



Potential Influential Mentor,

**Fun fact:** The roots of a 300 foot redwood tree are actually quite shallow reaching only about 5 feet deep. In order to grow so tall, these trees intertwine roots to support each other.

**Our Mission Statement:** *Intentional Mentoring coaches youth in a positive direction for their mind, body and soul by connecting the gaps between school, home, community, and other activities.*

Today, many middle school students are involved in numerous part-time or seasonal activities. Usually, these activities are disconnected, and often adults working with these students have a hard time overlapping teachable moments and learning experiences from one thing to the next. Often students go home to families that are busy, or overwhelmed.

You may have heard of our growing achievement gap within our school systems. This achievement gap is both academic and social. Some students have a support network, and their roots are intertwined; others are less connected and may have a more difficult time standing tall in the face of storms. We hope to provide coaching support for students' roots to grab onto so they can continue to grow upward.

We are looking for adults who are passionate about our next generation and have previous experience working with youth, currently work with youth, or are seeking a way to have an impact. This program will bridge the gap between the other programs in which students are involved.

Our goal is to provide you with the resources needed so this commitment can be paired alongside your normal schedule. We will work with you to make this work, so that it can work for the student.

If you volunteer for this program you will be:

- intentionally connected with a middle school student
- provided resources and training to reach this student in these gaps and make a difference

Your training role will be:

- 1 hour meeting once a month with the site coach and coaching group

Your mentoring role will be:

- 3 check-ins per week with your student
- Attend a school/community event each month for/with your mentee
- Communication to school and family

Please contact **Katie Imhoff-Smith** with any questions.

262-366-0030

[katie@intentionalmentoringmadison.org](mailto:katie@intentionalmentoringmadison.org)

# Intentional Mentoring FAQs

## 1. The Youth

How are they selected for participation in the program?

We will be working with students in the MMSD. Students are recommended by teachers and support staff within the school. Parents and families may also recommend students for this program. Following recommendation, students need to fill out an application to participate. Once selected, they are put into our system until we have a mentor match.

How old are they?

Most children participating in the program are in 6th through 8th grade. Students start no earlier than 4th grade, and our program's involvement with the mentor and mentee discontinues once the mentee is finished with high school.

What is their living situation like?

Youth in the MMSD range from having homeless living situations to living in purchased homes. Each child's situation is different, making it important to recognize the variety of factors a child may be experiencing at home..

## 2. The Roles of Mentors

Who is a mentor?

A mentor is an adult who provides young people with support, counsel, friendship, reinforcement and a constructive example. Mentors are good listeners, people who care, people who want to help young people bring out strengths that are already there. As a mentor, you can help connect youth with four resources: safe places and structured activities during non-school hours, a healthy start, a marketable skill through effective education and an opportunity to give back through community service.

What do mentors do?

Mentors influence young people 1) by enhancing social skills and emotional well-being; 2) by improving cognitive skills through dialogue and listening; and 3) by serving as a role model and advocate.

Your primary role as a mentor is to help a youth understand their worth and value and navigate the challenges they are facing. You want to help them develop a growth mindset; knowing that working to grow in any situation is possible. You can help them identify positive supports (you, school, work, community referrals, etc.) to sustain their well-being, keep them away from delinquency and harm, and help them continue to make positive changes and life choices.

What are the general do's and don'ts?

Do develop a mentoring relationship built on trust and respect. Do know the importance of developing the relationship above all other goals. Do assume the role of the adult, including the responsibility for keeping the match going. Do not try to "fix" the mentee. Do not attempt to change or reform the youth from the onset of the relationship.

What is and isn't a mentor?

A mentor is a guide, a friend, a listener, a coach, a responsive adult. A mentor is not a savior, a foster parent, a therapist, a parole officer, or a cool peer.

What is expected of me as a mentor?

