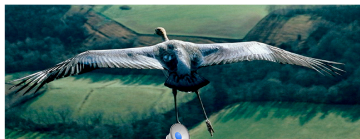## Slide 1

The problem of "Catch and Release" and "50 Ways to Leave Your Mentee"

What the BBBS and SMILE Studies of School-Based Mentoring say about Goodbyes

Michael J. Karcher, Ed.D., Ph.D.
University of Texas at San Antonio
Principal Investigator of the
Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment (SMILE)

Slide 2

BBBS growth in SBM

BBBS school-based matches increased from 27,000 in 1999 to 100,000 in 2003, an increase of 270%. This compares with an increase in community-based matches (CBM) from 92,000 to 105,000 – a 14% increase – during the same period. The new enterprise of school-based mentoring is an important growth area for BBBS, and one that creates a need to understand the role of new types of partnerships, volunteer sources, programming, and clients, both volunteer and youth.

Slide 3

Natural mentoring at work

Alberto Mijangos
Kenny Karcher
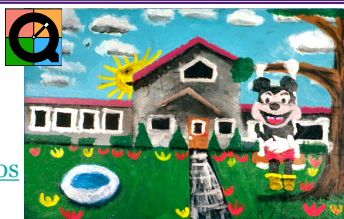
Slide 4

People who've taught me a great deal:
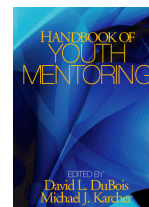
Handbook of Youth Mentoring
David DuBois, co-editor of

Carla Herrera, coauthor of:
"*Lifting as we Climb: Achieving Positive Youth Development through School-based Mentoring*"
(Forthcoming, from Harvard University Press, 2009)

Slide 5

National BBBS School-Based Mentoring Impact Study

Public/Private Ventures

Carla Herrera, Jean Grossman, Tina Kauh, Amy Feldman, and Jennifer McMaken

Locally, acknowledgement of your major role:

Willa Dendy, Staci Halyak, Kim Parrish (GA)

Ronald Evans, Joe Swortz, Tanya Olaviany (PA)

Slide 6

BBBS: Study Design

- Random Assignment Impact Study
- 10 Agencies
- 71 Schools
- 1,139 Youth in Grades 4 through 9
- Surveys Administered to Youth & Teachers
- 3 Waves of Data Collection (15-Month Study)
  – Fall 2004
  – Spring 2005
  – Late Fall 2005

BBBS Findings: The Program

- BBBS SBM is <u>not</u>:
  - a tutoring program.
  - a CBM program placed inside a school.
- CBM and SBM costs are very similar.
- Programs are very diverse.
- Youth have many risk factors.
- Training and support could be strengthened.

What do you know (read, heard) about the "impacts"?

Training and Support

Relationship closeness Linked with	Carryover of match Linked with
•Individual pre-match training; •Individual post-match training; •Communication with school staff; •BBBS program quality; •BBBS staff support; •Helpfulness of BBBS staff; •Helpfulness of school staff; and •School resources and space.	•Group training; •Individual pre-match training; •Individual post-match training; •BBBS program quality; •BBBS staff support; •Helpfulness of BBBS staff; and •School resources and space.

Findings: Impacts in Year One

Littles fared significantly better than controls in:
- Overall academic performance
  - Written and oral language
  - Science
- Quality of class work
- Number of assignments completed
- Absence without an excuse/Starting to skip school
- Engaging in serious school misconduct
- Scholastic efficacy

Findings: Impacts in Year Two

- Littles were less likely to skip school and were more confident they would attend and complete college.
- Other impacts were not sustained. (1-year, low relationship quality matches appeared harmful)
- Two reasons for the lack of strong Year 2 impacts:
  - Low participation in Year Two (50% had mentors)
  - Timing of Year 2 Follow-Up (3 months into Fall)

6

Findings: Youth Characteristics and Program Impacts

- HINTS that certain groups benefited more than others
  - Girls (both years)
  - Minorities (both years)
  - High academic performers (in year 1; but low academic performers in year 2)
  - Those able to create high-quality relationships with their mentors.

Findings: Mentoring Experiences and Program Impacts

- Longer matches are linked with stronger impacts.
- Relationship quality may work with match length to determine strength of benefits.
- Summer meetings may lengthen and strengthen relationships.

Recommendations

- Increase Match Length.
- Bridge the Summer Gap.
- Choose Supportive Schools and Foster those Relationships.
- Provide Volunteers with Sufficient Levels of Support and Training.
- Strengthen Relationship Quality.

9

S M I L E

Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment Project Overview

Begun, in 2003, SMILE is the 1st large-scale, multisite, randomized study of school-based mentoring.

Followed 550 youth (½ mentees; ½ comparison) across 20 elementary, middle and high schools for two years.

The only SBM study to include large numbers of Latino mentees and mentors or high school aged mentees.

