

**AISWA**  
Association of Independent Schools  
of Western Australia

## Mentoring an Early Career Teacher

What's this all about?

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## You and your role




## What is....?

- Mentoring
- Coaching
- Counselling
- Teaching
- Appraisal



## What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a **learning and development relationship** between two people.

The relationship is based on:

- High degree of trust and confidentiality
- Mutual benefit of care and respect
- Attention to the individual's emotional and professional needs




## What is coaching?

The term "coaching" is used in a wide variety of contexts to describe an array of relationships. Consequently, there is no universal practice when it comes to coaching. Coaching relationships can and often do cross over with mentoring, teaching by instruction and counselling (see Figure 1). A number of definitions are discussed in the following sections in the context of the various models.




Coaching environmental scan Summary of selected literature, models and current practices Hay Group - November 2013



## Three Key Attributes of an Effective Early Career Teacher Mentor

BEGINNING TEACHERS	MENTORS	PRINCIPALS/SCHOOL LEADERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approachable, accessible, willing to be engaged</li> <li>• supportive</li> <li>• understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ability and willingness to listen</li> <li>• empathy</li> <li>• supportive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective listener</li> <li>• communication skills</li> <li>• build effective, 'trusted', positive working relationships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good communication, provides honest feedback</li> <li>• knowledge and experience (mainly pedagogical, but also subject matter)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• good communication skills</li> <li>• experienced teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• able to give honest constructive feedback</li> <li>• high-level teaching and learning, skills/curriculum knowledge</li> <li>• seen as role model by all teachers</li> <li>• willing to give time to the beginning teacher</li> <li>• empathy and patience</li> </ul>


A Learning Guide for Mentors, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Victoria



## What is mentoring?



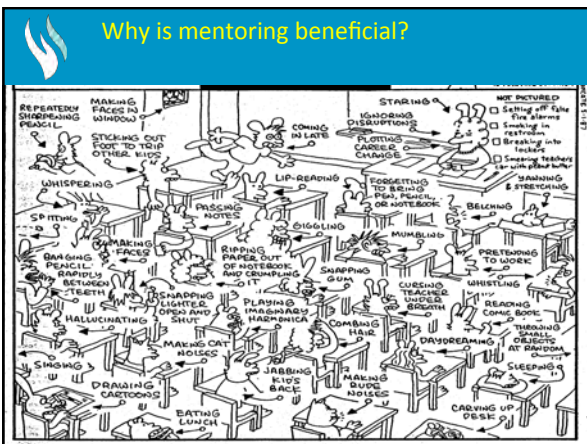
The purpose of mentoring is to:

- Expedite learning of a new job or skill
- Support improved instructional performance
- Retain quality teachers in the workplace
- **Respond to National and State imperatives**
- Welcome new staff into the school culture
- Create a collaborative and positive climate
- Assist in the development of deep reflection
- Provide social support
- Support the career stage transition between being a graduate teacher to becoming proficient as a teacher.




## What does this mean to you?

- Quality mentoring is more than casually matching a new teacher and a veteran teacher, assuming they will meet together throughout the school year and that the protégé will flourish.


## What does the research say?

- Between 25 and 40 per cent of teachers leave the profession within five years of starting, according to estimates in numerous surveys by teacher unions and education academics.
- Poor pay is not the reason they're giving for leaving the profession: it's the workplace issues of highly stressful, poor working conditions... Teaching is one of the few professions where beginners are put into the deep end, almost thoughtlessly.
- Without mentoring, new staff focus on survival!



## Just a few benefits.....


- Improved teacher effectiveness
- Improved student achievement
- Increased job satisfaction
- Increased teacher retention
- Positive collegiality




## It's About Learning (and it's about time)

Stoll, Fink and Earl 2003


- Lipton and Wellman with Hunbard (2001) describe mentors as 'powerful models for novice teachers as they describe their own learning goals and help proteges craft meaningful challenges of their own.' New teacher and student teacher mentoring by more experienced colleagues offers benefits to both partners, with the new or novice teacher acting as a fresh pair of eyes on the mentor's classroom practice.
- Further on .....
- He suggests interviewing some pupils after the lesson might also be beneficial to see how well they understand what they have been doing.





