

Mentoring

PARTNERSHIP OF CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA

Becoming a Mentor

Adults, who have experience-based wisdom, are good listeners, and can play a helping role in the life of a local area youth are great candidates for becoming mentors.

The Mentoring Partnership of Central Pennsylvania (MPCP) works like a hub, connecting potential mentors with mentoring organizations. They work with mentors to find a youth that has a background similar to the mentor's interests or technical skills. In addition, MPCP provides orientation and support sessions for mentors to help them cultivate their natural abilities as mentors. Sometimes, getting matched with a compatible young person takes time. This happens in order to appropriately match the interests of the adult with the interests of the young person. New mentors are always encouraged to be patient with the process as organizations work to forge bonds as quickly and as appropriately as possible.

The time commitment

Depending on upon the need of the child and the nature of the program, the time commitment needed from the mentor varies. For instance, homework helpers may need to give an hour of their time each day, three days each week. Conversely, interest based mentors (such as sports, music, art, etc.) may spend an hour or two each week with children participating in the program. In any case, consistent levels of contact are critical to the success of the relationship.

Some mentoring relationships last for many years; most do not. Some programs may support a child through to high school graduation, while others are needed for a single semester. In a formal mentoring relationship, it is always best to follow the guidelines of the mentoring program, promising only to mentor a young person for the time period determined by the program.

On occasion, mentors like to continue the mentoring relationship after the program has officially ended. In those cases, the transition from a formal to informal relationship is discussed with the mentoring program operator, the mentee and the mentee's parent or guardian.

Monetary Cost

Most, if not all, mentoring programs require no monetary commitment from a mentor. In fact, mentors are discouraged from buying gifts for mentees or taking mentees to concerts, movies, plays, sporting events, or other outings not formally sponsored by the organization.

Criminal background check

For the safety of the children participating in our programs, all mentors are required to obtain a Pennsylvania Criminal History check. This is obtained electronically through a system that reports activity recorded in Pennsylvania courts. A Child Abuse Clearance is also required. This is also obtained electronically through a system that reports any findings of child abuse or neglect in county social service departments. In most cases, a Federal Criminal History check is the final requirement. This information is also obtained electronically through a system that reports activity recorded in any National or International court.

For more information about becoming a mentor, go to www.mentoringcentralpa.com.

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