Norwalk Mentor Program

Our Mission is to encourage the social, academic and mental growth of Norwalk’s youth through a one-on-one mentoring relationship where a caring adult serves as a role model to a student who is going through a difficult period or faces new challenges.

Overview

- Established in 1986 as the first school-based mentoring program in the country
- A program of the Norwalk Public School system from 1986-2008
- Became a program of the Human Services Council in 2009
- Matches volunteers with elementary, middle and high school students in Norwalk’s 19 public schools

Programs of the Human Services Council include:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dr. Robert E. Appleby School Based Health Centers</th>
<th>Norwalk Mentor Program</th>
<th>Middletown Substance Abuse Coalition</th>
<th>Supportive Housing</th>
<th>Children’s Connection</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WE KNOW HEALTHY KIDS MAKE BETTER LEARNERS</td>
<td>ONE HOUR A WEEK CAN CHANGE LIVES FOREVER</td>
<td>PREVENTION IS THE PATH TO A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE</td>
<td>QUALITY INDEPENDENT HOUSING RESOURCES</td>
<td>ENSURING THE SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN EVERY DAY</td>
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2016-2017 School Year

87% Of mentors retained from previous year

264 Mentor/mentee matches as of June 2017

57 New mentors were trained this year

66 New students were matched this year

14 Welcome Back Breakfasts were held

225 Attendees at our January Event

350 Attendees at our End-of-Year Outing

10,600 Hours of mentoring

$256,000+ Collective value of our mentors’ time according to Independent Sector
Annual Events

Welcome Back Breakfats & other mentor gatherings at individual schools

“The out of school events such as bowling and the museum visit are great and provide me with a chance to meet the parents or guardians and see my mentee in a non school environment.”

Mentor to 7th grader

Evening at Stepping Stones Museum for mentors, mentees, family members

“My mentee and I loved the Stepping Stones event. He liked introducing me to his parents.”

Mentor to 2nd grader

“The magician and hypnotist were very cool! I had fun!”

8th grade mentee

End of year outing at Bowlmor for mentors and mentees

“My mentee is so excited about the upcoming bowling trip. Funny thing: She didn’t know what ‘bowling’ meant.”

Mentor to Kindergarten student
How Mentees Feel

Comments

“My mentor tells me to never give up.”
2nd grade mentee

“My mentor is a really good friend and she tells me good things about me.”
4th grade mentee

“My mentor helped me develop into a different person. I’m much nicer and smarter about things.”
7th grade mentee

“My mentor helped me learn that education is the key to success.”
8th grade mentee

“My mentor always encourages me and motivates me to do my best. He is always on my side and helps me with everything.”
10th grade mentee

Report having a mentor helps them feel good about themselves

Report they can discuss problems with their mentor

Report their mentor helps them try harder in school

Report that having a mentor helps them make better decisions

Mentee Demographics

Gender

- 123 boys
- 141 girls

Grade Level

- 26% Middle
- 31% High School
- 43% Elementary

Norwalk Mentor Program: 2017 End-of-Year Report
School staff reported significant improvements due to their students being matched with a mentor:

82% Have improved self confidence

84% Are able to express feelings better

74% Can make better decisions (thinks before acting and is aware of consequences of behavior)

63% Have better class participation

Comments from School Staff

“Mentors make our children feel cared for, supported, and safe. Their gift of time makes all the difference in the world to them.”

Elementary school social worker

“Through a mentor’s love, support, encouragement, and the valuable time spent together, children are learning to believe in themselves and believe in others.”

Elementary school social worker

“My mentee has really begun to think about his future since having a mentor. He is constantly thinking about what he wants to do and how he’s going to get there.”

11th grade school social worker

“He is more confident and in control of his emotions.”

9th grade teacher

“He is more focused, knows he has someone on his side. He truly trusts her—mentions her often.”

12th grade teacher

Norwalk Mentor Program: 2017 End-of-Year Report
## What Mentors Think

“My mentee is consumed with his family dynamics. The best thing for me to do is to be a good listener and let him vent. I try to be a ‘constant’ in his life by making sure I meet with him on a regular basis.”

