



2021 Vermont Mentoring Survey Toolkit

If you have any questions related to the surveys or how to access them, please contact us at surveys@mentorvt.org or 802-658-1888.

Overview

During the summer of 2020, through MENTOR Vermont's federal grant from OJJDP, MENTOR Vermont was able to work with [Amy Syvertsen](#), director of applied qualitative research at the Search Institute and member of the National Mentoring Resource Center Research Board, to develop and implement COVID-19 Response Mentoring Surveys for mentors and mentees. The four OJJDP COVID-19 Response subgrantees administered this survey to mentors and mentees before the start of the 2020-2021 school-year. Based on the data that was gathered and the continuation of the pandemic through the 2020-2021 school-year, MENTOR Vermont decided to once again work with Amy Syvertsen to shorten and revise the original COVID-19 Response Surveys and provide them to the larger Vermont mentoring program community during the 2020-2021 grant year in lieu of the previous years' Vermont Mentoring Surveys.

For 2021, the revised COVID-19 Response Surveys will replace the Vermont Mentoring Surveys of years past. All Vermont Mentoring Grantees are required to conduct the survey in full. Unlike in past years when MENTOR Vermont required programs to conduct the full Vermont Mentoring Surveys, or the Core Survey questions in addition to a program's own survey, programs that received a Vermont Mentoring Grant are required to run the full 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys. If a program still wishes to conduct their own surveys beyond the 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys, they are welcome to do so.

Objectives:

- Understand the impact of mentoring relationships for youth mentees during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Identify barriers and ways to improve mentoring in a pandemic (and, remote mentoring and "physically distanced" mentoring more generally).

Intended Use:

To provide information, through the collection of anonymous data, about the role mentoring has played during the COVID-19 pandemic to funders, the community, and to prospective mentors, mentees, and families.

- Data will be used by local mentoring programs:
 - To improve remote mentoring.
 - To highlight their value during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Data will be used by MENTOR Vermont:
 - In reports to Vermont Mentoring Grants funders to provide empirical evidence of the impact of maintaining mentoring relationships (in-person with social distancing and remote mentoring) during the COVID-19 pandemic.



- In supporting local programs in providing high-quality mentoring in a remote environment.

Format and Length:

- The survey consists largely of closed-ended survey items with Likert-type response options. A few open-ended questions have been included in the mentor survey to gather rich examples and stories of the impact of maintaining mentoring during COVID-19.
- Target Reading Level: 3rd grade
- Mentee Survey Target Length: 5-10 minutes
- Mentor Survey Target Length: 10-15 minutes

How to Access the Surveys

To view a SAMPLE of the 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys go to: www.mentorvt.org/resources-for-programs#5. Please do NOT distribute these versions of the surveys.

To receive your program's unique survey links for the 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys, email benji@mentorvt.org.

What if I want to add questions to the surveys?

Review the 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys, and if you want to add a limited number of questions at the end of the survey to either of the surveys, email benji@mentorvt.org. He will work with you to get your additional questions into your program's customized survey(s).

What if I have an existing survey that my program already uses?

We realize that programs may have their own surveys they have been using for years. We encourage you to review the 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys and see how to include the 2021 COVID-19 Response Survey to your existing surveys. If you choose to do so you must reach out to surveys@mentorvt.org to share your survey prior to implementation.

*Please note that if your program received funding through the 2020-2021 Vermont Mentoring Grants, there is a requirement to conduct the 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys. ***The order and wording of questions and the scale may not be altered beyond changing how you refer to your mentors and mentees (i.e. "Bigs and Littles," "young leaders," "partners") unless you have received prior approval from MENTOR Vermont.***

MENTOR Vermont can provide you with the corresponding image files for the scale to include in your survey system. These images are intended to make the surveys more accessible for individuals of all ages and abilities. While the images are encouraged, they are not required.

Other Questions?

We encourage you to reach out to surveys@mentorvt.org if you have any additional questions that are not covered by this toolkit or the survey web page.

mentorvt.org | 19 Marble Avenue, Suite 4 Burlington, VT 05401



Administering Surveys

WHEN:

MENTOR Vermont asks programs ***to set a four-week time period between March 1st and May 31st*** within which the 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys will be administered and collected. We ask all mentoring programs in Vermont to conduct the surveys during this time period to create consistency with the data that is gathered. The four-week window is important because if the surveying time is too long, the results will not correctly represent a snapshot in time for your program. These surveys are recommended for all programs, and ***required*** for all programs receiving funding through the Vermont Mentoring Grants.

