



January Funding Tip

The Finance Project is pleased to announce the next installment in a series of [monthly funding tips](#) for youth programs. These tips cover different financing strategies to help programs finance and sustain their work.

Tip: Build Partnerships with Businesses and Foundations to Support Mentoring Programs

Partnering with businesses and foundations is one approach youth mentoring programs can pursue to implement, expand, and sustain their organization. Partnerships can help attract both cash and in-kind contributions, help in leveraging additional funding, provide access to technical expertise, and raise the visibility of a youth mentoring program.

To engage private organizations, youth mentoring programs may use a variety of overlapping strategies, including being able to show positive results from your program and acknowledging partners through public forums whenever possible. Mentoring organizations should also stress direct benefits that could result from a partnership. By joining forces with a credible youth mentoring organization, for example, businesses can create a sense of goodwill and community investment that can help attract and retain good employees, foster a strong brand identity, and positively contribute to the future workforce. In addition, businesses are eligible to receive tax benefits for all contributions of cash and in-kind resources to nonprofit community entities such as youth mentoring programs.

Example from the Field: Partnering to Provide Mentoring to Youth in Foster Care

The Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), the nation's oldest and largest member-based child welfare organization, in partnership with FosterClub, a national nonprofit organization committed to giving young people a voice, secured funding from the New York Life Foundation to launch Fostering Healthy Connections. The three-year initiative is a peer mentoring program in which former foster youth mentor children currently in the foster care system. This initiative seeks to support eight CWLA member agencies in developing or enhancing peer mentoring programs. The peer mentoring programs aim to prepare current and former foster youth to develop healthy connections in order to improve their educational and behavioral outcomes and to strengthen their interpersonal relationships.

CWLA acts in an intermediary grant-maker role and assists member agencies by providing funding, training, consultation, and technical assistance on program sustainability, resource development, and fundraising. The organization, in consultation with project partners, FosterClub, and Father Maloney's Boys' Haven mentor program, provides sites with mentor and mentee training as well as youth friendly online resources, tools, and materials to ensure success across selected sites. For more information, see <http://www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/peermentoring.htm>.

For more information on this financing strategy and the various strategies in accessing funding to support mentoring services for youth, see the Finance Project's publication, *Finding Resources to Support Mentoring Programs and Services for Youth*, <http://www.financeproject.org/publications/FindingResources-MentoringPrograms.pdf>.

Within the [Youth Programs Resource Center](#) you will also find an [online clearinghouse](#), jointly developed by The Finance Project and The Forum for Youth Investment. The clearinghouse contains a wealth of information and resources for supporting and sustaining youth programs and initiatives. It is designed to help you learn about data, tools, policies, practices, financing strategies, coordination efforts and technical assistance resources developed by organizations in the field that aim to improve the lives of youth.