Mentor to 8th grader

“It’s easy to squeeze an hour a week into my schedule to enrich a child’s life and try to make it better. It’s incredibly rewarding for me!”

Mentor to 4th grader

“My mentee gets so excited when she sees me. Her whole face lights up which warms my heart!”

Mentor to 2nd grader

<table>
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<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Statement</th>
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<tr>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Think their mentee feels like there are more adults who care about and are willing to help him/her</td>
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<tr>
<td>83%</td>
<td>Think their mentee is able to express his/her feelings better</td>
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<tr>
<td>87%</td>
<td>Think their mentee has higher expectations of himself / herself</td>
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<tr>
<td>98%</td>
<td>Feel that being a mentor has enriched their life</td>
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“Becoming a mentor was one of the best things I ever did. It made me grow. It made me a better parent to my own children. I’m very grateful the program exists.”

- Mentor to 12th grader
What Parents are Saying

“My daughter has fun with her mentor and feels confident with her. She talks to her mentor about friend problems and says she would like to be a professional like her.”

7th grade parent

“They’ve been together since third grade! The greatest benefit of having a mentor is that my child is becoming more involved in the community.”

9th grade parent

“My son loves talking and hanging with his mentor. He’s learning to self-advocate more and opens up more.”

10th grade parent

Since being matched with a mentor:

77% of parents report their child completes their homework
74% of parents report their child is getting better grades
93% say their child is happier
91% say their child is more responsible
93% say their child feels better about himself / herself
93% say their child is more self-confident
Norwalk Mentor Program: 2017 End-Of-Year Report

This year 13 high school seniors were paired with mentors in the Norwalk Mentor Program. Some of these young people had been with the same mentor for 11 years!

Many years ago, the Norwalk Mentor Scholarship was set up to reward high school seniors who stayed with their mentor until graduation and encourage them to pursue higher education. The scholarship is given to students who graduate from one of the Norwalk Public high schools and successfully complete the application process.

Each of our 13 seniors applied for and received a $2,000 Norwalk Mentor Scholarship Dollars for Scholars award. They plan to attend:

- Central Connecticut State University
- Johnson & Wales University
- Norwalk Community College
- Shaw University
- University of New Haven
- Shaw University
- University of New Haven

“At the Brien McMahon Scholarship ceremony, Marvin received his Mentee scholarship. I am so proud of him and grateful to have him in my life. Marvin has been my mentee since first grade, six years old. He’s now 18 and graduating from high school and off to University of New Haven this fall. Over all these years, we’ve spent time together each week, playing games when he was little, working on school projects and talking about life. I’ll always remember the very first day I met him, and now that cute little kid has grown up into a fine young man. I’ll always be there for him, he knows that, and I look forward to watching him continue to learn and grow and make his way in the world.”

Mentor to a 12th grader

“My mentor has helped with everything I have a problem with. I honestly think that if it wasn’t for my mentor I would not be where I am both in life and school. It’s just comforting to know that there is someone out there who cares about you and only wishes for your success.”

- High School Senior

“I appreciate everything you’ve done for me for the past years & even this year. You truly were a huge help to me & that’s what I needed all along. Thank you for also staying on top of me for my attendance & grades. It made me a lot more motivated to stay in class, focus & work a lot harder… you’re the best & a true role model. Thank you.”

- High School Senior

(in a letter to her mentor)
Our Challenge

We currently have 264 students in the Norwalk Mentor Program and there are over 11,000 students in the Norwalk Public Schools. How do we reach more students in need?

You Can Help

Become a HEROES Sponsor — Sponsor a mentor/mentee match by donating $750 per year to the Norwalk Mentor Program

What You Receive

• The reward of being part of a young person’s support system
• Regular correspondence on the progress of the relationship
• Invitations to events to meet your sponsored match
• The priceless gift of making a difference in the life of a child
Thank You!

For Supporting the Norwalk Mentor Program
During the 2016-2017 School Year!

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United Bank Foundation
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Numerous Individual Donors

For More Information Contact:

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Norwalk Mentor Program: 2017 End-of-Year Report