



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT™  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Reach & Rise® Mentoring Program

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### WHY WAS THE MENTORING PROGRAM CREATED?

- **Reach & Rise** mentoring program was established to serve the needs of young people not being met by existing mental health services.
- To offer over-stressed families a resource to help meet their children's needs.
- To provide youth with positive, growth-inducing relationships with adults through mentoring.
- To make a difference in a child's life.

#### WHAT TYPE OF YOUTH DOES THE PROGRAM SERVE?

- Youth ages 6-17.
- Young people experiencing challenges with low self-esteem, poor academic progress, peer difficulties, family conflict and/or poor decision making, for example.
- Youth from a wide range of ethnic diversity and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Youth encompassing a variety of family backgrounds: intact families, single-parent families, blended families, foster homes, and/or grandparent or other relative-headed families.

#### HOW ARE YOUNG PEOPLE REFERRED TO THE PROGRAM?

- From school counselors, teachers and principals.
- All referrals to **Reach & Rise** go through an application process and an initial telephone and/or face-to-face screening with the Program Director. This process helps determine whether or not each child is appropriate for the program. Those children assessed to have mental health problems not appropriate for our program will be referred elsewhere. The types of issues not likely to be handled by our mentors include: acute depression, homicidal or suicidal behavior, drug/alcohol dependence, and violent behavior.



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### **WHO ARE THE MENTORS?**

- Volunteers from the local community who wish to make a positive impact on young people.
- Adults ages 23+
- Adults from varied cultural, educational and professional backgrounds.
- Mentors are often recruited within the YMCA membership, community agencies, local corporations and universities.

### **WHAT IS EXPECTED OF MENTORS?**

- Mentors fill out a volunteer application and speak with Susan Baston, **Reach & Rise** Director, for an initial screening.
- Mentors commit to spending 1-3 hours once a week with a youth for one year.
- Mentors will complete 15+ hours of paraprofessional counseling training before being assigned to a young person (usually over the course of 4-5 weeks).
- Mentors will need to complete a criminal background check and have references checked before being matched.
- Mentors must have a clean driving record if they plan to drive their mentee.
- Mentors must have valid auto liability insurance and driver's license.

### **HOW ARE MENTORS SUPPORTED ONCE THEY'VE COMPLETED THE TRAINING AND HAVE BEEN "MATCHED" WITH A YOUTH?**

- **Reach & Rise** is committed to on-going training and support for all volunteer mentors, and the Program Director is actively involved in goal-setting and on-going planning with all mentors for their mentees.
- Mentors are invited and encouraged to attend ongoing mentor support group meetings, which are led by the Program Director. This continuing support is considered vital because it provides structure for the mentors as well as on-going training and development of mentoring skills. Individual telephone support is provided on a monthly or as needed basis. The Program Director can serve as a liaison between the mentor and the mentee's family to work through any issues that may arise in the mentoring relationship.

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## Reach & Rise Mentoring Program

### Should I Become a Mentor?

These questions are things to consider and help you decide if being a mentor is right for you.

- Do you genuinely like children?
- Do you like child-centered or adolescent-type activities?
- Are you flexible? Can you tolerate disappointments?
- Do you get frustrated easily? Can you be patient when things are unpredictable?
- Can you be non-judgmental? Do you believe there is a right or wrong way to do most things?
- Can you be friends with a child and his/her family who are different from you socially?
- Are you dependable? Can you be counted on to do what you've said you will do?
- Do you have friends who meet your own adult social needs? Or are you hoping a child will be a companion for you?
- Do you have a sense of humor?
- Is becoming a Mentor something you've given some thought to about how it will impact your life over the next year & discussed it with others?