

St. Albert Youth Community Centre

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Mentoring Program

1. St. Albert In-School Mentoring Program

i. Program Purpose and Outcomes:

Purpose: The purpose of this program is to match supportive volunteers with students in kindergarten to nine who need help with homework, reading, writing, spelling math, study skills and organization skills.

Mentor Role: Mentors commit to meeting with their match for one hour each week for a minimum of four months. Hours are flexible and reflect the needs of both the Mentor and student. Mentors work with students on identified areas of need such as reading, math and organization skills. Mentors will establish working relationships with students, parents, teachers and the Program Coordinator.

Outcomes for Children and Families: Children, families, and teachers will report an increase in self esteem, higher marks, better organizational skills, and a better attitude towards school.

Mentor Outcomes: Mentors gain experience working with students, and have the opportunity to acquire information on topics such as portfolio making, teaching study skills, school board interviews, and how to make learning fun.

ii. Relevant Recruitment/Promotional Messages:

Youth Best-Suited to this Program: Children best suited to this program are students in kindergarten to Grade 9 who are struggling with their school work. They are identified by parents, teachers and/or counselors as students who would benefit from individual help from a volunteer for one hour once a week.

Mentors Best Suited to the Program: Mentors have a genuine interest in working with children and a desire to make a difference. Mentors have good communication skills, organization skills, creativity and patience.

Motivations and Fears of Potential Mentors: Potential mentors are often post-secondary students or members of the business community, who experience many demands on their time. For this reason they may struggle with the decision to volunteer. However, volunteers often find that the benefits of volunteering, along with the relatively small time commitment far outweigh any time scheduling conflicts. Some volunteers also may feel under qualified to offer assistance with academics. In response to this, an effort is made to utilize each volunteer's strengths by matching them with a student of an appropriate age who needs assistance with subjects that the volunteers are comfortable with.

iii. Projected Volunteer Demand for the Program

2000-2001 Match Statistics

Current Matches	121
Current Mentors	60
Current Mentees	121 (including homework club matches, excludes numbers from 8 classrooms that had volunteers)

Target number of planned matches by September 2003

Total number of matches	150
Number of mentors (new)	60
Number of mentees (new)	100
Number of rematched mentors	20
Number of rematched mentees	50

2. Recruitment/Screening:

Interviews and Reference Checks: Volunteers are recruited through presentations and displays at post-secondary institutions, promotional packages, media, and word of mouth. Applicants are given a brochure which explains the program and are asked to fill out an application form. Interviews are then scheduled with each potential volunteer. Applicants are asked to provide 3 references, a criminal record check and a Child Welfare check.

Orientation and Training: Volunteers attend an orientation session outlining techniques to make the match successful, procedures for handling disclosures, and answers to any of their questions. Each volunteer will also receive a handbook which includes ideas for working with your student, a brief description of the curriculum for each grade, helpful websites, and instructions on what to do in case of a disclosure. Ongoing training opportunities, support from the Program Coordinator and newsletters can also be accessed throughout the year. Educational resources including games, activity books, and flash cards are also available for each Mentor to use with their student.

Matching: Appropriate matches are made through consultation with the teacher and/or counselor, the Program Coordinator, the Mentor and the parent. Matches are available at all of the elementary and junior high schools in St. Albert and will reflect the interests, strengths, needs and time constraints of both the Mentors and the students.

Follow-up/Evaluation: The Program Coordinator will maintain contact with each match through site visits, check-in meetings, and ongoing support. At the end of each year, an evaluation form is filled out by each teacher, parent, student and mentor who is involved in the program.