

NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT:

MAKING MENTORS PILOT PROJECT

“Mentoring is a relationship through which one person (mentor) supports the development of another (mentee) by sharing their resources, expertise, values, skills, perspectives and attitudes. It is based on active listening, encouragement, helpful conversations, openness, trust, respect and willingness to learn and share.”

Leadership Victoria

INTRODUCTION

PROJECT BACKGROUND

BNNC Inc has developed an iterative suite of learning and development opportunities aimed at raising the sustainability, resilience and capability of its member neighbourhood houses (App 1).

The Making Mentors Pilot Project is a response to issues and ideas identified during the Give Where You Live funded Strategic Planning and Professional Supervision process and the Department of Health and Human Services Funded Organisations Performance Management Framework (FOPMF) where it was identified that targeted support to staff and volunteers would be timely and beneficial. It is a partnership project designed to develop and implement a mentoring program for Neighbourhood Houses in the Barwon Region. The key partners on the Project Reference Group are:

- Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Houses
- Neighbourhood House representatives from each NOCH
- Funding bodies
 - o Dept of Health and Human Services
 - o City of Greater Geelong
 - o Colac Otway Shire and
- Volunteering Geelong

Key funding partners are:

- o Department of Health and Human Services
- o City of Greater Geelong
- o Colac Otway Shire
- o Geelong Community Foundation
- o Give Where You Live
- o Neighbourhood Houses Vic.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

In short, it is a learning and development partnership between someone with vast experience and someone who wants to learn.

Mentoring is a helping relationship that gives people the opportunity to share their skills, knowledge and experience and to grow and develop in the process. It provides a unique opportunity to learn from and be challenged by someone who has perspective, experiences and expertise skills that may be different to your own.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

“Mentoring”

The use of social networks and relationships between individuals of differing levels of experience and expertise, that emphasises mutual learning, with one person having more experience and knowledge in areas relevant to the other person's needs.

“Mentor”

A more experienced person guiding and sponsoring a less experienced person to achieve goals and improved learning and development in areas in which the mentor has more experience and knowledge. This person can be from within or external to the NH sector.

“Mentee”

A person seeking guidance and support from another more experienced and knowledgeable person in relation to achieving particular goals or learning and development.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Mentoring can bring value to both the mentor and the mentee.

- Sharing and transfer of experience and expertise
- Problem solving
- Exchanging of positive feedback
- Improved governance, leadership, management, administration, organisational planning, etc
- Skills and knowledge transfer
- Improved learning and development
- Building of mutually beneficial relationships
- Creation of networking opportunities

Additional benefits for the mentee include the following:

- Increased confidence
- Increased self-awareness
- A bigger personal and professional network
- A sounding board for testing ideas, plans and trying new skills
- Positive and helpful feedback on personal and professional development areas.

Some of the benefits for the mentor include the following:

- Personal and professional satisfaction gained from developing and supporting others
- Opportunity to reflect on their own role
- Learning new ideas and new perspectives from the mentee
- Increased awareness of their own strengths and areas for improvement

WHAT IS THE MAKING MENTORS PILOT PROJECT?

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Making Mentors Pilot Project is a tailored mentoring program specifically designed to benefit Neighbourhood Houses. The project aims to impact long term sustainability and capacity of the centres to meet the demands and expectations of the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) service agreement, other funding bodies and communities. It focuses on the connection, working with Neighbourhood House coordinators, staff and volunteers, including committee members. The project aims to bring together people with skills and experience relevant to the sector with those currently active in the sector.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this Making Mentors Project are:

- To build and strengthen the sustainability and capacity of participating Neighbourhood Houses to meet requirements of their funders by supporting their people.
- To empower and develop the confidence and aspirations of people to be active and effective in their Neighbourhood House role.
- To focus on agreed areas of high risk and vulnerability for Houses such as management support, governance, strategic planning, financial management, organisational culture, grant seeking, HR matters.
- Testing and trialling the concept and model of mentoring as applicable to Barwon Neighbourhood Houses with a view to this being a long term sustainable model for the sector.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Making Mentors project is guided by Neighbourhood House Sector Principles (App 2) and is based on:

- Voluntary commitment
- Building solid and trusting relationships
- Focusing on strengths and opportunity
- Sector sustainability
- Maintaining confidentiality (Chatham House rules) App 3

COMMUNICATION

Communication for the project will be driven by the Baron Network of Neighbourhood Houses through the quarterly LGA NOCH meetings, the Quick Update newsletter and regular progress reports to key stakeholders.

