



Mentoring Project

“Mentor One Child, Change Two Lives”

www.northiowamentoring.org

**Mason City, Clear Lake, Ventura, Garner,
Forest City, & West Fork Schools**



308 S. Penn
Mason City, IA 50401
Ph.: (641) 421-2708
Fax: (641) 424-4737
mcytf@masoncity.net

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What is Mentoring?



A mentor is an adult who provides a young person with support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement, and a positive role model. Mentors are good listeners, people who care, people who want to help young people bring out strengths that are already there. Mentoring is a different kind of relationship for everyone—each child is unique, therefore, each mentoring experience is going to be unique!

Qualities of Successful Mentors

You don't have to be brilliant or perfect to be a good mentor! All you have to do is want to be a friend and care enough to be committed to the youth! While each mentoring experience is going to be different, the qualities of an effective mentor remain the same.

- ☺ **A sincere desire to be involved with a young person**
- ☺ **Respect for young people**
- ☺ **An ability to listen actively**
- ☺ **Empathize**
- ☺ **See solutions and opportunities**
- ☺ **Flexibility and openness**

Personal Benefits of the Mentoring Relationship

Mentoring has a powerful role in shaping lives!

Everyone benefits from a successful mentoring relationship: the mentees, the mentors, and family members. Mentoring provides a young person with a wealth of benefits. From improved grades to an enhanced self image, the research shows mentoring helps young people.

Mentoring provides significant benefits to mentors as well. Experienced mentors report that they actually feel like they get more out of their mentoring relationship than they give! The benefits of mentoring are as diverse as the people who mentor, but the following are some common things mentors have said:

- ☺ Making a difference in someone else's life
- ☺ Learning about yourself
- ☺ Giving back and contributing to the future
- ☺ Having fun

Many adults have special memories of a person who played an important role in their life. That special person, who was most often older, was a source of support and nurturing that was not always available from peers, parents, or siblings. This "friend" provided inspiration, acceptance, challenge, a sympathetic ear, or exposure to new activities or ideas.

Today we would call this special person a mentor!

Mentor Screening Process

All potential mentors for the One On One project will be screened by the following process:

Age of mentors: a junior or senior in high school, or anyone over 18 years old can apply to be a mentor.

Complete & submit an application includes the following:

- ⇒ Personal background information
- ⇒ Education information
- ⇒ Employment information
- ⇒ Information on special interests and hobbies
- ⇒ Contact information for four character local references
- ⇒ Information on desired/available times and meeting locations



- ⇒ Sit down for a face-to-face interview with project staff
- ⇒ Sign permission forms for Sex Offenders Registry Check, Driving Record Check, State of Iowa Child Abuse Registry, and State Criminal Records background checks.
- ⇒ Receive satisfactory reports on all background checks and from four character references.

Readiness Training

After satisfactory background checks have been collected, Mentor Training will be scheduled.

Training includes:

- * A review of information from the orientation session and mentor job description.
- * Guidelines on management of the mentoring relationship and problem solving exercises on relationship issues.
- * Project procedures, guidelines and reporting.
- * Information on confidentiality and liability and procedure guidelines to be followed to maintain the integrity of the project.
- * Information on community resources, web pages, and resource material mentors may find helpful.
- * Tips on communication skills, crisis management, and diversity sensitivity and appreciation.

Youth Referral Process & Matching

Youth referred:

- Will be in kindergarten through 12th grade in the school.
- Be referred to the Mentoring Coordinator by a parent, teacher, school counselor, or community agency working with the family. Both the youth and the parents need to agree to being part of the mentoring program. This is not a court ordered program, it is voluntary for all participants.

The most common reason a youth is referred include:

- ⇒ Academic Performance - Truancy and/or Absence - School Behavior and/or Discipline
- ⇒ Peer Relationships - Needs an extra positive role model, Outside of School Issues (family or community)

Matching Strategies:

- ⇒ Matches will be of the same gender.
- ⇒ Interests of the mentor and youth will be a criteria for match selection.
- ⇒ Pairs will be matched according compatibility, not according to first youth on the list.
- ⇒ Meeting location preferences indicated by the mentor and the parent of the youth will be a criteria for match selection (meeting at school, community, or combination of the two).

