

# **MENTOR TRAINING**

Utah Youth Mentor Project

# Welcome & Introductions



I want to be  
a mentor  
because...

# Mentor Project Structure

See Handout, page 1

## Utah Youth Mentor Project

If youth transitioning from foster care to independent living build healthy relationships with caring mentors who create a community of support by offering advice, stability during crisis, and referrals to community resources, then youth will develop assets and life skills, exhibit less antisocial behavior, and have greater opportunities for becoming responsible citizens.

Utah Youth Mentor Project's unique model focuses on three sources of strength:

### YOUTH

- Volunteer participation—not compelled or court ordered
- One-to-one matching
- Meet with mentor twice monthly for two years
- TAL support
- No “programs” - youth centered leadership and life skills opportunities
- Participate in orientation and events

### MENTORS

- Volunteer as groups: 5-8 mentors
- Meet with youth twice monthly for two years
- Group Coordinator serves as a leader and helps organize trainings and events
- Participate in orientation, trainings, and events
- Complete monthly contact surveys

### PROJECT

- Administrative staff and volunteer advocates
- Assist youth to overcome barriers to success: pro-bono legal representation, housing advocate, etc
- Facilitate trainings, leadership, and life skills opportunities
- Build community partnerships
- Report on measurable outcomes

# YOUTH

Making It On Their Own

# “Aging-Out” of Foster Care



# Facing Barriers to Success

Youth leaving foster care are likely to face homelessness, incarceration, and poverty.

Youth often lack resources, such as:

- Safe & affordable housing
- Legal representation
- Life skills: managing money, time, stress, etc
- Employment & education assistance

Mentors can help youth accomplish goals, establish healthy relationships, and connect to resources to overcome barriers to success.

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# In Their Words

"It sounded neat to have someone be my friend who has so much wisdom, who genuinely cares, and who is making a commitment to be a consistent person in my life."

- Ashley Wagstaff

"A mentor is having someone to be there after you leave court. It's like having a big brother to talk to when you're having a hard time, someone to get information and ideas from. So it's better than feeling alone - I have someone I can go to."

- Jordan Christiansen

"I wanted a mentor for support and friendship."

- Adam Tran

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# Community of Support



# Basic Needs

- Safety & Structure
  - Belonging
  - Self Esteem
  - Ability to Contribute
  - Independence & Control Their Own Life
  - Support from Caring Adults
  - Competence & Mastery
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# Culture Shock

- Expect diversity: youth culture, class, race, religion, background, values, etc
  - Respect differences: have an open mind
  - Practice suspending judgment: abandon “ought” & “should”
  - Remember: it’s not about you
  - Beware of: “If it were me...” or “my kids would never...”
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# Consistency is Key

- The longer the relationship the greater the impact
  - Staying in contact may be challenging
  - Take responsibility for the relationship
  - Model healthy conflict resolution
  - Expect boundary testing
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# Healthy Expectations



# MENTORS

Building Friendship & Community

# Define “Mentor”

## **Mentors are not:**

- parents
- ATMs
- dictators
- fairy-god mothers

## **Mentors are:**

- friends
  - advisors
  - helpers
  - self-esteem builders
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# Friendship First



# “Job Description”

See Handouts, 2 -4

## What are mentors expected to do?

- Build a friendship: meet twice a month for two years
  - Attend two mentor trainings per year
  - Participate in mentor group activities
  - Complete a short monthly survey
  - Follow the “Mentor Guidelines and Code of Conduct”
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# Effective Mentors

See Handout, page 5

- Are friends through good times and bad
  - Show respect for different viewpoint and values
  - Have fun, laugh, and play
  - Help youth make their own decisions
  - Get help when they need it
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## Less Effective Mentors

See Handout, page 5

- Do not meet regularly
  - Try to “fix” everything
  - Are easily offended
  - Have unrealistic expectations
  - Think they are the boss/parent
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# ESSENTIAL SKILLS

