



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
1250 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

SEP 1 2006

Re: Mentoring Children of Prisoners (MCP) Program: Relationship Quality Survey

Dear MCP Colleagues:

I want to thank each of you again for all your work on behalf of the children and families we serve through the Mentoring Children of Prisoners program. The results of your work are seen in the ever increasing number of mentoring matches and in the enhanced quality of life for those we serve each and every day.

At the National MCP Conference in June, we announced an annual survey to measure the quality of mentoring relationships. The survey will provide you and FYSB with important information regarding how MCP relationships are developing and how the MCP program is meeting a critical objective: forming high quality relationships.

Based upon your feedback, we have created a special website for the survey within the ACF Online Data Collection System (OLDC). (<https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/ssi/>) **On or soon after September 8th**, you should log in to the OLDC via the secure sign-in you have used each quarter. There you will find the relationship survey for your youth on a drop down list with the quarterly caseload report. There is a section describing your program to complete once. Instructions, FAQs and help screens are part of the website.

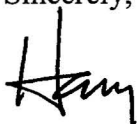
The survey is designed to be administered over the telephone and is based on a well-validated instrument created by Dr. Jean Rhodes, a national expert in mentoring programs and a consultant to FYSB. **Results must be transmitted to FYSB via the online system (in a single submission) no later than November 30, 2006.** FYSB will develop aggregate information for submission as required by Congress. (You may complete and transmit your set of surveys any time before November 30, the sooner the better.)

This survey is a requirement of your FYSB grant and is designed for all children in your program who, as of July 1, 2006, are aged nine years and older and part of a relationship with the same adult mentor that has lasted at least nine months. **The system will protect the identities of individual children. FYSB will not receive individual names.** OLDC will only record and transmit anonymous identifiers for each person surveyed.

Attached are explanatory documents including: an introduction to the survey with

frequently asked questions; a Spanish language version of the section that is to be administered directly to children (for translations other than Spanish, please contact technical support); and a general guide to navigating OLDC. The technical support team can answer directly or refer to us any questions you have. Please contact them on 1-866-577-0771 or app_support@acf.hhs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harry", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Harry Wilson
Associate Commissioner
Family and Youth Services Bureau

**MENTORING CHILDREN OF PRISONERS
RELATIONSHIP QUALITY SURVEY:
An Introduction and Frequently Asked Questions**

Background:

The Relationship Quality Survey (RQS) is a carefully crafted series of 20 questions about individual youths' relationships with their mentors. Positive answers to these questions have been shown to be linked to positive outcomes for youth, including increased self-confidence and scholastic competence. Dr. Jean Rhodes and other experts in mentoring research have developed, tested and used the instrument in large-scale studies of mentoring programs for at-risk youth.

MCP Program grantees will administer the RQS to each MCP youth nine years of age and older who, by July 1, 2006, has been mentored consistently by one single adult mentor for nine months or more. These relationships will have begun either on October 1, 2006 *or earlier*.

When the information is combined at the national level for all MCP programs, it will be used for reporting to the US Congress in the Annual Performance Report in the President's Budget and to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in the Executive Office of the President. It will also be used by ACF to improve the program. Providing such information in a survey approved by OMB is a requirement in the terms and conditions of your MCP grant.

The RQS is also a case management tool that can be used to read the vital signs of your program – how well the mentors and mentees are getting along. For example, it can provide insights to help design mentor supervision and training programs to improve performance. (See section on "Uses" below.)

Administration:

Grantees should administer the survey to each child over the telephone and should make every reasonable effort to interview all eligible youth in their programs. Grantees must obtain parental permission from youth before administering the survey. In order to ensure that individual survey responses are kept confidential and the child feels comfortable being frank, only the youth and interviewer should be present when the survey is being administered. The child's responses should not be shared with his or her specific mentor or parent. The instructions provide suggested language that may be used to reassure the parent. Ultimately, a parent has the right to insist on being present, and the agency should defer. The form will allow a notation that the parent or guardian was on the line during the interview so that adjustments can be made in the analysis.

MPC grantees will complete and submit on-line RQS data collection forms through the ACF Online Data Collection System (OLDC). The submission deadline will be no later than November 30, 2006. This is an extension from an earlier projected deadline to give grantees sufficient time, at least 80 days to administer the survey.

Grantees of the MCP program will report data from the instrument once each year. If grantees have questions or challenges completing the survey, they should either call or e-mail the OLDC help-line at 1-866-577-0771/app_support@acf.hhs.gov.