Mentor Commitment

- **Four hours per month** (not all four hours on one day) weekly or bi-weekly
- **Minimum of meeting for one year** (either a calendar or school year, with the potential for continuing until student is through high school or no longer wants to meet)



This is one of the **key ingredients** in a successful mentoring experience for both the mentor and the youth! There is a lot that goes into building a successful mentoring relationship with a youth. Having the youth develop and grow brings great rewards but it doesn't happen overnight and it isn't always easy. You have to hang in there and be committed to the relationship for these things to happen.

Meeting Locations & Activities

Supervised locations: Area Elementary, Middle, and High schools, YMCA, local library, or at public events within your community.

If you are a community based mentor, approved locations will be discussed during the first meeting between you, your child, the mentor, and the Mentoring Coordinator.

Activities: The trick to having this happen is finding activities both people enjoy and keeping the lines of communication open. The options are endless— everyone just need to be creative! Some possible ideas include:

- Playing games or cards
- Discussion/comparison of school experiences
- Tutoring (if you are comfortable)
- Discussion of issues faced by mentor or student
- Goal setting, planning, and decision making
- Current events and community activities
- Experience nature: go the park, go fishing, go on a scavenger hunt.
- Craft projects
- Community service projects— walking dogs at the Humane Society, participate in a volunteer project at your church, serve a meal at Community Kitchen or lend a hand at your local food pantry.

Mentoring is serious business, but it should still be enjoyable!

Monitoring & Support

The Mentoring Coordinator will monitor your relationship with on-going contact (in person, phone, or email) and address any needs or concerns of all parties involved. All parties are urged to initiate contact with the Mentoring Coordinator any time they have a question or a concern.

As soon as staff becomes aware of any mentors or mentees pending termination, a closure meeting will be set up and the youth and/or mentor are contacted to assess their desire to be re-matched.

The Mentor Coordinator will utilize a variety of strategies to provide support and recognition to participants including: a bi-monthly newsletter; Mentor lunches; additional trainings; & Large group meetings or special event activities will be offered quarterly.

Expectations of Mentors

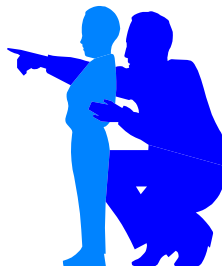
- Commitment to meeting with youth for four hours per month for one year.
- Let youth/school know promptly if unable to make it to a scheduled meeting.
- Track your number of meetings and hours met.
- Contact the Mentoring Coordinator or referral resource with any questions or concern. I can't help you if I don't know about it!
- Attendance to mentor meetings or recognition events if able.
- Notification to the Mentoring Coordinator of the need or desire to terminate the match.
- Completion of the annual pre/post-survey.

Please remember if you have any questions or concerns to
Contact your Coordinator immediately!

Mentoring Coordinator Contact Information

Clear Lake/Ventura	Amanda Korenberg	641-420-9660	mentorclv@yahoo.com
Forest City	Scott Jackson	641-585-2670	sjackson@forestcity.k12.ia.us
Garner-Hayfield/Ventura	Shirley Brown	641-430-4716	sbrown@garner.k12.ia.us
Mason City/Central Springs	Jessica Prazak	641.421.2708	jprazak@masoncity.net
West Fork	LuAnn Helmers	641-822-3389	lchelmers@mchsi.com

Studies show that students who meet regularly with mentors are less likely to begin using drugs, less likely to skip school, and less likely to get into fights. Students with mentors also reported greater confidence in their performance at school and better relations with their families.



"Adults who devote their time can make a huge difference in the lives of young people... in addition to helping with academic and social skills, mentors give youth the message that they are important and have something to contribute."
- Hillary Clinton



Mentoring is a wonderful way for caring adults to share their wisdom with future generations and to strengthen their community.