We ask that you meet with your mentee once per week for at least 12 months, and communicate with your mentee 3 times per week. We also ask that you carve out time for our quarterly mentor trainings and monthly coaching meetings. Our hope is that these will not be a burden, and will build your confidence and comfort in the relationship. As we invite you to fun mentor (or mentor & mentee) gatherings, we hope you will try to attend! Some mentoring relationships will stretch for a year or more, and this is a wonderful thing; some will also be shorter. It can be difficult to predict the length of mentoring but we ask that you do your part to help support youth in their changing interests as they grow up. You are also expected to communicate your feedback, challenges, successes, questions, absences, and any redflag issues regularly to your mentor coach.

### **3. The Basics of the Program**

When and where is mentoring scheduled?

You can meet with your mentee at any time and at any public location that is convenient, as long as you can coordinate that time with your mentee and his/her family. Suggestions for locations include restaurants, libraries, and community centers near where the youth lives or goes to school. Suggested times include right after school, during or after dinner, or on weekends.

Why do I have to coordinate with the family?

As you will be meeting with these students, it is important to recognize your piece in their school, community and home supports. As youth, they are learning how to plan and coordinate. As you work with the family, you will help the student learn this process and you will get to know more of their world. While this can sometimes be difficult, think of this as learning about their life and the potential struggles the family deals with as well.

Should I allow the student to bring friends with us?

Your mentoring time is meant to be a chance for your youth to express him or herself without fear of judgment. If they are constantly with their friends, you may not get to know them. Teens and Pre-Teens are often struggling to fit in, and while it will be important to know their friends, it is also important to build your relationship as a mentor and mentee.

What happens if one of us needs to cancel or reschedule?

You should reschedule any meeting at least 2 days in advance, when possible. Try to avoid any cancellation. In general, you should always leave one meeting with an agreement about the next time you will meet and a plan to communicate any last minute cancellations. In no circumstance should you cancel a meeting without informing the youth and their care provider. Offer a phone number or another way to be contacted in case either of you has to reach the other.

How do I plan for mentoring?

The first time you meet your mentee, take the time to get to know him or her. Offer a little bit about yourself, but don't make the meeting about you. Explain what the mentoring program is about and ask if they are already familiar with Intentional Mentoring. Start with a casual conversation and don't ask very

personal questions unless those questions are helpful to your work together and the youth has indicated that he or she is comfortable disclosing at this point in time. Some possible questions to ask in the beginning: What do you like to do in your free time? What movies or books or sports teams or TV shows do you enjoy? Have you ever had a mentor before? What would you like to know about me? You may also need to be realistic with them about what you can and cannot do for them. Your mentor coach will go over these things. You should not promise anything you cannot deliver on! **(This includes promising to keep self-harm, suicidal ideation or abuse a secret.)**

What kinds of activities can I do with my mentee?

You are not expected to be an entertainer, Santa Claus, favorite uncle, or chauffeur. Bonding is often facilitated through shared, enjoyable activities, so you may want to poll the youth about things they would enjoy doing while working together on their goals, and also keep an eye on what's happening in their community that will enrich them, connect them, and inspire them. From time to time, mentors and mentees will be invited to participate in activities with others in Intentional Mentoring.

What requirements or training do I need before I get started?

Follow the steps listed on the checklist in this packet. Read through the documents and ask your mentor coach any questions that will help you decide whether you want to participate.

What can I expect from mentoring?

You can expect to connect with a wonderful student and develop a helping relationship out of shared interests, respect for differences, and a growing trust and appreciation for each other's value and strengths. You can expect regular coaching and development. You will also get to collaborate with a team of committed volunteers and exercise your ability to relate with a child or teenager.

What challenges can I expect?

Younger children cannot be expected to remember dates and times of scheduled meetings. You may run into resistance or apathy from the parent or guardian who will be your contact for visits. It may take a long while for a child to trust you enough to share his or her true feelings. Not all goals you set one day will seem that appealing the next. You may not get a call back for a few days. You may feel that you're doing all the work at times. You may feel that the youth is not 'changing' or 'learning' fast enough. You may feel that all the cards are stacked against him or her. **This list goes on...**

Most mentors acknowledge these aspects as an everyday part of working with children and youth and are actually excited by them and steadfast in their desire to see the youth grow, unconditionally and separate from their own expectations for that youth.

