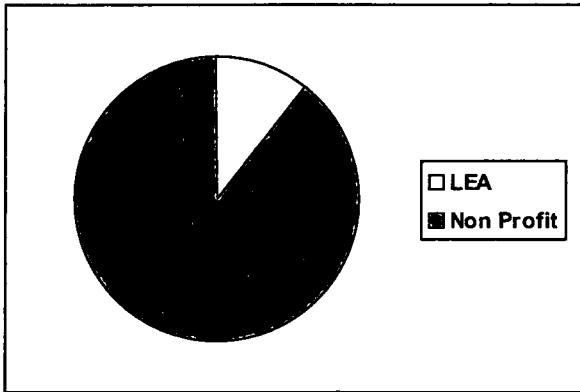
Exhibit 1.4 – JUMP Projects are primarily non-profit
organizations that partner with an LEA.

School relationships are especially critical to the JUMP projects in terms of their ability to measure their progress toward legislative goals and to provide required information to the national evaluation. The JUMP legislation clearly stated three goals for the national program, two of which are directly related to schools. These two school-related goals are:

- To improve academic performance;

- To reduce the dropout rate.

To determine the success of the JUMP program in meeting these goals, it is important for local projects to gather information about the academic performance of the youth participating in their projects. Local projects must be able to access grade-averages, attendance information and other academic for their youth participants, document that information, and transmit it to the national evaluation team. This type of information is absolutely essential for OJJDP to determine the overall success of the JUMP national initiative.

In the initial years of the JUMP program, the nature of LEA partnerships was quite diverse. In grant proposals, potential JUMP grantees submitted letters of support from their LEA partners. Most of these letters were vague in terms of the type of support the LEA was to provide. As a practical matter, these letters were often more reflective of the support of a particular individual, and not the LEA as an entity. Often, school leadership would change and the level of support for JUMP would evaporate, as new administrators entered with their own priorities and agendas. Many JUMP projects discovered that they encountered difficulties in implementing projects, such as lack of meeting space for mentors and mentees, limited access to resources and perhaps most notably, *lack of access to information regarding the youth's academic performance.*

In an effort to guide applicants in establishing relationships with LEAs, the FY 2000 funding announcement for the JUMP projects established clearer, more specific guidelines for the nature of the partnership between LEAs and nonprofit agencies. The solicitation states:

> *Relationships between the private nonprofit sector and the schools are important. Real collaboration must take place with joint decision-making. Problems in implementing and operating a project have occurred when this relationship is weak or not clearly defined.*

> ***FY2000 OJJDP Discretionary Program Announcement, Juvenile Mentoring Program, page 3.***

Further, the solicitation states:

> *Because two goals of this program are to improve academic performance and to reduce the dropout rate, it is imperative that school-related information on JUMP youth be made available to OJJDP by participating schools. Therefore, applications must contain a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by any non-LEA applicant and the participating LEA... (This agreement should) state that the LEA will provide academic grades, attendance records, information regarding disciplinary actions, and other pertinent data on a quarterly basis for youth being served by JUMP.*

> ***FY2000 OJJDP Discretionary Program Announcement, Juvenile Mentoring Program, page 4.***

This solicitation included a sample MOU for use by the applicant. JUMP grantees awarded funds in response to this solicitation will begin participating in the project in late 2000 or early 2001. It is anticipated that the clearer delineation of LEA responsibilities in the grant announcement will assist projects both in implementation and information gathering throughout the term of their grants.

Participation in the Evaluation Activities

The JUMP legislation emphasized the importance of evaluating the program's effectiveness in meeting stated goals. Specifically, the legislation called for *"a report regarding the success and effectiveness of the grant program in reducing juvenile delinquency and gang participation, improving academic performance, and reducing the dropout rate" (42 U.S.C. 5667F)*. Since 1995, OJJDP has supported a national evaluation of the JUMP project. Earlier program announcements stated that, *"projects funded under JUMP must provide written assurance that they will participate in the national evaluation" (FY 1996 OJJDP Discretionary Program Announcement, Juvenile Mentoring Program, page 7)*. OJJDP has also taken steps to

encourage local projects to conduct meaningful self-evaluations, in order to determine the community-specific impacts of their mentoring projects.

Again, as initial JUMP projects began to design and implement mentoring in their communities, it became clear that there was a need for a more specific description of the responsibilities JUMP grantees had to institutionalize to participate effectively in the national evaluation. Many of the JUMP projects had not participated in a nationwide evaluation before and were unfamiliar with the standardized methods that would be used to collect information. Other projects had developed policies and procedures that made compliance with the national evaluation awkward. Few of the projects had specific plans for local evaluations.

In FY2000, OJJDP clarified grantee requirements for participation in the national evaluation and again emphasized the importance of project self-evaluation in determining outcomes. Grant applicants received specific information regarding the nature of the data collection, the technological requirements for data collection and transmission (including computer specifications), and the scope of the assistance provided for projects to conduct self-evaluation. These guidelines should ensure that projects funded under this solicitation begin participating in the JUMP project with clear expectations about evaluation requirements and the necessary resources to meet these criteria.

Emphasis on One-to-One Relationships

Since the inception of the JUMP program, OJJDP has emphasized the one-to-one nature of the mentoring relationships it supports. Since the first group of JUMP grantees received funding in 1995, there has been a clear expectation that any given mentor would be assigned to only one mentee at any given point in time. JUMP grantees have largely complied with this requirement.

In some cases, however, JUMP funds are awarded to agencies who, at the time of the grant award, already had mentors in place working with youth in a group mentoring type of relationship. These agencies generally opt to transition youth and mentors to one-to-one relationships, or to support the existing group mentoring project with non-JUMP funds. Most of these agencies leave youth in group mentoring relationships until sufficient numbers of mentors can be recruited for one-to-one relationships. Today, a small number of youth who are enrolled in the JUMP program continue to be involved in relationships that are not one-to-one.

Another practical consideration that impacts many projects is that mentor recruitment can be difficult. It is often the case that there are many more youth in need of mentors than there are mentors available. Many projects face a strong temptation to pair mentors with multiple youth, in order to pair as many youth as possible with a positive adult role model. In meeting this challenge, projects will need to become creative in their mentor recruitment efforts, as well as their programs and activities aimed at mentor retention. OJJDP has training in the area of mentor recruitment largely through the work of the National Mentoring Center, which offers

different resources to projects struggling to recruit adequate numbers of volunteers. A new approach to mentor recruitment – a postcard campaign proposed at the National Mentoring Center's 1999 Regional Training Conference in New Orleans – has just been implemented with promising initial results. Finally, many projects choose to augment their one-to-one mentoring relationships with group activities. This allows youth to interact with a number of other adult role models and may also help to maintain the interest of youth who currently are not matched with mentors.

Adherence to Mentor Selection Guidelines

Perhaps one of the most common questions JUMP grantees ask pertains to the criteria for mentor selections, specifically, the origin of the 21 year age requirement mandated by the authorizing legislation. Some projects, particularly those located near colleges or universities, receive mentor applications from adults younger than age 21 whom they feel would otherwise be excellent mentor candidates. Additionally, some projects feel that their youth may identify more strongly or have more in common with a younger mentor. Projects may also feel that mentors who are college students may help their mentees see the benefits of higher education in ways that mentors who are more removed from their college experiences cannot.

There is no clear answer to the questions posed by projects that wish to utilize younger adults in their mentoring projects. Certainly an effective mentoring program relies on trustworthy, responsible adult volunteers who can serve as positive role models for youth. Effective mentors must also have the time available to spend with their mentees and some basic resources (e.g., appropriate transportation) to maintain the mentoring relationship. None of these factors necessarily precludes the use of mentors who are under age 21.

To comply with the legislation, while still accessing the volunteer resources of colleges and universities, some mentoring projects have developed projects that allow mentees to form relationships with individual mentors aged 21 and over while also affording them the opportunity to interact with college students. Often these programs offer group activities, led by college-aged facilitators, that take place **in addition to** the one-to-one activities that involve the mentored youth and the over-21 mentors. Projects that have utilized this approach report that they feel the youth benefit, both from the mentoring relationship and from the relationships that develop with the younger facilitators.

Although there is much to be learned from current JUMP projects, it also is clear that the JUMP program has benefited from the experiences of the first groups of JUMP grantees. Clearly it is important that JUMP applicants have as much information regarding program expectations and requirements as they are writing their applications. This helps to ensure that projects will be designed in such a way that they comply with both the letter and the spirit of the legislation without compromising the mission and values of each individual agency.

Conclusion

Today's youth live in a time of exciting opportunity and great growth in the realm of technology and communication. They also face social, educational, and economic challenges in increasing numbers. OJJDP has developed a *Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent, and Chronic Juvenile Offenders* in an effort to assist communities in offering positive alternatives to truancy and delinquent behavior. An important component of this plan is the JUMP Program. The JUMP program supports local community-based mentoring projects, as well as national training and technical assistance in the field of mentoring and a number of other collaborations and information-sharing strategies designed to improve the quality and availability of mentoring opportunities for America's youth. The next chapter of this report discusses the community-based agencies that are the heart of the JUMP program.

Chapter Two: JUMP Projects

Introduction

Within the parameters established by the legislation, JUMP grantees have flexibility to design a mentoring program that best suits their individual communities. This discretion has resulted in extensive variability among projects with respect to various operational and programmatic characteristics. This chapter provides a summary of these key features and details the creative ways in which grantee agencies seek to fulfill the mission of the JUMP program. Data for this chapter were gathered from several sources, including the automated collection of standardized information from all JUMP projects, Quarterly Narrative Evaluation Reports, selected site visits, and telephone interviews.

Required Attributes

All JUMP projects are required to match adult (over age 21), volunteer mentors with eligible youth. Areas specifically targeted by the legislation include youth with demonstrated participation in delinquent activities, gang involvement, use/abuse of alcohol, tobacco and/or other drugs (ATOD), academic failure, and dropping out of school. The intent of the mentoring relationship, as described in the legislation, is to provide one-to-one support, guidance, and supervision for participating youth to help buffer the risks that may interrupt their healthy development. JUMP projects may be stand-alone agencies or components of broader agencies. Additionally, to be considered for a JUMP grant, the agency must have identified:

- a community need;
- a local educational agency (LEA) with whom they will partner if they are not such an organization themselves;
- a plan for recruiting, screening, training, supervising, and retaining volunteer mentors;
- the defined at-risk population they are intending to serve;
- procedures for ensuring appropriate matches between youth and mentors;
- clear guidelines for the frequency, duration, and nature of the mentor/youth meetings;
- a plan for project implementation;
- procedures for monitoring progress toward project goals.

Using the JUMP MIS Agency Profile, all JUMP grantees are required to submit comprehensive information related to their agency and program structure to the national evaluation team at the time of the grant award. Grantees are also asked to submit changes or corrections to their agency profiles as necessary, throughout the life of the grant.

JUMP Projects Are Located Throughout the United States

In 1995, grants years were awarded to 41 JUMP projects in 24 states and the District of Columbia. In 1997, 52 additional projects were funded, bringing JUMP to a total of 33 states and the District of Columbia. Most recently, in the year 2000, 82 new projects were funded, bringing JUMP to a total of 39 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Currently, OJJDP anticipates making approximately 30 JUMP awards to new grantees in the winter of 2000.

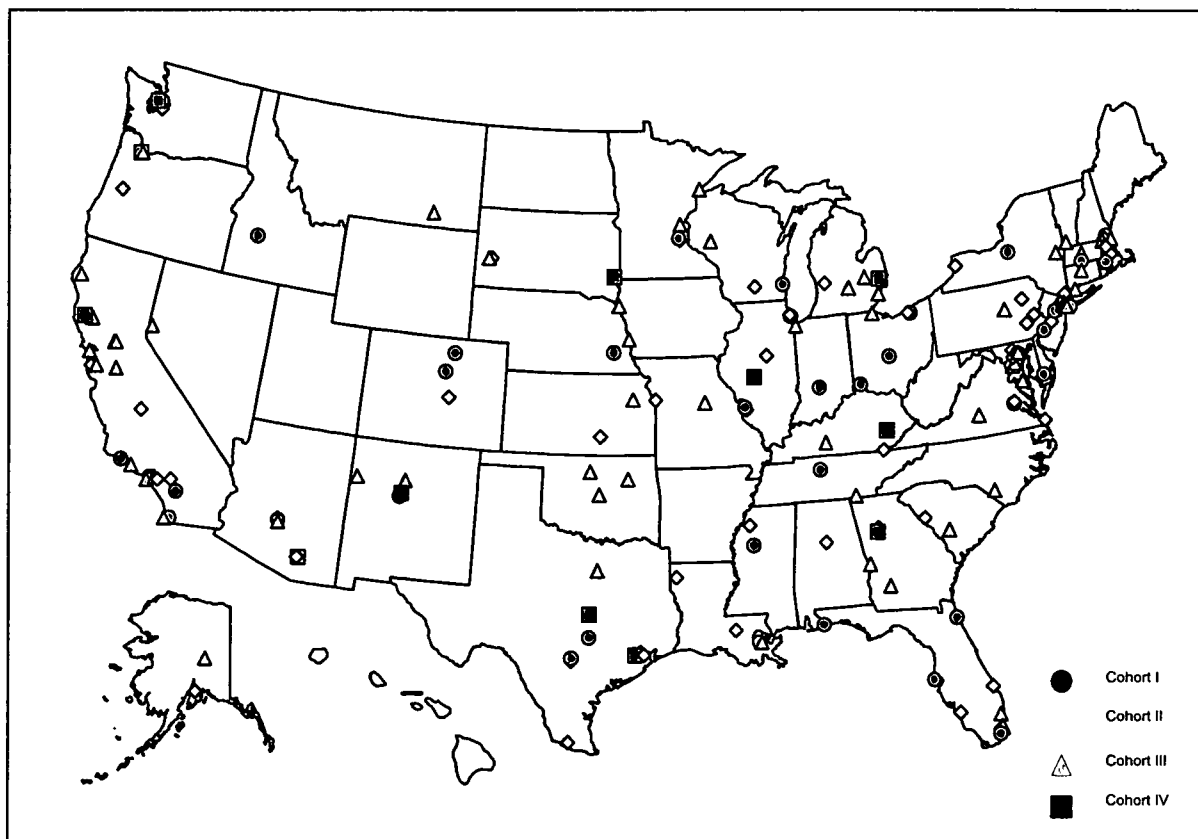Exhibit 2.1 – JUMP projects are located across the United States.

JUMP Projects Collaborate with Different Agencies

The 175 funded JUMP projects represent an interesting organizational diversity. Some JUMP grantees represent affiliates of national organizations, or partnerships between a community-based agency and an affiliate of a broader organization. Other JUMP projects operate more independently.

Currently the JUMP national evaluation gathers information about the nature of these collaborative relationships. Specifically, grantees are asked whether the primary recipient of the JUMP grant is an affiliate of a broader organization. For example, several JUMP projects are affiliates of the national organization Communities in Schools. Grantees are also asked if they have a subcontract with an affiliate of any broader organization such as a JUMP grantee that is a local school district who negotiated a subcontract with the local Big Brothers/Big Sisters chapter to provide mentoring services through JUMP.
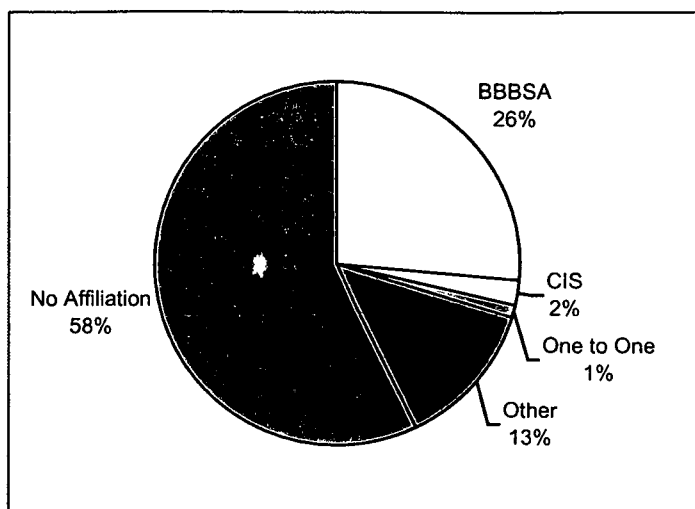
Exhibit 2.2 – JUMP projects are affiliated with broader organizations.

Of the 175 projects currently funded, 75 (26 percent) report an affiliation with a national organization. Many of these projects are affiliated with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BBBSA), either as the primary grantee or as a subcontractor with an LEA. In addition to affiliations with BBBSA, grantees are also asked specifically about affiliations with Communities in Schools, One to One, and America's Promise.* Thirteen percent of JUMP projects state that they are affiliated with an organization *other* than those specifically listed in the JUMP data collection instruments. These other organizations with which JUMP projects are affiliated include the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, the YMCA, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), the Children's Home Society, and the California Mentor Initiative.

JUMP projects benefit from these affiliations in a variety of ways. A relationship with an existing organization can lend credibility to a new project. The existing guidelines and infrastructure that are often found in these broader agencies can contribute to volunteer recruitment, fund-raising efforts, and community support. Larger organizations often have staff and volunteer curricula in place that also can help projects get started quickly.

However, it is important to note that 58 percent of JUMP projects do not report affiliations with any broader organization. Smaller, stand-alone mentoring projects can be just as successful as their affiliated counterparts. We will continue to explore, document, and re-examine how the experience of building and maintaining a mentoring project differs between these two groups.

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* Although the JUMP data collection allows grantees to report an affiliation to America's Promise, to date, no JUMP grantee has identified itself as such.

JUMP Projects Differ in Their Levels of Prior Experience in Youth Mentoring
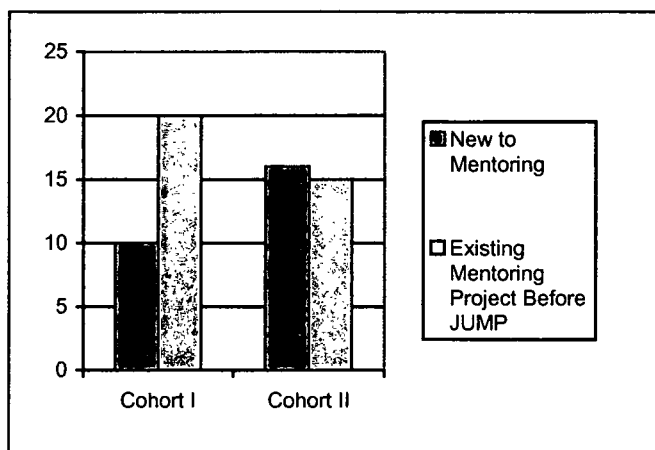
Exhibit 2.3 - JUMP grantees demonstrated different degrees of youth mentoring experience prior to being awarded JUMP grant funds.

