

GUIDE TO MENTORING

For mentors, buddy parents,
mentor parents
and guardians





Congratulations!

Welcome to Athletes for Kids. We are excited to work with your children and provide a supporting and meaningful relationship.

This Guide will help you learn about the world of mentoring, how our program works, and the important role that you play in making the experience a successful mentorship.

Remember, our staff is just a phone call away. We're happy to answer questions or address concerns whenever you need help or seek guidance.

What's in this guide?

What Is Mentoring All About?

About AFK Youth Mentoring

Mentor FAQ'S

Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

Staff Directory

What is mentoring all about?

What Is a Mentor??

A mentor is a caring and responsible community member who takes time to be a friend to a young person. A mentor listens, supports, and guides a young person on a consistent basis over a specified period of time, usually at least one year. Our mentor program is unique because every one of our mentors is a high school athlete. They volunteer time to our program while maintaining rigorous scholastic and sports schedules.

A mentor develops a trusting relationship with a young person—whom we call a “buddy”—in order to help him or her be successful at home, at school, and in the community. By developing this positive relationship, a mentor can:

- Help a young person develop a sense of competence
- Help a young person with social skills
- Nurture a young person’s self-confidence and positive self-esteem
- Introduce the young person to new ideas, activities, and opportunities within the parameters set by you, the parent/guardian

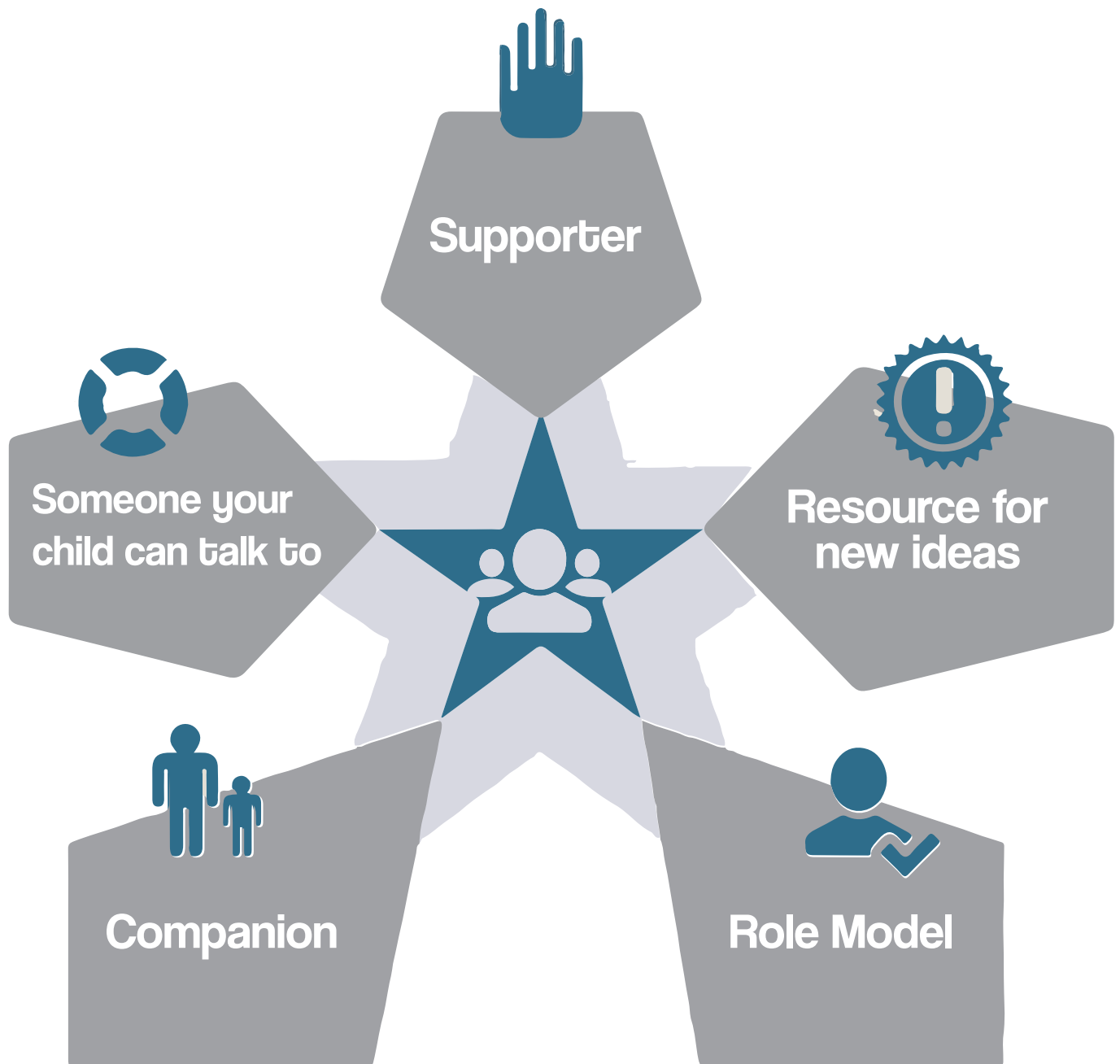
The particular ways that a buddy may benefit from the mentoring relationship will depend on his or her needs, strengths, and many other factors. Sometimes the benefits of mentoring aren’t visible right away, but over time this relationship can help a buddy gain new skills and experiences that will last a lifetime.