Progress reports will be added to the BNNC website and delivered to NH Vic.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

There is a preliminary process whereby mentors and mentees are independently matched according to need, skill set and compatibility. They then meet, get to know one another, agree on areas of focus and establish expectations.

This pilot project aims to foster a one year mentoring relationship. It is flexible and multi faceted utilising a mix of mentoring and coaching approaches relevant to the needs and circumstances of the individual and the House.

WHO ARE THE MENTORS?

Primarily, mentors will be drawn from previous/existing Coordinators, chairpersons, committee members etc as they are familiar with, and skilled in, the sector.

Where appropriate, other mentors who have specific qualifications, skills and expertise that are needed but not readily available within the sector, may be drawn from outside the sector e.g. in areas such as corporate governance, IT, finance and accounting, legal etc.

WHO ARE THE MENTEES?

The mentees will be the Neighbourhood House Coordinators, staff and/or volunteers including Committee of Management.

The mentoring will be able to be available to Houses after they have undertaken their current Funded Organisations Performance Management Framework (FOPMF) assessment and will be informed by the action plan that the Houses have developed with the Department of Health and Human Services.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MENTORS AND MENTEES¹

IN SUMMARY, YOUR ROLE AS THE **MENTEE** IN THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP IS TO:

- Be open** – to new approaches, attitudes and skills
- Take responsibility** – for your own decisions, actions, growth and development
- Be willing to talk about** – your hopes, needs and expectations
- Be prepared to try new things** – and do things differently
- Be sharing** – both personally and professionally
- Develop strategies** – to achieve goals
- Commit to fulfilling your potential** – be prepared to make the effort required
- Be accepting of guidance** – seek to learn through observation, listening and reflection
- Accept feedback** – and learn from it

THE ROLE OF YOUR **MENTOR** IN THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP IS TO:

- Be challenging** – identify assumptions and offer alternatives
- Be inspiring** - provide vision, encourage and motivate
- Be a good listener** – be open minded, non-judgemental and foster reflection
- Be sharing** – both personally and professionally
- Promote understanding** – of different roles and their associated outcomes
- Recognise potential** - and encourage the mentee to fulfil it

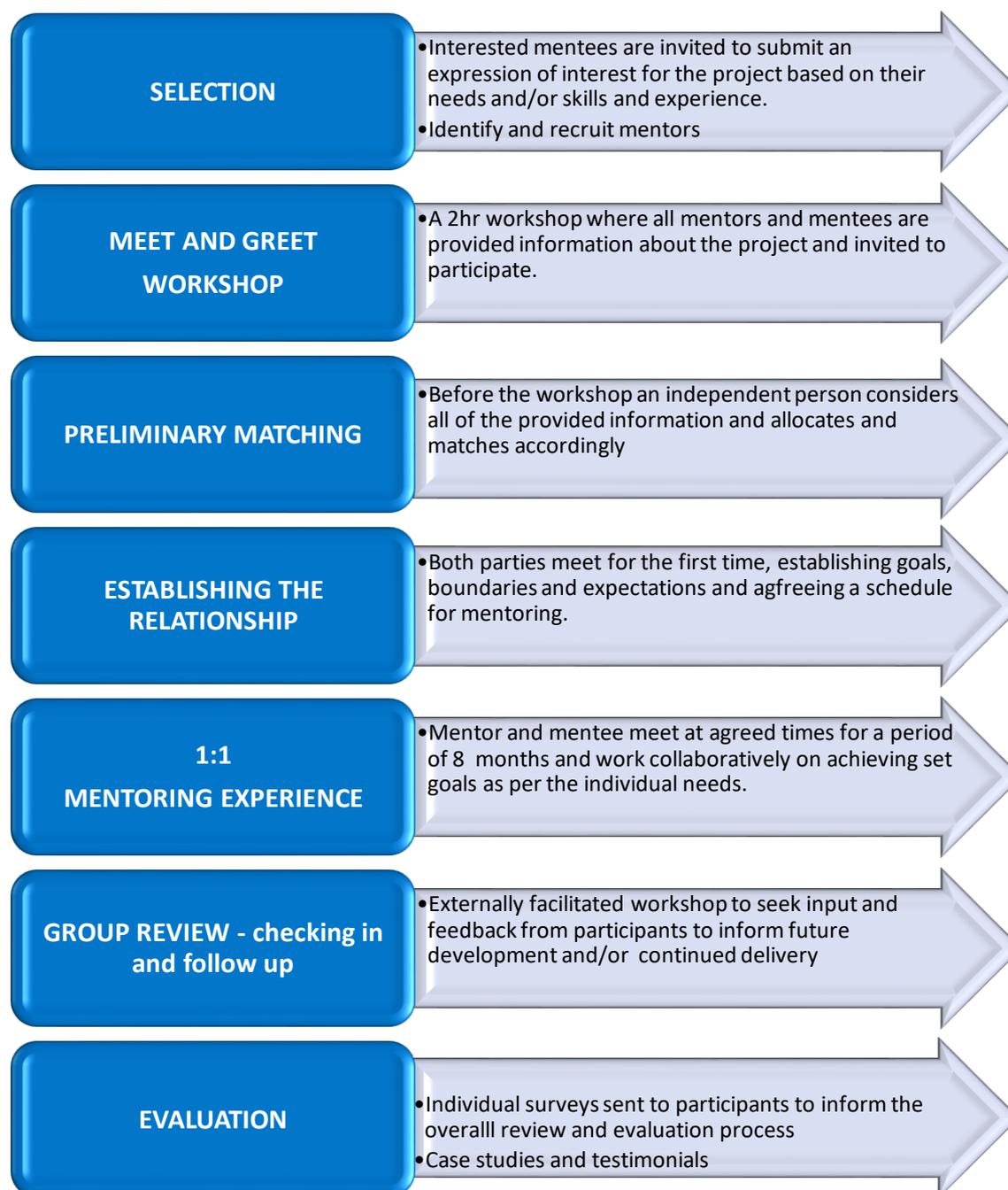
¹Leadership Victoria's Women's Board Leadership Program Mentee Guide 2018