### **Transportation of youth**

The children in this program may live anywhere in Madison area, in a family shelter or may move from place to place depending on family circumstances. We encourage mentors to get the children outside and exploring their community with you. When available, we will provide mentors with Metro cards to use in transporting children. Never transport a child in a private vehicle without first providing Intentional Mentoring with the required documentation (copy of driver's license, DMV record, and proof of insurance) and receiving prior permission from Intentional Mentoring, as well as the parent or guardian.

### **Siblings**

When you have a fun activity planned, you may likely be asked if your mentee's siblings (or even parents) can come along. The policy is that if siblings are going to be involved, it must be ok with the

mentor and the mentee's family. We also request that you share this information with your mentor coach. We will schedule fun and appropriate family-wide events from time to time.

## **4. Intentional Mentoring**

What is the purpose of our mentoring program?

*Intentional Mentoring coaches youth in a positive direction for their mind, body and soul by connecting the gaps between school, home, community, and other activities. With these connected supports, students will be able to stand stronger through struggles, growing both academically and physically.*

What is my role as an Intentional Mentoring volunteer?

Remember that there are several other parts to Intentional Mentoring, community outreach, advocacy, and development. Your presence at occasional events and activities, supporting ideas or projects, and participating in all-volunteer discussions (over email and in person) is important and expected. Please remember to read all program emails and complete your mentoring reports. Your background check, additional paperwork and references must be completed prior to the start of mentoring.

What room is there for me to grow or affect bigger change in this program?

All volunteers are encouraged to identify and use their strengths to enrich the mentoring program. We support all ideas and visions you might have, so make sure to share them with your mentor coach, or to contact Katie Mae directly ([katie@intentionalmentoringmadison.org](mailto:katie@intentionalmentoringmadison.org)). In fact, this program will not grow without people like you doing just that!

What should I try to avoid doing?

Be aware of flirtation in either direction; sometimes your behavior or innocuous interactions with other facilitators or youth may be misperceived, and sometimes youth may knowingly try to flirt with you. Remember to maintain appropriate adult/youth boundaries. Also, try to avoid responding in a negative tone or message. Youth may very well challenge you or even disrespect you or your beliefs in some way, however it is important to take a deep breath, step back, and remember your role is not to scold, but to teach. To keep dialogue open, instead of closing it down.

What if a youth asks me a personal question I do not want to answer?

You may develop a close connection with some of the youth, which may lead to them asking you personal questions. Before responding to a personal question, first consider the implications (the costs and benefits) for the youth. When in doubt, let him/her know that you are not comfortable answering their question. Some questions you may anticipate include: What is your income? Have you ever done drugs? Can I go to your house? Will you drive me to an appointment?

What do I do if a youth reveals something personal that makes me worry?

When in doubt about safety issues contact Katie Mae (the head director of Intentional Mentoring) directly and immediately at 262-366-0030.

***We value your participation and hope you'll see that making a difference in the lives of these youth is a great privilege. Don't hesitate to contact us with questions, concerns, or feedback.***

## Mentoring Consent to Share Information & Agreement of Confidentiality

In my choice to serve as a mentoring volunteer with students in the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD), I consent for my volunteer information to be exchanged between Intentional Mentoring and a staff at MMSD. As such, I authorize Intentional Mentoring to provide MMSD and its representatives with the results of my background investigation, written information, and verbal feedback about myself and my performance as a volunteer. I allow Intentional Mentoring to maintain a volunteer file in my name and to consult with MMSD regarding any nature of my volunteer experience. Both agencies reserve the right to make decisions about my volunteer involvement based on information sharing and review of records. My volunteer information will not be used beyond these purposes and will remain strictly confidential within these two partners.

This agreement will expire when I cease serving as a volunteer in this capacity. All materials, knowledge, data, and information generated through, originating from, or having to do with Intentional Mentoring or youth associated with our activities is to be considered privileged and confidential and is not to be disclosed to any third party. This privilege extends to all forms and formats in which the information is maintained and stored, including, but not limited to hardcopy, photocopy, microform, automated and/or electronic form – and all forms of communication, including phone, in-person communication, and electronic means. Client/ youth information, including all file information, is not to be disclosed to any third party, under any circumstances, without the consent of the Intentional Mentoring. I will further help ensure that others in the program adhere to these standards. Any disclosure of stage of this information whether intentional or unintentional, will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

### References

The following references may be contacted to support my involvement in this program working with our future generation.