Mentors are not meant to take the role of parent/guardian, teacher, or coach. A mentor is not a disciplinarian or decision-maker for a child. A mentor’s main role is to spend time doing positive and fun activities that will help buddy become more self-confident. By doing this, the mentor becomes part of a caring team who supports the healthy development of the buddy.



“My buddy has taught me a lot: how to be kinder, more patient, and open to new ideas. I’ve also gotten to see, first hand the impact of our friendship in our lives” -Mentor

A mentor is a...



A mentor is not a...

Babysitter, Tutor, Social worker, Parent, Nag, Source of Money, Disciplinarian.

Why Does A Buddy Need A Mentor?

All children need the support of caring community members in order to be successful, not only within their family but at school and in their communities. Growing up isn't easy, and for those with special needs it can be especially difficult. Sometimes parents don't have all the answers, and sometimes children need someone outside the family with whom to share their thoughts. Having a variety of people positively involved in a child's life provides a child with new opportunities and experiences that will help him/her grow and gain self confidence.

You may be able to think of adults — a teacher, a coach, a youth leader — who helped you out when you were a child, encouraging you through rough spots along your road to adulthood, or just showing you a new way to look at your world. Although this may not have been a formal mentoring relationship, this person was a mentor for you.

A mentor can give your child someone else to talk to — a safe, concerned, and responsible confidant who can help sort out a problem or just listen and be supportive. A mentor can be someone just to have a little fun with, when the world feels overwhelming.

The children we serve



Athletes For Kids Youth Mentoring Program serves children in the 1st-12th grades, who have special needs. To be considered for the program the child must be referred by a school professional, a health care or psychiatric specialist, and/or have a recognized disability or IEP. The child's family must live within our chapter high school boundaries or within a reasonable driving distance of an available mentor. Our current chapter schools are listed on our website at: www.athletesforkids.org.

Many of our children have been diagnosed on the autism spectrum, some have physical or developmental disabilities, and others have had an adverse childhood experience. We have children in the program with Down syndrome, Tourette's, ADHD, and more. All of them want to be kids, to play and laugh, and just hang out with a friend.

About AFK Youth Mentoring

Who we are

Athletes for Kids began in 2001 when a young boy in Sammamish, WA with a difficult medical condition was being teased, bullied, and ostracized by his peers because of it. The boy's mother and father believed that if their son could have one supportive relationship, outside of family, it could turn the boy's life around.

