

Practice makes perfect: New meta-analysis highlights important role for peer mentors

Chances are you've heard about the pedestrian on 57th Street who sees a musician getting out of a cab and asks, "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" Without pause, the musician replies "**Practice.**"

Indeed, when it comes to any skill, from music to mindfulness or job interviewing skills, practice makes perfect—and mentors can help. That's because it's easier to practice when you have supportive encouragement and feedback.

KEY FINDINGS

The MentorPRO team of scientists recently published a meta-analysis demonstrating the power of supervised practice when working with youth and students.

-  Skills-based programs that included opportunities for supervised practice were more effective than those that were unsupervised.
-  Effects were strongest for internalizing outcomes (i.e., stress, mental health)
-  Mentors can reinforce new skills and create a low-stakes, positive learning environment that can lead to mastery and student success.



Christensen, K., Assink, M., van Dam, L., and Stams, G., Poon, Y.S., Astesano, J., & Rhodes, J. (in press). Youth interventions with and without supervised practice: A second-order meta-analysis. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*.