In addition to examining the affiliations that JUMP grantee agencies have with broader organizations, it is interesting to examine the different levels of experience that JUMP projects have had with youth mentoring. JUMP grants are often awarded to agencies that have very little experience in offering youth mentoring, and wish to offer this as a new intervention to their youth population. Often these agencies, while having little formal mentoring experience, have a long history of working with youth in other capacities. In contrast, other JUMP grantees are agencies that have a great deal of experience in mentoring but want to expand their existing project into a new school or neighborhood, or to a new youth population. For example, some community-based mentoring projects may utilize JUMP funds to form a new school-based mentoring program.

The JUMP national evaluation currently gathers data on the levels of experience that JUMP grantees have in offering a formal mentoring program to their youth populations. Two groups of JUMP grantees were surveyed at the time that their grants ended: those who had been awarded JUMP funds in 1995 (Cohort I) and those who had been awarded JUMP funds in 1997 (Cohort II). During telephone interviews, agency staff were asked whether the agency had been involved in offering youth mentoring before the JUMP grant was awarded, or if mentoring was a new intervention for this agency. Of the 30 Cohort I projects that completed the survey, ten were new to mentoring and 20 had been involved in youth mentoring before the JUMP grant. Of the 31 Cohort II projects that completed the interview, 16 were new to mentoring and 15 had been involved in youth mentoring before the JUMP grant.

JUMP Projects Target a Variety of Youth Populations

JUMP projects are mandated to serve at-risk youth. Specifically, the JUMP legislation targets youth who are at risk of the following:

- involvement in delinquent behaviors;
- involvement in gang activities;
- school failure/dropping out.

Within these guidelines, JUMP projects have considerable latitude in structuring their projects to serve particular target populations. While specific characteristics of the youth served are discussed in detail in Chapter Three, it is important to note some of the organizational differences in projects here.

Program Location

JUMP projects are located in a variety of settings across the country, from crowded urban locations to rural Native American tribal lands. Each setting presents a unique array of challenges and opportunities to projects seeking to match mentors and youth.

One of the simplest yet most informative distinctions among programs is their characterization as urban, suburban, and rural projects. For example, urban projects often face intense challenges associated with overcrowding and higher costs of living. Rural projects contend with a lack of availability of public transportation and few alternatives for recreational activities. Each JUMP project is asked to identify its location, based on U.S. Census definitions of communities. A majority of JUMP projects (113, or 65 percent) are located in urban areas. Twenty-one projects are located in rural areas, and 16 projects in suburban areas.
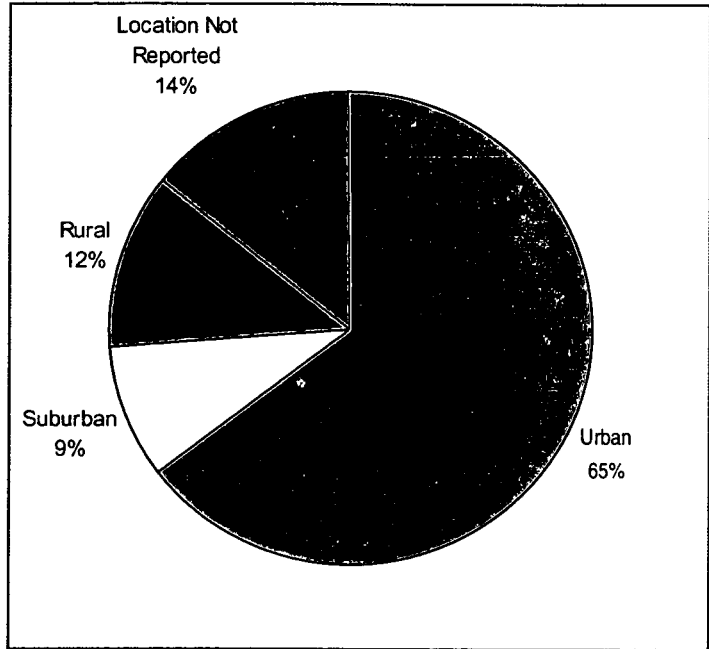
Exhibit 2.4 – JUMP projects are located in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

Target Populations

JUMP projects also target youth living in a variety of settings. While the majority of JUMP projects work with youth living in the community, some projects are located in alternative living environments. Specifically, JUMP projects are asked if they target youth living in
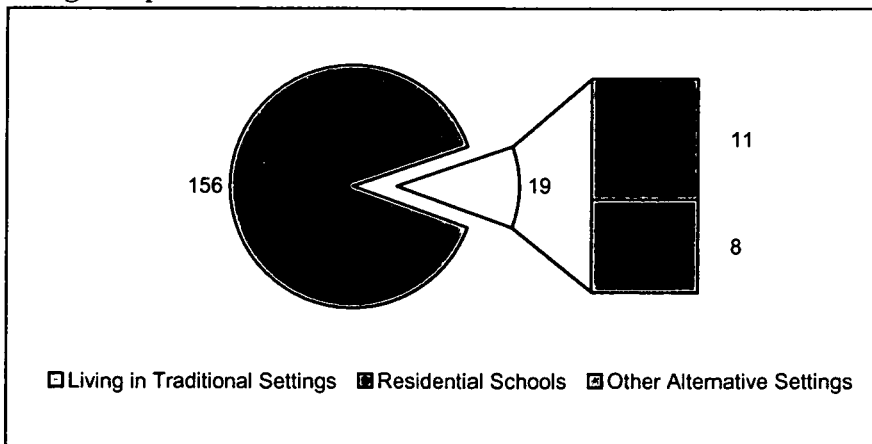
Exhibit 2.5 - Relatively few JUMP projects target youth living in residential settings.

juvenile detention centers, foster homes, shelters, residential schools, mental health facilities, substance abuse treatment facilities, or other residential facilities. Only 19 JUMP projects of 175 funded to date (11 percent) serve youth living in these alternative settings. Of these projects, 11 serve youth living in a residential school setting.

Target Risk Factors

In addition to selecting the targeted residential setting, JUMP projects are also able to target particular groups of youth based on other determinants. Many JUMP projects elect to serve youth of a particular gender; other projects elect to serve youth of a particular race or ethnicity. These features of JUMP projects are discussed more in detail in Chapter Three.

JUMP Projects Have Different Structures and Philosophies

Although the JUMP legislation emphasizes collaboration with LEAs, it does not mandate the projects offer school-based mentoring to youth. JUMP projects are free to design programs that best suit the needs of their communities and the preferences of the youth, volunteers, and families that they serve. Therefore, JUMP projects represent a blend of different styles of mentoring.

Community-based Mentoring

A popular mechanism for offering mentoring is to provide a traditional community-based intervention, in which youth and mentors select the activities in which they participate and complete these activities in the community. Generally in these types of projects, the mentors have relatively little contact with the schools, although they may elect to help youth with academics in some of the time together. Activities that pairs often select in community-based programs include playing sports, going to movies or the mall, going to the library, participating in volunteer activities or just "hanging out." One mentor in a Wisconsin program owned a horse that was boarded in a nearby stable. She and her mentee often spent part of their time together grooming and riding the horse – an experience that her urban mentee would not likely have encountered had she not participated in the mentoring project.

Site Visit - The JUMP Project at Ohio Dominican College

The JUMP project at Ohio Dominican College demonstrates many features of a successful mentoring intervention. The College actively seeks ways to maintain a positive relationship with the surrounding community, and JUMP resources were used to augment this existing relationship. The JUMP project brings local youth to the college – some on a daily basis – and offers them one-to-one mentoring as part of a spectrum of services. Mentor/mentee pairs meet separately, but are also part of a larger group, which meets monthly to discuss issues around a particular theme. While one-to-one mentors are adults over the age of 21, youth groups are led by college students, who also participate in other aspects of the project. Youth in this site-based project benefit from one-to-one relationships and have the opportunity to interact with multiple adult role models and current college students.

School-based Mentoring

Conversely, the concept of school-based mentoring is growing across the country. School-based projects typically mandate that most, if not all, of the mentor/mentee meetings occur on school grounds. Some projects even mandate that interactions must be directly supervised by school staff members. School-based projects, in general, require fewer hours of commitment by the mentee and usually focus more on academic goals. A typical mentor/mentee interaction in a school-based project may be for the pair to spend half of their time together on schoolwork and the other half on a recreational activity such as arts and crafts, eating lunch together, or playing on the playground or in the school gym.

Site-based Mentoring

Similar to school-based mentoring is site-based mentoring. In site-based mentoring projects, most, if not all, mentor/mentee interactions are restricted to a particular location, such as a community center. These projects may or may not elect to have a specific academic focus and often arrange group activities in which mentor/youth pairs may participate. These projects allow youth to interact with a greater number of adult role models while still offering a one-to-one intervention. One site-based project we visited in Georgia offered group activities to mentor/youth pairs. On the night of our visit, mentors and youth together participated in a self-defense class. Other activities that are popular for site-based mentoring projects include educational programs, movie nights, pizza parties, and games.

Blended Programs

It is important to remember that many JUMP projects combine features of community-, school-, and site-based mentoring projects. For example, community-based projects may occasionally offer group activities. Some school-based mentoring projects offer mentor/mentee pairs the opportunity to transition to a community-based match after the relationship has lasted for a certain period of time. Currently, there is no evidence that one type of mentoring is more effective than another. What is critical is that projects identify the type of mentoring project that is most likely to attract youth and mentors in a specific community and provide a structure that will be enjoyable and meaningful to all project participants.
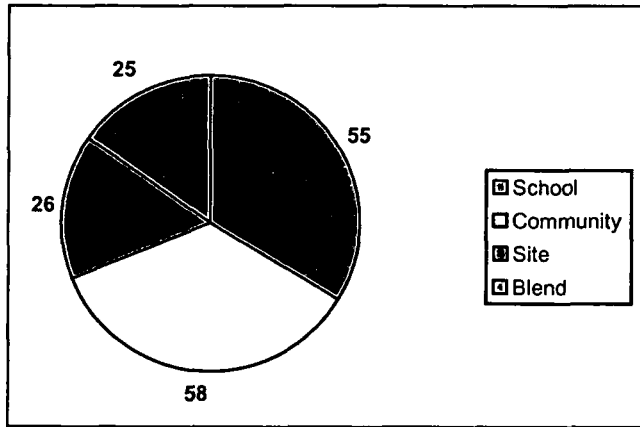
Exhibit 2.6 – Mentoring in JUMP projects takes place in different settings.

Another interesting feature of JUMP projects is that the projects themselves, or their parent agencies, often provide other services to youth and families outside the scope of the traditional mentoring relationship. For example, a JUMP project in Washington offers school-based mentoring; however, the agency itself provides an array of case-management services designed to meet the concrete needs of students. Often it is these types of services that initially bring students and their families to agencies, where the concept of mentoring can then be introduced.

Project Leaders Are Critical to Success

In determining what factors have the greatest impact on the success of JUMP projects, it is clear that the leaders of the mentoring programs play a critical role in the implementation, operation and sustainability of JUMP projects. These individuals carry a number of job titles, such as case manager, project manager, or program administrator. For ease of reference, we will refer to these dynamic and committed individuals as *project managers* throughout this report. The evaluation team is examining this important characteristic of projects in a variety of ways, but primarily through site visits and telephone interviews.

Several factors have emerged that appear consistently in successful project managers. Specific experience in operating a mentoring project is beneficial, but not an absolute requirement. However, it does seem that experience in working with at-risk youth is critical. JUMP project managers have gained this type of experience in a variety of ways, including teaching, social work, and case management.

Another critical factor in the success of a JUMP project is the development of strong ties to a community that enable it to recruit both youth and mentors. Several JUMP project managers grew up in the same neighborhoods or under the same circumstances as the youth who are now their clients. For other individual project managers, this common background appears to provide them with a basis for open communication with the youth, as well as an opportunity to serve as a positive role model themselves. In one Massachusetts project, the program manager had grown up in the town in which the project operated. He still maintained close ties with a group of childhood friends and therefore was able to match many of the boys in his project with strong adult role models. Other projects have had to build time into their projects to allow key project staff to establish relationships with community leaders. One project in Wisconsin allowed its case manager to spend the first six months of the project spending time in the community centers targeted by the project. During this time she was able to form relationships with families that eventually led to widespread acceptance of, and enthusiasm for, the project.

While strong project managers are a critical component of the JUMP projects, many projects struggle with high levels of staff turnover. It is common for the projects to employ several different project managers throughout the life of the grant. Some factors that projects identify as playing a role in high levels of turnover include comparatively low salaries and large caseload. Additionally, many of the individuals who accept roles as project managers do so to

gain experience in the field or to make decisions about a future career path. Many former project managers leave JUMP projects to return to school, to pursue other avenues of youth work, or to move to a new geographic area. These levels of staff turnover have important implications for projects, which must develop mechanisms to ensure the continuity of project management throughout the period of the grant.

JUMP Funds Establish Projects Across the Country

The intent of the JUMP program is to provide funding to a number of mentoring projects across the country for a sufficient period of time for projects to become self-sustaining. The expectation is that, at the end of the three-year grant period, projects will have developed
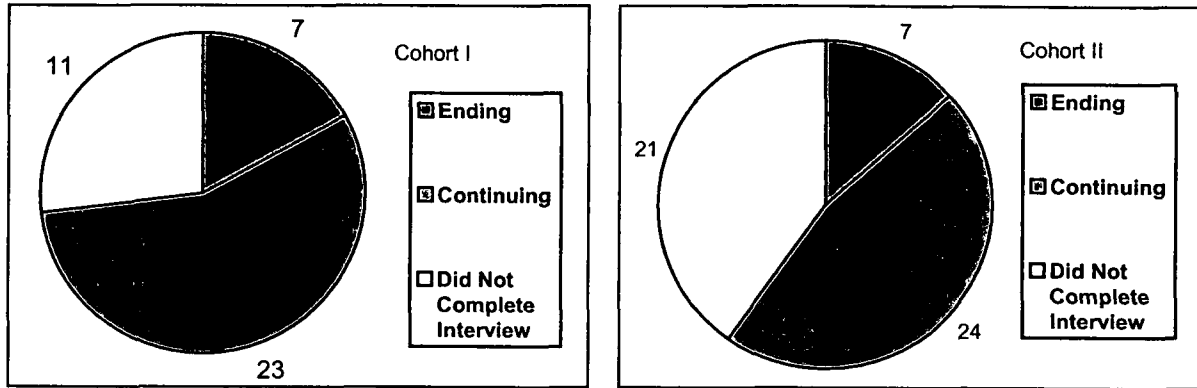
Exhibit 2.7 – A majority of JUMP projects who responded to the survey had secured resources to continue after the JUMP funds terminated.

resources to allow them to continue to offer mentoring to community youth. Projects currently are ineligible for funding through JUMP after they have completed their three-year grant.[*]

Within the last year, JUMP projects funded in 1995[**] and 1997 have begun to draw to a close, offering the national evaluation team an opportunity to examine how projects planned to continue the mentoring work they had started in their communities. Data regarding future sustainability of projects was gathered in a variety of ways including site visits and telephone interviews. All Cohort I and Cohort II grantees were contacted to complete a telephone interview at the end of the grant term. Of 93 grantee agencies, 61 completed these interviews

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[*] JUMP grantees may apply for no-cost extensions to their grant, which essentially allows extra time for projects to utilize funds that have already been approved. They may not apply for additional money through the JUMP project. Because of these extensions it is common for JUMP projects to be funded for longer than three years.

[**] Due to a variety of factors, a number of projects were slow to start. Nearly all of the 1995 grantees received a minimum one-year, no-cost extension. Therefore, most 1995 grantees were supported by JUMP funds through 1999.

(13 had significant extensions to their grants and will be contacted in the future; 20 were unable to be reached despite numerous attempts). Both Cohorts I and II demonstrated success overall in securing necessary resources to allow the projects to continue at the end of the JUMP grant, with only 23 percent of projects reporting that they were ending their mentoring activities at the end of the JUMP grant.
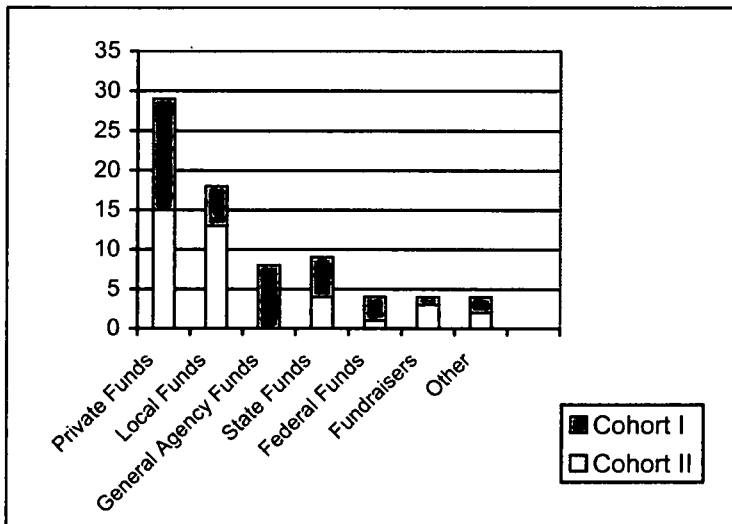
Exhibit 2.8 – JUMP projects secured funding from a variety of different sources.

JUMP projects that were able to secure continued funding following the JUMP grant found resources from a variety of sources. Additionally, most projects noted that funding terms as long as JUMP (three years) were rare. Most agencies had definite funding for a period of one to two years after the JUMP grant. By far the most commonly reported sources of funds were private funds (which might include foundations or other private philanthropic organizations) and local funds (which included city or county monies). Other sources of funding that were accessed by JUMP projects included proceeds from fundraisers, state funds, other federal funds, and general agency funds.
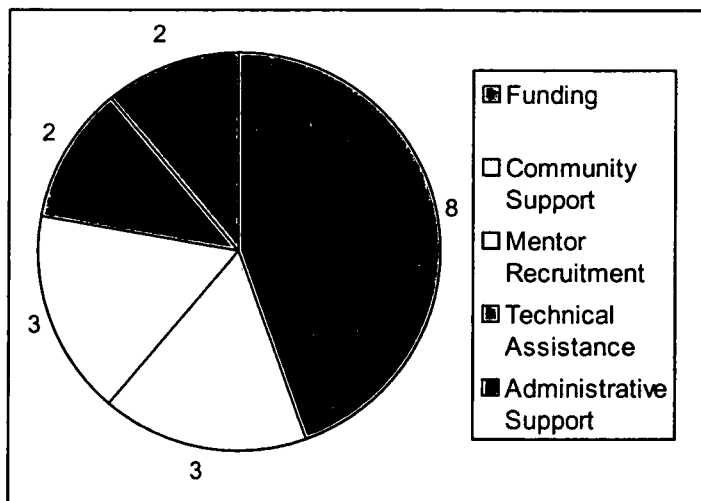
Exhibit 2.9 -- JUMP projects identified types of supports they believed would have enabled them to continue their mentoring projects.