The parents were introduced to a star local athlete, Simi Reynolds, from nearby Skyline High School in Sammamish, who agreed to spend time with their son each week as a mentor. That relationship became so life-changing for their son that Simi agreed to recruit a group of fellow athletes at Skyline, to mentor other children with medical conditions, disabilities, and special needs of all kinds. In 2002, Athletes for Kids was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) and established the first mentor chapter made up of 6 athletes from Skyline High School.

Since that time the AFK Youth Mentoring Program has expanded and currently has 12 active chapter high schools made up of athletes from Eastside high schools. We currently serve children and families in the cities of Bellevue, Fall City, Issaquah, Kirkland, Mercer Island, Newcastle, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, Snoqualmie, and Woodinville.

To our knowledge, we are still the only Mentorship program in the country that matches high school athletes with younger children who have disabilities in such a close, supportive relationship.



MENTOR



"Being an AFK mentor gave me a new perspective on serving others and how you can much such an impact on someone's life."
-Mentor



BUDDY



"Before I started Athletes for Kids, I was not very good at being social with other kids. But, with you, I am getting much better at socializing with people" -Buddy



PARENT



"Athletes for kids was the light of hope that brought my son out of the isolation that resulted from his disability"
-Buddy Parent

Our Staff

AFK is staffed by an Executive Director, a Development Director, a Mentorship Coordinator, a Data and Development Coordinator, an IT Specialist and a Controller.

These professionals are available to support Mentors and Buddies, to answer your questions, to offer advice, and to make sure the program runs safely, smoothly, and effectively



About the Mentoring Process

How are matches made?

We spend a lot of time getting to know your children (the buddy and the mentors) before we begin the matching process. From the application through orientation and training we study their personalities, interests and values so that we can find the best match.

After mentor training, we begin the quest to find a match for every athlete we accept into the program. Male mentors are always matched with males, but female mentors may be matched with males. After that we consider many different criteria, such as: personalities, geographic proximity, common interests and common values are always weighed. Sometimes our families will have specific criteria or other special needs we'll take into account.

The next steps of the process can take a few days to a few months and are designed to offer the buddy family and the mentor time to make sure we have the right match. (See our Steps to Matching document at the end of this guide.) Some of our athletes are matched sooner than others. Some may have to wait so that we can find the right match. It has been rare but there have been a few years when a few athletes were never matched, but served in the program in other ways.

Where and when does mentoring take place?

Once matched, mentors strive to spend four to eight hours a month with their buddy, usually at the buddy's home. We encourage families to set up a regular meeting time with the mentor. One-and-a-half hours per week usually works well. We encourage mentors to clearly communicate any scheduling changes. If the mentor or the buddy family does not contact you for more than two weeks (without prior notice), please contact our Mentorship Coordinator immediately.

During the mentors sports season as well as their final exams we ask for patience. Remember, mentors are volunteers, juggling academics, sports, families, friends and their commitment to their buddy.

All matches are set up to last until the mentor graduates from high school. Matches are expected to meet during the summer months as often as possible.

What do matches do when they meet?

Mentors and their buddies begin by just getting to know one another, learning about each other's interests, likes, and dislikes, and talking about when they will meet and what they want to do when they get together. We encourage these first few meetings to take place at the buddy's home, where the buddy feels comfortable. Later they may plan special activities outside of the buddy's home, with the buddy's parents permission. The focus of their time together is fun. Just having someone to talk can help the buddy gain confidence and develop new interests.

Since our focus is not sports related but on one-to-one relationships, your child's attitude toward sports or athletic abilities will not be a factor in his/her mentorship.