Provide guidance - through practical help and role modelling

Be aware of and respect cultural differences

Give positive feedback – reinforcement and constructive criticism when appropriate.

THE MENTORING PROCESS FOR THE PILOT PHASE – FOR DISCUSSION



MENTORING TOOLS & RESOURCES

Mentors and mentees will be provided with a Making Mentors Resource Kit which will include the following:

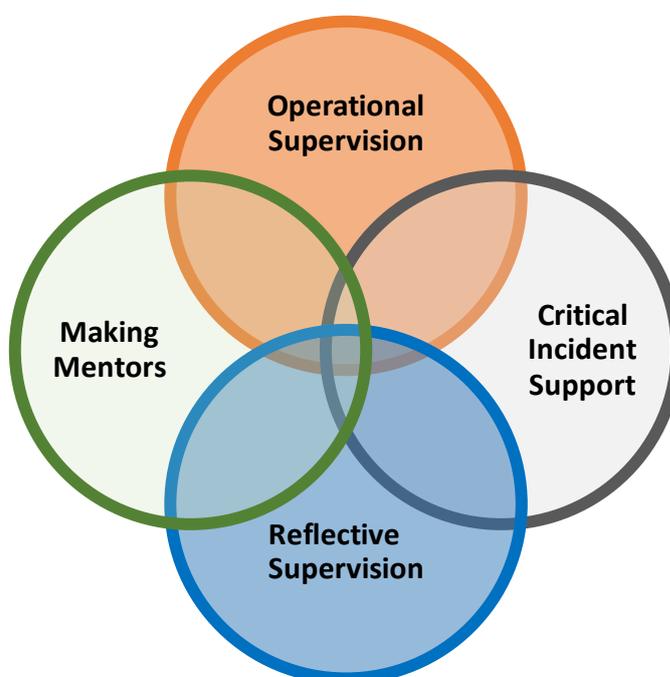
- A Making Mentors Agreement

- Mentoring Plan to record goals and achievements

HOW DOES IT FIT IN WITH OTHER SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT MECHANISMS?

The Making Mentors project compliments the Neighbourhood House Supervision Framework as it provides an additional layer of support outside of the following operations and practice.

- **Critical Incident Support** – support provided in relation to a specific incident.
- **Operational Supervision** – supervision and support from a line manager in relation to the operational element of the role and performance against the strategic and annual plans.
- **Reflective Supervision** – support and guidance provided opportunities to reflect on practice and explore work related challenges with an independent supervisor



EVALUATION AND REVIEW

A two-pronged approach to evaluation will take place through the distribution of individual surveys and an externally facilitated group review to determine project strengths, gaps and impact.

Upon completion, a final report will be submitted to the Barwon Network of Neighbourhood Centres Committee of Management and Neighbourhood Houses Victoria for review and further implementation.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Neighbourhood House Coordination Program Guidelines

Appendix 2 Neighbourhood House Coordination Program Sector Principles

Appendix 3 Leadership Victoria's Women's Board Leadership Program Mentee Guide 2018

Appendix 4 Neighbourhood House Making Mentors Resource Kit

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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