“When an experienced person and a new person work together in a nurturing relationship, each gets something of real value from the other. The experienced person gains energy; the new person gains inspiration. Isolation fades, connection flourishes, pain turns into wisdom – a joyful wisdom that makes the difficulties in our work endurable and keeps both the experienced and the new person coming back for more.”

“A Tale of Two Children,” by David Shoemaker, Phi Delta Kappan, February 2003 (Vol. 84, No. 6).




“The most powerful form of learning, the most sophisticated form of staff development, comes not from listening to the good works of others but from sharing what we know with others .....

By reflecting on what we do, by giving it coherence, and by sharing and articulating our craft knowledge, we make meaning, we learn.”


Roland Barth




**Who makes a good mentor??**




- In your group make a list of the qualities of a good mentor on sticky notes.
- Please have someone to report back to the larger group.

“Asking a question is the simplest way of focusing thinking. Asking the right question may be the most important part of thinking.”

Edward de Bono  
<http://www.habits-of-mind.net/questioning.htm>




PERSONAL QUALITIES	COMPETENCE AND EXPERIENCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enthusiastic</li> <li>• Motivating and encouraging</li> <li>• Open and honest</li> <li>• Empathetic</li> <li>• Positive and optimistic</li> <li>• A good communicator</li> <li>• Active listener</li> <li>• Role model</li> <li>• Open to learning and training</li> <li>• Is reflective and eager to share</li> <li>• Has high standards for themselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can articulate and demonstrate effective instructional strategies</li> <li>• Uses time efficiently</li> <li>• Is passionate about teaching</li> <li>• Models and offers support in productive ways.</li> <li>• Works with others</li> <li>• Has resilience</li> <li>• Attention to detail</li> <li>• Follows through</li> <li>• Supportive</li> </ul>




COMMUNICATION SKILLS	INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active listening</li> <li>• Building rapport</li> <li>• Questioning</li> <li>• Challenging</li> <li>• Reflective</li> <li>• Relating</li> <li>• Summarising</li> <li>• Supporting</li> <li>• Encouraging</li> <li>• understanding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains a trusting relationship</li> <li>• Can express care and commitment</li> <li>• Is sensitive to political issues</li> <li>• Understands diversity and equity</li> <li>• Is patient</li> <li>• Is honest and ethical</li> <li>• Can read body language</li> <li>• Is respected in the school</li> </ul>





## Characteristics of Effective Mentors

### Skilled mentors

- Are continual, visible learners
- Set high standards for themselves
- Enjoy and are enthusiastic about their field and teaching in general
- Continue to update their knowledge and skills in the field
- Model professional growth, focusing on improving student learning
- Are considered by peers to be experts in the field
- Use a variety of techniques and skills to achieve their goals



## Effective mentors earn colleagues respect because they ...

- Listen to and communicate effectively with others
- Exhibit a good feeling about their own accomplishments and the teaching profession
- Recognise excellence in others and encourage it
- Enjoy intellectual engagement and like to help others
- Place great value on the development of critical thinking skills
- Exercise good judgement in decisions concerning themselves and the welfare of others
- Are sensitive to the needs of others, and generally recognise when others require support, direct assistance or independence



## Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

### GOAL OF THE PROGRAM

1. To assist the early years teacher manage the complexities of teaching, feel happy and secure in your context and work towards successful transition to full registration with the TRB.

### MENTOR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

*What do you think?*



## What are the challenges and barriers?



## The Heart and Art of Teaching and Learning - Practical Ideas and Resources for Beginning Teachers

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario  
[www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca)

[http://heartandart.ca/?page\\_id=47](http://heartandart.ca/?page_id=47)

Find the book here, individual teachers may freely download a copy



## So what's in it for me?

Aitsl Professional Standards for Teachers

- Highly Accomplished Teacher
- Lead Teacher



### Engage in professional learning - Highly Accomplished

<p><b>6.1 Identify and plan professional learning needs</b> Analyse the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to plan personal professional development goals, support colleagues to identify and achieve personal development goals and pre-service teachers to improve classroom practice.</p>	<p><b>6.2 Engage in professional learning and improve practice</b> Plan for professional learning by accessing and critiquing relevant research, engage in high quality targeted opportunities to improve practice and offer quality placements for pre-service teachers where applicable.</p>	<p><b>6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice</b> Initiate and engage in professional discussions with colleagues in a range of forums to evaluate practice directed at improving professional knowledge and practice, and the educational outcomes of students.</p>	<p><b>6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning</b> Engage with colleagues to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher professional learning activities to address student learning needs.</p>
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### Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/caregivers and the community - HA