We encourage mentors to find low-cost or free activities, such as hiking or cycling, going to a park, or visiting the public library. Occasionally the buddy family may pay for a special outing such as a trip to the zoo or appropriate movie etc. Our website also offers a mentor resource area, where mentors can find weekly fun activities to do with their buddies. After the two have developed a bond, the mentor may suggest activities to expose the buddy to new experiences. Community Volunteer groups as well as AFK strive to provide monthly events where Mentors can bring their buddies to. You might invite the mentor to the buddy's activities or take the buddy to watch the mentor's activities.

Regardless of the specific activities, Athletes For Kids mentors are encouraged to take a relationship-centered approach to working with the buddy. Research indicates that the magic of mentoring comes from the closeness of this bond, not simply from doing certain activities. Accordingly, Athletes For Kids mentors are trained to put their emphasis on being an encouraging and reliable support for their buddy.

Some buddy parents worry that a mentor might subvert the parents' role and have concerns about their child saying things to the mentor that are not expressed at home. Our mentors are trained to work closely with the buddy parents so that everyone is comfortable with the mentoring activities. While they may keep some aspects of their relationship with the child in confidence, they are required to report any conversations about dangerous or illegal activity to both parents and the program staff. They are also required to report any concerns about abuse or neglect to the program staff.

So while the buddy may be receiving a supportive confident in his or her mentor, as the buddy parent you are also getting another caring team member who will work with the buddy to help the buddy thrive.

What kind of support is available to me?

It takes some time for a mentor and buddy to bond and it's not unusual if the relationship struggles at times. AFK offers ongoing support during the life of the mentorship. We are delighted to report that our match failure rate is low.



"My experience as a mentor changed me, it gave me a new perspective on serving others"

Much of that can be attributed to the dedication of our mentors and the program's dedication to ongoing training and support for every mentor. Research shows that monitored matches are more successful and meet for more hours than those that are unsupervised. Each month the mentors attend a meeting at or near their high school with our staff and other mentors from their high school. At the meeting the mentors receive support and training and have an opportunity to discuss their challenges and successes in a nurturing atmosphere. The mentors also report the hours they spend with their buddy each month.

Our Mentorship Coordinator will be monitoring hours and meeting attendance and will contact the mentor to discuss any irregularities. He will also be in contact with the buddy's family regularly to get their perspective on the match's progress. We know that when small problems are addressed early on, the matches can be stronger. Our Mentorship Coordinator is happy to act as an intermediary any time you have a question or concern or you can't or don't want to address with the mentorparent/guardian.

What are the mentor's responsibilities?

Our children are some of the most vulnerable in the community and mentors have an adult-sized responsibility. You'll need consistency, enthusiasm and persistence to be successful.

While you may keep many aspects of your relationship with your buddy in confidence, we want you to report any conversations about dangerous or illegal activity to both parents and the program staff. We'll work with you on how to present the issue in question to the parent/guardians. We also want you to report any concerns about abuse or neglect to the program staff.

You will be given training on safety specifics and confidentiality at your mentor training and during monthly meetings. Neither of these issues have been reported in our program but we want you to be ready just in case.

How do matches end?

Most matches end after our mentors graduate. AFK staff train mentors to set up a final meeting that provides closure and positive feelings for all involved. We highly encourage mentors and buddies to maintain contact even after the athlete leaves for college.

Matches can end prematurely for a variety of reasons: a family moves away, a mentor's life circumstances change, even the reality that sometimes a match just doesn't "click." This happens rarely in our program. However, when it does we like to facilitate a closing meeting. If the match ends nine months or less before graduation, we will not match the mentor again, but will offer the mentor opportunities to serve the program in other ways. Buddy families will have the opportunity to apply for a rematch.

Mentor FAQ'S

Getting a mentoring relationship started can sometimes be stressful for everyone: the mentor worries about breaking the ice, the buddy wonders what the experience will be like, and parents of our buddies usually have a number of concerns about this new person in their child's life.

What about gifts and money? Who pays for outings?

As a rule, mentors are not encouraged to give gifts or spend money on activities. A mentor may purchase a small token or gift to acknowledge a special occasion such as a birthday or achievement, but shopping trips and regular gifts of items or cash are not allowed.

