



MENTOR PROGRAM

Youth Guidebook

2018

WHAT IS THE MENTOR PROGRAM?

ABOUT

Founded in 2007, A Family For Every Child's Mentor Program was originally designed for youth in foster care. By connecting these youth with a caring and authentic role model who wasn't paid to be in their lives, youth were able to forge a sincere connection, learn life skills and have increased independence and self-reliance. The program has since opened to serve any youth who can be considered "at-risk" for not reaching their full potential.

WHAT DO MENTORS AND YOUTH DO?

That all depends on the youth and the mentor! We interview all of our mentors and youth so we can make the best decision in terms of matching. We match based upon mutual interests, personalities and hobbies; we have mentor pairs who like to go hiking, some who like to do arts and crafts, some who like to do more academic work, and some that are a mixed bag!

YOUTH WE SERVE

We serve youth ages 5-21 in the Lane County and Portland areas. There is no "specific requirements" to be in our program, however, all youth who participate must be willing to be in the program. Youth choice is one of the pillars of our program. We perform an interview with all youth in the program to get a sense of who they are, what they need, and what kind of mentor would be best for them. There are no one-size-fits-all mentor matches!

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

Because we match based upon compatibility as opposed to a by-the-numbers wait list, we always like to be transparent that it could take weeks or months for a youth to be matched. It all depends on when the right mentor for them applies. That doesn't mean that your youth won't get to engage in some of the same fun -- check out our section on Waiting Youth Outings below!





WAITING YOUTH OUTINGS

We understand that when a youth is waiting on a mentor that could mean a period of time between when they are interviewed and when they are matched. We believe that all youth in our program should have access to the activities that matched youth do. We have Waiting Youth Outings for our youth who do no yet have mentors.

A Waiting Youth Outing is like a field trip, only for youth in the Mentor Program. Our kids get to meet with and bond with other youth whom they otherwise would not have met and get to have experiences that they otherwise would not get to have! All Waiting Youth Outings are free of charge and we provide transportation for those who need it.

Previous Outings Include:

- Eugene Emeralds Baseball Games
- Ducks Football Games
- Museum Tours
- Fire House Tours
- Self-Defense Classes
- Fishing Trips
- Hikes
- Beach Trips
- Movies
- Creative Writing Classes

And we're always looking for new and exciting experiences for our youth!





Mentor Assisted Life Skills

We pair mentors with youth who will work on developing life skills together. Mentors and mentees will be offered a curriculum that includes information on how to handle one's finances, healthcare, cooking, and more. This program will better prepare children who are at risk of "aging out" of foster care and living on their own. These classes in conjunction with the mentors' support will aid in the success of each child becoming a self sufficient adult!

Educational Outreach

Many children in foster care do not receive the academic assistance that they need. Due to the lack of aid and the probability of a higher rate of school transfers, many foster youth struggle to remain academically on track. Our Educational Outreach Program connects mentors to their mentee's school so they may help their mentee if he or she is struggling. Our Education Outreach Coordinator helps guide the mentor by connecting them to key individuals, meetings regarding their mentee, offering trainings, and more.

Frequently Asked Questions

■ MY YOUTH STRUGGLES WITH EMOTIONAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFICULTIES. CAN THEY BE PART OF THE MENTOR PROGRAM?

Yes! We would use the information you provide and their interview answers to find the best mentor for them. There are people out there who are equipped and have the desire to help our higher needs youth, so mentoring is not closed to them!

■ WHO CAN MAKE A REFERRAL?

Almost anyone can make a referral -- parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, family friends, therapists, counselors, teachers, caseworkers... we've received referrals from them and more!

■ DOES THE YOUTH HAVE TO BE IN FOSTER CARE?

No. We believe all youth can benefit from a mentor so our program includes all youth ages 5-21.

■ MY YOUTH DOESN'T WANT A MENTOR. CAN YOU FIND THEM A MENTOR ANYWAY?

No. The Mentor Program is a choice for our youth. If they don't want to do it, we do not move forward.

■ WHAT IS MY ROLE?

If you are a caregiver you will be the primary point of contact for the mentor and youth. You will help facilitate outings and the mentor will work with you regarding concerns that you have. Mentors are not babysitters -- a mentor is your partner in helping your youth succeed.

■ HOW SAFE ARE MENTORS?

All mentors undergo an in-home interview, fingerprints and background check, three reference checks, and an orientation. We have never had an issue concerning an unsafe mentor.

■ I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS!

If you have questions you can give us a call at 541-343-2856 or email mentor@afamilyforeverychild.org

