

The user of this manual is encouraged to refer to this document for resources and curriculum information as needed. Personnel involved in program implementation activities are urged to review the resource information as flexible tools to be modified and applied at the local level.

This manual provides a short overview on the mentoring process, with stand-alone sections that can serve as informational packets for volunteers to share with their targeted audience. We hope that you will find this manual a useful tool in creating an effective program to promote substance abuse and mental health careers among Hispanic youth.

What is Mentoring?

Flexman, Ascher, and Harrington (1988) provide a helpful and useful definition of mentoring:

Mentoring is defined as a supportive relationship between a youth or young adult, or an individual who offers support, guidance and concrete assistance as the younger partner goes through a difficult period, enters a new area of experience, takes on important tasks, or corrects earlier challenges.

Background

The ASPIRA Association researched and collected information on existing community-based mentoring programs. In conducting this research, ASPIRA found that several organizations implement mentoring programs that reach Hispanic youth. Among these are: 4-H, Teen Pals, AmeriCorps, Mentors, Inc., Latin American Youth Center, the Big Brother Big Sisters Program, the National Society for Hispanic MBA's, National Alliance for Hispanic Health, the Global Classroom Project which uses the Internet, and others. All of these organizations produce materials related to their specific mentoring programs.

ASPIRA has also identified products on mentoring that were developed by a number of organizations such as the U.S. Department of Education's Partnership for Family Involvement in Education, *Yes, You Can* (1998); Virginia Office of Volunteerism, *Volunteer Mentor Programs* (1997); United Way of America, *A Youth Mentor Training Curriculum* (1991) and The Groundhog Job Shadow Day Coalition, *How to Have a Successful Groundhog Job Shadow Day 2000* (1999). ASPIRA was unable to identify a specific curriculum manual targeted toward working with Hispanic youth that would encourage their participation in substance abuse and mental health careers.

A national advisory panel was convened for the development of this manual. This group provided input on the initial strategy of this manual and later reviewed and made recommendations on draft materials.