



## Welcome to the Stepping Stones Mentoring Program

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

<http://www.steppingstones.org>

This introductory slide should be up as people come into the presentation room. People can jot down the Web address of your program to look at later. Including some fun pictures of youth in your program is a good idea for this slide as well.

The tag line here is a combination of two you may recognize from the program background sheet. Since the purpose of this presentation is recruitment, Stepping Stones decided to appeal to volunteer motivations. For a fundraising version of this presentation, they could use other taglines, such as “Improving learning and lives in our community.”

## My mentoring story

My mentor provided me with:

- Support
- Compassion
- Values
- Time

Who was *your* mentor?

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One way of opening a recruitment session is with a story about how mentoring has impacted you, the presenter. We have all had mentors, either formally or informally, and this gives the you a chance to personalize the experience for the audience while also giving examples of how a mentor can work in subtle ways. The story should only take a minute or so to tell, yet should reflect the passion you have for mentoring. Once you are done, you can solicit other stories from the audience if time allows.

## *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

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This slide clarifies the role of a mentor and builds upon the stories of mentoring just shared. Be sure to note the difference between informal mentors (which may have been featured heavily in the stories of mentoring you opened with) and the formal mentors that your program creates. Mentoring programs step in and provide mentors to youth who may not be able to find the benefits of a natural mentor. Obviously, you may wish to modify this slide based on the various roles mentors play in your program.

## 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>

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Once you get people in the room thinking about that special mentor they had in their lives, let them know that there are many youth in the community still looking for that person. Let the audience know that all youth need mentors, not just the ones facing some tough times. Review the bulleted excerpts from the 40 Developmental Assets: mentors provide all of these things. There are many other assets that a mentor may be able to provide depending on the structure of your program, such as spirituality, connectedness to school, and recreational activities. You can tailor the assets you mention to the audience you are presenting to (for example, a group of retired teachers may be very interested in improving school connectedness), but the four listed on the slide are most typical of what mentors provide.

## 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

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This slide further clarifies who you are serving. You may wish to provide other demographic data you have about the youth in your program, but be careful of the picture you paint. Too dire, and the audience may feel overwhelmed at the prospect of working with them.

## 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%

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As you can see, Stepping Stones has decided to go with some local statistics to show the need for mentoring. Your program may decide to choose different statistics from different sources, but they should all have relevance to the goals and objectives of the program and speak to the potential motivations of your target audience. Be sure to partner, even if it's informally, with schools, law enforcement, social services, and health agencies to get data about your community and youth population.

## 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?

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This slide transitions from the need for mentoring in your community to the solutions Stepping Stones is providing. Elaborate on how the mentoring program's services impact youth. You don't need to explain every detail about how mentoring in your program works, but draw connections between the statistics you just mentioned and the qualities of the mentoring relationships in your program.

## 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).

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This slide begins to tout the success of the program. Notice that this doesn't use the familiar statistics from the Big Brothers Big Sisters Impact Study (1995, Public/Private Ventures). Use your own! (This is easier to do if your program is doing a good evaluation.) Also notice how Stepping Stones has made the effort to track youth after they leave the program and continue on to high school and college.

## 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

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Obviously the statistics you present can be tweaked to match the motivations of your audience.

## 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

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A slide like this can add an additional “need” to your recruitment pitch. You’ve already illustrated that the youth in the community need mentors, but this language also shows that your program itself has needs. You’ve proven that your services work, you just need their help to expand the outreach. This type of appeal is also quite useful during fundraising presentations (“we know this works, help us do more of it”).

## 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!!!

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This slide provides additional motivations to the audience. They know that this will help the youth, but what's in it for them? Explain the many benefits that come from serving as a mentor. This is one area where surveying your current volunteers could provide insight into the things to highlight. You may wish to supplement this slide with an additional one (or two) featuring quotes from current and former mentors.

- 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.

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This slide is optional, but very necessary when presenting to a business or group, especially if you are requesting a formal partnership or promise of large numbers of mentors. The people in charge of making that decision may need to know how it will benefit the organization itself, not just the youth and community. Another angle to take on this is to highlight how your program's goals align with any state philanthropic or community involvement goals the business or organization may have.

## 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

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At this point, many in the room may be thinking about taking the plunge, or at least looking into it more. Take time to explain what the “role of a mentor” looks like in your program. (The next slides deals more directly with eligibility criteria and applying.) Your goal with this slide is to get them to see themselves in the role and to clarify what mentors in your program do. Note how many of these points are designed to alleviate fears potential mentors may have (such as the level of support the program provides). This is another area where surveying your current mentors may provide insight into what they were initially worried about. If you have many items you would like to address at this point, break this information out over several slides and include many pictures of your matches in action.

## 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)

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This slide starts to spell out some of your eligibility criteria. Don't go overboard here; you don't want to create reasons for people to start opting out. Just cover some of the basics of who is eligible for your program. Interested parties can always learn about the details of your eligibility and screening during post-presentation follow-up.

## 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

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This optional slide may be useful when presenting to a business that could help you either by providing mentors or by providing in-kind donations of goods and services. Your program likely has a long list of things it could use, so don't be afraid to list what you need.

## 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.

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Every recruitment pitch needs to have a firm “ask.” People will not step up if you do not directly ask them. Notice how this ask ties together many of the major themes of the presentation and makes one last attempt at allaying fears. It also presents one last motivation: helping the community itself.

You may wish to end this ask with a quote from a mentee talking about the difference a mentor made in their lives (all the more powerful if the youth is there to say it in person!).

## For more information:

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

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Make sure participants know how to take the next steps. Have application forms, FAQ sheets, and other program materials to distribute. Offer to stay and answer questions (if appropriate for where you are presenting) and give your card to those who wish to contact you later. Have a sign-up sheet for those who would like more information. However you do it, provide multiple avenues for folks to learn more and get their questions answered. And be sure to thank them for the opportunity to tell them about the good work your program is doing!