WHO:

The 2021 COVID-19 Response Surveys are designed to be administered to the following constituents:

- Mentees
- Mentors

Return Rate:

It would be great if all programs had a 100% return rate for all the surveys they administer, but that is not a realistic expectation, particularly during the pandemic. To ensure that you have enough data to evaluate your program, and that MENTOR Vermont has enough data from programs around the state, programs should strive to meet the following minimum return rates. If your program receives funding through the Vermont Mentoring Grants, meeting these baseline return rates for the mentor and mentee surveys is a requirement of your grant.

- **Mentees: 35%**
- **Mentors: 35%**

While the recommended return rate has been reduced from past years to be reflective of the remote nature of mentoring during the pandemic and the increased difficulty that this challenge may present for surveying mentors and mentees, MENTOR Vermont encourages programs to strive for as high a return rate as possible. The more responses your program is able to receive, the more representative your program's data will be.

HOW:

The 2021 COVID-19 Response Survey are available in two formats:

- Online through SurveyMonkey (view How to Access the Survey section above)
- As a printable PDF for the Mentee Survey (file can be found [here](#))

Standardized Survey Administration Instructions:

1. Do not alter the wording of the questions or the scale. We can provide you with the corresponding image files for the scale to include in your survey system. While use of the images is encouraged, it is not required.
2. If individuals taking the survey feel a question doesn't apply to them, they should skip that question and provide no response.
3. If a mentee asks for clarification on a question or about what something means:



- Don't provide your interpretation of the question or rephrase the question.
- Don't provide any affirmation of a response or concern/disapproval.
- Ask the mentee what they think it means. Whatever they think it means is fine.
- If the mentee is really stuck, they can skip the question.

Overall Tips for Administering Surveys:

- Ensure you pick a four-week window in which you have the necessary staff time to dedicate to this process. To get a good return rate, you will need to have time to reach out multiple times to those whom you wish to complete surveys.
- Let the person being surveyed know why their responses are important.
- Be honest and upfront with how long the survey will take. (Surveys should take around 10 minutes on average to complete for mentees, and 10-15 minutes on average for mentors.)
- Provide clear, concise instructions with the survey that explain how to complete the survey and how to return it once completed.
- Make taking and returning the survey as easy as possible. All surveys can be filled out through SurveyMonkey with a unique link for your program, or printed version for the mentee survey.
- Some programs have found that offering a drawing for a donated gift card to people that complete the survey has led to increased participation.
- If you choose to mail blank surveys to mentees, include a self-addressed envelope to return the survey in (if you're able to, you may want to consider including postage as well).

Tips for Administering Surveys to Mentees:

Due to the pandemic, most programs surveys will have to be administered to mentees by sending them the SurveyMonkey link or mailing them a paper survey. While it is best for a mentee to complete the survey on their own or with support of an adult, outside of their family, not involved in the mentoring program, this may not be possible especially this year with the further complications due to the pandemic. Mentors should not administer surveys to their mentee but it is appropriate for a program staff member or parent to support a mentee in completing the survey if adult support is needed. For a more detailed guide for how best to administer surveys with youth go to:

<https://www.mentorvt.org/resources-for-programs/#5>.

For site-based programs that have mentees still on site, mentees should complete the survey away from any adult or other youth who may distract or influence the responses.

Mentees under 10 years old:

In past years, it was recommended for younger mentees that the survey be read aloud to the youth, and that the youth tells their answers to a program staff member who will record the answers for them. With the pandemic, this may not be possible this year and programs may need to get creative with how to best administer surveys to youth that need additional support completing the survey.

One possibility would be completing the survey over the phone or video. If you are able to take this approach, you may find that you will need to read each item aloud as they read along, and then the mentee can mark whichever answer is most accurate or you can mark their response on your end. For the one open-ended question where you are asking for mentees to write, it is fine if they simply wish to tell you, and have you record their response, **word for word**, on the survey sheet. It is often found that youth are



happier speaking their answer to an adult rather than writing it down themselves. However, if they prefer to write it down themselves, that is fine too.

Mentees 10 and older:

Mentees should receive clear directions from you on how to fill out the survey, and how and when they should return the survey to you if using the printed version. For older mentees, it is fine to have them complete the survey on their own.

Survey Data

If Using the Print Version of the Mentee Survey:

When you receive completed paper surveys, the easiest way to enter the data will be to manually enter each survey into the corresponding SurveyMonkey survey for your program. This will result in the data from all of your survey responses, both paper and online, being stored and tabulated in one spot.

Survey Results:

All the online SurveyMonkey surveys are hosted under MENTOR Vermont's SurveyMonkey account. This enables MENTOR Vermont to add your program's questions to the Vermont Mentoring Surveys and create unique survey links for your program. All of your program's survey results will be stored in SurveyMonkey. When your surveys are launched, MENTOR Vermont will provide you with a link for each survey type (mentor, mentee, etc...) that will allow you to view your results as they come in so that you can check in on how many responses you have received at any point during your survey window without needing MENTOR Vermont's assistance.