

Need for Mentoring

Right now, one in six young people ages 16-24 are disconnected from work and school. The 2014 National Gallup Student Survey shows that 47% of youth in the US say they lack hope, and 36% say they are not thriving.

MENTOR released a report that includes the first-ever nationally representative survey of young people on the topic of mentoring. Titled *The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring*, the report found that there is a powerful mentoring effect demonstrated by the experiences of young people in this nationally representative survey. It is linked to improved academic, social and economic prospects, and strengthens our communities and our nation. This same report found that one in three young people across the country will grow up without a mentor.

You very well may be in training today thanks to hearing about the program from a current mentor. Our mentors are our best advocates and we hope each mentor is so compelled by their experience that they find at least one additional person to recruit to the cause. Each year there are over 300 mentors who retire from the program that we need to replace. On top of that, there are 500 additional volunteers needed to clear the waiting list of students who need or want a mentor.

Mentoring Outcomes

In the *Mentoring Effect* report, it was found that young people who were at-risk for not completing high school but who had a mentor reported higher educational aspirations and matriculation into post-secondary education, as well as greater engagement in positive activities. They were:

- 55% more likely to be enrolled in college than those who did not have a mentor.
- 81% more likely to report participating regularly in sports or extracurricular activities.
- More than twice as likely to say they held a leadership position in a club or sports team.
- 78% more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities.
- Nearly nine in ten respondents who had a mentor said they are now interested in becoming mentors.

Youth with mentors are less likely to begin using illegal drugs, drink alcohol, skip school, hit someone or lie to a parent.

LSS mentors report that the student they work with has shown improved academic performance, better school attendance and most importantly, a higher self-esteem. Mentors also overwhelmingly report that they have learned something new by being a mentor and their lives have been changed by this experience.

Keep in mind that it takes time for these outcomes to develop and surface. As one mentor often says, this is a marathon, not a sprint. If you commit to being a quality mentor and commit to the long haul, you will gradually see changes in the student that you work with.