Projects that were not able to continue offering mentoring after the JUMP grants ended were asked to identify types of support that might have enabled them to continue the work they had started. The majority of these projects indicated that securing continued funding was the major obstacle to continuing mentoring in their communities after the JUMP grant had ended. Other difficulties that were noted included lack of community support for the project, difficulty recruiting mentors, low levels of support from JUMP administrators, and the need for increased technical assistance.

It is interesting to note that of the 14 projects that reported that they were closing at the end of the JUMP grant, a majority had been new mentoring projects at the time of the grant awards, rather than projects that had some level of experience in providing youth mentoring. Of the seven projects from Cohort I that completed exit interviews and stated that they were closing their mentoring projects at the end of the JUMP grant, five had been new projects. All seven of the Cohort II projects that completed exit interviews and stated that they were closing their mentoring projects at the end of the JUMP grant were new to youth mentoring at the time of their JUMP awards. The relationship between mentoring experience and project sustainability is an interesting avenue for future study. While the information gathered during these closing interviews might appear to suggest that new mentoring projects struggle more with sustainability issues than do projects with a history of providing mentoring services, 14 new projects did find funds to continue offering mentoring after the JUMP grant ended.

The issue of sustainability has important future ramifications for OJJDP. One area JUMP grantees consistently identify as being important for training and technical assistance is that of resource development. In addition to the training and assistance offered by the National Mentoring Center, OJJDP is in a unique position to offer grantees a connection to state juvenile justice agencies who may have funds available for mentoring through block grants or other avenues. One area to explore in the future is the development of a system to link JUMP projects to juvenile justice agencies at the state level to foster cooperation and resource sharing.

□ Continuing   ■ Closing - Had been New   □ Closing - Had Existed Before J
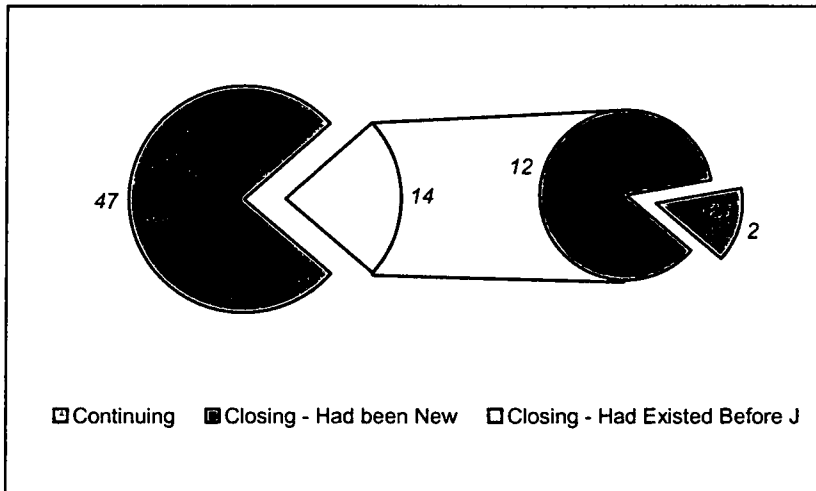
Exhibit 2.10 – Most JUMP projects that closed had been new, not expansions of projects that existed before JUMP.

JUMP Projects Must Develop a Strong Infrastructure

One area that JUMP projects consistently identify as being critical to the success of the mentoring project is the degree and strength of the project's infrastructure. Many project managers noted that developing the necessary structure is a complicated and time-consuming process. Some projects noted that is it nearly impossible to develop these project components while simultaneously recruiting youth and mentors and monitoring matches.

One concept that appears popular among some groups of grantees would be to offer funds to support one year of capacity building activities to projects, before allowing access to JUMP funds. During this initial year, the agency's emphasis would be on recruiting and training staff, developing an appropriate volunteer training curriculum, and building relationships with community partners such as schools, community centers, local businesses, and local justice agencies. During this year of infrastructure development, there would be no official expectation for a particular number of mentor/mentee matches. At the end of the year, projects would be required to demonstrate that the appropriate structures are in place before they could access their JUMP funds to manage the three-year project.

JUMP Grantees Relied on Support from OJJDP

For many grantees, JUMP funds represented the single largest financial support from any one source for their projects. Many grantees noted that having a stable funding source for a period of three years allowed project staff to concentrate on program development, youth and volunteer recruitment, and match supervision. Nearly all grantees felt that the funding level was appropriate (while noting that increased funds would result in an increased number of youth who could be served by the project), with most grantees also feeling that three full calendar years is sufficient time for programs to become established in their communities.

JUMP projects did note that OJJDP provided different types of support in addition to grant funds. Specifically, 1995 and 1997 grantees noted that the establishment of the National Mentoring Center to provide training and technical assistance to grantees was particularly beneficial. Grantees enjoyed conferences and training sessions, and emphasized the value of being able to network with other mentoring projects across the country. It was particularly beneficial to hold a JUMP Cluster Conference, mandatory for newly awarded JUMP projects, shortly after JUMP grants are first awarded. This enables new projects to ask questions and gain valuable information early in their periods of performance. The most opportune time for such a meeting would be approximately three months after JUMP awards are announced. This opportunity for information sharing is one of the most valuable opportunities made available to JUMP grantees through the training and technical assistance contract.

Grantees also noted that they had a number of avenues for information gathering. While each JUMP project is assigned to a specific JUMP project manager, grantees also felt that they were able to contact the national evaluator or the National Mentoring Center for information and support. Many grantees noted that they appreciated being able to access information in a variety of ways including phone, mail, e-mail, and the Internet.

One interesting development that occurred for both Cohort I[*] and Cohort II is the relatively high number of projects that receive no-cost extensions, which extend the time period

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[*] Due to delays in signing contracts and awarding JUMP funds, all Cohort I grantees received an automatic, one-year, no-cost extension.

that projects receive JUMP grant funding, but not the total number of dollars the projects receive. Of the 61 projects completing exit interviews, 48 projects finished on time. The remaining projects received extensions varying from three months to 24 months. Projects had a variety of reasons for requiring extensions to their grants; however, two situations occurred with the greatest frequency. For some projects, staff vacancies leave some salary dollars unspent. Therefore, projects have "leftover" money at the end of the grant term. A second common situation is for projects to begin significantly later than the official start date of their grants. This happens when projects require more time than anticipated to hire staff, or final grant negotiations take longer than expected. Because projects begin operating (and drawing down funds) late, they add extra months to the end of the grant to utilize all available resources.

JUMP Projects Evaluate Their Results in a Variety of Ways

As JUMP grants end, projects begin to look for ways to sustain their mentoring programs with funding from new sources. At this time, projects also begin to look at what they have accomplished during the life of their grants. Often funding agents want information about the impacts and benefits of programs before they commit to supporting the program in the future. Also, the end of an existing grant is a natural time for project staff to review the impacts that the program has had and begin to chart a direction for the future.

JUMP projects participate in evaluation activities to different degrees. All JUMP grantees are required to submit data to the national evaluation team to support ongoing research in the field of mentoring. However, this should not replace a sound local evaluation at the project level to determine the specific impacts of a particular project on its host community. JUMP projects participate in local evaluation to varying degrees. All JUMP projects are able to access the data that is collected in the JUMP Management Information System (MIS) for submission to the national evaluation team. Grantees are encouraged to utilize this data to support local evaluation efforts. *Evaluating Your Program: A Self-Evaluation Workbook for Mentoring Programs*, currently under development, will assist grantees in designing effective, meaningful local evaluations. This workbook emphasizes the importance of evaluation and is designed for a wide audience – from project staff with no evaluation experience to those individuals who may have some evaluation background. Additionally, many grantees elect to work with evaluation consultants to design individual project level evaluations. The national evaluation team intends to work with

> ### Site Visit – BB/BS of Metro Atlanta
>
> *JUMP projects can use local evaluation results in a variety of ways. Perhaps one of the most valuable uses for this information is in resource development. The JUMP project sponsored by BB/BS of Metro Atlanta conducted an informal local evaluation to determine what levels of staffing were most appropriate within their agency. Through local evaluation activities, program leaders were able to document the enormous amount of effort required to recruit, screen and train just one volunteer for their project. This information enabled agency leaders to justify the number of staff needed to support the project at its projected size. It also provided valuable information to new projects with less experience staffing their projects.*

projects more closely in the future to determine what types of evaluation activities are being completed by JUMP grantees. These lessons learned at the local level can no doubt benefit other JUMP projects across the country.

Conclusion

JUMP projects represent a variety of different types of mentoring programs. JUMP funds have supported community-based programs and school-based programs, academic-focused projects and recreational projects, and projects serving youth of all ages, grades, races, and ethnicities. The flexibility to tailor a project that best suits its host community is one of the greatest strengths of the JUMP program. In the next chapter of this report, we focus on the youth who participate in JUMP projects and learn more about the impacts of JUMP across the country.

Chapter Three: JUMP Youth

Introduction

In this chapter, we present information about the youth who participate in JUMP projects. To gain an understanding of these youth, we collected data using standardized quarterly data submissions prepared by project staff, youth exit interviews, a standardized self risk assessment instrument, and site visits that included interviews with youth participating in mentoring relationships. Information in this chapter represent youth who were enrolled and active during the period October 1, 1997 through June 30, 2000. Unless otherwise noted, data from all JUMP cohorts have been combined. A number of analyses were conducted on subsets of data to identify differences that may be attributable to program models or community characteristics. Since each cohort is in a different phase of operation, or indeed in the case of Cohort I and some Cohort II projects may have now concluded operations, it is not possible to draw conclusions about differences or similarities between these groups of projects.

Through the second quarter of 2000, JUMP projects report serving 11,751 youth. JUMP projects, though required to participate in the national evaluation, vary in the degree to which they comply with reporting requirements. It is possible that some agencies under-report the numbers of youth participating in their projects. Other JUMP projects have submitted no data about mentored youth.

Cohort	Number of Youth Reported	Range	Average Youth Per Project*
1	3,406	0 – 309	83
2	6,020	8 – 368	115
3	2,112	0 – 144	30
4	213	0 – 58	18
Total	11,751		

Exhibit 3.1 – Youth enrollment in JUMP projects, by cohort.

Demographic Characteristics of JUMP Youth

Available JUMP data provided information on gender, age, ethnicity, and school grade for JUMP youth. Currently JUMP projects serve male and female youth in approximately equal numbers. Six JUMP projects report serving male youth only, while eight JUMP projects report serving female youth only.

In the 1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY97) sponsored by OJJDP, a nationally representative sample of youth was asked questions about their involvement in a variety of delinquent and deviant behaviors. One of the characteristics of the NLSY97 that makes it particularly useful in the context of this mentoring evaluation is that it assists researchers in determining the age at which deviant and delinquent behaviors begin. Based on

the data provided by the NLSY97, certain delinquent behaviors are more likely to appear for the first time by the time a youth is age 12. These activities include committing assault, carrying a handgun, and belonging to a gang (OJJDP, Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report). Although less than one tenth of youth surveyed ages 12-16 reported that they had ever been arrested, 40 percent of the youth who had been arrested had reported two or more arrests.

This background provides an interesting context for age demographic data collected on JUMP youth. JUMP girls tend to be slightly older than boys at the time that they are enrolled in JUMP projects. Consistent with this is the fact that girls are slightly over-represented among grades nine through 12, whereas boys are over-represented in grades six and seven.
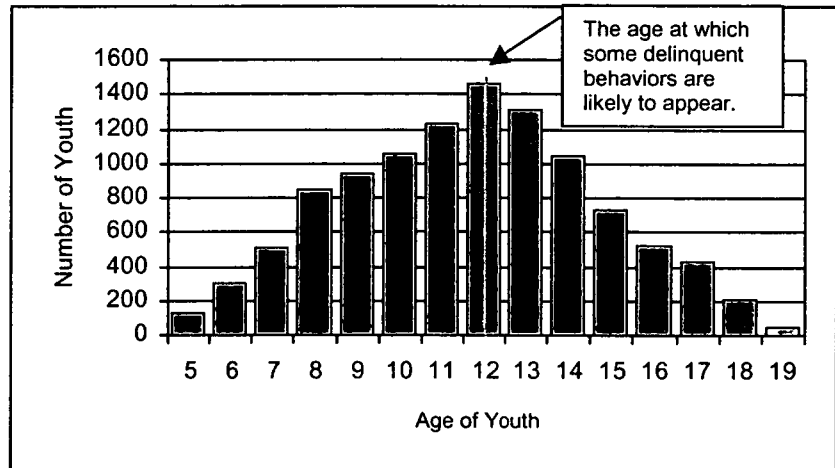
Exhibit 3.2 – JUMP youth represent a broad range of ages, but cluster primarily in the 10 – 14 age group.

JUMP projects that are affiliated with Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) enroll boys and girls in approximately equal numbers, but at a younger age. The average age of youth in BBBSA-affiliated projects is 10.5 years, compared with 12.2 years in other JUMP projects.

As would be expected, consistent with the data available on the age of JUMP youth is the information available about the current school grade of these youth. JUMP projects report targeting primarily youth in grades four through nine, with a special emphasis on the middle school years. The data indicate that the majority of youth (70 percent) being served do indeed fall within this grade range.
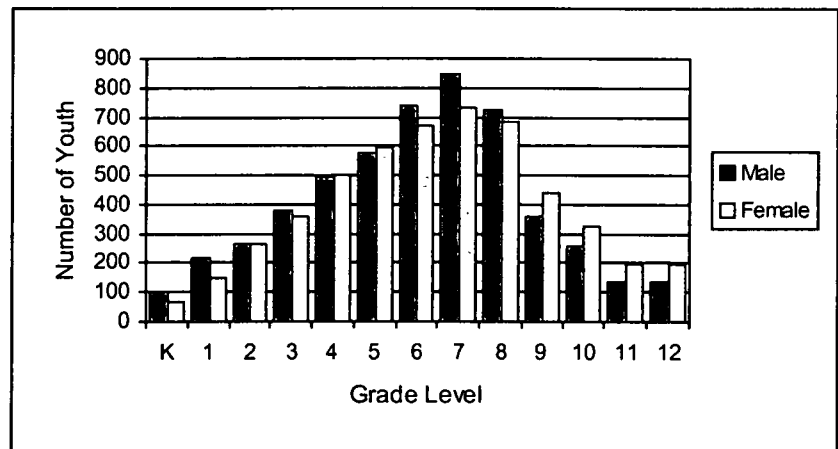
Exhibit 3.3 – As would be expected, JUMP youth cluster in grades 5 – 8.

JUMP projects report ethnicity of youth by selecting one or multiple race/ethnic categories from those listed in the JUMP MIS. Categories for classifying the racial/ethnic

identity of youth and mentors enrolled in the JUMP projects correspond to U.S. Census categories, both in the JUMP data collection and throughout this document. This classification process allows the national evaluation team to collect data that is manageable and reflective of the rich diversity represented in the JUMP program.

Although most grantees reported a single, primary ethnic category for each youth, 235 JUMP youth were documented to be of mixed ethnicity. Black youth make up the majority of those enrolled across all JUMP projects, with White and Hispanic youth making up most of the balance. It is interesting to note that the percentage of Native American youth is substantially higher for Cohort II and Cohort III grantees, attributable to the

Exhibit 3.4 – JUMP youth represent a variety of races and ethnicities.

addition of 1996 grant awards to projects in South Dakota and Alaska that serve predominately Native American/Alaskan Native populations. Again, some difference in ethnicity reporting was found between those agencies affiliated with BBBSA versus those not affiliated with BBBSA.

BBBSA-affiliated projects appear to serve a larger proportion of White, African-American and biracial youth, and a smaller proportion of Native American, Latino, and Asian/Pacific Islander youth than non-BBBSA projects.

Exhibit 3.5 – BBBSA-affiliated projects serve a different population of youth than do non-BBBSA-affiliated projects.

JUMP Projects Address Multiple Risk Factors

Grantees from Cohorts II through IV were asked to administer the Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT) to all youth ages 12 and over enrolling in JUMP projects. The POSIT, which was developed by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and its contractors (Rahdert, 1991) is a ten-domain adolescent screening instrument that has become widely used in both public and private health settings (Dembo et al, 1994; McLaney et al, 1994). As a screening instrument, the POSIT favors high sensitivity. Concurrent validity and internal reliability studies (Melchior et al, 1994; Babor et al, 1991) have shown it generally reliable.

The POSIT measures ten psychosocial and behavioral domains:

1. Substance Use/Abuse	6. Educational Status
2. Physical Health	7. Vocational Status
3. Mental Health	8. Social Skills
4. Family Relationships	9. Leisure/Recreation
5. Peer Relationships	10. Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency

There are no other publicly available measures that assess all of these domains, contributing to the increasingly common opinion that the POSIT is the best multidomain screen available for teenagers. Unfortunately, there is no comparable measure for youth under the age of 12, as self-administered instruments for younger children tend to be unreliable.

Adolescents potentially at risk in one area of life often have problems in other areas. In clinical settings, there are other definitive instruments that may be used as diagnostic follow-up to a high score on the POSIT. However, such diagnostic instruments usually require trained administrators, and therefore appear to be inappropriate for the universe of the JUMP projects. Exhibit 3.6 provides a brief description of the POSIT domains, as adapted from Danseco & Marques (2000).

The POSIT currently being used by JUMP grantees contains 138 questions, with some items counting for more than one risk domain. The scores from each of these domains are compared with a NIDA validation sample used to define three levels of risk, which bring context to the POSIT scores. Youth can therefore be described as likely to be low, middle, or high risk with respect to each risk domain.

Domain	Description
Substance Use/Abuse	This scale screens adolescents who have problems due to substance use like legal, social, or delinquency problems. It does not ask directly about types of drugs, first use, or frequency of use.
Physical Health	This scale indicates possible physical problems and may suggest a need for medical consultation or physical examination. Included in this domain are questions about sleeping habits and weight. The standard POSIT also contains questions pertaining to the risk of HIV; however, these two items were excluded from this administration.
Mental Health	This scale screens for anxiety, depression, and attention deficit issues.
Family Relationships	This scale screens for problems with the adolescent's relationships with parents or guardians. It includes questions about the general family atmosphere and parenting practices.
Peer Relationships	This scale screens for problems due to negative influences and negative behaviors by the youth's peers such as truancy, property damage, and theft.
Educational Status	This scale screens primarily for learning disabilities or underachievement due to problems with cognitive functioning like concentration, learning new tasks, and following directions.
Vocational Status	This is a screen for career maturity. Some of these items are scored only for youth that are at least 16 years old. It is generally considered invalid for youth under age 16.
Social Skills	This scale screens for problems the youth may have with relating to other people in a social setting. Questions are included about the ability to make new friends easily in a new group and perception of others' feelings about oneself.
Leisure/Recreation	This scale includes questions on hobbies and sports that the youth or his/her peers engage in
Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency	The items on this scale screen for conduct-related or delinquency problems. Some items are indirect measures that may predict conduct problems, such as whether the youth feels restless, or teases others a lot. Other items are more direct, such as whether the youth has been in fights or has threatened to hurt others.