Most of the activities they plan together should be low-cost or free activities. The parents of the buddy should pay if you've decided to do something out of the ordinary, like a movie or zoo visit, etc. If the mentor would like to plan something special and he or she knows the family is unable to provide funds, you can speak with the Mentorship Coordinator. Program funds may be available in such cases.

What if the parents of my buddy ask me to do something against our program's policies?

In this situation mentors can tell the parent to contact the Mentorship Coordinator for clarification, who will then explain the policy to the family.



What if the buddy parent won't answer my phone calls?

Be sure to leave a message when you call. Text, email or call. Don't let more than a few days go by without trying again. If one week passes and you have received no response, call the Mentorship Coordinator. We do not want communication issues to linger beyond two weeks! If you have a recurring problem, let us know!

A Responsible Mentor

- Meets on a regular weekly basis
- Confirms meetings with buddy's parents
- Phones, texts or emails buddy parents every week if he/she can't meet
- Attempts to make up missed meetings
- Follows up if he/she promises something
- Stays enthusiastic knowing enthusiasm can overcome nearly all other obstacles
- Asks for help when he/she becomes frustrated, concerned or has questions about policy
- Acts like a role model in the presence of his/her buddy, at school and in the community
- Has good communication with the buddy parents
- Thinks of creative ways to spend time with their buddy using the resources available on AFK's website as well as the staff
- Thinks about safety
- Understands and accepts the buddy's disabilities and or special needs
- Has a clear plan for the mentorship closure

What if my buddy and me get stuck in the same routine?

For some of our children, routine is a good thing, but if you're getting bored your Buddy probably is too. It's time to talk to your Buddy. Spend some of your next meeting brainstorming things you like to do together and things you might like to plan in the future. Talk to the parent/guardian about the list you come up with and listen to their ideas. Bring your problem to your next mentor meeting and listen to ideas from the other mentors.

Our Data and Development Coordinator posts every week fun activities to do with your buddy on our website, so make sure you visit it often for fun ideas!



What if I feel like my match isn't working out?

Ideally, your concerns about your buddy will have been addressed during the initial matching meeting. But sometimes unexpected issues crop up in new mentoring relationships as boundaries are set and personalities emerge. It is not uncommon for mentoring relationships to have a slightly bumpy start.

AFK offers a structured process for working through relationship difficulties. Most issues are easily resolved by discussing this with the buddy parent. We also offer ongoing training for mentors, on topics such as problem-solving and communication skills. It is important for you to attend your monthly mentor meetings for this reason and to feel comfortable sharing your successes and your struggles.

Children in new mentoring relationships often need time to warm up to the idea. After all, a mentor is a different kind of relationship than they have had before, and children can initially be uncomfortable or shy around older people they do not know. We encourage you to give the relationship time to develop and to contact the Mentorship Coordinator if you have concerns.

Research indicates that keeping a mentoring relationship going for at least one year is most likely to benefit the child and that closing a match too early can actually have some negative consequences.* These consequences affect both the buddy and the athlete. This is why we encourage all participants to be patient, honest, and do their best to work through any problems as their mentoring relationships develop.

*Stand by Me: The Risks and Rewards of Mentoring Today's Youth by Dr. Jean Rhodes. Available at: <http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog/RHOSTA.html>

In closing

We hope that having a mentorship is one of the most incredible and fulfilling things for your child.

AFK is committed to supporting you from match-up through match closing. We look forward to working with you, and we appreciate your support and involvement.

Welcome to the AFK family! It should be a fun and rewarding experience for you.



For parents of mentors: How you can help

Thank you for sharing your sons and daughters with us.

It is not only buddies who benefit from their involvement with AFK. Parents of graduated mentors report many positive changes in their athlete resulting from their participation in AFK, including increased empathy, increased maturity and leadership, and overall increase in happiness and well-being. Our program will ask much from your son or daughter, but in return will offer experiences that will positively affect him or her for a lifetime.

