



Buddies and Friends Information Sheet

Mentoring—What is it?

Mentoring is a mutually beneficial relationship which is based on the simplicity and power of friendship. A mentor is someone who listens to, cares for, gives advice to, and shares information and life/career experiences with a young person.

What do young people get from mentoring?

Research continually points towards the many rewards of mentoring for young people. Some of these rewards may be:

- A sense of belonging,
- Life experience,
- Someone to believe in them,
- Someone impartial to talk to, and
- Having a positive adult role model and friend.

What do the mentors get from mentoring?

- Gaining experience working with young people,
- Actively contribute to the young community,
- Personal development,
- Sense of achievement, and
- Awareness of youth issues.

What does it take to be a mentor?

Mentoring is a very rewarding experience, but not everybody has the opportunity to make the commitment. Some of the characteristics important in a mentor are:

- Ability to listen,
- Non-judgmental,
- Flexible, consistent and reliable,
- Willing to commit for at least 12 months,
- Between the ages of 20-35 (as a guideline only), and
- Have the capacity to develop a meaningful relationship with a young person.



What are the young people in the program like?

The young people that participate in this program are all students at the Berne Education Centre – which is a special school owned and operated by the Marist Brothers in Lewisham. The school is for young people who do not fit into mainstream school for behavioural and emotional reasons. They all have different likes and dislikes, have many different talents and skills, and are great fun to be around.

How much time do I need to be able to give?

Generally, a mentor has contact with the young person once a week, for about 1-2 hours. Meaningful relationships are formed during this time, and contact needs to be maintained regularly over at least a 12 month period.

What do we do when we are together?

Activities are chosen by both mentor and young person, and will be different all the time (based on time and resources). Meeting times and activities are arranged by both mentor and young person through the week. Some activities that may enhance the relationship could be a walk along the beach, watching a sporting event or visiting tourist/city sites. Covering the cost of the activities for the young person may be taken care of by the parents or the school.

What training do I have to do? Is there ongoing support?

Training and orientation are very important. All mentors will be required to attend training prior to being “matched”. Each match is individually supervised and supported by one of the counsellors at Berne on a regular basis.

What are the outcomes Berne is looking for?

We are aiming to foster strong, meaningful and positive relationships for our students through the mentoring program. Through this relationship, we aim to foster the development of social skills and reduce anti social behaviour. Most importantly, we are aiming to strengthen our students’ self-identity and self-esteem.

What is involved in applying?

The application process is structured and developed so as to help match you with a student who shares similar qualities and interests. The school carries out an interview, and also conducts criminal record and working with children checks – these are required by law. You will also be asked to provide the names of 4 people who can act as referees.

What could I expect to gain from mentoring?

There are a lot of things that you may take away from mentoring. First of all you will have gained a great friend. You will also have an increased understanding of youth issues, and the community. You will gain experience working with young people, and also develop an awareness of your personal views and values.



How can you get involved?

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, print out the form below and send it to us, along with a photo of yourself.

If you have any questions or queries, or if you are not sure about mentoring, give us a call and talk with someone who may be able to answer your questions.

Further information

For further information, please contact Sue Draysey.

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**People convicted of any
child related offenses are not
permitted—by legislation—to
apply.**

**All preferred applicants will be
screened.**