Exhibit 3.6 – The POSIT measures risk on ten different domains.

Agencies were asked to administer the POSIT as soon as feasible after recruiting each youth (age 12 and older) into the project. As of June, 2000, 1099 completed POSITs from youth have been submitted for evaluation, representing input from 53 different agencies.

Agencies received a report on each youth's risk scores so that the information could be used to guide project activities. The *Vocational Status* domain has been omitted from the discussion presented here because it is only reliable for youth who are aged 16 or older. Since relatively few of the JUMP youth are that age, it does not provide a good indicator of vocational risk for this population.

Of the 792 youth that have been identified as age 12 or over, *Educational Status* was the most frequently identified high-risk domain, at 34.6 percent of the reporting sample. The items in this domain screen for problems the youth may have with cognitive functioning and achievement such as difficulty in learning new tasks. This difficulty could be attributed to learning disabilities or underachievement. (This finding tends to validate the problems identified by the agencies themselves, who tended to report school problems as the most frequently reported both boys and girls.) Approximately one quarter to one third of the youth who completed the POSIT had scores that fell in the *high risk* range for problems with *Family*

Relations, Mental Health, Leisure/Recreation, and *Social Skills.* This finding tends to validate the problems identified by agencies themselves, who tended to report school problems as the most frequently reported among both boys and girls.

Exhibit 3.7 depicts the disposition of youth into risk categories within the nine POSIT domains reported.

POSIT DOMAINS	HIGH RISK	MIDDLE RISK	LOW RISK
Substance Use/Abuse	4.4%	11.1%	84.5%
Physical Health	22.0%	42.3%	35.7%
Mental Health	26.9%	44.3%	28.8%
Family Relations	24.5%	40.3%	35.2%
Peer Relations	14.1%	59.0%	26.9%
Educational Status	34.6%	44.2%	21.2%
Social Skills	27.4%	40.5%	32.1%
Leisure/Recreation	27.9%	37.5%	34.6%
Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency	11.0%	60.9%	28.1%

Exhibit 3.7 – JUMP youth exhibit different levels of risk in nine domains as measured by the POSIT.
All percentages are based on the number of youth completing the assessment,
NOT the total number of JUMP youth.

Risk in the *Substance Use/Abuse* domain was the least frequently reported, with 84.5% of respondents classified as low risk. While infrequent, 15.5% of the youth did fall into the *middle to high risk* categories for substance abuse, suggesting that some JUMP youth may require additional assistance with these issues. The youth who scored *high risk* for substance abuse were mostly 16 years or older and came primarily from four agencies. Three of these agencies had high-intensity, year-round projects. The fourth was a residential school. The rest of the *middle and high risk* youth were scattered among 33 of the other 53 agencies supplying POSIT data. Ten agencies had youth in the low-risk category for this domain. Approximately one quarter to one third (26.0 – 32.1%) of the youth had scores that classified them as *low risk* in the domains of *Mental Health, Peer Relationships, Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency,* and *Social Skills.*

It is interesting to note that a majority of the youth who completed the POSIT had scores that classified them as *medium risk* (60.9%) or *high risk* (11%) for *Aggressive Behavior/Delinquency.* An analysis of the *high risk* youth in this domain show that over half of these aggressive risk youth were also at *medium or high risk* on the substance abuse domain. It is possible that the acting out behavior captured in this scale is a likely precursor to alcohol and other drug involvement (see Rahdert, 1991). The high numbers of at-risk participants probably means that the JUMP projects are successfully reaching individuals who exhibit early indicators

for problems. Over half (59.0%) of youth had scores in the *medium risk* range in the peer relationship domain.

Answers to individual questions on the POSIT, though not valid for diagnostic purposes, may also provide some insight into the presenting issues of youth entering JUMP projects. While only 2.5% of the sample completing the POSIT admitted that they got into trouble because of their drug or alcohol use, more youth (8.3%) admit that family or friends tell them they should cut down on their drug or alcohol use. Of the sample of youth completing the POSIT, 20.6% have had unexcused absences from school at least five days in the past year. The 28.4% of the youth who scored as high risk for possible mental health problems such as anxiety or depression comprise about the same number as those youth who answered *yes* to the question, *do you feel sad most of the time?*

Follow-Up POSIT Data

JUMP projects are asked to administer a Follow-Up version of the POSIT as youth reach their one-year anniversary in the project. Although the POSIT Follow-Up has many of the same questions as the POSIT, it focuses on the youth's experiences over the previous three months. The POSIT Follow-Up is a 110-question instrument that examines the same domains as the POSIT and is intended to measure changes in the situation of the youth and their recent life experiences when matched with the POSIT. Although the projects were asked to administer the POSIT Follow-Up annually to all youth over the age of 12 in their projects, many projects waited until the youth exited the project. In other cases, it was difficult to determine how much time had elapsed between a youth's entry into the project and the administration of the POSIT Follow-Up. In some cases, projects did not administer the POSIT Follow-Up before a school break or vacation, expecting the youth to return to the project following the holiday. Inevitably, some youth did not return and the project lost the opportunity to collect this data. Presently, there is insufficient data from POSIT Follow-Up instruments for inclusion in this report.

Other Factors that Influence Data Collection

A variety of factors impact a JUMP project's ability to comply with the data submission standards required of the national evaluation. Specific issues that impact a project's ability to collect school and law enforcement information will be discussed later in this chapter. However, there are two overarching considerations that further influence the degree of data submission compliance. The first of these is the diversification of goals and objectives of the individual organizations; the second is the sensitive nature of the data collected and concerns for the privacy of the youth involved in the JUMP program. Each of these is discussed in turn.

Diversification

The JUMP program, currently supporting mentoring in 175 different agencies across the country, offers a unique opportunity to learn about the nature of mentoring in a variety of

different communities across the country. However, the very diversity that makes the JUMP program so interesting also presents unique challenges to standardized data collection and analysis. The JUMP program is one that can be difficult to manage and administer. While it is necessary to offer communities high degrees of flexibility to allow them to design projects that best meet their existing needs and resources, this can impact the degrees to which agencies have access to information and their ability to share that information with the national evaluation team.

Currently it is not clear to what degree projects attempt to comply with data submission requirements but are thwarted by various local challenges. It is also not clear how many projects simply choose not to submit data. More research must be completed on the nature of grantee compliance with data submission requirements to determine the best methods for improving data submission rates.

Privacy Concerns and Considerations

An often-cited challenge to obtaining the data requested by the national evaluation team is concern for the privacy of the youth involved and the somewhat sensitive nature of the data collection. The national evaluation team has taken all required steps to assure that all data is collected, analyzed, stored, and reported in an ethical manner that respects the confidentiality of JUMP participants. In 1998 all of the JUMP data collection instruments, as well as the overall evaluation design, were reviewed by an internal review board (IRB) affiliated with the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE). This IRB determined that the evaluation design and data collection methods appropriately protected the privacy and confidentiality of the participants.

Two features of the JUMP data collection serve to protect the privacy of the participants in the JUMP evaluation. One of these is the design of the computerized data collection; the other is the coding of all youth and mentors participating in JUMP projects.

Currently, all JUMP projects are required to submit data to the national evaluation team using the JUMP MIS. To protect the confidentiality of data contained in the MIS, the system is password protected. This password is distributed to JUMP Project Managers in a letter contained in the system documentation. Each JUMP project is responsible for limiting distribution of the password to project staff members directly involved in data collection. The JUMP MIS cannot be opened without the password.

Additionally, each JUMP project is asked to assign individual identification codes to each youth and mentor involved in the project. Information transmitted to the national evaluation team is identified by code only. *The national evaluation team cannot identify an individual youth or mentor from information transmitted via the JUMP MIS.* Additionally, the national evaluation team is careful to assure that information is aggregated in such a way that participants

in smaller JUMP projects (for example, those involved with only one or two youth) cannot be identified specifically.

The national evaluation team continues to work with OJJDP's Privacy and Confidentiality officer to assure that the JUMP evaluation complies with all current ethical standards. Additionally, the evaluation team works with JUMP projects in an ongoing manner to assure that schools and community-based agencies are knowledgeable about, and comfortable with, reporting information for the national evaluation.

Data on Academic Performance

Two of the goals of the JUMP legislation are to improve academic performance and reduce the rates of school dropout. To evaluate the success of the JUMP program in meeting these legislative goals, the JUMP national evaluation gathers data regarding the academic performance of youth enrolled in JUMP projects. Specifically, JUMP projects are asked to submit the following information for all youth enrolled in JUMP projects:

- Current school grade or reason for nonenrollment in school
- Highest grade of completion
- Letter grades in core subjects (English, Science, History, Math)
- History of repeating/skipping school grades
- Enrollment in non-traditional academic programs
- Enrollment in special education
- Diagnosed learning disabilities
- Number of school absences
- Number of disciplinary referrals
- Number of detentions
- Number of school suspensions
- Reasons for school-based discipline

To date, JUMP projects have varied significantly in the degree to which they provide this information on their enrolled youth. Exhibit 3.8 summarizes the levels of data submission on some key variables. Projects with modest levels of compliance in submitting this data note numerous challenges related to accessing and sharing school-based information. Many schools cite concern for the privacy of students as their primary reason for refusal to share

Variable	Percentage of JUMP Youth for Whom Data Are Available
Gender	97.8%
School enrollment (whether or not youth is enrolled in school)	95.8%
Grades (letter grades in core subjects)	21.7%
Attendance	19.1%
Level of gang involvement	26.9%
Involvement with law enforcement agency	24.1%

Exhibit 3.8 – Data compliance varies widely among key data elements.

this information with JUMP project staff members. JUMP project staff also note that while one school administrator may support the JUMP project and agree to provide this information, other administrators may refuse for a variety of reasons.

Currently the national evaluation team is working with the JUMP projects to improve rates of submission of school-based data. The national evaluation team has made an effort to work with schools to clarify the procedures in place for protecting the confidentiality of youth enrolled in JUMP projects. Additionally, projects are encouraged to employ creative methods for accessing data from youth whose schools decline to release such information. Some methods that projects have employed successfully include obtaining school information from parents or mentors and offering incentives to youth for submitting report cards to project staff members. Because future grantees will be required to submit a more detailed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with their local educational agency, it is anticipated that the submission of school-based data will be improved with future cohorts.

Data on Involvement with the Juvenile Justice System

The JUMP legislation also focuses on a reduction of gang involvement and delinquent behavior. To assess the degree to which the JUMP project is meeting this legislative goal, JUMP grantees are asked to submit the following information for all youth enrolled in their projects:

- Gang membership or affiliation
- Number of contacts with law enforcement officials
- Reason for contacts with law enforcement officials
- Disposition of such contacts

Just as with school-based data, JUMP projects vary in the degree to which they are able to access and report this data to the national evaluation team. Clearly those projects that are located in, or have close working relationships with, law enforcement agencies tend to be able to access this data more readily. However, these projects are relatively few (only seven JUMP projects report being located in law enforcement agencies). The majority of JUMP projects, which are school- or community-based and do not have an official relationship with a law enforcement entity, have a much more difficult time collecting this information.

Conclusion

JUMP projects serve youth across the country representing a variety of ethnicities, ages, geographic regions and family structures. The most commonly represented groups among JUMP youth are African American youth between the ages of 12 and 14 living in urban areas. These young people also face a variety of risk factors identified as increasing their chances for school failure, gang membership, family problems, delinquency, alcohol, tobacco or other drug use, and pregnancy. While not a substitute for appropriate family involvement and intervention, JUMP

programs seek to reduce the threat of these risk factors and provide positive relationships with adult role models for these at-risk youth. The subsequent chapter describes the mentor figure in these relationships and highlights characteristics of the adult volunteers on which the JUMP programs are dependent for success.

Chapter Four: JUMP Mentors

The success of the JUMP program would not be possible without the effort of the thousands of volunteer mentors who offer their time and talent to work with at-risk youth across the country. This chapter provides a more complete picture of these volunteer mentors, including a discussion of demographic characteristics, education and employment history, and the level of training they receive before being matched with youth. Data used in this chapter were obtained from a variety of sources, including standardized quarterly evaluation reports, mentor exit forms that are completed by the mentors themselves, and in-person interviews conducted during site visits. These data represent primarily those mentors who were fully approved and actively engaged with a youth in a mentoring relationship during the period from October 1, 1997 through June 30, 2000. Additional mentors were in the process of being screened and approved and, depending on the program model, were participating in activities in limited ways, such as attending group activities or special program events. Data reported here represent a cumulative record of all mentors. However, in the earlier years (1997 –1998) of the program, information about mentors was not consistently reported, making these data somewhat biased in favor of later years (1999 – 2000).

Through the second quarter of FY2000, JUMP projects reported data on a total of 9601 mentors. Again, it is important to remember that JUMP projects vary in the degree to which they comply with data submission requirements and procedures. Again, under-reporting may be reflected in the available data. It also is important to recall that the Cohort III and Cohort IV grantees are, at the time of this writing, currently at the end of their first year of project operations. It is

Cohort	Number of Mentors Reported	Range	Average Number of Mentors Per Project
1	3,049	0 – 304	75
2	4,813	10 – 378	93
3	1,539	0 – 137	22
4	200	0 – 57	17
Total	9,601		

Exhibit 4.1 – Mentor enrollment in JUMP projects, by cohort.

not uncommon for projects to spend most of the first year of JUMP funding on capacity building activities. Many Cohort III and Cohort IV projects were just beginning to recruit and screen mentors in June 2000.

Mentors Represent a Wide Range of Demographic Characteristics

The JUMP national evaluation collects mentor demographic information similar to the information gathered on JUMP youth.   In general, projects attempt to diversify their mentor pool. However, about 51 percent of JUMP mentors are white and 29 percent are black. This differs substantially from the ethnicity of the youth, which is 20 percent white and 45 percent

black. Many JUMP projects report some difficulty in recruiting mentors from minority populations. Although most grantees reported a single, primary ethnic category for each mentor, 68 mentors were reported to be of mixed ethnicity.

Data on JUMP mentors were analyzed to determine the level of variation between different subsets of JUMP projects. As with the youth data, the only significant differences demonstrated were between projects that were Big Brothers/Big Sisters affiliates (BBBSA) and projects that were not affiliated with BBBSA. In the BBBSA-affiliated projects, 64 percent of the mentors are white, compared with 46 percent in non BBBSA-affiliated. BBBSA projects also had smaller proportions of mentors who are black (21 percent vs. 32 percent) and Latino (5 percent vs. 12 percent).
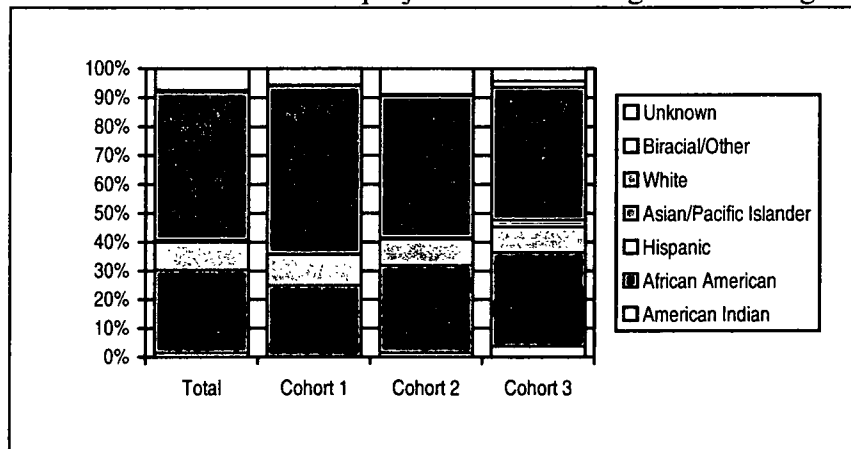
Exhibit 4.2 – JUMP mentors represent a variety of racial and ethnic groups.

JUMP projects are also asked to report mentor age at the time of enrollment in the program. Mentor ages varied considerably, within a wide range. The median mentor age is 33 years.

While the JUMP legislation specifically states that all mentors must be age 21 or over, the data reflect that some mentors in JUMP projects are younger. Current JUMP data indicates that 417 mentors (4 percent) were under the age of 21 at the time that they were first matched with youth. On average, these mentors were 19.6 years old at the time of the match. A total of 66 agencies from Cohorts I, II, and III reported enrolling mentors who were under the age of 21. In nearly all cases, these individuals were involved in mentoring projects before the JUMP grant was awarded, and these projects either opted to allow matches to continue
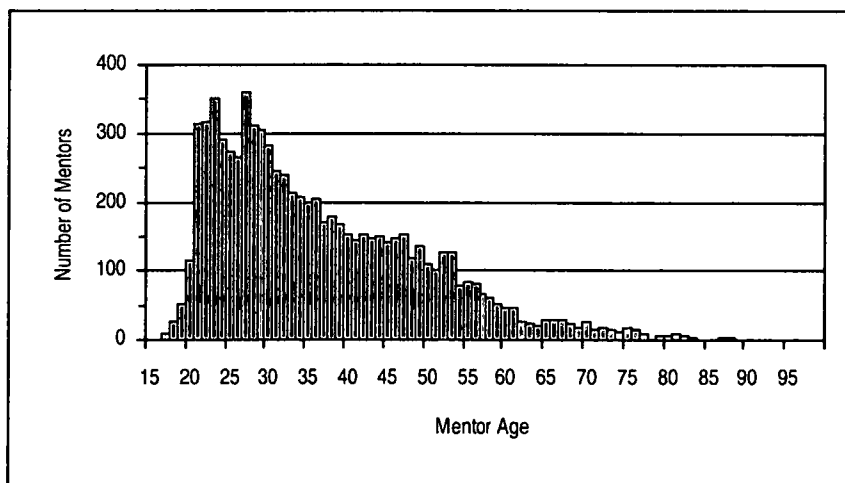
Exhibit 4.3 – JUMP mentors represent a variety of age groups but cluster primarily in mid-20's to mid-30's.

or transitioned these matches to other programs. The ongoing impact of this age requirement on JUMP projects is discussed in more detail in Chapter Eight.

Projects often report difficulty in recruiting male mentors. The data appear to support

	Number of Projects	Number of Mentors Under Age 21	Average Age of Mentors (for those mentors under age 21)
Cohort I	23	229	19.6
Cohort II	24	149	19.8
Cohort III	17	39	20.2

Exhibit 4.4 – Projects in Cohorts I, II, and III have small numbers of mentors who are under age 21.

this statement, with female mentors comprising nearly 62 percent of the mentor population. Chapter Five discusses in more detail the degree to which youth/mentor matches are same gender versus cross gender.

