



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## **Reach & Rise™** **A Mentoring Program of the YMCA**

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### **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

#### **WHAT IS REACH & RISE? WHY WAS THIS PROGRAM CREATED?**

- Reach & Rise is a free, one-to-one youth mentoring program that was established to provide young people in our community with positive adult relationships.
- Each adult is matched with a young person who they meet with once a week, for 1-3 hours. Each match lasts at least one year.
- Mentors are meant to serve as role models, friends, and confidants. They're another source of support for your child. They are not meant to take the role of a parent, babysitter, or financier.

#### **HOW ARE MENTORS SCREENED BEFORE BEING MATCHED WITH MY CHILD?**

- Mentors fill out a volunteer application and are screened by the Program Director.
- Mentors complete 15 + hours of training before being matched with your child.
- Before being matched with your child, mentors have passed a fingerprint security screening and thorough reference check.
- Mentors must have valid auto liability insurance. Program will obtain a copy of their driving record from the DMV.

#### **ONCE MY CHILD IS MATCHED WITH A MENTOR, WHAT CAN I EXPECT?**

- The mentor should meet with your child every week, for 1-3 hours.
- Mentors usually pick "mentees" up at home, but can also arrange with you to pick them up at their school, day care, a relative's house, or the YMCA.
- Some typical times to meet might be weekdays after school (e.g. 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.) or during a weekend day. Regular patterns of all day outings are not appropriate.
- Your child should meet with her mentor one-to-one; this means siblings and/or friends should not come along on the outings.
- You should expect consistency from the mentor (e.g. he/she should be on time and showing up for meetings as planned). If for some reason they are unable to make a meeting, the mentor should call in advance and let you and your child know, and set up a new time to meet.

### **WHAT ARE SOME ACTIVITIES THAT MENTORS DO WITH THEIR MENTEES?**

- Your child and her mentor should decide together what activity they will do each week. They might find something they both enjoy, and do that activity several times throughout the course of the year. Or, they might try something new each time they meet.
- Here are some sample activities that your child do with his or her mentor:
  - Go to the park, the library, a museum, etc.
  - Go to the YMCA to play sports or swim
  - Take a walk and talking
  - Do art projects together
- Many mentors try to introduce their mentees to new activities to help them grow and learn about themselves and their community.

### **SHOULD MY CHILD SPEND TIME AT A MENTOR'S HOUSE?**

- Your child should not go to his/her mentor's house.
- The mentor should not bring his/her family members and/or significant others along on outings with your child.
- Your child should never spend the night at his/her mentor's house, or go away with his/her mentor for an overnight or the weekend.
- If at any time throughout the relationship you are uncomfortable with the type of activities your child is doing with her mentor, you should call the Program Director right away to discuss it.

### **HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY CHILD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS/HER MENTOR?**

It is very important to choose a regular meeting day and time with your child's mentor as soon as possible. This will help establish the consistency and structure that children need. It will also ease any scheduling difficulties that could prevent the mentor from meeting with your child weekly. Please remember that the relationship between the mentor and your child will be most effective if they are allowed confidentiality. Mentors are trained to discuss situations with you in which the safety and well-being of your child may be jeopardized. Aside from this, your child should be allowed the privacy within her relationship to talk about whatever is on her mind. However, we value your reactions to the mentor. After the first meeting, please call the Program Director to talk about your feelings. If you have any questions, concerns, or are feeling uncomfortable for any reason, it is important to call and discuss it immediately. Children will be more willing to participate fully in the new relationship if they know their parents are comfortable with it.