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Benefits for Young People

Mentoring is often one component of a program that involves other elements, such as tutoring or life skills training and coaching. The supportive, healthy relationships formed between mentors and mentees are both immediate and long-term and contribute to a host of benefits for mentors and mentees.

Benefits for youth:

- Increased high school graduation rates
- Lower high school dropout rates
- Healthier relationships and lifestyle choices
- Better attitude about school
- Higher college enrollment rates and higher educational aspirations
- Enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improved behavior, both at home and at school
- Stronger relationships with parents, teachers, and peers
- Improved interpersonal skills

- Decreased likelihood of initiating drug and alcohol use (MENTOR, 2009; Cavell, DuBois, Karcher, Keller, & Rhodes, 2009)

Potential Educational Benefits



Potential Behavioral Benefits



Other Potential Benefits



Benefits for mentors:

- Increased self-esteem
- A sense of accomplishment
- Creation of networks of volunteers
- Insight into childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood
- Increased patience and improved supervisory skills (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.)

Mentoring can help youth as they go through challenging life transitions, including dealing with stressful changes at home or transitioning to adulthood. Close, healthy, supportive relationships between mentors and mentees that last for a significant portion of time (i.e., more than one year) are central to success. Without this, mentoring programs run the risk of harming young people who are paired with mentors ill-equipped to meet the mentees' needs. Specifically, relationships with mentors that last less than three months; where there is irregular and inconsistent contact; where there is a disconnect between the personalities, interests, and expectations of the mentors and mentees; where mentors are unprepared and lack skills to relate to youth; and where there is no emotional bond between the mentor and mentee have been found to be harmful to youth (Jekielek et al., 2002; Rhodes & DuBois, 2006).

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