Mentor Education and Work History Varies

An interesting characteristic of JUMP mentors is that, for the most part, they are a highly educated group, with 48 percent having a college degree and an additional 31 percent having at least some college experience. Although it is not clear how mentor education impacts the mentoring relationship, it may be that, for many youth, the mentor represents the best role model in their lives with advanced education.
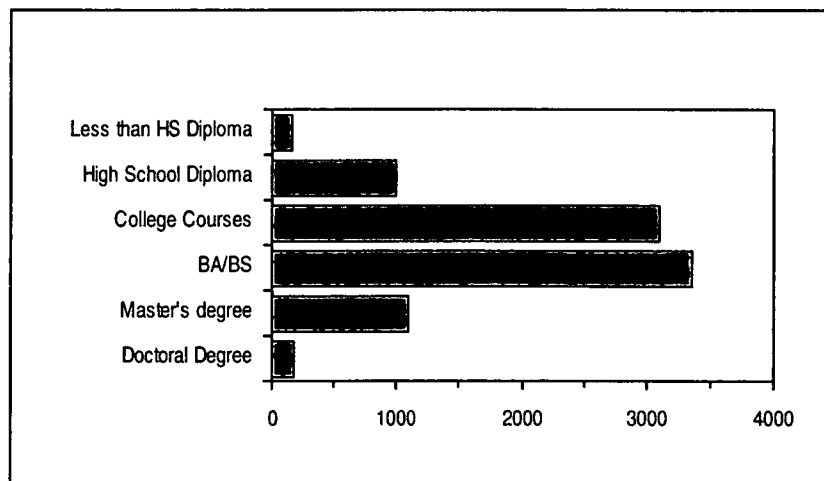
Exhibit 4.5 – JUMP mentors are a fairly well educated group, with most having at least some college experience.

While 10 percent of the JUMP mentors were reported to be full-time students, most of the mentors either are in or have retired from the work force (77 percent and 5 percent respectively). A majority of the 82 percent of working or retired mentors are/were in managerial positions. Exhibit 4.6 summarizes the work experience of JUMP mentors. Since JUMP mentors serve as role models for a positive and productive self-sufficient adulthood, their experience in the workforce is an important factor in their relationship with youth.
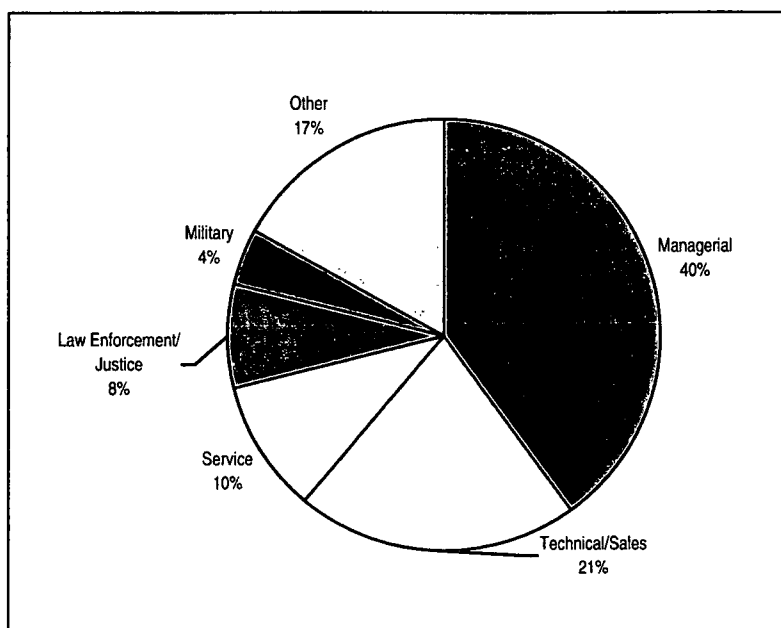
Exhibit 4.6 – JUMP mentors have employment experience in a variety of fields.

In addition to work experience, many mentors are reported as having prior mentor-like experience either in a formal mentoring program or in a less structured situation. Programs report that more than one third of their mentors have mentoring experience. In addition, many mentors are parents (43 percent) and thus presumably gained skills, knowledge, and understanding of youth through their experience raising their own children. However mentors in BBBSA-affiliated projects are reported to have less previous mentoring or parenting experience than other JUMP mentors.

Mentors Receive Structured Training

Another critical indicator of project success is the degree to which mentors are prepared adequately for the challenges of working with at-risk youth. While JUMP mentors bring to projects a variety of skills and talents, many have little experience with some of the issues facing at-risk youth. All JUMP programs were asked to report the levels of training that mentors were required to complete. Only 17 projects reported that no training was required of mentors at any time during their work with the project. Most projects (129) required some training before the mentor was eligible to be matched with a youth. A surprisingly large number (88) reported requiring training throughout the mentor's tenure with the project. It is important to note that the national JUMP program guidelines do not specify a training approach or curriculum that is required of all JUMP projects. While technical assistance in the area of mentor training is available to JUMP grantees, the legislation is rather flexible about the manner in which mentor training and support is to be offered. Therefore, the training offered to mentors varies widely across projects. Based on the available data, about 85 percent of JUMP mentors had been offered some type of training. However, some of the mentors who are reported to have received no training to date may be enrolled in projects that offer training only when there is a larger group of volunteers available to participate. These mentors may receive training later in their participation in the project.

One aspect of mentor training that many projects find valuable is the use of regularly scheduled mentor support meetings. Some projects schedule these meetings monthly, whereas

others offer training only when mentors first enter the project. Anecdotal evidence offered during site visits and interviews suggests that many mentors enjoy an opportunity to interact with other volunteers. This often proves particularly valuable for new mentors, or those who have
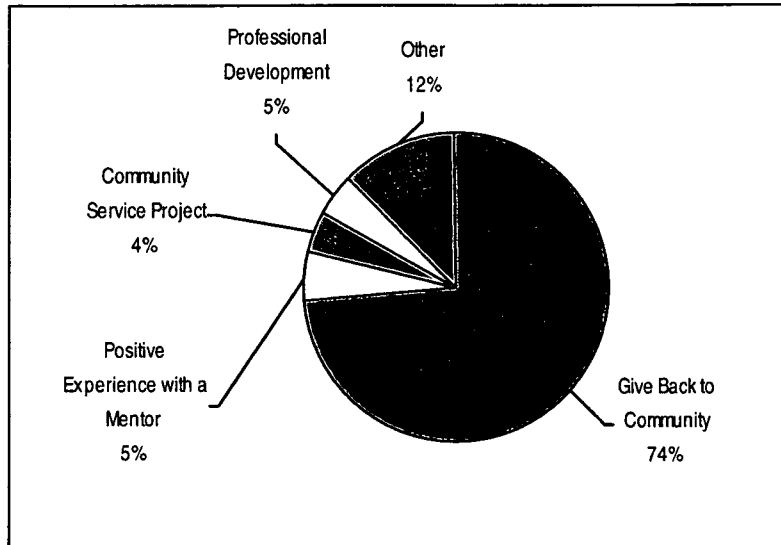
Exhibit 4.7 – JUMP mentors participate for a variety of reasons.

little experience working with high-risk youth. Interacting with other mentors can help to bolster a volunteer's confidence, or provide insight into the mentoring relationship. In some projects, the national evaluation team's site visit provided the first opportunity for many mentors to interact with one another and discuss their challenges and successes. Many of these projects opted to schedule regular events for mentors in response to positive feedback from these site visit meetings.

Motivations to Mentor

Mentors were asked at intake what their primary reason was for becoming a mentor. Of the 3090 mentors who responded to this question, a majority (2266 or 74 percent) responded that they wanted to *give back to the community*. Other reasons given included having *had a positive experience with a mentor figure during childhood*, needing to participate in a *community service project or requirement*, wanting *experience toward a career goal or professional development*, or *other*. While many projects cast a wide net in their volunteer recruitment efforts, these data suggest that, on the whole, mentors choose to volunteer for altruistic motives. Therefore, projects may find that it is most fruitful to design recruitment materials and campaigns that emphasize this aspect of mentoring.
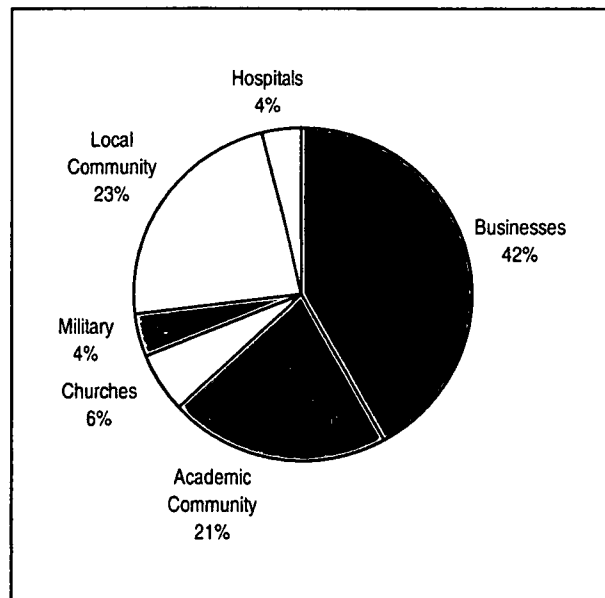
Exhibit 4.8 – JUMP projects recruit mentors from a variety of sources.

Mentor Recruitment

Mentor recruitment is one of the most challenging areas for both new and established projects. JUMP projects are required to submit a plan for mentor recruitment as part of their JUMP grant proposals. However, these plans vary both in their content and the degree of specificity they provide. Legislative guidelines for mentor recruitment are also fairly broad, with the only specific requirement for mentors being that they are age 21 or over.

JUMP projects employ a variety of strategies for recruiting mentors including forming partnerships with businesses, targeting recruitment in churches and faith-based organizations, and recruiting throughout the community through billboards, television, radio and print media, advertisements, and word-of-mouth recruiting.

Through telephone close-out interviews with JUMP projects that have finished their grants, information was gathered about the primary sources for mentor candidates. The two largest sources for volunteers reported in these interviews were businesses and government agencies and the academic community, which included college and university students and faculty. Most JUMP projects also conduct some type of recruitment in the general community that can include advertisements in newspapers or on the radio, billboards, and mailings. One JUMP project in the northeast worked with a local business to include a brochure about mentoring in staff paychecks. Other JUMP projects have reported that some of their best volunteer recruiters are their current volunteer mentors, who recruit friends and family members to participate in projects.

Another area that JUMP projects may find difficult is retaining mentors. Currently mentors who have enrolled and been discharged from JUMP projects average approximately 13 months of participation in JUMP projects. Projects are asked to report the reason for discharge for each mentor who leaves the project. Their responses for the 2565 mentors who have been discharged as of this writing are summarized in Exhibit 4.9. While many of these reasons are beyond the control of the mentor or the project, others indicate that there are some steps that projects can take to increase mentor retention. Some of these may include improving existing mentor training and support, improving the level of feedback given to the mentor regarding the benefits to the relationship, and offering increased levels of assistance during difficult times in the match relationship.

Because mentor recruitment and retention can be challenging for JUMP projects, OJJDP has supported efforts to assist projects in development innovative volunteer recruitment in their communities. Under its training and technical assistance contract, the National Mentoring Center (NMC) offers training on mentor recruitment and retention during the JUMP Regional Trainings. The NMC also recently supported a postcard campaign, designed to allow local projects to utilize current volunteers in mentor recruitment efforts. Projects are provided with postcards to distribute to mentors, who are asked to mail them to friends and colleagues who may be interested in becoming mentors themselves. Although this is a new endeavor, some

projects have reported encouraging results in using these postcards as a tool to support their current recruitment efforts.
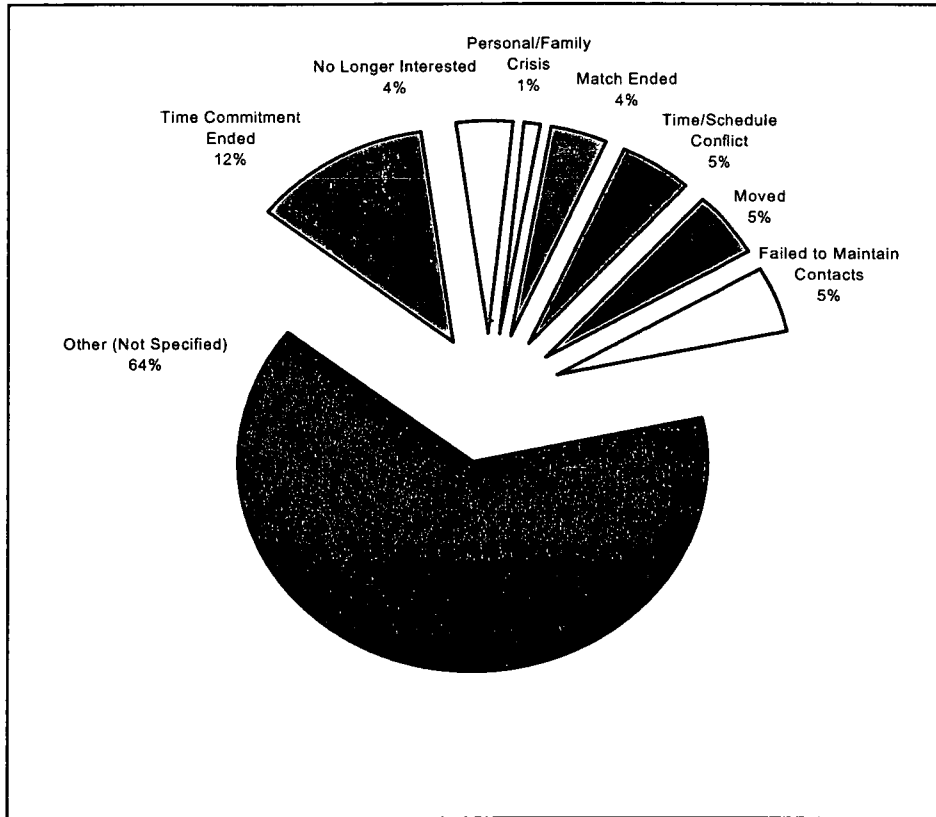
Exhibit 4.9 – Mentors report a variety of reasons for departing from JUMP projects

Conclusion

This document has presented information on the individuals directly involved in the mentoring process – youth who are participating in the project and the individuals who volunteer to mentor them. Mentors in JUMP projects have a wide range of experience in terms of their age and ethnicity, education and employment, and their motivations to mentor. Most JUMP mentors are in the 25- to 35-year-old age range and tend to have at least some college experience. A majority of JUMP mentors are employed, although some mentors are full-time students or have retired from the workforce. While mentors have complex reasons for volunteering, a majority state that their primary reason is a desire to give back to their communities. In the next chapter, we will examine the ways in which projects match youth and mentors, and discuss both youth and mentor satisfaction with projects and perception of benefits.

Chapter Five: The Mentoring Relationship

The key to the effectiveness of mentoring as an intervention is the strength of the relationship established between a youth and his or her mentor. Each JUMP program is structured to foster a mentoring relationship that will support specific project goals. A JUMP project that emphasizes improvement in school performance may look for the mentoring relationship to be based on formal tutoring sessions during the school day. Other JUMP projects that seek to provide more general support, encouragement, and enrichment for youth at risk may focus on social and cultural activities that the mentor and youth choose for themselves and carry out independent of any formal structure. In this chapter we present some of the program considerations when making matches, and some characteristics of the matches that are reported.

This information represents matches that were active between October 1, 1997 and June 30, 2000. It includes matches for which information was available for both the youth and the mentor. Cohort I agencies reported 2851 matches, Cohort II reported 4043 matches, Cohort III reported 985 matches, and Cohort IV reported 115 matches.

Cohort	Number of Matches Reported	Range	Average Number of Mentors per Project
I	2851	0 – 304	70
II	4043	0 – 303	78
III	985	0 – 82	14
IV	115	0 – 81	10
Total	7994		

Exhibit 5.1 – JUMP projects report different numbers of matches.

Waiting Time for a Match Is Relatively Brief

Projects record information about youth and mentors according to their individual organizational protocols. Some site-based projects record youth as enrolled at the time they express interest in receiving a mentor. Other community-based projects enroll youth only when a suitable mentor is identified, whereas others enroll the youth after the mentor is trained and matched with the youth. There is an average of 10 weeks from the time of youth enrollment to the reported date of match. This value may be somewhat distorted by the fact that about 32 percent of the matches had a no waiting time and it is unclear at this point whether these youth actually were matched immediately upon their entry into the program, or if they in fact waited some period to be matched. Boys wait, on average, slightly more than a week longer than girls to be paired with a mentor. Black youth wait nearly three weeks longer than white youth. Youth in Cohort II programs waited more than three weeks longer than youth in Cohorts I and III. Waiting time for youth in JUMP programs affiliated with BB/BS was 15 weeks, which is seven weeks longer than for youth in non-BBBSA-affiliated programs. The longer wait times for boys and nonwhites likely reflects the preponderance of white, female mentors and many programs desire to match on race and sex.

Most Programs Use Gender as a Matching Criteria

Gender is a primary factor considered by most JUMP projects in making matches. Of the 175 JUMP projects funded to date, 83 state that they require that youth be matched with mentors who are the same gender. An additional 39 projects stated that they prefer for youth to be matched with mentors who are the same gender. For those matches in which the gender of both the youth and the mentor was reported, male mentors were matched with boys 94 percent of the time, and female mentors were matched with girls 84 percent of the time. Only 4 percent of the girls are matched with male mentors. However, 21 percent of the boys are matched with a female mentor. Many projects note that they have more success in recruiting female mentors; therefore, they may choose to reserve their available male mentors to participate in relationships with male youth only.

Exhibit 5.2 – Many JUMP projects require that youth and mentors be the same gender, while others prefer that they be the same gender.

Projects are also often willing to match male youth with female mentors in the absence of an available male mentor. Since girls are just as likely to be raised in a family without an adult male figure, it is reasonable to hypothesize that girls may benefit from a positive mentoring relationship with a man. However, the relative scarcity of male mentors, and the desire to match on gender means that, in practice, girls are rarely matched with male mentors. Projects often note that they feel there are liability concerns associated with matching male mentors with female youth; therefore most projects tend to avoid these types of matches. The ways in which cross-gender matches differ from same-gender matches is not clear at this point. Further research is needed in this area. It is interesting to note that BBBSA-affiliated programs were less likely to have cross-gender matches than non-BBBSA-affiliated programs.

	Youth	
	Male	Female
Matched with Male Mentor	79%	4%
Matched with Female Mentor	21%	96%

	Mentors	
	Male	Female
Matched with Male Youth	94%	16%
Matched with Female Youth	6%	84%

Exhibit 5.3 -- Gender appears to be a factor in matching youth with mentors, as most youth are matched with mentors who are their same gender.

