

**TEXAS SUPPORT FOR HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM
MENTOR PROGRAM
2006-07 School Year**

Congratulations! As a result of your previous success as a funded homeless education project, your project has been selected to serve as a mentor for a first-time McKinney-Vento subgrant recipient. Your project agreed to serve as a mentor as a condition of receiving the Texas Support for Homeless Education Program (TEXSHEP) subgrant.

Officially, your mentorship will last for the 2006-07 school year. Your subgrant has been increased by \$1,000 to cover costs you may incur as a result of your mentoring activities, including travel (mentor to mentee district or mentee to mentor district), telephone, postage, copying, or other related costs. It is prudent to develop a budget for the mentoring project so that funds will be spent as effectively as possible. Ideally, the relationship you and your mentee develop will continue to grow and blossom long beyond the first year of the grant cycle.

When possible, the Texas Homeless Education Office (THEO) has attempted to match mentors with projects that are of equivalent size, demographics (rural, urban, etc.), district with district, regional service centers with regional service centers, etc., so that information and practices shared may more likely be applicable. Others were matched because of particular strengths of the mentor and/or needs of the mentee.

As a mentor project, you will not be expected to provide technical assistance and guidance in lieu of THEO staff, but rather be a supplement for the support that THEO offers. THEO will continue to provide training, support and technical assistance to all projects, including mentor, and mentee projects. Mentor projects should plan to work closely with THEO staff in addressing any issues, concerns, questions, and suggestions concerning the mentee project, or your own project, that arise as a result of your role as a mentor.

As a mentor, you should read and follow the guidelines outlined below:

1. Think back to your first year as a subgrantee. What were some of the fears, concerns, uncertainties, and other challenges that you faced? What help did you receive, or wish you had received, that would have helped you better understand and fulfill your responsibilities? These are probably the same types of assistance from which your mentee could benefit – jot them down for future reference.
2. Contact your mentee project, introduce yourself, and either set a time and place for further interaction and/or briefly get to know your mentee via phone.
3. Get to know your mentee project's unique features and special needs.
 - a. Request a copy of the project's needs assessment, objectives, data collection, and evaluation process.

- b. Become familiar with the newly funded project's staff.
4. Establish communications with your mentee, i.e., set a monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly time to contact the mentee project for updates. While you are not limited to pre-set contacts, and certainly may spontaneously contact your mentee, having pre-set communication times assists the mentee project with planning, so that they can make the best use of your assistance.
5. Set aside a time to visit the mentee project in person, and/or have staff from the newly funded project visit your project.
6. Below are examples of the types of support you might provide to your mentee:
 - a. information regarding your project, policies, procedures, best practices, data collection practices, evaluation approaches, etc.
 - b. discussion of issues that are likely to emerge, and description of how these issues might have been part of your own learning.
 - c. suggestions for completing paperwork and implementing procedures as needed/requested.
 - d. response to, or referral for, assistance your mentee may request/need. (Remember that you will want to consult with THEO regarding many of your responses and/or referrals.)
 - e. review of your mentee's progress prior to the mid-year review; response to questions they may have regarding the self-assessment guide, or the year-end report. (You may want to defer many of these issues to THEO; certainly any oversight issues should be directed to THEO.)
7. In your required year-end report, include 1-2 paragraphs that answer the following questions regarding your mentoring activities:
 - a. What project did you mentor?
 - b. How much time do you think you spent on mentoring activities?
 - c. What type of mentoring activities did you do?
 - d. Was the \$1,000 stipend you received sufficient to cover your costs as a mentor?
 - d. Describe how you built the mentor relationship, and the positive results you saw from that relationship.
 - e. What suggestions do you have for others to make for a positive mentoring experience?