<p><b>7.1 Meet professional ethics and responsibilities</b> Maintain high ethical standards and support colleagues to interpret codes of ethics and exercise sound judgement in all school and community contexts.</p>	<p><b>7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements</b> Support colleagues to review and interpret legislative, administrative, and organisational requirements, policies and processes.</p>	<p><b>7.3 Engage with the parents/carers</b> Demonstrate responsiveness in all communications with parents/carers about their children's learning and wellbeing.</p>	<p><b>7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities</b> Contribute to professional networks and associations and build productive links with the wider community to improve teaching and learning.</p>
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### Engage in professional learning – Lead Teacher

<p><b>6.1 Identify and plan professional learning needs</b> Use comprehensive knowledge of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to plan and lead the development of professional learning policies and programs that address the professional learning needs of colleagues and pre-service teachers.</p>	<p><b>6.2 Engage in professional learning and improve practice</b> Initiate collaborative relationships to expand professional learning opportunities, engage in research, and provide quality opportunities and placements for pre-service teachers.</p>	<p><b>6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice</b> Implement professional dialogue within the school or professional learning network(s) that is informed by feedback, analysis of current research and practice to improve the educational outcomes of students.</p>	<p><b>6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning</b> Advocate, participate in and lead strategies to support high-quality professional learning opportunities for colleagues that focus on improved student learning.</p>
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### Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/caregivers and the community - Lead

<p><b>7.1 Meet professional ethics and responsibilities</b> Model exemplary ethical behaviour and exercise informed judgements in all professional dealings with students, colleagues and the community.</p>	<p><b>7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements</b> Initiate, develop and implement relevant policies and processes to support colleagues' compliance with and understanding of existing and new legislative, administrative, organisational and professional responsibilities.</p>	<p><b>7.3 Engage with the parents/carers</b> Identify, initiate and build on opportunities that engage parents/carers in both the progress of their children's learning and in the educational priorities of the school.</p>	<p><b>7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities</b> Take a leadership role in professional and community networks and support the involvement of colleagues in external learning opportunities.</p>
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### Feedback and Evaluation of the Program

- Professional portfolio
- Mentee's Journal
- Observation schedule
- Informal notes - mentor
- Email communication
- Formal questionnaire

### Some suggestions .....

- Mentor and mentee meet each week for 1 term and then at regular intervals to be decided – time?
- Mentors actively support the mentee to transition to full registration with the TRB
- Set out clear outcomes and goals of the mentor program
- Mentoring should NOT be used for performance management
- Mentors deserve guidelines or training and are valued
- Mentor and mentee keep a journal of their learning partnership
- The effectiveness of the program should be evaluated.



## To enhance early career teacher resilience

### Don't forget to:

Acknowledge the complex, intense and unpredictable nature of teachers' work

#### *A way through the fog .....*

- Attend to the physical, intellectual, relational and emotional dimensions of teachers' work
- Acknowledge that it is demanding and tiring
- Assist to negotiate the multiple and complex relationships in diverse settings



## Or to .....

Develop teachers' curriculum and pedagogical knowledge and strategies

#### *Kicking the caffeine*

- Provide opportunities for collaborative planning, teaching, assessment and reporting
- Allocate space and structures for teachers' critical and reflective work
- Focus on student diversity, passions and interests
- Promote innovative and engaging curriculum practices



## And also .....

Provide support to create engaging learning environments

#### *Connecting for calm*

- Taking collective ownership of students' wellbeing and behaviour
- developing beliefs and practices that engage students and encourage constructive behaviours
- Creating collaborative and democratic learning environments
- Making authentic connections between students' learning and their lifeworld's



## Please .....

Ensure access to appropriate ongoing support, resources and learning opportunities

#### *Not just a luxury*

- Provide equitable timely access to needs-based professional learning
- Support the development of pedagogical beliefs, values and practices
- Provide adequate release time from face-to-face teaching




## QUESTIONS?



***Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen,  
and a push in the right direction***

(John Crosby)





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Thank you for your participation