Race and Ethnicity Are Match Considerations

Most of the JUMP projects report that they do not use race as a match criteria. Only ten JUMP projects state that they require that youth and mentors be of the same race or ethnicity. An additional 42 projects report that they prefer for youth and mentors to be of the same race or ethnicity. However, there appears to be a strong relationship between mentor and mentee ethnicity. For instance 85 percent of the black mentors are paired with a black youth, 66 percent of the Hispanic mentors are paired with a Hispanic youth, and 38 percent of the white mentors are paired with a white youth. Because white mentors are over-represented, it is not surprising that many of the white mentors are paired with nonwhite youth. Across ethnic categories, 48 percent of the reported youth are paired with a mentor of a different race or ethnicity from their own. This includes 41 percent of the black youth, and 50 percent of the Hispanic youth who are paired with a white mentor. BBBSA-affiliated programs are more likely to match youth with mentors of a different race or ethnicity than nonaffiliated programs.

Pie chart:
- Did Not Report 2%
- Require Same Race Match 6%
- Prefer Same Race Match 24%
- No Preference Based on Race 68%

Exhibit 5.4 - Most JUMP projects do not have a specific requirement or preference that youth and mentors be of the same race or ethnicity.

It appears that same-race matches are made whenever possible. However, when minority mentors are not available, minority youth are paired with white mentors. As discussed in previous reports, some agencies have developed more successful approaches for recruiting minority mentors, and further research will be important to learn about effective recruitment

·practices that are sustained over a longer period of time. At this point in the JUMP evaluation, it is difficult to determine how same-race matches may differ from cross-race matches. However, this remains an important area for future study.

	Mentor Race and Ethnicity					
	American Indian	African American	Hispanic	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	White	Biracial/ Other
Matched with American Indian Youth	90%	1%	2%	6%	3%	5%
Matched with African American Youth	2%	85%	15%	22%	36%	37%
Matched with Hispanic Youth	1%	6%	66%	22%	18%	21%
Matched with Asian American/Pacific Islander Youth	<1%	<1%	1%	30%	<1%	<1%
Matched with White Youth	2%	4%	12%	13%	38%	27%
Matched with Biracial/Other Youth	5%	4%	4%	7%	5%	10%

	Youth Race and Ethnicity					
	American Indian	African American	Hispanic	Asian American/ Pacific Islander	White	Biracial/ Other
Matched with American Indian Mentor	58%	<1%	<1%	2%	<1%	3%
Matched with African American Mentor	5%	51%	9%	2%	5%	21%
Matched with Hispanic Mentor	4%	3%	34%	12%	5%	10%
Matched with Asian American/Pacific Islander Mentor	1%	<1%	1%	39%	<1%	<1%
Matched with White Mentor	28%	41%	50%	39%	84%	57%
Matched with Biracial/Other Mentor	4%	5%	6%	5%	6%	9%

Exhibit 5.5 – JUMP projects make same race matches whenever possible.

Match Longevity Reflects Program Models

The data available at the time information was gathered for this report are interim data and reflect ongoing mentor-youth matches. Because of this, accurate measures of match longevity are not currently available. Only 40 percent of the recorded matches had end dates, which indicated that the match was terminated at the time of reporting. The median length for

those matches was approximately 7.1 months. These terminated matches often corresponded with school-year-based programs that end matches at the close of each nine-month academic year

Growth of Matches Within Programs

Because Cohort II grantees within this data set represent a relatively complete program funding cycle, it is interesting to look at their pattern of growth of active matches. For each grantee, the number of matches active within each six-month period was calculated beginning January 1, 1997. The change in active matches over time was modeled using Amos 4.0, and a traditional growth modeling procedure, including latent slope and intercept terms. The resulting model produced the growth curve depicted in Exhibit 5.5. (The analysis of the model's fit indicated that it accounts for only a small proportion of the variance.) Further analysis will focus on determining if particular variables help to predict differing growth patterns, perhaps
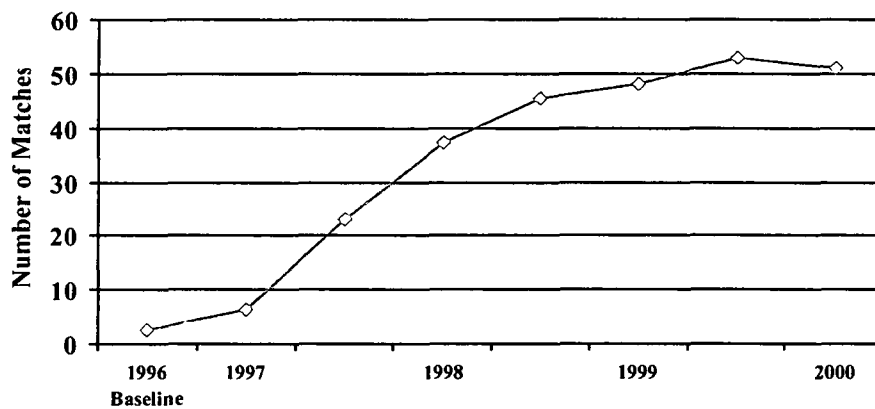
Exhibit 5.6 – JUMP projects appear to reach their peak match efficiency in the third (and last) year of their grants.

identifying promising practices that lead to successful match growth. The model fitting limitations, the analysis does illustrate an important feature of the development of the JUMP grantees. While JUMP grants run nominally for three years, the programs seem to reach their match peak efficiency only in the last year of operation. Therefore, an evaluation of the effectiveness of such programs would only be fairly applied to that final year of operation, making cross-year comparisons theoretically problematic.

Conclusion

JUMP projects utilize a variety of criteria to match youth with mentors. Most JUMP projects match youth with mentors who are the same gender. While few JUMP projects have a specific requirement or preference to match youth with mentors who are the same race or ethnicity, a majority of JUMP youth are in fact matched with mentors who are members of the

same racial or ethnic group. While most of the match data collected to date reflect ongoing matches, it will be interesting to determine the differences in match longevity associated with different match characteristics. In the next chapter we present information gathered from youth and mentors whose matches have ended, including data regarding youth and mentor satisfaction and perceived benefits associated with the mentoring relationship.

Chapter Six: The Mentoring Experience

The perceptions of the youth and mentor are important considerations in the value of the mentoring project to the individuals involved and important indicators for other areas such as value to the community and project sustainability. As each mentoring relationship terminates, mentors and youth complete a short exit questionnaire designed to capture the viewpoint of each participant in the mentoring relationship. Both the mentor and youth were asked to rate the perceived benefits of the mentoring relationship on the youth.

The youth exit questionnaire is a short, written assessment designed for ease of use. This questionnaire was designed specifically for use in the JUMP evaluation and was administered to all the youth who had participated in JUMP projects, regardless of age. The youth that responded ranged in ages from 4 to 21 but were primarily in the 12-15-year-old range. Considering the wide range of age and reading levels of the youth enrolled in JUMP projects, the questionnaire was deliberately designed to be appropriate for even relatively young children. Projects also were instructed to offer adult assistance to the youth, when necessary. In the most recent administration of these surveys, 592 youth from 39 agencies completed the exit questionnaire. Their responses provide the basis for this chapter.

Youth and Mentor Satisfaction

Youth

Both youth and mentors view the mentoring relationship as positive. Although the Youth Exit Questionnaire and the Mentor Exit Questionnaire are similar in content, the questions are phrased slightly differently. The questions for the youth were worded such that they could choose to identify themselves with other kids who either liked their mentors or did not like their mentors, to varying degrees. In other words, in response to the statements, *some kids liked their mentor (Y)*, and *some kids did not like their mentor (z)*, youth were asked to choose one of the following responses:

- *I am really like the kids in Y*
- *I am sort of like the kids in Y*
- *I am sort of like the kids in Z*
- *I am really like the kids in Z*

For ease of presentation, this scale has been reconfigured in the table below as a standard Likert scale.

Item	Very much identified with	Somewhat identified with	Somewhat did not identify with	Very much did not identify with
Kids who liked their mentors	80%	15%	3%	2%
Kids who got along with their mentors	85%	12%	2%	1%
Kids who felt their mentors understood them	70%	23%	6%	1%
Kids who thought their mentors were helpful	73%	20%	5%	2%

Exhibit 6.1 – Youth were generally positive in their perceptions of the mentoring relationship.

Most of these youth (80.2 percent) reported really liking their mentors and also identified with kids who really "got along" with them (85 percent). Furthermore, 70.1 percent of the youth felt their mentors "really understood" them. Most mentees (72.9 percent) felt their mentors were "really helpful" and 20.5 percent "sort of" helpful to them. To date there has been little formal research completed on the link between satisfaction with the mentoring relationship and other factors such as match longevity. However, intuitively it seems that higher levels of youth and mentor satisfaction with the relationship may lead to greater youth benefits in the long term. Clearly this is an important area for future research over time.

Mentors

The Mentor Exit Questionnaire is similar in content to the one completed by JUMP youth, though questions were structured somewhat differently. Mentors were asked more direct questions such as, *how much did you like your mentee?* Available answers were *not very much, a little, pretty much,* and *a lot.* At the time of this report, 460 mentors from 29 agencies completed the 14-question mentor exit form. Their responses are summarized in Exhibit 6-2.

Item	A lot	Pretty much	A little	Not at all
How much do you like your mentee?	64%	34%	2%	0%
How well do you get along with your mentee?	60%	37%	3%	0%
How well do you feel you understand your mentee?	28%	57%	13%	2%
How helpful do you feel you were to your mentee?	20%	51%	24%	5%

Exhibit 6.2 – Mentors were generally positive in their perceptions of the mentoring relationship.

Perception of Benefits

Both the Youth Exit Questionnaire and the Mentor Exit Questionnaire asked questions regarding the perceived benefits of the mentoring relationship. Youth were asked how useful they felt the relationship was to them in nine different areas. Mentors were asked how much they felt they helped their mentees in these same areas. On both questionnaires, "not addressed" was an answer option, to indicate that the respondent did not feel that particular area was an issue for that specific youth. Between 40.4 and 53.7 percent of the mentors expressed confidence that they helped their mentees *a lot* in all the areas examined. However, 20 to 25.9 percent of mentors reported that some of the topics, like staying away from alcohol, drugs, weapons, or gangs, were "*not addressed*" with their mentees. The largest number of mentors, like the mentees, chose the area of *getting along with their family* as where they were most helpful.

Youth Issues	Youth perception of benefit			Mentor perception of benefit		
	A lot	A little	Not at all	A lot	A little	Not at all
Getting better grades	49%	37%	7%	40%	43%	10%
Attendance in classes	60%	17%	6%	50%	29%	11%
Staying away from alcohol	54%	10%	5%	41%	25%	8%
Staying away from drugs	55%	7%	5%	48%	20%	10%
Avoiding fights	52%	20%	7%	48%	32%	9%
Staying away from gangs	52%	9%	6%	46%	25%	9%
Not using knives or guns	48%	7%	8%	42%	23%	10%
Avoiding friends starting trouble	46%	26%	8%	40%	33%	11%
Getting along with family	60%	21%	7%	54%	32%	6%

Exhibit 6.3 – Mentors and youth assessed the perceived benefits of mentoring in a number of different areas.

Mentors were also invited to share comments about their experiences in the mentoring relationship. While not many chose to do so, those comments received indicated that while the mentors were positive about the youth with whom they were involved, they recognized different types of limitations to the programs and settings. Mentors expressed disappointment that, due to

their work or time constraints, they could not do more. Some mentors felt that their expectations of the mentoring relationship differed significantly from the expectations of the youth with whom they were matched. For example, one mentor stated, "*my mentee started the program with the idea that I would entertain him on weekends and during mentoring sessions. He had no interest in preparing for school. He complained that sessions were boring and would rather play basketball...*" Other mentors expressed reservations about the amount of time required to participate in the mentoring project, such as, "*this is an excellent program yet I think it requires too much of a time commitment to be possible for many people. I would have liked to remain in the program yet I'm unable to commit to the amount of time required.*" Finally, some mentors found that they were unable to meet with youth very often throughout the project. One mentor noted, "*I only met with my mentee a few times, so I really didn't have much of an influence.*"

Other mentor comments were more positive. Some thought it was *fun, fulfilling* or *helpful to both mentor and mentee.* The youth were described in a variety of ways from *outstanding* and *educational* to *easily distracted* or as *having real issues.* Others saw *great change* over the course of the program. Finally, one mentor wrote, *this is a two-way program that helps both mentee and mentor.*

Conclusion

An important component of the JUMP evaluation is information provided directly by youth and their mentors about their satisfaction and perception of benefits of the mentoring relationship. While there is some variation, in general, youth and mentors are positive about each other and in their assessment of specific benefits to the youth. It appears that JUMP projects are largely successful in creating mentoring relationships that are enjoyable to both the youth and the mentors, and are perceived as having positive impacts. In the next chapter, we identify some of the best practices of JUMP projects that contribute to their ability to create these relationships between youth and volunteers.

Chapter Seven: Promising Practices

Introduction

Since the inception of the JUMP evaluation, we have had an opportunity to gather information from 175 different mentoring projects across the country. These data have contributed to the ongoing process and impact evaluation and are the foundation of this report. The JUMP evaluation has afforded us an opportunity to interact with hundreds of dedicated and talented staff members who work with at-risk youth on a daily basis. These individuals have shared their challenges and successes with us. Through their contributions, we have begun to develop knowledge about what some of the most promising practices are in mentoring today.

Information in this section of the report was gathered from a variety of sources including standardized data collection, site visits, and telephone interviews. It is our anticipation that, as the JUMP program grows and matures, we will learn even more about the promise of mentoring as an intervention in the lives of at-risk youth.

JUMP Projects Use a Variety of Staffing Patterns

JUMP projects elect to utilize funds in a variety of different manners that conform to the standards outlined in the JUMP legislation. Projects use this money to pay staff salaries, cover expenses for facilities and materials, and support mentor recruitment activities. By far, the majority of JUMP projects spend most of their JUMP funds to support staff salaries. Generally, JUMP funds support one to 1.5 full-time staff members dedicated to the JUMP project. As discussed in Chapter Two, JUMP project staff members come from a wide variety of backgrounds in terms of both education and experience.

Recently there has been a great deal of interest in the costs associated with mentoring. Although there has been some research completed addressing this issue, most of it has utilized data from a specific type of mentoring project. For example, a recent report released by Public/Private Ventures reported that, on average, the mentoring projects they surveyed spent $1114 per youth, per year, to provide mentoring services. However, projects ranged between $12 and $1900 per youth, per year. These costs did not include an estimation of the value of donated goods and services that projects utilized to provide services to youth. While this study and others similar to it begin to address questions about the cost of mentoring, it is clear that more research must be completed to determine the ways in which factors such as target population, risk factors, and community circumstances impact the costs and outcomes of mentoring projects.

Closely linked to the question of cost of mentoring is the need for more information about appropriate caseloads for JUMP staff. While at this time there is no definitive formula for determining an appropriate staff-to-match ratio, it appears that most JUMP projects have one full-time staff member for every 30 to 45 matches that are currently active. A reasonable caseload for one full-time staff member appears to be no more than 60 active matches at any given time. This type of ratio allows staff members to have frequent contact with both youth and mentors and to monitor the relationship closely enough to assure that it is satisfying and beneficial to all individuals involved. Many JUMP staff members noted that they rely on frequent phone and in-person contact to assure that meetings are being scheduled and kept, to provide support and guidance to mentors, and to solicit feedback from youth and families regarding the mentoring relationship.

It is not uncommon for staff members in some agencies to take a more active role in arranging meetings between mentors and youth. In some projects many of the youth enrolled do not have phones in their homes. In these cases, project staff may facilitate meetings between mentors and youth by taking messages to the youth from the mentor. One JUMP case manager frequently delivered telephone messages regarding scheduling to a youth's home when phone service was disconnected. JUMP staff members also often have some responsibilities for transporting youth to program activities, for interacting with the schools on the youth's behalf, or for assisting families in meeting more concrete needs for the youth such as school supplies or clothing. Clearly staff members working with youth who have greater needs require smaller caseloads in order to manage the many demands on their time.

> ### *Staffing Patterns*
>
> *JUMP projects often rely on relatively small numbers of staff to perform the different functions related to operating a successful mentoring project. Often staffing levels are carefully scrutinized by potential funders. One JUMP grantee conducted an internal evaluation to determine the level of staffing required to screen, and train the number of mentors needed to meet its target number for matches. Through these local evaluation activities, program leaders were able to document the enormous amount of effort required to recruit, screen, and train just one volunteer for their project. This information enabled agency leaders to justify the number of staff needed to support the project at its projected size. It also provided valuable information to new projects with less experience staffing their projects.*

JUMP Projects Rely on Strong Support from Sponsoring Agencies

Some JUMP projects exist as stand-alone entities, with the JUMP project representing the sole scope of services the agency provides. However, it is far more common for JUMP projects to be housed in larger mentoring agencies, or in agencies that provide a spectrum of services to the community. The degree of support the JUMP project receives from the sponsoring agency is often a critical factor in the success of the project.

Strong support from a sponsoring agency can impact a JUMP project in many different ways. Agencies that are established in a community can lend credibility to a new mentoring initiative. Often families who might not ordinarily have sought out mentoring do so when they approach agencies for other services. Similarly, volunteers may learn about mentoring

opportunities through their work with a larger sponsoring agency. Finally, well-organized agencies are often able to support the infrastructure necessary to support a successful mentoring project. This type of support is especially critical to volunteer recruitment and training and resource development.

Conversely, JUMP projects that do not receive this type of support can struggle throughout the life of the grant. In some instances, agencies receive JUMP funds and implement staff for the project but provide little in the way of ongoing support. This leaves staff members, who must recruit and train mentors and youth, make mentor/youth matches, and monitor matches, also responsible for a variety of other critical tasks, such as securing ongoing funding and generating positive publicity. It is important the JUMP projects receive adequate support from the sponsoring agency to assure that the project is afforded the best possible opportunity to grow and flourish, even after the JUMP grant has ended.

School Support Is Critical to the Success of JUMP Projects

The JUMP legislation mandates the JUMP projects must be themselves local educational agencies (LEAs) or must have a written, well-defined agreement with an LEA. JUMP projects receive varying types and degrees of support from LEAs. Often the most successful projects are the ones that have developed strong, positive relationships with local schools.

