GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR DESIGNING AN E-MENTORING PROGRAM

e-Mentoring programs should have a theory of change and/or logic model that outlines the program's goals and outcomes. This model should outline the benefits of offering mentoring virtually as opposed to in-person or a blended approach. The questions in the table below will help you transition from in-person to virtual mentoring.

Area	Guiding questions
Define program goals and structure	• What is the purpose of the program? • What is the program's theory of change? • Why is a virtual medium suitable and useful to achieve the program goals? • For in-person programs transitioning to virtual relationships: Should the theory of change be adjusted? How can the program goals be achieved in a digital environment?
Choose the technology (users, not platforms)	• Will your program use asynchronous or synchronous communications? • Will you use custom technology or commonly available technology? Will it use low or high bandwidth tools? • Is the technology accessible for your intended users (internet connection, device availability, privacy, accessibility, users with disabilities)? • For in-person programs transitioning to virtual relationships: Which tools best align with the program's theory of change? What is the program and the staff's capacity to manage a digital tool?
Outline activities and communication expectations	• What will the mentors and mentees do when they interact (or in-between their interactions)? • How often will mentors and mentees interact (frequency)? • How long will the program take (duration)? • For in-person programs transitioning to virtual relationships: What activities could matches do in a virtual environment? Do matches require additional activity ideas? Do matches require a clarification around meeting and communication expectations?
Create and deliver training	• How will you train mentors and mentees before they are matched? What do they need to know about the technological tool? • What skills do they need for effective virtual communications? • What do they need to know about the program goals and communication expectations? • What training does your staff need? • For in-person programs transitioning to virtual relationships: Do matches need additional training on online communications or the use of the technological tool?
Monitor and support matches	• How will you offer ongoing support to mentors and mentees during the program? • How will you monitor matches to ensure that they are on track to meet the program goals? • For in-person programs transitioning to virtual relationships: How should monitoring processes be modified? How can programs offer support to matches?
Evaluate program implementation and outcomes	• How will you evaluate your program and track outcomes? Will you be using qualitative and/or quantitative methods to evaluate your program's outcomes? • For in-person programs transitioning to virtual relationships: What information can programs collect online or by phone? Should metrics or evaluation frameworks be adjusted to the online environment?
Ensure privacy and data safety	• Do your policies include user privacy and data safety protocols? • How will you manage user information before, during, and after the program? • Where are the platform or tool's servers located? • If your program uses a commonly available technology, does the app or software developer collect and potentially share or sell user information? • For in-person programs transitioning to virtual relationships: Should programs adjust their policies or create temporary guidelines to delineate processes and expectations?

Source: E-mentoring: Key Topic Overview. Canadian Mentoring Partnership, May 2020 Version 1.0

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