

## IN-SCHOOL MENTOR PROGRAM REGULATION

Each school will designate a staff member that will work cooperatively with Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) and The Job Foundation to implement the program. The school staff member will:

- 1) Identify eligible students.
- 2) Secure parent permission.
- 3) Provide student orientation on what it means to have a mentor.
- 4) Assist with the supervision and support of mentor/mentee (adult/student) matches.

The BBBS and The Job Foundation staff member will:

- 1) Recruit community members, including Partners in Education, as mentors.
- 2) Screen mentors in accordance with district policy.
- 3) Train and support mentors.
- 4) Conduct annual program evaluation.
- 5) Help in providing mentor recognition and on-going education/training.

### INTAKE, APPLICATION, AND SCREENING PROCESS

**Mentor Eligibility:** A mentor (defined as an adult who assists a student, known as a “mentee”) must meet eligibility criteria as follows:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Be willing to adhere to all program policies and procedures.
- Agree to a commitment to the program for at least one year.
- Commit to spending a minimum of approximately 45 minutes per week with the mentee.
- Complete the screening procedure, background checks, and interview.
- Violent crimes against persons, sexual crimes against adults or children, or crimes resulting from negligence are clear reasons for excluding volunteer applicants.
- Not be convicted of a felony.
- Agree to attend mentor trainings.
- Not have falsified information during the course of the screening process.

**Mentee Eligibility:** A mentee must meet eligibility criteria as follows:

- Be in grades K-12 (Big Brothers Big Sisters) or grades K-5 (The Job Foundation)
- Recommended by one of the following: school personnel, a parent/guardian, outside referral or a student may also refer him or herself.
- Demonstrate a desire to participate in the program and be willing to abide by all policies and procedures.
- Obtain parental/guardian permission and ongoing support for participation in the program.
- Agree to commit to the program for a minimum of one year (The Job Foundation) or 18 months (BBBS)
- Commit to spending a minimum of approximately 45 minutes per week with the mentor.
- Be willing to communicate regularly with their respective program staff member about their match.

## **MENTOR AND MENTEE SCREENING**

Each mentor and mentee applicant shall complete a screening procedure. Each applicant shall complete these minimum screening procedures:

### **Mentor Screening Procedures**

- Complete written application.
- Submit to criminal history check including state criminal history, child abuse registry, sexual offender registry, adult abuse registry.
- Provide personal references.
- Complete personal interview.
- Attend mentor training.

### **Mentee Screening Procedures**

- Obtain parent/guardian consent.
- Complete personal (mentee) interview.
- Participate in mentee training.

The decision to accept an applicant into the program will be based upon a final assessment completed by program staff at the completion of the mentor or mentee screening procedure. BBBS and The Job Foundation have final approval for an applicant's acceptance into the program. No reason will be provided to mentor applicants rejected from participation in the program.

All mentors are expected to meet the eligibility criteria; however, extenuating circumstances may be reviewed and acceptance may be allowed when all eligibility requirements are not clearly met. These instances are expected to be rare.

Documentation of the screening process must be maintained and placed in confidential files.

## **MATCHING MENTOR AND MENTEE**

The Job Foundation and BBBS staff shall use the applicant's information to determine the suitability of a mentor/mentee match based on the following criteria:

- Preferences of the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian.
- Similar sex/ethnicity.
- Common interests.
- Similar personalities.
- Similar life experiences.

Female mentees must be matched with female mentors. Male mentees must be matched with male mentors based on the matching criteria listed above. The Job Foundation and BBBS in some situations may match a couple with a mentee, or other exceptions based on special circumstances.

## **MATCH SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION**

Program staff will regularly contact all parties involved with each match including the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian. Program staff may inquire about and/or probe issues such as whether they enjoy participating in the match, progress of match, difficulties, the status of the relationship concerns or the need for support or

intervention. If a problem exists, the coordinator will attempt to clarify the problem and work with the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian to resolve the issue early.

The general process for resolving problems will follow the IDEAL model that includes:

- Identify the problem and have a clear-shared understanding of the problem between the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian.
- Develop alternative solutions.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each solution.
- Act on the most constructive solution.
- Learn from the solution and repeat the IDEAL process, if necessary.

When the match problem involves a lack of contact on the part of the mentor or mentee, the program staff must investigate reasons for lack of contact with the offending party, and make efforts to ensure the match is meeting regularly.

If the problem continues, the staff member should consult with other agency staff members and/or community resources to define a viable approach to address the problem.

If the problem cannot be resolved, the match may be formally closed. At that time, it would be determined if either or both parties are suitable for re-matching with other partners.

### **RECORD-KEEPING POLICY**

Each year The Job Foundation and BBBS will update their mentor and mentee records and provide a report on student demographics, academic achievement and youth impact to the District

### **MANDATORY/PERMISSIVE REPORTING**

All staff, mentors, and other representatives of the program must follow their respective requirements of Mandatory/Permissive reporting of any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to agency clients or program participants immediately and all appropriate state and/or local authorities.

Any staff, volunteers, or mentors accused of child abuse or neglect will be investigated. Contact with program youth will be restricted or constrained and/or the person in question suspended from program participation until such investigation is concluded.

### **CLOSURE POLICY**

All mentors and mentees of the BBBS and The Job Foundation mentoring program must participate in closure procedures. Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship regardless of the circumstances or whether an informal contact continues.