Mentors were college students, business employees, and adult volunteers (half Latino).

S M I L E

Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment Project Overview

Conducted through Communities In Schools of San Antonio, so it can tell us about AMIGO: **A**dding **M**entoring for **I**ndividuals **G**etting **O**ther **S**ervices (e.g., tutoring, counseling)

Key question: For kids already receiving services commonly available in schools, who benefits most from receiving a mentor in addition?

The Study of Mentoring in the Learning Environment (SMILE): Study Specifics

Sample
      Demographics (Individual characteristics/effects)
           Mentees   Mentors
      Timeframe: 2 Cohorts
      20 Schools (Setting effects)
Data collection and "Instrumentations"
      Self-report Measures

      Activity Log
Program characteristics:
      Starting and ending of matches
      Mentor training and support

SMILE when AMIGOS: Key Questions and General Background Information

SBM Structure:
      Dosage—Is SBM like aspirin or antibiotics?
      Duration—Why might less than 6 months be bad?
      Activities—What are we doing anyway?
      "Do no harm"—Research on negative mentoring effects
Moderating & Mediating Variables: For whom & through what?
      Youth's gender: "*Don't stand so close to me.*" (The Police)
      Youth's age: Who's watching us?
      Cultural and developmental factors
      Mentors' gender (moderators)
      Mentees' experiences : Activities
      Staff support and setting resources

Gender Factors in SBM

a) Girls tend to value relatedness and may be more open to the mentoring process (ahough boys are quicker to refer to their mentors as "significant" people).

b) Boys place more emphasis on autonomy and on physical interaction (even in game play) than do girls, who more emphasize relatedness and balance play and talk (especially teens).

See DuBois, Parra et al., 2002 (New Directions); b) Bogat & Liang, 2005 (HYM); Erikson, Toys and Reasons.

Cultural elements in the SBM puzzle

Intimacy and autonomy processes for Latino/as:

a) Latinos more often view family as mentors, and less often refer their children to mentoring programs.

b) Among Latino/as, Latinos emphasize autonomy in terms of strength, invulnerability more than Latinas. Mentoring that is problem (not friendship focused) implies weakness.

See, for example, Suarez-Orosco & Suarez-Orosco, 1995; Sanchez et al., 2005, 2006; MENTOR, 2005

Developmental elements of the SBM puzzle:
Consequences of the "3rd person perspective taking skills" in MS/HS?

- Emergence of self-consciousness and insecurity about how one feels viewed by peers
- Emergence, and increased importance of a "future orientation"
- The ability to take a large-group, cultural or ethnic group perspective
- The way in which context, school vs. home, may impede or facilitate a bi-cultural identity

---

For which Latinas did SBM work best? High School Girls

Compared to not-mentored girls, mentored High School Latinas reported more

1. Connectedness to peers;
2. Connectedness to culturally different peers;
3. Self-esteem: Global and Self-in-the-Present;
4. Perceived Social Support from friends.

Why might this be? A developmental connectedness perspective on SBM

Finding: Older Latinas AMIGOs can benefit uniquely (stronger peer relations and self-esteem) from developing a close relationships with a mentor.

Interpretation: These changes might serve as the foundation for later changes in connectedness to school and to teachers, or in academic achievement. (However, these could be "authority undermining" effects too, as often found for White boys.)

Implication: Give scarce mentors to older Latinas; but track their long-term outcomes.

For which Latinos did SBM AMIGOS work best? Elementary Boys

After being mentored Elementary School Latinos reported more
Connectedness to school and to culturally different peers,
Social skills: Empathy and cooperation
Hopefulness
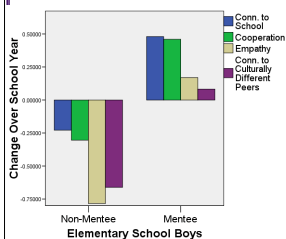
Do no harm: When mentoring can result in disconnection

HS Latinos mentees reported more disconnection from teachers compared to non-mentored boys after being "mentored." Why? In HS:

1. Fewer games available, less free/play space.
2. More pressure to help youth academically.

Both resulted in more goal-oriented, academically focused interactions, which are "harmful."
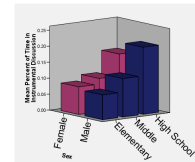
Slide 1

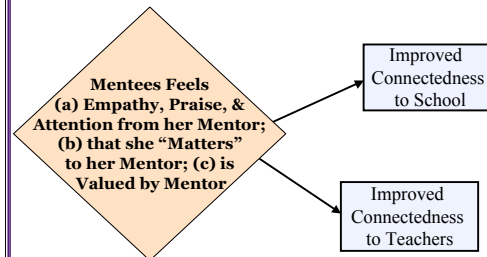### Why might this be? A developmental connectedness perspective on SBM

Finding: Younger Latinos benefitted most.

Interpretation 1: Younger youth are allowed to have more fun (present > future focus), because Elementary mentors are more playful and social.