As discussed in Chapter Two, JUMP projects are structured in different ways. The way in which a project is structured impacts the degree to which the projects emphasize academics and interact with the schools. School-based projects clearly require a higher degree of collaboration and cooperation with schools than do community-based projects. However, all projects, regardless of structure, rely on schools to provide information about students that is critical to the development of a mentoring relationship. It is clear that the more information a mentor has about a child's attitude toward and behavior in school, the more likely he is to be able to impact that child's academic performance. Similarly, schools are most likely to have critical knowledge about the child's life outside of school that may impact his ability to form relationships with others. Finally, schools are most often the best source of referrals for mentoring projects. This is particularly true of schools that tend to serve youth whose families are too overburdened, dysfunctional, or disinterested to seek out mentoring opportunities for their youth.

At a minimum, it is critical that schools provide timely and accurate information to projects about the academic performance of students involved in JUMP projects. One of the key goals of the legislation is to improve academic performance. Without regular information about a student's grades, attendance, and disciplinary records, it is impossible to know whether or not the project is successfully achieving this goal.

Additionally, feedback that schools provide can strengthen the mentor/mentee relationship. One of the comments most often made by mentors is that they themselves have

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difficulty perceiving any change in their mentees, even after many meetings together. Some mentors, feeling that they are having no positive impact, may become frustrated and terminate the relationship. However, schools may notice improvements in school behavior or performance and can provide mentors with this feedback, thereby reinforcing the mentor's commitment to the mentoring relationship. Often school personnel are the critical measure of a child's well-being. School staff members see children more often than mentors or project staff; often they are the first to notice key changes in a child's behavior and attitude.

Finally, schools are often an important means of linking youth with mentoring projects. Often underserved youth have parents who are overwhelmed, unwilling, or unable to seek out additional services for their children. Schools can fill in the critical gap by referring students to mentoring projects and providing the programs with sufficient information to screen and enroll youth appropriately. Finally, support from schools may help the parents overcome any unwillingness or misconceptions they have that might prevent them from allowing youth to participate in the project.

JUMP Projects Utilize Various Methods for Mentor Training and Support

A hallmark of successful mentoring projects is that they invest time, energy and resources to train and support mentors appropriately throughout their involvement in the project. As noted in Chapter Four, JUMP projects use a variety of methods for training mentors. However, nearly all require some amount of training before a mentor is matched with a youth. Throughout our work with the JUMP projects, mentors have identified numerous areas that are critical for mentor training. Areas that are most commonly identified by mentors include:

Behavioral Expectations of Mentees: Many mentors stated that forming a relationship with their mentee took longer, and was more difficult, than they had anticipated. Mentors who had received training regarding youth behavior tended to be better prepared for the slow development of some relationships. Mentors stated that it was particularly useful to hear that other mentors had the same experience. One mentor stated, "I thought I was doing something wrong, until I talked with other mentors."

Appropriate Activities: Many mentors noted that they did not have children of their own, or children in the same age range as their mentee. Mentors noted that they appreciated suggestions for activities that were available for youth in the community, particularly activities at little or no cost.

Limit Setting: Mentors noted that they often had difficulty setting limits with mentees, or in some cases with mentees' families. One mentor noted that her mentees' mother often pressured her to include other siblings in outings. Another mentee stated that her mentee expected to be taken out to eat at every meeting. Mentors generally appreciated training that helped them to anticipate, and respond appropriately to, these requests.

Project Rules and Expectations: Mentors in general appreciated having a clear understanding of the project's rules, as well as the rationale behind them. This is especially important given that volunteer programs differ widely in terms of expectations and restrictions. For example, some JUMP projects allow or even encourage mentors to transport youth to activities in their personal vehicles. Other projects specifically prohibit mentors from transporting youth. Mentors felt it was important to understand all of a project's expectations when they become involved in the project. One mentor noted that she appreciated understanding the rationale behind some of the rules as well. Confused about an agency policy that prohibited her from purchasing gifts for her mentee, the mentor appreciated the explanation offered and the alternatives for celebrating the occasion that agency staff offered.

Mentors noted that they often appreciated hearing about the experiences of other mentors who have been involved in projects longer. Although not many projects have utilized experienced mentors in their mentor training, those that have feel that it added a valuable dimension to the training. Similarly, some projects have invited one or several mentees to speak at volunteer recruitment or training meetings with positive results.

Ongoing mentor support is as critical as mentor training to the ongoing success of projects. Again, JUMP projects differ in the ways in which this support is provided. Nearly all JUMP projects have a staff member who is available by phone, at a minimum, to mentors should issues arise. Many projects have a schedule for contacting mentors, and in some cases youth, on a regular basis to check on the status of the relationship.

JUMP projects differ in their views of ongoing mentor support and training. Some JUMP projects do not require or offer ongoing mentor meetings, feeling that such meetings demand too much time of volunteers, who already have a minimum requirement for time spent with their mentees. Other projects consider these meetings a valuable opportunity for mentors to interact, share experiences, and share information with one another. Activities that bring mentors together, with or without their mentees, offer a valuable opportunity for mentors to network. It is important for projects to consider ways in which this can be accomplished in a manner that best suits the needs and the preferences of their community.

Successful JUMP Projects Require an Appropriate Youth Pool

The most basic requirement of a successful mentoring project is a population of youth who are interested in having mentors and are appropriate for participation in the project. While most JUMP projects report having far more interested youth than they are able to serve, we have learned valuable lessons from several projects that struggled with youth recruitment.

One factor that can impede a JUMP project's ability to recruit sufficient numbers of youth is the availability of other programs and activities that are appealing to the same population that the JUMP project has targeted. For example, many of the JUMP projects target

schools that have a number of other after school activities available to youth. These schools may arrange for mentors to meet with youth immediately after school – at the same time that sports teams have practice, scouts meet, and the computer club gathers in the library. All of these activities may draw from the population the JUMP project intended to serve.

One southern JUMP project located in a juvenile detention facility encountered problems with scheduling multiple activities. Because of the policies and procedures of the facility, mentors were only permitted to visit the facility on Thursday evenings. This was the same night that the Boy Scouts met and that a number of other recreational programs were offered. Many of the youth who had initially expressed an interest in mentoring chose to participate in other activities. The JUMP project leaders spent more time than anticipated educating youth on the benefits of having a mentor. This project also faced challenges related to the population of youth they targeted for service. Mentors were recruited from the area around the juvenile facility so that mentors could visit with youth weekly. The project intended that the mentoring relationships would form while youth were in the facility, with the mentor serving as a resource for the youth when he returned home. Therefore, the project only accepted youth who planned to be released into the same county as the juvenile facility (which served youth from the entire state). This greatly limited the percentage of youth in the facility who could be served by the project. Although this project enjoyed some success in matching youth with mentors, these various factors prevented them from ever achieving their target goal with respect to youth recruitment.

Conclusion

A number of factors impact a project's ability to succeed in meeting their goals of matching at-risk youth with mentors. Many of these factors are rooted in the internal structure of the agency offering the project, such as the leadership chosen to head the project, the level of internal agency support for the mentoring project, and the level of staff dedicated to implementing and maintaining the JUMP project. Other factors are more community based, such as the available population of youth to be recruited by the project. While we still have much to learn about how successful mentoring projects develop and flourish, we are beginning to identify promising practices that can be implemented in other communities wishing to offer mentoring services to their youth.

Chapter Eight: Program Implications

The first group (Cohort I) of JUMP grantees, funded in 1995, has just completed their grant cycle. Many of the Cohort II grantees have also finished their grants. Eighty-three projects have been in operation for just over a year. A new group of JUMP awards will be announced in the winter of 2000. In addition to both the qualitative and quantitative data we have collected, having JUMP projects at different phases of completion concurrently has allowed us to draw some preliminary conclusions with important policy implications for the future. More specifically, these recommendations may be categorized into issues related to the intent of the legislation, issues related to project design and operation, and issues related to project sustainability following the JUMP grant.

Legislative Intent

Throughout this report, we have made reference to the authorizing legislation for the JUMP program. This document clearly delineates the goals and intent of the JUMP program, which became the foundation for the national evaluation. The first step in determining the success of any program is to state clearly what the desired outcomes are. From there, the evaluator must somehow make these outcomes measurable, gather data, and analyze information to draw solid conclusions.

With regard to the JUMP program, the desired outcomes are clear: *"to reduce juvenile delinquency and gang participation, to improve academic performance, and to reduce the dropout rate, through the use of mentors for at risk youth (42 U.S.C. 5667e)."* Further, the JUMP project also must be viewed in the context of OJJDP's *Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Offenders*. This *Strategy* enumerates agency goals for the agency's work with at-risk youth, including:

- *Healthy and nurturing families;*
- *Safe communities;*
- *School attachment;*
- *Prosocial peer relations;*
- *Personal development and life skills;*
- *Healthy lifestyle choices.*

> **Guide for Implementing the Comprehensive Strategy for Serious, Violent and Chronic Juvenile Offenders, OJJDP, 1998, page 8.**

Because they are so clearly and simply stated, the goals of the JUMP project and the goals of the *Strategy* appear deceptively simple to measure. Numerous considerations have impacted our ability to evaluate change in each of the target areas of the JUMP legislation.

Collection of Delinquency/Gang Participation Data

The degree to which the national evaluation team is able to collect information regarding delinquent activities and gang involvement from each JUMP project is influenced by a number of factors. Perhaps the most significant obstacle to collecting this information lies in the structure of JUMP projects themselves. Despite the fact that the JUMP program is sponsored by the Department of Justice, relatively few (approximately 5 percent) of the JUMP projects are based in juvenile justice agencies. A majority of JUMP projects are managed by schools, or by community-based agencies with relatively little access to this type of information.

Those projects that are housed in local courts, youth authorities, or other projects run by a justice-focused local agency tend to have more ready access to information regarding delinquent behavior and gang activity involving the youth that they serve. School- and community-based projects, however, tend to have minimal access to this information, although they are occasionally able to gather some information from mentors, family members, school counselors, or even the youth themselves. Throughout the evaluation, gathering this type of information has proven to be one of the most challenging areas of the evaluation design. One way in which the national evaluation supplements the information gathered by the individual projects is through the administration of the Problem-Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT) to all youth (ages 12 and over) upon entry into the project. Youth are also asked to complete the POSIT Follow-Up as they exit the project. This standardized instrument assesses risk on ten different subscales, one of which is aggressive behavior/delinquency. The POSIT also gathers data in related areas such as substance abuse, mental health, and peer relationships, all of which may be related to involvement in delinquent activities. Scores on this risk assessment allow the national evaluation team to measure progress toward this legislative goal using a standardized instrument to compare across projects. Nonetheless, we encourage projects to continue to be creative in their efforts to gather this valuable data.

Another factor impacting the evaluation team's ability to gather data regarding delinquency and gang involvement is the number of projects serving relatively young youth. Approximately, 1950 JUMP youth, or about 16 percent, are under the age of 12, the age at which delinquent behavior and gang involvement are most likely to begin. In other words, those JUMP projects serving younger children are not likely to measure significant levels of delinquent behavior or gang involvement because the children they serve are not yet at an age at which these behaviors are commonly seen. Because they are not likely to measure significant levels of delinquent behavior or gang involvement, they are not likely to demonstrate improvement in these areas. It may be that measuring maintenance at this level of functioning, rather than demonstrating improvement, may be the best indicator of success in these projects. Another strategy currently being designed and implemented by the national evaluation team is to select a

representative sample of youth, including some of these younger JUMP participants, and gather data from them over a longer period of time, in an attempt to document some of the long-term preventative impacts of mentoring.

Measurement of Data Related to the Dropout Rate

Similarly to considerations impacting delinquency data collection are the issues affecting this ability of the national evaluation to measure progress toward the goal of reducing the school dropout rate. In all states, youth are required to remain in school until the age of 16 (Education Commission of the States, March 2000). A majority of youth involved in JUMP projects are younger than this age; therefore it is not possible to determine whether youth remain in school due to the efforts of the project or simply because they are legally required to do so.

Again, to determine what some of the impacts of mentoring may be, the national evaluation team has begun to design an aspect of the evaluation that will allow us to gather data from a representative sample of JUMP youth over a longer period of time, to determine some of the long-term impacts of mentoring. One of our primary areas of interest will be the dropout rate of JUMP participants over time. Our sample will attempt to include children in all of the different age ranges served by the JUMP project to determine the impact of mentoring at different age levels on the dropout rate.

Another way in which the national evaluation is looking at the impacts of the JUMP program on the dropout rate is by gathering data on a number of intermediate variables – variables that are likely to demonstrate change during the course of a youth's involvement in the JUMP projects that research has linked to future school dropout. Some of these variables include instances of school-based discipline, instances of repeating a grade, levels of school absenteeism, and other mediating academic variables such as placement in special education and diagnosed learning disabilities. Contributing to this analysis is data gathered through the administration of the POSIT to all youth (ages 12 and over) upon entry into the project. Youth are also asked to complete the POSIT Follow-Up as they exit the project. This standardized risk assessment gathers information from students relative to ten different risk domains, one of which is educational status. The POSIT also gathers information on related domains such as social skills, leisure/recreation, and mental health.

Collection of School-based Data

One of the most critical issues regarding the collection of school-based data (which includes information on academic performance, as well as attendance and school-based discipline) is the varied nature of the LEA agreements across JUMP projects. This issue is discussed in more depth in Chapter One of this report. It is anticipated that increased guidance from OJJDP will help to alleviate this issue in the future. However, concern about the privacy and confidentiality of student records presents nearly as great a challenge to data collection.

Without adequate data from schools, it is not possible to determine fully the impact of the JUMP program on academic performance.

Perhaps the most important protections of student privacy and confidentiality lie in the construction of the JUMP Management Information System (JUMP MIS), which grantee agencies use to collect and transmit data for use in the national evaluation. The JUMP MIS is password protected – allowing grantee agencies to restrict access to student data. Additionally, the JUMP MIS is designed to allow projects to assign a confidential identification number to each individual participating in the project. *No identifying information (name, address, or Social Security number) is ever transmitted to the national evaluation team, or any other agency outside of the local mentoring project.* While the national evaluation team depends on the disclosure of certain information regarding JUMP participants, we respect the sensitive nature of this information and have taken every precaution to protect the youth's rights to privacy and confidentiality.

Another way in which compliance with providing academic information might be improved would be to encourage grantees to seek parental permission for the disclosure of this information, confidentially, to the national evaluation team. Currently, nearly all (78 percent) JUMP projects require parental permission for participation in the JUMP project. Projects could obtain parental consent for the release of academic information by adding such a statement to their existing permission forms.

Improving the quality of academic information available on JUMP youth will strengthen the conclusions that can be drawn by the national evaluation. It is critical that more resources be invested to provide projects with practical suggestions for obtaining this information accurately and in a timely fashion.

Policy Implications/Operational Issues

The national evaluation, to date, has worked with 175 JUMP projects across the country. We have had the opportunity to gather data from projects during the start-up phase of project operation, throughout the active term of the grant, to the termination of the grant period. We eagerly anticipate working with future JUMP projects supported by OJJDP. From our work with projects at various phases of the JUMP program, we have learned a great deal about the implementation of mentoring in different types of communities across the nation. Several common themes, with important implications for future policy and legislation, have emerged.

Project Start-up

Through the JUMP program, OJJDP has awarded grant funds both to agencies that currently operate mentoring projects and to agencies that have never before offered mentoring as an intervention. To qualify for JUMP funds, agencies that currently are involved in mentoring are required to target a new youth population or to in some way expand the current mentoring

effort. Therefore, all JUMP projects require some period of time for *start-up* activities, which may include hiring staff, securing office space, determining policies and procedures, and recruiting volunteers or youth, regardless of their current level of experience in offering mentoring.

While the JUMP grant requires that some of these start-up activities be guaranteed in the grant proposal, such as written assurances of cooperation with the LEA, it is important to remember that potential grantees complete applications as much as a year before grants are announced. Therefore, some period of time is necessary for projects that receive JUMP funds to re-establish their mentoring projects as a priority, both within their agencies and within their communities. Further, some start-up tasks, such as renting space or equipment or hiring staff, cannot be completed until actual funds are awarded. Often projects do not receive funds until several months after the official grant award. This leaves many projects feeling as though they are "starting out behind." Many projects find that they spend their first year or more in capacity-building activities. During that year they are often not able to serve their targeted numbers of youth.

Several projects have noted that a change in the structure of the grant award might allow projects to become fully established in communities before actual mentoring activities begin. A popular proposal is to change the period of the grant from three years to four, with the first year designated as a capacity-building year. This year, which would be funded at a lower level than the remaining three, would allow projects to establish their mentoring programs before taking responsibility for matching youth with mentors. By allowing projects time to hire qualified staff, solidify key relationships in the community, and begin mentor recruitment activities without any expectation for youth enrollment or match completion, projects would ultimately be able to offer a stronger mentoring intervention to the youth they serve.

Relationships with LEAs

The authorizing legislation for the JUMP project emphasizes the importance of LEAs in creating strong mentoring projects. All JUMP grantees must themselves be LEAs or have a formal written agreement with the LEA in support of the mentoring project. As discussed in Chapter One, until recently the nature of these agreements varied widely. However, it is the belief of the national evaluation team that these relationships are critical to the success of JUMP projects, for several reasons. As noted earlier in this chapter, LEAs possess information related to a youth's academic performance that is vital to the ability of the national evaluation team to assess progress toward legislative goals. More fundamentally LEA cooperation is, for several reasons, often the foundation of a successful mentoring project.

Put simply, schools are one location in which youth spend the majority of their waking hours. Often school staff members are the experts with regard to their students, including their strengths and their challenges, their resources and their needs. Especially in high-risk communities, schools often provide a spectrum of services and resources to youth and families.

Schools are often at the heart of a community and serve as a meeting place, a source of information, and a familiar, comfortable setting for families in need of assistance. For this reason, mentoring projects that are located in schools are often able to reach youth who may otherwise be resistant to participating in an otherwise unfamiliar project.

Funding and Scheduling

Two areas of particular interest for the national evaluation team are the levels of funding received by JUMP projects and the schedule with which funds are disseminated to local agencies. As we have talked with grantees regarding their initial grant awards, patterns emerge relating to the manner in which funding is approved and the amount of support that JUMP grants provide to the agencies.

For most JUMP grantees, the JUMP award represents the largest amount of funds received from a single source. Most JUMP grantee projects have not received federal grant funds in the past, either from OJJDP or from another federal agency, and are unfamiliar with the policies and procedures in place for accessing federal dollars. Many JUMP projects are unaccustomed to the amount of time required to process changes or modifications to their project plans. For some projects, this caused some degree of difficulty in establishing and maintaining their projects.

The time of year that JUMP grants are awarded is a key factor in the early success of the JUMP projects. Many JUMP projects (approximately 26 percent) focus their mentoring activities during the traditional nine-month school year. Furthermore, most projects require a minimum of three to six months from the time that they begin accessing JUMP dollars, for capacity-building activities such as hiring staff members; purchasing computers, supplies, and equipment; and acquiring and arranging office space. *The ideal time of year to begin JUMP projects is in May or June, giving projects the summer months to establish a project before youth return to school. In practice, however, JUMP grants have been announced in September or October.* Most projects are not ready to begin working with youth until December, when many schools close again for local holidays. By the time youth return to school in January and are matched with mentors, they generally have only four to five months to participate in the mentoring relationship before the school year ends for the summer. This structure impacts the local project's ability to meet its match goals, in regard to both total number of matches and average length of match.