Closure may occur for any number of reasons including the contracted match duration has ended, one or both participants do not want to continue the match, changes in life circumstances in one or both of the match partner's lives, or an individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation. Hence, the match may end at the discretion of the mentor, mentee, parent/guardian, and/or program coordinator. It is at the discretion of the program coordinator whether an individual will be reassigned to

another match in the future based upon past participation performance and current goals and needs of the program.

Future contact will be at the mutual and informal agreement of the mentor, mentee and parent/guardian. If future contact is agreed upon, the school district, BBBS, and The Job Foundation will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended. The agency staff member will verbally and in writing inform all parties—the mentor, mentee, and parent/guardian—that the formal match has ended and that the school district, BBBS and The Job Foundation will not be liable for any incidences that occur after the match has closed.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

The confidentiality of program participants and their families will be protected. With the exception of the limitations listed below, program staff may only share information about mentors, mentees, and their families with other program staff. Further, all prospective mentors, mentees, and parents/guardians will be informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality by program staff. Additionally, mentors are required to keep information about their mentee and his/her family confidential including:

- Information gained from mentors and mentees, written or otherwise and/or their families, in application to or during program participation.
- Participants' names and images gained from participants, program meetings, training sessions, and other events.
- Information gained about participants from outside sources including confidential references, school staff, and employers.

Records are considered the property of Big Brothers Big Sisters, The Job Foundation and the school district, and are not available for review by mentors, mentees, or parents/guardians.

Information from mentor and mentee records may be shared with individuals or organizations as specified below under the following conditions:

- Directory information, as identified in Policy 506.4-R2 (including names, photographs, videos, etc.) may be used in agency publication or promotional materials unless the parent/guardian provides a written refusal on the parent permission form.
- Information may only be provided to law enforcement officials or the courts pursuant to a valid and enforceable subpoena.
- Information may be provided to legal counsel in the event of litigation or potential litigation involving the agency. Such information is considered privileged information, and law protects its confidentiality.
- Program staff and volunteers are Mandatory/Permissive reporters and as such may disclose information indicating that a mentor or mentee may be dangerous to or intend to harm him/herself or others.
- If program staff receive information at any point in the match process that a volunteer is using illegal substances, there is criminal history of any kind, or is inappropriately using alcohol or other controlled substances, the information will be shared with the parent and they will have the option to reject the prospective mentor or close the existing match.

- At the time a mentor or mentee is considered as a match candidate, information may be shared with the prospective match parties. Each party shall have the right to refuse the proposed match based on anonymous information provided to them.

The mentor agencies are considered the custodian of confidential records. It is their responsibility to supervise the management of confidential information in order to ensure safekeeping, accuracy, accountability, and compliance with agency policies.

BBBS, The Job Foundation, and the school district shall respect a mentee's or volunteer's right to privacy. Requests for confidential information from other organizations or persons shall be accompanied by a signed release from the mentor, mentee, and/or parent/guardian.

A known violation of the agency policy on confidentiality by a program participant may result in a written warning or disciplinary action such as suspension or termination from the program.

### **EVALUATION POLICY**

Evaluation will be a key component in measuring the success of the program and for making continuous improvements in the effectiveness and delivery of mentoring services.

Evaluation data will be collected yearly for mentees in the program, including the following general measures: attendance, office discipline referrals and academic performance.

Program staff will be responsible for evaluation efforts and share program results with school and District staff.

### **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

BBBS and The Job Foundation do allow their mentors to transport mentees with parent permission and meeting all program requirements in their School-Based Plus and Community-Based Mentoring models. School-Based only mentors are not permitted to transport their mentees.

### **OFF CAMPUS CONTACT POLICY**

Off campus contact is only allowed with parent permission. An integral component of The Job Foundation program is its afterschool activities.

### **USE OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS, TOBACCO, AND FIREARMS POLICY**

Mentors and mentees are prohibited from using drugs or alcohol or possessing firearms while engaged in the mentoring relationship. Any suspected violations should be reported to the program coordinator.

No participant will possess or consume beer, wine, or other alcoholic beverages while actively engaged or prior to actively engaging in mentoring, nor shall any participant endorse the use of alcohol.

No participant will manufacture, possess, distribute, or use any illegal substance while engaged in mentoring or otherwise.

Smoking and the use of all tobacco products, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or other matters or substances that contains tobacco, is prohibited.

The possession or use of firearms, firecrackers, explosives, toxic or dangerous chemicals, or other lethal weapons, equipment, or material while participating in mentoring activities is strictly prohibited.

Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate suspension and/or termination of the mentoring relationship. In addition, violations of this policy may result in notification to legal authorities and appropriate action taken.

Mentors and mentees are expected to adhere to Waterloo Community School District policies while participating in the program. Behaviors such as those listed below are regarded as incompatible with district goals, values, and program standards and are unacceptable and prohibited while participants are engaged in mentoring activities:

- Unwelcome physical contact, such as inappropriate touching, patting, pinching, punching, and physical assault
- Unwelcome physical, verbal, visual, or behavioral mannerisms or conduct that denigrates, shows hostility, or aversion toward any individual
- Demeaning or exploitive behavior of either a sexual or nonsexual nature, including threats of such behavior
- Display of demeaning, suggestive, or pornographic material
- Known sexual abuse or neglect of a child
- Denigration, public or private, of any mentee parent/guardian or family member
- Denigration, public or private, of political or religious institutions or their leaders
- Intentional violation of any local, state, or federal law
- Possession of illegal substances

Any unacceptable behavior, as specified but not limited to the above, will result in a warning and/or disciplinary action including suspension or termination from participation in the program.

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