



Welcome to the Stepping Stones Mentoring Program

**“Stepping Stones Mentoring Program
— Where just being you makes all the
difference”**

My mentoring story

My mentor provided me with:

- Support
- Compassion
- Values
- Time

Who was *your* mentor?

Definition:

A mentor is a wise and trusted guide and advisor

A mentor is:

- A friend
- A coach
- An advocate
- A role model
- A resource
- A supporter

A mentor is not:

- A substitute parent
- A childcare provider
- A social worker
- An ATM
- A miracle worker

Who needs mentors? *All* children.

Among the 40 Developmental Assets:

- Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults.
- Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
- Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
- Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.

Source: Search Institute, *40 Developmental Assets*, 2006. <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/forty.html>

Who does Stepping Stones serve?

- Middle school youth at Jefferson and Russell middle schools
- Youth are referred for many reasons by parents, teachers, and counselors
- 45% of our youth come from single parent homes
- 68% are on free and reduced lunch status

What happens when mentoring is absent?

- One in 15 youth in Cook County Schools drops out
- 52% of CCS students don't go on to college (national average is 63%)
- 2005: 356 citations for underage drinking, 120 juvenile arrests (36 for violent crimes)
- 25% increase in local gang activity
- Unemployment rate for 18–24 year olds in the state is 19%

Stepping Stones Mentoring is meeting these challenges:

- We work with youth before they become those statistics
- Our mentors develop the whole child, not just one area
- Our mentors bring fun, opportunity, and caring

So, how are we doing so far?

Stepping Stones Mentoring is meeting these challenges!

- In the classroom...
 - 75% of our mentees improved their grades in key subjects
 - Unexcused absences from school declined by 40% for mentored youth
 - 85% of mentees reported feeling more confident about school
 - 88 of 145 former Stepping Stones mentees have gone on to pursue higher education (52 of those were the first in their family to do so).

Stepping Stones Mentoring is meeting these challenges!

- In the community...
 - 65% of mentees reported improved relations with their family, 55% said they had improved peer relationships
 - 83% of the parents of participating youth felt that the program had improved their child's self-esteem, attitudes, and relationships
 - Alcohol and substance use decreased by 30% in mentored youth

In spite of this success, we can do more:

- We are currently serving only 130 youth in the entire county
- We have 66 youth on a waiting list
- Our program could handle over 100 new matches
- We believe that every child in Cook County deserves access to a mentor

Mentoring benefits *everyone* involved!

- For mentors...
 - An opportunity to share knowledge, experiences, and values
 - Giving back to the community
 - A better understanding of today's youth (including their own children)
 - Explore different cultures and engage in new activities
 - FUN!!!

- For employers...
 - One survey of a prominent national insurance company in which employees served as mentors found that 75% of the employees reported that the activity improved their attitude at work*
 - Increased productivity, improved community relations and public image, and recruitment and retention of employees**
 - Improved employee teamwork and enhanced skills in coaching, communication, and teamwork***

* S. Weinberger, *The Allstate work-based mentoring project*. Norwalk, CT: Mentor Consulting Group.

** The Conference Board, "Corporate Volunteer Programs: Benefits to Business." Report 1029 (The Points of Light Foundation, 1993).

*** K. E. Kram, *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life*. Lanham, MD: University Press, 1988.

So what's it like to be a Stepping Stones mentor?

- Meet weekly for one hour
- Alternate between school and community
- Activities are up to you and your youth
- Friendship, not “fixing”
- Full training and support from program staff
- Fun group outings and community projects

Who can serve as mentors?

- Adults 21 and over
- One year commitment
- Pass screening and interview process
- Access to transportation
- Anyone with an open heart and mind (no special skills required)

Other ways you can help:

- Donate goods and services (we need help with our website!)
- Become an advocate for the program
- Recruit others
- Sponsor group outings and activities
- Help with office tasks

WE NEED YOU!

You don't have to be special, perfect, or a know-it-all. You just need to be there. We'll make it easy; the kids will make it fun. Please volunteer with Stepping Stones and help us make a difference for Cook County.

For more information:

- Your Name – (123) 456–7890,
presenter@steppingstone.com
- Website: www.steppingstonementors.org