Use:

General

Data from the RQS provide information about the kinds of relationships that have been shown to lead to improvements in youth self-esteem and academic achievement. Data from this survey also indicate which relationships appear likely to endure. FYSB will use this information for Congressionally-mandated reporting. FYSB also will collect information using the RQS form that will provide statistical, programmatic and demographic context for the survey responses.

Grantees - Case Management

Although grantees must keep individual survey results confidential from mentors, they may use general findings to target support and follow-up activities to mentors and youth to facilitate stronger youth/mentor connections. For example, if large percentages of youth indicate that it is “sort-of true” or “very true” that (in question #5 of the RQS) “sometimes my mentor promises we will do something, then we don’t do it,” and it also is “sort-of true” or “very true” that (in question #17) “when I am with my mentor, I feel disappointed,” grantees may wish to modify mentor support trainings to include sessions on managing youth expectations, being consistent, and making realistic promises to youth about what they can and cannot do. Other questions relate to mentors being on time, treating children with respect, etc.

If large percentages of youth indicate it is “sort-of true” or “very true” that (in question #15) “I feel I can’t trust my mentor with secrets because my mentor would tell my parent/guardian,” grantees may wish to educate mentors about the importance of confidentiality in most circumstances, but to remind mentors about the necessary boundaries of that confidentiality. (If a youth is being harmed or is engaging in dangerous behaviors, mentors may have an obligation to inform program staff.) Finally, grantees also may assess trends in relationship quality at their organizations over time.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Support:

- **Who can grantees contact if they have questions?**
 - **Grantees should call 1-866-577-0771 or e-mail app_support@acf.hhs.gov if they have questions about the survey (either in terms of content or in terms of data entry).**

Rationale/Requirements:

- **Why are grantees being asked to administer the survey?**
 - To help FYSB meet OMB and Congressional reporting requirements and to “tell our story.”
 - To assess MCP Program’s potential to establish and nurture meaningful relationships between children of prisoners and mentors. (Generating these relationships is a critical first step in achieving the Program’s ultimate goals for improved outcomes for youth in the program.)
 - To use results for case management and to improve their own programs

- **Can grantees opt not to administer the survey?**
 - No.

Logistics:

- **When should surveys be administered?**
 - September-November, 2006. Deadline is November 30, 2006. Reports can be submitted at any time during that period. Grantees are encouraged to begin surveys as soon as the website is open (September 8, 2006).
- **Who should administer the surveys?**
 - This is up to grantees. Any individual who has experience interacting with youth in the program can conduct the interview. They must ask the questions in an unbiased fashion and not encourage youth to provide certain answers. They must be trusted to ensure the confidentiality of data collected. Grantees may wish to have case managers or match coordinators serve in this capacity, but are not required to do so.
- **Is parental permission required? How should grantees obtain parental permission?**
 - Before interviewing youth, interviewers must obtain parental permission to do so. To obtain this permission, when telephoning mentees, interviewers should briefly describe the types of questions in the study and that the data will be confidential. It will be used in research to improve the program. Interviewers should then ask parents if they have permission to administer the survey to their children. If parents decline, interviewers should not survey youth. The website will save previously entered data on the youth but will not proceed to the survey itself.
- **What if a parent wants to be present for the interview?**
 - Parents should not be present because this may affect how youth respond to the questions. If parents are uncomfortable with this idea, interviewers may share questions that they will ask with parents so that parents know what youth will respond to.
 - If a parent insists on being present, the interviewer should note this in the field provided on the data form and interview the youth with the parent present.
- **Who should be surveyed?**
 - Mentees aged nine and older that have been in a relationship lasting nine months or more (with same mentor) as of July 1, 2006. These relationships will have begun either on October 1, 2006 *or earlier*.