Every year it is a sincere pleasure to get to know them and experience the energy and passion of their youth. They are exemplary citizens and inspiring to us and to the families we work with.

Parents of our mentors are some of our best spokespeople. We've received many referrals for mentors and buddies from past and present parents. Please share our story with all who will listen, pass along our website, like us on Facebook and keep those referrals coming! Thank you.

As a parent of a mentor, you may have questions about your role in the program. Please see the following lists of suggested dos and don'ts just for you.

- DO encourage your teen to meet regularly with his/her buddy, and to contact the buddy's family as soon as possible if they cannot meet.
- DO be positive about the relationship, and ask how things are going, especially in the first month.
- DO listen to your teen and be supportive of his or her feelings. He or she may be nervous with his/her buddy at first and may go through periods of "testing" as the relationship develops. As a parent you are a good resource if your teen has general questions about children. Be patient and encouraging. If your teen has trouble with the relationship, encourage him or her talk to the Mentorship Coordinator immediately.
- DO look at your email, so you don't miss any important news or events.
- DO encourage your teen to take on the responsibility of responding both to AFK staff and to the buddy's family. The athletes who communicate directly with staff and families have the most successful mentorships.
- DO remind your son or daughter to report their monthly mentoring hours and to carry their buddy's emergency contact information in their email with them during meetings to ensure they have their buddy's emergency contact information at all times.
- DO ensure a final meeting between your teen and their buddy happens when they graduate.



- DON'T worry if your son or daughter is not matched right away. About half of our mentors will be placed within six weeks of training. Sometimes it takes months before we find the right match for your son or daughter. We also 'rematch' some of our buddies and those matches don't go into effect until summer.
- DON'T hesitate to call our staff if you have concerns about your son or daughter's safety or a question regarding abuse or neglect.
- DON'T share your son or daughter's buddy's name or photographs with anyone. We need to honor our family's requests for confidentiality.
- DON'T forget to check out our website often for volunteer opportunities, upcoming events, or to make a financial contribution: www.athletesforkids.org

Policies, Procedures and Guidelines

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MENTORS, BUDDIES, AND FAMILIES OF BUDDIES

Mentor Eligibility Requirements

- Be at least a sophomore in high school, participating on a high school sports team, and attending one of our chapter schools.
- Agree to commit to the program until high school graduation.
- Be willing to spend a minimum of six hours a month with the Buddy (average 1.5 hours per week.)
- Be willing to communicate with the buddy or buddy parents weekly.
- Be willing to offer time to volunteer at least two special activities or AFK events per year.
- Complete the screening process: Submit a background form and agree to criminal background check, submit a new mentor application, agree to interview, and submit character references.
- Agree to attend initial orientation before being considered for a match. Agree to attend monthly training meetings at or near your school. These are required meetings.
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the Mentorship Coordinator and submit monthly meeting and activity information. Be willing to answer all requests for information in a timely manner (within 48 hours if possible).
- Be willing to adhere to all AFK policies and procedures and have a parent or guardian signature on the Parental Consent Form for Mentors.
- Have transportation provided for your weekly meetings to your buddy's home.
- If transporting buddy by car:
 - Have a current driver's license, auto insurance, and a good driving record (no major citations).
 - Have a transportation waiver signed by the family of the buddy on file with AFK.
- When buddy is in car, follow all traffic laws including seat belt laws.
- Carry your buddy's emergency contact information in your email any time you are with your buddy.
- Not use alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances.
- Not have falsified information during the course of the screening process.

