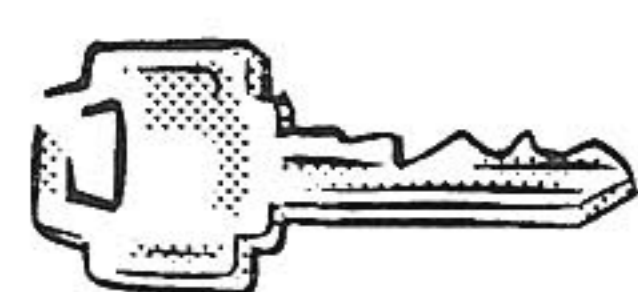


2 An Effective Program Director

The most prominent common element among successful programs in which teenagers taught younger children was a passionate, committed, adult program director.



Key Research Findings

- Successful directors were as varied as successful programs.
- There was a match between program directors and their programs.
- Program directors shared with the teen teachers their commitment to children.
- Most successful program directors worked long hours.
- The directors of successful programs were involved with their teen participants outside of work and often for years following a teen's participation in the program.
- Successful directors established respectful personal and professional relationships with the teen teachers.

“The program director is kinda, I don’t want to say charismatic but, verging on that. I mean, when she talks, they [teenagers] really listen.”

—PROGRAM PLANNER



Tips from the Field

The program director is the key to success

- Take time and care when selecting a director.
- Urge the program director to adjust the program to match his or her vision and philosophy.

Successful directors

- respect teenagers and children
- recognize, promote, and celebrate diversity
- build on the strengths of teenagers as individuals and as a team
- respect individual differences and work with teenagers within the scope of their individual development
- allow teenagers to be heard, encouraging them to improve the program
- support teenagers in and outside of work

Insider or outsider?

Successful program directors can be from within or from outside the communities where they work. Each situation offers unique advantages.