Interpretation 2: The absence of opportunities to "have fun" with a mentor in HS may interact with heightened machismo/bravado (need to appear strong) to make older boys less open to "help".
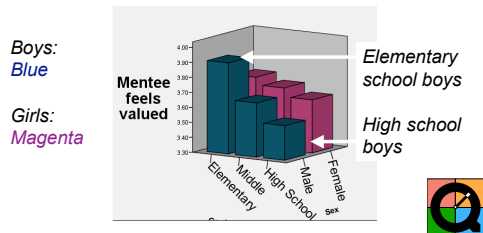
Implication: Target mentors to younger Latinos unless training and school support are available to fully counteract these cultural and developmental factors.

Slide 2

Extending Rhodes' (2005) mediation model to SBM

Mentees Feels (a) Empathy, Praise, & Attention from her Mentor; (b) that she "Matters" to her Mentor; (c) is Valued by Mentor → Improved Connectedness to School / Improved Connectedness to Teachers

"We're your friends, we're your friends": SMILE study found **Essential In** SMILE to effective SBM as well in friendships

Slide 3

"We're your friends…"
Feeling valued by the Mentor: is a critical ingredient (but is in short supply in HS matches)

Boys: Blue

Girls: Magenta

Mentee feels valued — Elementary school boys — High school boys

Slide 4

Are your mentees jumping for joy when their mentors arrive?

That's where your mentor training and support come in.

Slide 5

Are your mentees jumping for joy when their mentors arrive?

- How else might we make sense of these cultural and developmental differences in program effectiveness?

- What does this mean for program planning, for mentor training, or even for mentee and parent training?

Slide 6

"50 Ways to Lose Your Mentors"
They, slip out the back, Jack; Volunteer some other way, Kay…

Mentors need on-site support as well as extended support from program staff after the initial training. Why? <u>Because they need to feel connected</u> to the program too.

Mentors' Survey Items Assessing Staff Support

SMILE

- The program staff seem willing to help me.
- The program staff has shared important information with me about my mentee.
- The program staff has given suggestions on what I can do with my mentee.
- The program staff seems truly concerned about how well our match is going.

Staff Support and Mentors' Retention

SMILE

- Case Manager Support → Mentor Feeling Important
- Case Manager Support → Mentor Viewing Mentor/Mentee Relationship Positively
- Case Manager Support → Mentors feeling mentoring benefited them socially and helped their career

---

Questions about satisfaction with space and resources

SMILE

- At my school, I have easy access to the Activity Logs I complete.
- At my school, I have easy access to games and other activities.
- At my school, I have a satisfactory space to meet with my mentee.
- At my school, I have easy access to resources I can use with my mentee (e.g., college info.).

As with BBBS, SMILE found: "Make room for mentors…."

- Mentors who felt the **space and resources** were adequate were 2.5 times more likely to return for a second year.
- Those with no complaints about space and resources **also mentored more days** than those feeling they did not have enough space or resources.

SMILE

SMILE: "Ask *not* what you can do for your program, but what <u>your program</u> can do *for your mentors*"

- School Staff Support & Resources to Use → Mentors' view of their Relationship w/ Mentees
- Sufficient and Ongoing Training & Supervision → Mentors' view of their Relationship w/ Mentees
- Parent Involvement → Mentors' view of their Relationship w/ Mentees

SMILE

"Catch and release" is just as <u>un</u>-acceptable as "No Child Left Behind"

- SBM Matches are FAR less likely to continue into the second year than CBM;
- <u>Obvious conclusion</u> (I think): we cannot continue to hold "multiple-year" matches as "Gold" (*or only*) standard of success.
- <u>What to do:</u> Terminate all matches at the end of the year. Seriously. Rematch in Fall.
- See "Termination Ritual" on mentoring.org

Endings are a Part of Life and Essential for Optimal Youth Development

We Need to Work to Ensure Mentoring Losses are Developmental not Detrimental

S M I L E Study of Mentoring In the Learning Environment www.utsasmile.org — Michael Karcher, Ed.D., Ph.D. Michael.karcher@utsa.edu — Funded by the W. T. Grant Foundation

---

Acknowledgements

Website: **www.utsasmile.org**
Contact: **michael.karcher@utsa.edu**

Drs. Ed Seidman & Robert Granger at the W. T. Grant Foundation

SMILE staff: Debby Gil-Hernandez, Chichi Allen, Molly Gomez, Laura Roy-Carlson, Kristi Benne

Communities in Schools San Antonio

David DuBois, consultant for SMILE project;

Contribution to to the SBM field, Joyce Corlett, Carla Herrera, Keoki Hansen, Jean Rhodes,

S M I L E Study of Mentoring In the Learning Environment www.utsasmile.org — Michael Karcher, Ed.D., Ph.D. Michael.karcher@utsa.edu — Funded by the W. T. Grant Foundation