- **Is there an age cut-off for youth asked to complete interview/survey?**
 - Yes. The survey is for children 9 years and older as of July 1, 2006.
- **How many eligible mentees should be interviewed?**
 - Grantees should attempt to interview all eligible youth in their programs.
 - At a minimum, grantees should interview 85% of eligible youth.
 - If by early November grantees are not approaching this target, they should contact the survey help-line staff at either 1-866-577-0771 or app_support@acf.hhs.gov
- **How should survey be administered?**
 - Over the telephone.
- **Should interviews be conducted in person if youths can't be reached by phone?**
 - No, doing so will compromise the validity of the data gathered. If an in-person interview is the only way to conduct a survey, this should be indicated on the form in the field provided: "How was this interview conducted?"
 - Grantees will need to keep track of all eligible youth and all youth surveyed.
- **How much of an effort should be made to reach difficult-to-contact youth?**
 - Each grantee must diligently endeavor to survey at least 85% of eligible youth.
- **Is it okay if youths do not respond to all questions?**
 - Although youth have the right to skip any question, please encourage them to answer as many questions as possible.
 - If youth are confused about the content of questions (and the interviewer notes a pattern in which many youth are confused by the same questions), please notify FYSB as soon as possible, so that we may change wording or provide clarification. To do so, contact the survey help-line staff at either 1-866-577-0771 or app_support@acf.hhs.gov
- **What should the interviewer do if a youth does not understand a question?**
 - Attempt to explain what the question is asking. Explain terms when necessary, but ask the question as written. (For the data to be valid, it is important for the survey to be administered consistently across grantees.)
 - A Spanish version of the questions is available on request from the help-line staff.
 - If the youth does not speak English or Spanish and needs the survey translated, contact survey help-line staff at either 1-866-577-0771 or app_support@acf.hhs.gov
- **Does the interviewer need to read questions word-for-word?**
 - Yes, that is essential. Again, so doing ensures that the survey is administered consistently across grantees.
- **How will confidentiality be upheld?**
 - The OLDC data collection system that interviewers use to record data will generate unique anonymous identifiers for each child in the study. This information will reach FYSB electronically and in coded format only. Additional security enhancements to OLDC will be implemented at the earliest possible dates, but the security of OLDC and RQS depends greatly on grantee diligence in training users, protecting passwords, limiting access, etc.
 - Grantees will be responsible for maintaining security of any hard copies of records. It is important for grantees' own case management that each interview, which OLDC will code anonymously, be correctly associated with the

confidential file of each child interviewed. Identifying data may not be shared with mentors, youths' parents or any other outside entities.

- **How is information for Section II (Questions About this Child) obtained?**
 - If it is possible, interviewers should obtain this basic information from grantee records before the interview. Doing so will reduce the burden of the survey for youth. (It will take less of their time to complete the survey.) If this information is not available or not accurate in records, however, the interviewer should obtain this information from youth or parent at the time of the interview.

Instrument Content:

- **How were the questions developed?**
 - These questions are based on a longer series of questions about youth/mentor relationship quality that were used successfully in other studies of mentoring efforts. The truncated list of questions included in this survey has also been used and shown successfully to indicate the quality of youth/mentor relationships.
 - Based on previous qualitative work (Morrow & Styles, 1995)
 - Original scale contained 74 items; Administered at 18 months
 - Tapped both positive and negative impressions
 - Exploratory factor analysis reduced the number of items
 - The first four factors, 15 items, most reliably captured relationship quality (34% variance)
 - Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the structure of the factors. Internal consistency of the scales was good, ranging from 0.74 to 0.85. Five of 20 items in the MCP version are "fillers" in the sense that they held no predictive value but helped to provide the questionnaire with a more upbeat tone
- **Has the survey been used before? Has it been used for children of prisoners?**
 - The survey is currently being used in the Public Private Ventures national evaluation of BBBS school-based mentoring. Some of the respondents are children of prisoners. It is also being used elsewhere, with different populations of youth. The ability to compare results across mentoring programs other than MCP is very valuable.
- **What is the significance of the relationship lengths inquired about in section I B (Longevity of Matched Relationships)? What is particularly important about relationships that last nine or more months?**
 - Shorter relationships are less likely to have time to "gel."
 - Positive outcomes are associated with longer-lasting relationships.
- **How is relationship quality related to relationship duration?**
 - In prior analyses of relationship quality data in other studies, relationship quality is associated with duration. However, youth who rated the quality of their mentoring relationships more positively had higher levels of academic and psychosocial outcomes, *above and beyond* the effects of the duration of their relationships.

Definitions:

Section IA:

Q3. Amachi Model

This is a program model for mentoring developed in the Amachi Program by Dr. Wilson Goode.

Q7. Faith Based Organization

A faith-based organization is a religiously affiliated organization, such as a church, synagogue or mosque, or an organization that is founded through that kind of religious institution.

Q7. Community Based Organization

A community-based organization is a non-profit organization that is tax-exempt, but that is not faith-based. (See above.) Community based organizations also are known as 501 C3s, because of their tax-exempt status.

Section 1B

Q9. Active Matches

Active matches are mentor/youth matches in which mentors and youth are paired and are meeting on a regular basis.

