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Developing and Implementing a Peer Mentor Program to Support Caregivers of Children with Tracheostomies

Background

- Few peer mentor programs exist to support caregivers of children with tracheostomies as they transition from the intensive care units to hospital wards and home.
- Peer mentoring is one of several interventions being tested by six hospitals in a pragmatic randomized study addressing caregiver support at home after discharge.

Purpose

To describe the development and initial reactions to peer mentoring curriculum for caregivers of a child with a tracheostomy.

Hypothesis

Establishing a peer mentor program to connect caregivers of children with trachs will reduce caregiver stress and increase their confidence in trach care at home.

Methods

- Research team explored existing training curricula and met with individuals experienced in managing and/or developing peer support programs.
- Investigators created a 90-minute peer-mentor training course and accompanying manual. The course included training in communication skills such as active and empathic listening and applying “What Matters to You”, example below.

what matters to me:



- Five experienced peer mentors engaged new peer mentors in role play, provided feedback to trainees, and offered advice on how to approach and maintain engagement with mentees.

Methods Continued

- ‘Canvas’ online education platform was used to host recorded trainings sessions for review or asynchronous training, the peer mentor training manual, and educational videos.
- Participants were asked to complete a short survey following the training about their experiences as caregivers and the trainings helpfulness in building skills and addressing potential challenges.

Results

21 Peer Mentors Trained

- 16 trainees attended a live training session.
- 5 trainees reviewed asynchronous materials on Canvas.

90% completed Baseline Survey

Demographics:

- Mean age: 38 yrs (range: 22-55)
- White (89%)
- Non-Hispanic (84%)
- Married (95%)
- 4+ Years of College (52%)
- Working Full Time (42%)

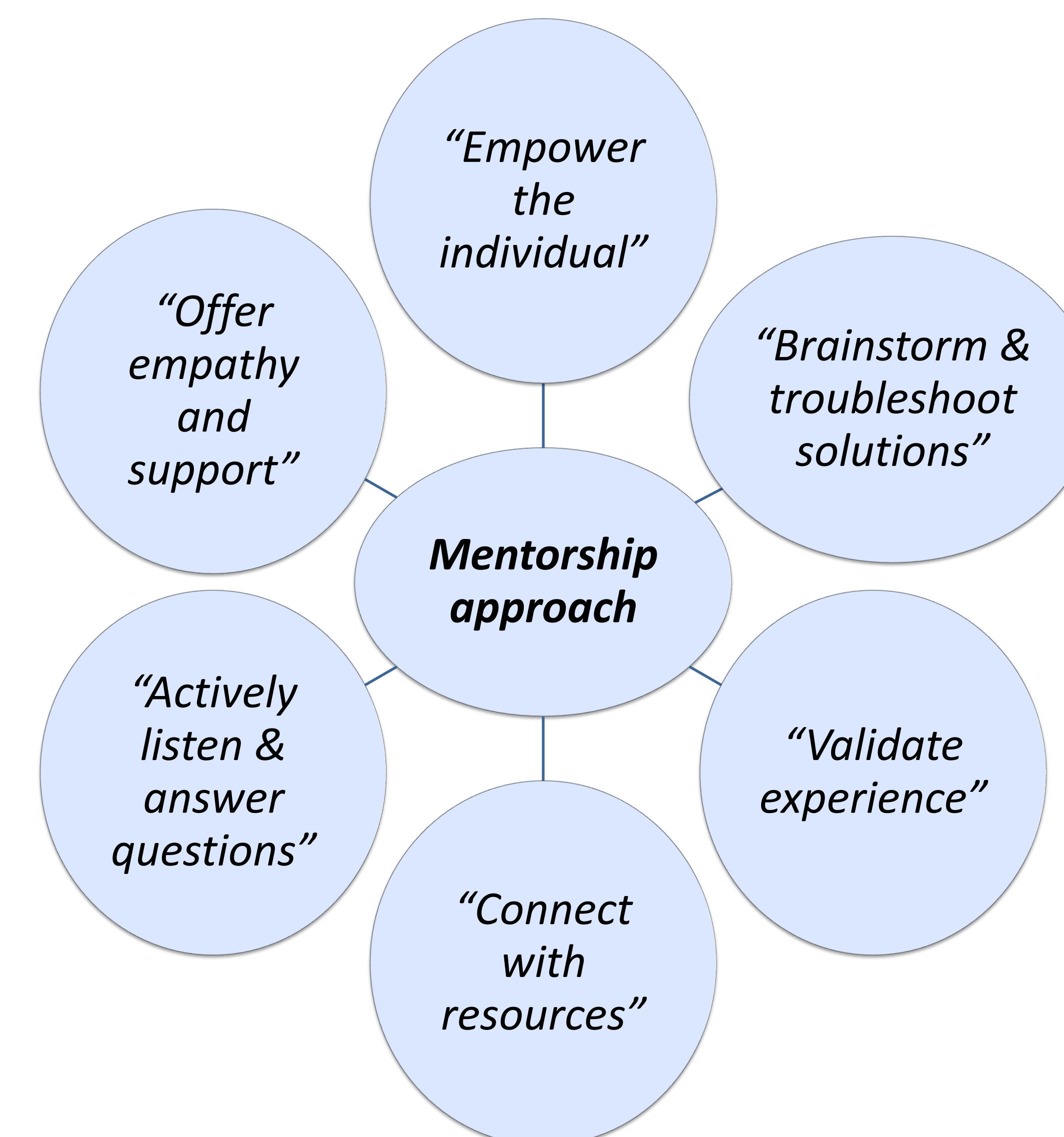
Parents who had (42%) and who did not have (58%) a mentor

described the impact of peer mentorship:



Results Continued

74% reported ‘Very good’ knowledge about caring for a child with tracheostomy and described their approach to mentorship after the training which revealed themes aligned with the curriculum:



Conclusion

A structured training curriculum was developed to support creation of peer-mentor programs across institutions. The training resources are available online and future work will evaluate the impact of peer mentors on caregiver burden.

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PCORI Project: [Reducing Caregiver Burden and Improving Outcomes for Children with Tracheostomies Living at Home](#)

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