Having What it Takes

# Mentor Skills Checklist:

- Self-awareness: understand your “triggers”
  - Authenticity - “get real”
  - Practice suspending judgment
  - Focus on feelings – don’t jump to problem solving
  - Unpack “loaded” words & expectations
  - Model positive behavior
  - Don’t take it personally
  - Persistence - stay in touch
  - Ask for help – support, resources, & info
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# Support, Resources, & Info

- Mentor Group & Group Coordinator
- Mentor Project staff
- TAL Coordinator
- Advocates (professional services)

Resource Lists: [www.justforyouth.utah.gov](http://www.justforyouth.utah.gov)

Job Training & Education: [www.yes.slco.org](http://www.yes.slco.org)

On-line Job Database: [www.jobs.utah.gov](http://www.jobs.utah.gov)

Utah Cares, Assistance Hotline: dial 2-1-1

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# Communication

See Handout, page 6



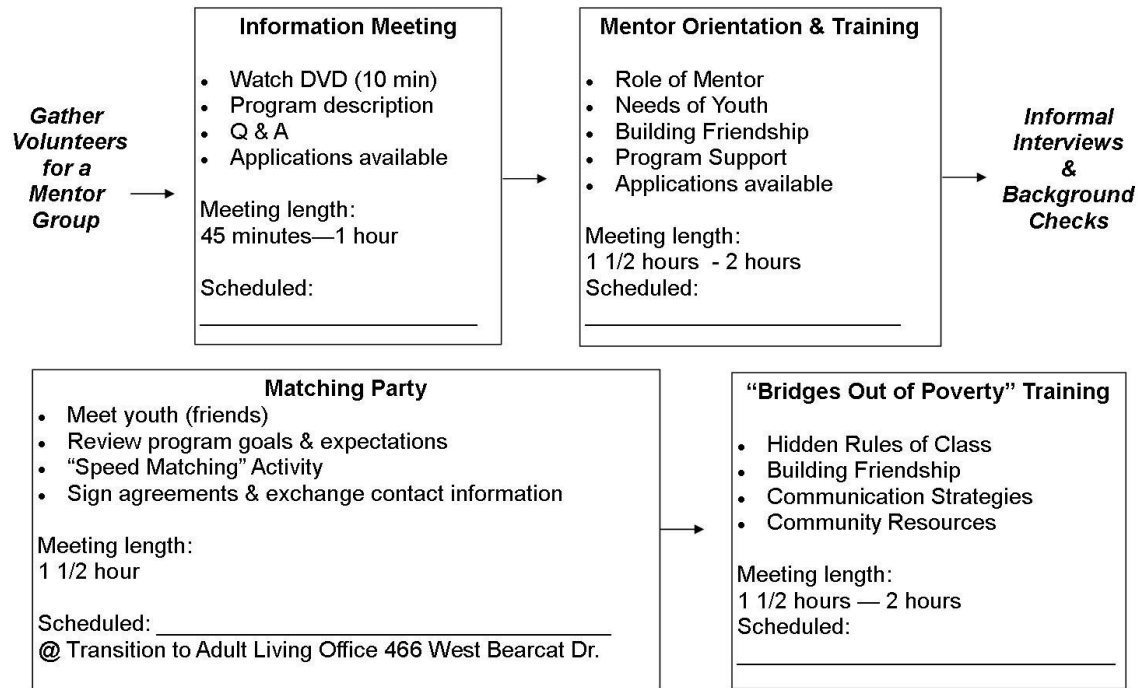
# Next Meeting

See Handout, page 7

Utah Youth Mentor Project

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Mentor Training & Matching Process



*On-going trainings and activities throughout the year  
& monthly e-mail contact surveys*

Questions?  
Contact Marianne (801) 755-3735  
marianne@youthmentorproject.org

# Questions?

Applications & Background Checks

**Marianne Brough**

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