Q12. Active “from nine months to eleven months”

Relationships that are active from nine months up to eleven months are relationships that have been active for not less than nine months but not more than eleven months. Full year relationships (and longer) are listed in separate categories.

Section II

Q10. Date the Relationship Began/Match Date

The match date is the first date on which the youth and mentor met as a pair, i.e. the first date on which youth and mentors met *and began their mentoring relationship*. (If the organization hosts a “meet the mentor” event and matches youth and mentors *after* that time, the match date *would not be* the date of the “meet the mentor” event, but rather the first date, after that time, that the pair made contact one-on-one and began the mentoring relationship.) This definition is consistent with the official FYSB definition for date upon which the match begins.



Online Data Collection - **OLDC**

Completing the Relationship Quality Instrument in OLDC

Introduction: One of the basic functions of OLDC is to facilitate the completion and submission of electronic grant forms, which reduces paperwork and allows for faster processing. After form information is entered by the grantee, it must be checked for errors and submitted to ACF.

Working with the Relationship Quality Instrument: Follow these steps to create or edit a new form.

- 1) From the "OLDC Home" screen, click **Report Form Entry**. The "Grantee Selection" screen displays.
- 2) Select the Program name from the drop-down list (Mentoring Children of Prisoners).
- 3) Select the Grantee's organization from the drop-down list (only the organization assigned to the person logged in is available).
- 4) Select the Type of report form to be created (Program Survey).
- 5) Click the **Enter** button. The "Reporting Period Selection" screen displays.
- 6) Select the current Funding/Grant period from the drop-down menu.
- 7) Be sure to record the unique identifier provided by the system in each child confidential case file (e.g., paper record) so you can retrieve the survey information for that child, using the number. You may also print the finished report on each child and store it securely in the child's confidential case file. Do not send this identifying information to ACF at any time.
- 8) Select **New/Edit/Revise Report** from the drop-down menu. New reports are generated report forms with no information. Reports that have been saved can be edited before being submitted or if necessary, afterwards (see 18 a or b, below).
- 9) Click the **Enter** button. The "Report Sections" screen displays.
- 10) Each section's data is entered separately and sections may be saved individually. Section 1 only needs to be filled out once. New records of the questions in Sections 2&3 should be created for each Mentor/Child match (Step 11). This can be done one child at a time, on each occasion that you are ready to record a child's responses. The report status reflects the entire report, not just individual sections.

Completing the Relationship Quality Instrument in OLDC (cont.)

- 11) To edit a form, click the drop-down arrow next to a section, select **Edit Section**, and then click **Go**. To create a new record for Sections 2&3, click the drop-down arrow next to Sections 2&3, select **Create Section**, and click **Go**. When a new record is created, a unique identifier is produced.
- 12) Enter responses to questions on the report form. Click the **Save** button at the top of the form to retain the information.
- 13) If necessary, click the **Next Section** button to complete the survey.

Note: In section 2, a unique random number is generated to identify the mentor/mentee match while preserving confidentiality. The number displays on the appropriate row on the "Report Sections" screen and in the heading at the top of Section 2. You may also enter a number created by the grantee for the mentor and one for the child in Section 2. These entered numbers may be used to facilitate organizational tracking and case management. The ID numbers should be recorded in each child's confidential case file. You may also wish to enclose print outs of the information and responses entered in each survey as long as these files are kept secure to protect confidentiality. However, you will always be able to access the child's responses and the other sections of each report via the password protected on line system. Be sure to maintain password and user ID security. If you have any security related questions, contact the help desk at 1-866-577-0771 (app_support@acf.hhs.gov).

- 14) When the survey is complete, navigate back to the "Report Sections" screen by using the links at the top or bottom of the screen.
- 15) Click the **Validate** button to check the form for missing data. If there are any problems, an error message appears at the top of the form.
- 16) If there are no errors or missing data and you are ready to send all sections of the reports and the child surveys, click the **Submit Report** button. (Note: the submit button only displays if the person logged in has appropriate permissions.) A pop-up screen displays with the message "We have received your report. Current page shows all reports we have received along with attachments." Click **OK**. The survey has now been received by ACF.
- 17) Be sure to record the unique identifier provided by the system in each child confidential case file (e.g., paper record) so you can retrieve the survey information for that child, using the number. You may also print the finished report on each child and store it securely in the child's confidential case file. Do not send this identifying information to ACF at any time.

