



A Friend in Fostering

MENTORING PROGRAM

“A MENTOR CAN SAY THE RIGHT WORDS
TO SOMEONE AT EXACTLY THE RIGHT
MOMENT THEY NEED TO HEAR IT. AND IT
CAN BE LIFE-CHANGING.”

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Our Mission

The mission of our mentor program, "A Friend in Fostering," is to unite enthusiastic, dedicated, caring adult members of our community with youth in foster care who need encouragement and support through the various transitions in their lives. By building strong and lasting relationships, mentors will instill confidence and cultivate independence in these youth while helping them develop the everyday life skills they will need.

Our Objective

For the mentees: To unite foster children with a mentor that will give them encouragement, a sense of relationship and guidance by offering love, support and meaningful connection.

For the mentors: To provide the youth with a sense of meaning, direction, connection and self-worth while also connecting mentors with Encourage by giving them the opportunity to care for youth in need.

- To connect youth with positive members of their community to build friendships and have role models.
- To provide youth with someone who offers support and guidance.
- To provide support and connection for youth as they experience various transitions in life (transition back home, transition to adulthood, etc.).
- To help the youth and the mentor form a strong bond; to provide the youth with someone to call "just because"; to provide a potentially permanent and edifying relationship for the youth.
- To teach independent living/life skills, instill creativity, and promote the youth's self-esteem.

Next Steps

Congratulations! You have decided to become a friend in fostering with Encourage Foster Care and Adoption. Here's what's next

- Inquire
- Complete an assessment
- Complete orientation/application
- BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY



Mentorship Policy and Procedures

1. The process begins at the time the individual inquires to become a mentor with Encourage. This process may occur via phone, email, website or through a card provided at one of our speaking events.
2. The Recruitment and Engagement Specialist will interview the individual, in person or over the phone, and provide an assessment to determine whether the mentor will be a good fit for our program.
3. The Recruitment and Engagement Specialist will provide an orientation for the individual. This orientation will include the Substitute Caregiver packet. The Substitute Caregiver ("Approved Babysitter") packet includes:
 - a. Form and instructions for the individual completing the FBI and BCII background check. **(The fee for FBI and BCII check will be reimbursed to the mentor once they have mentored at least on one occasion/outing. Original receipt is required for reimbursement.)**
* If this cost will be a financial hardship, please speak to the recruiter for information on a scholarship to help provide financial assistance.
 - b. An Alleged Perpetrator Search (return clearing letter from ODJFS).
 - c. The agency's Care & Discipline policy to read and review.

In addition, the Recruitment and Engagement Specialist will secure:

- a. A signed Privacy Practices form from the mentor.
 - b. Copy of valid driver's license if the mentor will be driving the youth.
4. The Recruitment and Engagement Specialist shall secure all the above documents in a binder.

5. The Recruitment and Engagement Specialist will discuss with the Foster Care Coordinators new mentors and possible matches. Following that time, the Coordinator will talk with the foster parent and identified youth about the possibility to match and plan for an introduction meeting.

6. Matches will be based upon age (8-12 years old and 13-18 years old) and geographical location. We do not expect our mentors to travel any longer than 30 minutes to provide mentorship with their assigned youth.

7. After 30 days, and then again at the six-month mark, the Recruitment and Engagement Specialist will follow up with the mentor to discuss any needs. The Recruiter and Coordinator will maintain ongoing connection to address any needs or concerns.

To inquire or ask questions in regard to mentoring through our Friends in Fostering program, please contact Heather Huebner at huebnerh@ccho.org or 330.462.1118.