The level of funding supported by the JUMP grant also directly impacts the manner in which services are provided to youth. Since the inception of the JUMP program, the funding level available has remained relatively constant, with slight increases between cohorts (see Exhibit 8.1). JUMP grant funds typically are utilized to support one to 1.5 staff members working directly for the mentoring project, with a small amount set aside for expenses including computer equipment and Internet access, transportation for youth, field trips and youth activities,

and other direct project costs. Most JUMP projects are expected to maintain 60 youth/mentor matches per year, at an approximate cost of $1000/match/year.

In reality, a variety of factors impact whether or not this funding level is sufficient to meet this goal. A number of JUMP projects have other sources of funding, including state, local, foundation funds, and private donations. Most JUMP projects also receive substantial in-kind support from their parent agencies and their communities. Perhaps the factors that most significantly impact the ability of the JUMP project to meet match expectations lie in the level of risk of the youth population and the scope of service the mentoring project attempts to provide to these youth under the JUMP grant. While it may be practical for one staff person to match 60 youth with mentors per year, and to monitor those matches throughout the year, this task becomes substantially more difficult if this same staff member is also expected to be the primary person responsible for volunteer recruitment, fund raising, reporting, and case management activities not directly related to the mentoring relationship. These are practical issues that many JUMP projects struggle with on a daily basis.

Sustainability

JUMP grants are awarded to local projects for a period of three years, with some extensions granted to projects that have funds remaining at the end of the grant period. (JUMP grantees are not eligible for additional funding, but are able to request additional time to utilize the funding that has already been approved.) Because the JUMP grant makes up a majority of the operating budget for most projects, it is critical that local projects begin to develop a plan for sustainability well before the end of the JUMP grant. *While it is ideal for JUMP projects to begin planning for project sustainability as soon as they receive their JUMP grants, in reality most projects do not consider this issue until the final months of their JUMP grants.* Of 61

Exhibit 8.1 – JUMP projects that continue find funding to do so from a variety of sources.

projects surveyed at the end of their grant terms, 7 projects were not continuing their mentoring programs due to a lack of funds. Those projects that were able to continue mentoring found funding from a variety of sources including donations, foundation funds, and general agency funds. This information is summarized in Exhibit 8.1. When asked, many projects stated that they would have benefited from increased assistance in this area, and in particular with accessing juvenile justice funds available at the state level to support mentoring.
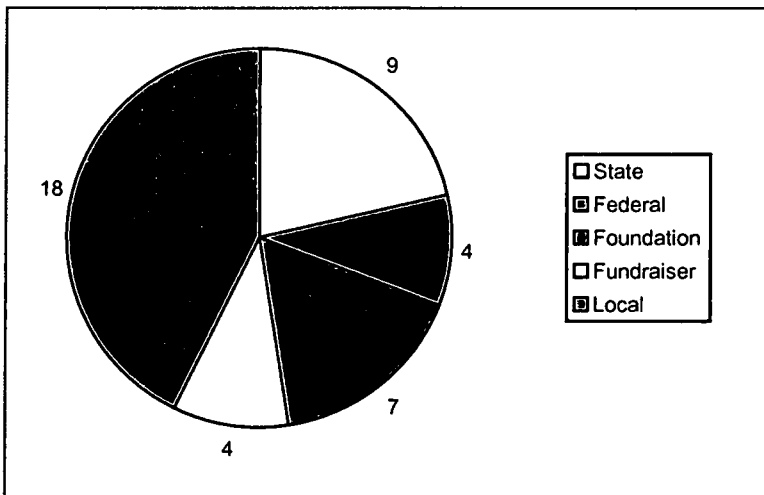
Conclusion

A fundamental aspect of the JUMP program is that it aims to offer communities an opportunity to establish mentoring projects with initial three-year grants. At the end of its JUMP grant, communities are expected to have established projects that contribute to the attainment of the goals of the national legislation, meet the needs of the communities, and have cultivated ongoing funding sources to enable them to continue into the future. At this phase of the JUMP evaluation, with two cohorts having completed their three-year funding cycles, we are able to identify several areas that impact the ability of the national evaluation to assess progress toward national goals, and determine whether projects are able to continue past the end of the JUMP funding. Some of these critical areas include the ability of projects to gather juvenile justice and academic information, the timing of the JUMP grant award, guidelines for the relationship with the LEA, and the resources that projects are able to access at the end of their JUMP grants. In the next chapter, we discuss the future of the JUMP national evaluation and the ways in which these findings will shape the JUMP program in the years to come.

Chapter Nine: Future Activities

This report has detailed evaluation findings to date and provided some preliminary conclusions based on the data available. In the future, the evaluation team plans to continue the work that we have begun in evaluating OJJDP's JUMP program. However, as we have learned more about mentoring, we have also begun to ask new questions and design strategies to gather and analyze information that will give us a more in-depth view of mentoring projects and the relationships they support. This chapter reviews the current JUMP evaluation strategy and outlines some of the ways in which the evaluation is being expanded to provide even more information regarding the benefits and impacts of mentoring. The chapter closes with a discussion of the different groups with whom the evaluation team is collaborating to strengthen mentoring programs throughout the United States.

The Evaluation Methodology: A Review

When the current national evaluation team began working with the JUMP program in 1995, the task at hand was to determine the degree to which the national program was meeting the goals of the legislation. These specific goals, as outlined in Chapter One, emphasized the importance of improving youth academic performance, decreasing gang involvement, and other delinquent behaviors, and reducing the high school dropout rate. The first step the evaluation team took to answer this broad question was to define our terms and develop methods for measuring these key elements in program participants. Additionally, because the evaluation began after the first group of JUMP awards had been announced, the evaluation team created preliminary data collection tools. These tools, which collected both qualitative and quantitative information, enabled the team to collect some basic data from this earliest group of JUMP participants to support both a process and an outcome evaluation.

To provide accurate and current information, JUMP grantees were required to submit data on a quarterly schedule. Data regarding the agency, youth, mentors, and matches were submitted quarterly on paper forms. Additionally, the JUMP grantees were asked to complete a narrative report detailing their progress toward project-specific goals, activities completed, and challenges they faced in implementing and maintaining their projects.

As the evaluation team began to receive data from JUMP grantees, the existing data collection instruments were modified to include more specific data elements that would support a more in-depth analysis of the mentoring intervention.   These data collection tools became the foundation for the JUMP Management Information System (JUMP MIS), software that enabled each JUMP grantee to gather and submit information electronically. In addition to reducing the amount of time needed to manually enter information in a database, the JUMP MIS allowed local grantees to access their own project specific information to create a number of reports, charts,

and graphs to support a variety of administrative and managerial functions. The first version of this software was distributed to all JUMP grantees in July 1999. Its use is mandatory for all JUMP grantees.

Finally, to supplement the information that grantees were collecting regarding JUMP youth, the national evaluation team selected a standardized instrument, the Problem-Oriented Screening Instrument for Teens (POSIT), which is administered to all youth over the age of 12, as they enter the mentoring project. Youth also are asked to complete a follow-up version of this instrument when they exit the project. This instrument allows us to compare youth across projects on ten different risk domains. More information on the POSIT is available in Chapter Three of this report.

The POSITs and Follow-up POSITs are to be used in an analysis that will seek to identify predictors of successful risk reduction. The analysis will be based upon a hierarchical structural equation model design, whereby individual, mentor-match, and project level variables will be included to predict reductions in risk among individual youth. A Pre-Post design, where POSITs and Follow-up POSITS are matched to each responding youth, will help to control for individual and inter-project differences that are not included in the analyses as predictor variables. Since POSIT instruments have only recently been distributed to the grantees, it is not surprising that we have yet to receive sufficient sets of POSITs and Follow-up POSITs. Once returned, this analysis should help to identify promising project practices that serve to maximize risk reduction.

Evaluation Reports

One goal of the JUMP national evaluation is to share lessons learned from this national program with other individuals working in related fields. The JUMP evaluation team has utilized several forums for disseminating evaluation results to date. Lessons learned from the evaluation have been shared through meetings and conferences and via written reports. Each of these is discussed in turn.

Meetings and Conferences

One of the most effective means for disseminating information is through face-to-face meetings with individuals who have an interest in youth mentoring. Members of the JUMP national evaluation team have utilized different meetings and conferences to share information with other individuals who have an interest in working with youth. In addition to regularly scheduled meetings with OJJDP, the national evaluation team has participated in many of the National Mentoring Center's regional trainings. This has provided the team with an opportunity to share specific information regarding the JUMP evaluation protocol, as well as disseminate information and engage in dialogue with other professionals in the field. Members of the national evaluation team have also participated in collaborative meetings with others working in youth mentoring, including regular meetings of the Public/Private Mentoring Alliance.

Evaluation information has also been shared with a broader audience through larger professional meetings such as the American Society of Criminology annual conferences.

Written Reports

The JUMP evaluation team has prepared several publications based on information gathered from the JUMP projects to date. The earliest of these publications is the *Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) 1998 Report to Congress*, which detailed some early process and outcome data from Cohorts I and II. In October 2000, OJJDP released the *Juvenile Justice Bulletin, Juvenile Mentoring Program: A Progress Review*. This annual report represents the third written publication detailing the JUMP national evaluation.

Expansion of National Evaluation Activities

As the JUMP national evaluation progresses, new issues have arisen that are of interest to those individuals working in mentoring. In FY1999, funding became available to expand the national evaluation and address several issues that, when examined thoroughly, might add valuable lessons to the existing body of knowledge regarding the design, implementation and benefits of mentoring programs. Specifically, the national evaluation team determined that the following four general areas of information merited further study:

- The sustainability of mentoring projects;
- The characteristics of projects relationships with local educational agencies;
- The level to which projects conduct self-evaluation and the results of these evaluations;
- The long-term impacts of mentoring.

Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

Sustainability

A major goal of the JUMP legislation was to support mentoring projects in diverse communities across the country. For this reason, JUMP grants are time limited. Projects are funded for a specific dollar amount and time period. While JUMP grantees may elect to utilize additional time to spend their allotted JUMP funds, they are not permitted to re-apply for additional funds under the JUMP grant. Therefore, because the funding is limited, it is critical that projects develop plans for financial sustainability over time.

As Cohort I and Cohort II projects drew to a close, it became clear that they met with different levels of success in pursuing new sources of financial support. Currently, the national evaluation team gathers information regarding the future of JUMP projects during telephone interviews conducted with JUMP projects as they draw to a close. With the expanded evaluation, the national evaluation team will begin to gather more in-depth information from

JUMP grantees quarterly to determine what types of sustainability activities projects engage in, what level of success they have, and what types of technical assistance they need to secure continued resources for their projects. The national evaluation team anticipates working closely with the National Mentoring Center to identify needs for technical assistance and provide support to JUMP grantees as they seek future resources for their projects.

Relationships with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs)

The JUMP legislation clearly emphasizes the importance of strong relationships with LEAs in developing effective youth mentoring projects. As discussed in Chapters One and Eight, until recently JUMP projects had a great deal of flexibility in developing these relationships. It was only in the most recent solicitation that JUMP applicants had a model memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the LEA collaboration.

Throughout the evaluation, it has been demonstrated clearly that the level of LEA support a project receives directly impacts that project's ability to succeed. Currently the national evaluation gathers some information regarding the level and type of LEA support from the grantees at the beginning of their grant periods. With the expanded evaluation, the national evaluation team will gather more in-depth information regarding the nature of LEA support and the specific ways that this impacts mentoring projects. The national evaluation team anticipates gathering more information directly from school officials to understand better their perspectives on the role of the mentoring project in their communities. The evaluation team will also expand some JUMP site visits to spend more time at the schools, talking with school staff and observing the role of the mentoring project in the school setting.

Project Self-evaluation

As noted throughout this document, all JUMP grantees must agree to participate in the national evaluation of the JUMP program. However, it is important to distinguish participation in this national data collection from the completion of a self-evaluation, which measures process and outcome issues at the local level. While JUMP projects are encouraged to develop self-evaluation (local evaluation) plans, the degree to which they do so varies greatly throughout the projects.

OJJDP has emphasized the importance of project self-evaluation and has taken measures to support local projects in designing and implementing meaningful local evaluations. The National Mentoring Center's curriculum for mentoring projects includes a module on outcome measurement. The national evaluation team has completed a workbook, *Evaluating Your Program: A Self-Evaluation Workbook for Mentoring Programs,* that can be used by projects with all levels of evaluation experience, from beginner to advanced. This publication will be distributed in the fall/winter of 2000.

To maximize the benefit of lessons learned from self-evaluations, the national evaluation team is designing an approach to review local evaluation plans, gather information regarding the conclusions supported by these evaluations, and disseminate this information to a broader audience. The national evaluation team anticipates that this expanded aspect of the national evaluation will have several benefits, including offering immediate feedback on evaluation technical assistance needs, and promoting information sharing among JUMP grantees.

Long-term Impacts of Mentoring

Currently, the JUMP national evaluation gathers data regarding youth throughout the time that they are enrolled in the individual JUMP projects. While this provides valuable information regarding the short-term benefits and impacts of the mentoring intervention, it does not support evaluation of the longer-term impacts of mentoring on participating youth. Clearly there is great interest in determining what the longer-term impacts of mentoring may be.

To determine some of the longer-term impacts of mentoring, the national evaluation team has begun to design a protocol to follow a sample of JUMP youth, over time, to chart their progress into adulthood. This protocol, which includes a pilot study phase and a study phase, will attempt to gather data from a sample of youth:

- Living in different geographic areas
- Participating in different types of projects (school-based, community-based, etc.)
- Participating in mentoring relationships for different periods of time (3 months, 6 months, etc.)

This aspect of the national evaluation will seek to determine what the long-term impacts of mentoring are on national legislative goals including, improving academic performance, reducing the dropout rate, and reducing levels of delinquent behavior and gang activity.

Collaborative Relationships

It is clear that mentoring is growing in popularity across the country as an effective intervention for working with at-risk youth. While the mentoring movement is making great strides in reaching increasing numbers of youth, much research remains to be done. One key to strengthening mentoring programs across the country is for those individuals and organizations that have developed expertise in this area to collaborate to share ideas, disseminate information, and promote mentoring as a valuable intervention for America' s youth. Currently, the JUMP national evaluation team participates in a number of collaborative relationships designed to strengthen our nation's mentoring efforts overall.

The National Mentoring Center

One of the most tangible supports for mentoring programs across the country is the National Mentoring Center (NMC), housed in the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratories (NWREL) in Portland, Oregon. In 1999, NWREL was competitively awarded a contract with OJJDP to provide training and technical assistance to mentoring programs, both JUMP and non-JUMP. This training and technical assistance was to include the development of a curriculum for mentoring programs, regularly scheduled training conferences at different sites across the country, the maintenance of a lending library, and the management of a web page containing information that would be relevant to mentoring programs.

The JUMP national evaluation team has worked collaboratively with the NMC since 1999, when the training and technical assistance contract was awarded. Members of the national evaluation team participate in regional trainings to educate audiences on topics including the national evaluation protocol and the development and implementation of local evaluation plans. The national evaluation team also worked closely with NMC staff as they developed their *Measuring Outcomes* training module. As a result, the evaluation training that is provided by the NMC is consistent with the approach outlined in the Self-Evaluation Workbook prepared by the national evaluation team. The national evaluation team anticipates working closely with the NMC in the future to maintain close relationships with the JUMP grantees and to further strengthen the mentoring initiatives being established across the country.

Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BBBSA)

As the oldest and one of the most well known youth mentoring organizations in the country, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America (BBBSA) has provided a foundation for the mentoring movement in the United States today. Currently 48 of the JUMP projects are, in some way, affiliated with BBBSA. Additionally, evaluations of BBBSA projects have contributed some of the most valuable lessons learned in the mentoring community.

To benefit from what BBBSA has already learned regarding the design, implementation and effectiveness of mentoring projects, members of the national evaluation team have met with representatives from BBBSA at the national level. The national evaluation team continues to work cooperatively with BBBSA to contribute to the growing body of knowledge about the impacts of mentoring as an intervention with youth today.

The Public/Private Mentoring Alliance

The Public/Private Mentoring Alliance (PPMA) was formed in 1997 as a follow-up to the President's Summit for America's Promise. The PPMA consists of public and private organizations that are dedicated to the concept of mentoring as a tool to meet the needs of America's youth. The PPMA's mission is *"to maximize the coordination and dissemination of*

information, resources, and opportunities available through mentoring initiatives in this country for youth, that so desperately need and want a relationship with a caring adult."

The PPMA meets on a regular basis to assure a high level of cooperation and information sharing in the mentoring community. Various individuals and organizations involved in the JUMP program participate in these meetings, both to share information learned through the JUMP program and to gather new information from the field for JUMP participants.

The Justice Research and Statistics Association

The JUMP evaluation has provided the national evaluation team with an opportunity to design a multi-site evaluation that gathers data from geographically and programmatically distinct sites to support common evaluative goals. In addition to learning a great deal about the specific intervention of mentoring, the national evaluation team has had an opportunity to enhance specific evaluative skills including data collection instrument design and implementation, and electronic data collection and transfer. These lessons could be valuable to any individual or organization wishing to complete a meaningful evaluation of a particular program or set of programs.

In 1998, the Justice Research and Statistics Association (JRSA) was awarded a contract from OJJDP to *"build evaluation capacity in the states."* Under the State Formula Grants Program, states were allotted funds to be used to support different programmatic initiatives to best meet their specific needs. Through a needs assessment that JRSA completed with the state Juvenile Justice Representatives, it was determined that more assistance regarding data collection and evaluation was needed at the state level.

Throughout the year 2000, representatives from the national evaluation team have participated in JRSA-sponsored regional trainings for Juvenile Justice Representatives. Using the JUMP MIS as a model, the national evaluation team has shared information regarding standardized data collection and evaluation with state representatives. The national evaluation team intends to work collaboratively with JRSA in the future to share lessons learned from the JUMP evaluation team with representatives at the state level, who may use this information to design practical and meaningful evaluations in their states.

Conclusion

To date, the JUMP national evaluation team has gathered data in support of national evaluation goals. To answer more fully some of the questions about mentoring, the national evaluation has been expanded. The increased level of resources available will enable the national evaluation team to examine issues of sustainability, relationships with LEAs, patterns of local evaluation, and long-term impacts of mentoring more fully. Additionally, to maximize the benefits of the lessons learned, members of the national evaluation team have formed collaborative relationships with other individuals and organizations working in the field.

Through these relationships, the national evaluation team hopes to strengthen mentoring projects across the country in the years to come.

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