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mentor Questions - Pairing Info Sheet

### Personal Information:

Today's date \_\_\_\_\_

First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_ M \_\_\_ F      Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

### Volunteer Information:

1. What do you feel are the strengths (bilingual, math skills, previous relevant volunteer experience, etc.) you can bring to this program?

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2. Why do you want to become a mentor? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Initial the two statements below:

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the mentor program involves spending a minimum of one hour every week for at least twelve months.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I will be required to complete the mentor program orientation, regular conference calls, and four additional training sessions during the year.

4. Educational Background (mark one):    \_\_\_ Some high school    \_\_\_ Graduate/professional school

\_\_\_ High school graduate    \_\_\_ Technical school    \_\_\_ Some college    \_\_\_ College graduate

\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you prefer working with a    \_\_\_ Girl    \_\_\_ Boy    \_\_\_ No Preference

6. Do you prefer working with a quiet, reserved child?    \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No    \_\_\_ No Preference

7. Do you prefer working with an outgoing child? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ No Preference

8. Do you prefer working with someone from a specific ethnic group? \_\_\_ Yes (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_ No

9. Do you speak a foreign language? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Please list any hobbies or interests you may have: \_\_\_\_\_

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11. What would you like to do with a mentee?

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12. What clubs or groups, if any, do you belong to? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. My favorite subject in school was

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14. My least favorite subject in school was

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15. Please put an X by the activities you enjoy the most:

- Playing sports such as \_\_\_\_\_
- Watching sports such as \_\_\_\_\_
- Writing
- Reading
- Listening to music such as \_\_\_\_\_
- Photography
- Going to the movies
- Arts and crafts
- Visiting zoos and parks
- Visiting museums, seeing plays
- Using computers
- Playing games
- Cooking
- Exploring possible careers
- Hiking and seeing nature
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

16. What qualities would you like in a mentee?

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17. What individual has served as a role model for you? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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18. If you could recommend one book for your mentee to read, what would it be? \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the Mentor Guidelines and Codes of Conduct Document and agree to follow the standards as established by Intentional Mentoring.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Mentor Schedule

**Let's make this mentorship work for you!**

Typical Weekly Availability (write schedule in, add notes):

| Monday   | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|----------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
|          |         |           |          |        |
| Saturday | Sunday  | Notes:    |          |        |
|          |         |           |          |        |

Preference for Site Coach Meetings- about 30 minutes (please check below):

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
|        |         |           |          |        |          |        |
| Notes: |         |           |          |        |          |        |
|        |         |           |          |        |          |        |

Please check the options below that spark the most interest for connecting with the student:

- Text messages (reminders about homework, questions about the week, etc.)
- Emails (if the student checks email)
- Phone calls (to touch base and let them know you are available)
- Weekly Meet-ups (could be to help with homework, go get ice cream, or just to touch base)
- Going to student events or after school programming
- Helping out in the classroom (tutoring)

## Mentor Checklist

The following checklist should be completed before the mentor is an official participant in the program:

- Reading Program Details (Letter and FAQs)
- Signing of Consent and Confidentiality Form
- Filling out references
- Finishing the Mentoring Questions and Pairing Sheet
- Finish the Schedule Page
- Ask any questions
- Copy of Driver's License and Insurance Cards
- Volunteer background check completed
- Mandatory Reporting Video Watched:
  - Go to DPI's Child Abuse and Neglect webcast at:  
<https://media.dpi.wi.gov/sspw/av/child-maltreatment-part-1/story.html>
  - After completing the training, you will be taken to the Documentation of Completed Training screen. Press the "Email Your Supervisor" button. Enter [katiemae@intentionalmentoringmadison.org](mailto:katiemae@intentionalmentoringmadison.org)
- Turning in all paperwork above (through email or hardcopy)