Note: The report may only be printed section by section from the "Report Sections" screen. Select the drop-down arrow next to the section you want to print, select **Print Section**, and click **Go**. The form displays as it will look when printed. Select **File - Print** from the menu bar, and click **Print**.

Completing the Relationship Quality Instrument in OLDC (cont.)

- 18) The submitted survey may be viewed at any time by navigating to the “Reporting Period Selection screen” (Steps 1-7), and choosing **View/Print/Status Report** under Step 3. The submitted report may be accessed from the Status Page by selecting **View Original**. If changes need to be made after the report is submitted, you may do one of the following:

Unsubmit the form – from the “Reporting Period Selection” screen, select **View/Print/Status Report**. Click the **Unsubmit** button. The form may now be edited. Before re-submitting, the form must be re-saved, re-validated, and re-submitted.

or

- a) Create a revision - from the “Reporting Period Selection” screen, select **New/Edit/Revise Report**. A new version of the form is created and is ready for editing. The revision must be saved, validated, and submitted to ACF. The original form remains unchanged and can be accessed from the Status Page.

Note: Each screen contains on-screen help links. Click the on-screen help (blue underlined text) for definitions or program survey instructions. Each screen also contains a link to the Help/FAQs. The Help/FAQ section contains definitions and explanations for several of the questions. If you have questions that are not found in the on-screen help or on the Help/FAQ section, you may:

- “Ask a Question” for the OLDC Help/FAQ section (sends a request to OLDC staff)
- Send an e-mail to app_support@acf.hhs.gov
- Call 1-866-577-0771

Section 3 Child - Mentor Relationships

La siguiente/Este cuestionario le preguntara a cada niño sobre sus experiencias en el programa de Tutoría de Hijos de Prisioneros. El cuestionario será administrado a niños con permiso de padres y sus respuestas se mantendrán totalmente confidenciales.

Dígale al niño:

Por cada una de las siguientes oraciones, decide que tan verdaderas son en cuanto a tus sentimientos hacia tu mentor. Después, dime el numero que mejor describe tu respuesta. Si piensas que la oración **no es verdad para nada**, di el numero "1"; Si piensas que **no es muy verdadero** di el numero "2"; Si piensas que es **algo verdadero**, di el numero "3"; O si piensas que es **muy verdadero**, di el numero "4". Tus respuestas no serán compartidas con tu mentor y se mantendrán privadas. Esto no es una evaluación de tu mentor pero nos ayudará mejorar el programa.

Código automático para mantener privacidad y anonimato para cada niño (mismo código de pregunta 2 Parte II):

Para entrevistar al niño recibimos permiso de los padres de acuerdo a la póliza de la agencia sobre la notificación y permiso de los padres.

	No Es Verdad Para Nada (1)	No Es Muy Verdadero (2)	Algo Verdadero (3)	Muy Verdadero (4)
1. Mi mentor tiene muchas buenas ideas sobre como resolver problemas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Mi mentor se burla de mí en maneras que no me gusta.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Mi mentor me ayuda a entretener mi mente haciendo diferentes cosas conmigo.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Cuando estoy con mi mentor, me siento ignorado/a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Algunas veces mi mentor me promete que vamos a hacer algo y no lo hacemos.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Mi mentor siempre se interesa en lo que yo quiero hacer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Me gustaría si mi mentor fuera diferente.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Cuando estoy con mi mentor, me siento enojado/a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	No Es Verdad Para Nada (1)	No Es Muy Verdadero (2)	Algo Verdadero (3)	Muy Verdadero (4)
9. A mi mentor y yo nos gusta hacer las mismas cosas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Cuando mi mentor me aconseja, me siento tonto/a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Me gustaría si mi mentor me conociera mejor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Me gustaría que mi mentor pasara mas tiempo conmigo.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Cuando estoy con mi mentor, me siento importante.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Me gustaría si mi mentor me hiciera mas preguntas acerca de cómo yo pienso.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Siento que no puedo confiar en mi mentor con mis secretos porque se los diría a mis padres/guardián.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Cuando estoy con mi mentor, me siento contento/a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Cuando estoy con mi mentor, me siento decepcionado/a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Mi mentor siempre llega a la hora acordada.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Cuando estoy con mi mentor, me siento aburrido/a.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Cuando algo me incomoda, mi mentor me escucha.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Agradézcale al niño:

Gracias! Porque has tomado tiempo para contestar estas preguntas acerca de tus sentimientos y experiencias privadas, nosotros podremos mejorar el programa y ayudar a más jóvenes como tú en todos lugares de los Estados Unidos.