Buddy and Buddy Family Eligibility Requirements

- Reside within a reasonable driving distance to one of our chapter high schools.
- Child is in the 1st through 12th grades, has a referral from a school professional, a health care or other specialist, and/or has a recognized disability or IEP.
- Demonstrate a desire to participate in the program and be willing to abide by all AFK's policies and procedures.
- Commit to consistent meetings until the mentor graduates from high school.
- Be willing to communicate with the mentor weekly.
- Complete phone interview.
- Complete all pertinent forms in a timely manner: Criminal Background Check Form, Parental Consent Form.
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the Executive Director or Mentorship Coordinator. Requests for information must be answered in a timely manner (within 48 hours if possible.)
- Be willing to communicate change of address, phone, email etc. in a timely manner.
- There is a \$240 Annual Mentorship Fee. The fee is paid by the family requesting a match, is nonrefundable, and helps to offset the initial cost of arranging the mentorship. In addition to the cost of making the match, AFK incurs approximately \$1,200 per mentorship each year to maintain the mentorship through ongoing support and follow-up from staff. Full and partial scholarships are available for those who apply.

Overnight visits/home alone restrictions

Overnight visits of any kind are prohibited. This includes family vacations and long visits.

Mentors cannot offer bathroom dressing help and are instructed to never be in a home alone with a child. Maintain open door policy.

Confidentiality & Mandatory Reporting Policy

It is the policy of AFK to protect the confidentiality of its participants and their families. With the exception of the limitations listed below, program staff will only share information about mentors, buddies, and their families with other AFK professional staff and the Board of Directors.

All prospective mentors, buddies, and parents/guardians will be informed of the scope and limitations of confidentiality by program staff. Additionally, mentors are required and trained to keep information about their buddy and his/her family confidential.

Records are considered the property of AFK, not AFK employees, and are not available for review by mentors, buddies, or parents/guardians.

Limits of Confidentiality

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

- Information may be gathered about program participants and shared with other participants, individuals, or organizations only upon receipt of signed “release” forms from mentors, buddies, or parents/guardians.
- Identifying information (including names, photographs, videos, etc.) of AFK participants may be used in publications or promotional materials only upon written consent of the mentor, buddy, and/or parent/guardian.
- 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 organization. Such information is considered privileged information, and its confidentiality is protected by law.
- If program staff receives information at any point in the match process that a volunteer is using illegal substances, has a 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 buddy is considered as a match candidate, information is shared between the prospective match parties. Each party shall have the right to refuse the proposed match based on the information provided to them. The information to be shared may include:
 1. Mentors: age, sex, race, religion, interests, hobbies, sport, living situation, siblings, reasons for applying to the program.
 2. Buddies: age, sex, race, religion, interests, hobbies, family situation, siblings, living situation, a summary of the client intake information, and expectations for match participation.

Mandatory Abuse Reporting

It is the policy of AFK that all staff must report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect of program clients or program participants immediately. All such suspected reports must be made to appropriate state and/or local authorities. Program staff must follow the mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect procedure.

All employees, volunteers, and mentors of AFK are required to undergo training as to what constitutes child abuse and neglect, what the state statutes are, and how to properly report such cases.

The event of a report of child abuse or neglect filed against anyone in the program will be overseen by the Executive Director. Contact with program youth will be restricted or constrained and/or the person in question suspended from employment or program participation per the decision of the Executive Director and Board of Directors until such investigation is concluded.

Violations of Confidentiality

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

Transportation Policy

It is the policy of AFK to allow mentors to transport buddies in the mentor's private vehicle if all consent forms are signed and on file and the mentor agrees to follow all other items of the transportation policy listed below:

- AFK has a signed consent from the buddy's parent/guardians approving the transportation of their child in mentor's car.
- AFK has a signed consent from the mentor and the mentor's parent/guardians to transport a buddy in a mentor's car.
- Mentors transporting buddies must use reliable, insured transportation. All mentors transporting buddies must possess a valid driver's license and present proof of auto insurance; a record of insurance will be maintained in the mentor's file and will be updated on an annual basis.
- All mentors transporting buddies will undergo a driving record check and have a good driving record (no major citations).
- Mentors transporting buddies must obey all traffic laws, and use seat belts at all times.
- Mentors transporting buddies must avoid taking medication or using any other substances that might impair their ability to drive.
- If an accident occurs while the mentor is engaged in mentoring, it should be reported to the Executive Director promptly.
- The mentor must carry a copy of the buddy's emergency contact information in the transporting automobile or on their person at all times in case of emergency.

Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Firearms Policy

Mentors are expected to be positive role models and are therefore held to a very high standard of behavior in their own schools and in the community:

Buddies and mentors are prohibited from using, possessing, transmitting or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol or possessing firearms while engaged in the mentoring relationship. Any suspected violations should be reported to the Executive Director.

Tobacco: The intent of AFK is to create a smoke- and tobacco-free environment. To that end, smoking and the use of all tobacco products is prohibited and participants in the program must refrain from the use of such products while engaged in mentoring. The use of tobacco products includes but is not limited to cigarettes, ecigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or other substances that contain tobacco.

Weapons, Firearms, and Other Dangerous Materials: 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.

Alcohol: A mentor should not attend or remain at an event where it is known that alcohol, or an illegal or prohibited substance is being consumed by a minor. The mentor is expected to remove himself/herself from the situation.

Any violation of this policy will result in immediate consequences and/or suspension/termination of the mentoring relationship. In addition, violations of this policy may result in notification being given to legal authorities that may result in arrest or legal action, and may be punishable by fine and/or imprisonment.

Unacceptable Behavior Policy

It is the policy of AFK that unacceptable behaviors will not be tolerated on the part of mentors or buddies while participating in the program. This policy is in addition to behavioral requirements stipulated in other policies or procedures. This policy in no way is intended to replace or take precedence over other policies or procedures including, but not limited to, the following:

Confidentiality Policy, Transportation Policy, Overnight Visits/Home Alone Policy, Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting Policy, Use of Alcohol, Drugs, Tobacco, and Firearms Policy

A number of behaviors are regarded as incompatible with AFK goals, values, and program standards and therefore are considered 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
- Taking part in disrespectful, demeaning actions or speech
- Intentional violation of any local, state, or federal law
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Possession of illegal substances

Any behavior that results in the suspension of the mentor from school should be reported to the Executive Director immediately. If a mentor is matched with a child at the time of the suspension, the mentor must notify the parents of the child. At that time, it will be the decision of the parents whether to end the mentorship or continue. If a mentor is not yet matched with a child at the time of the suspension, the mentor can be suspended or dismissed from the program.

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 mentoring program.

Closure Policy

It is the policy of AFK that all mentors and buddies must participate in closure procedures when their match ends. Closure is defined as the ending of a formal match relationship regardless of the circumstances of the match ending or whether participants intend to have future contact informally beyond the match duration.

Closure can occur for any number of reasons including: ending of the contracted match duration; one or both participants do not want to continue the match; changes of circumstances in one or both of the match partner's lives; a mentor graduates; or an individual no longer meets the requirements for program participation. Hence, the match may end at the discretion of the mentor, buddy, parent/guardian, and/or Executive Director. It is left to the discretion of the Executive Director 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, the buddy, and parent/guardian. If future contact is agreed upon, Athletes for Kids Youth Mentoring Program will not be responsible for monitoring and supporting the match after the match has ended.

Steps to Matching

Athletes Recruited

Applications submitted. Candidates interviewed. Selected athletes are notified and invited to orientation.

Athletes attend orientation, submit background check, consent forms and bios.

Athlete attends mentor meetings. Mentor Match Coordinator notifies athlete of potential match. Sends email with contacts and disabilities/abilities info.

Athlete contacts parent of child and sets up meeting with parents, away from the home, without the child present.

Parents of child and athlete meet

Athlete notifies Mentorship Coordinator that he/she wishes to continue within 48 HOURS of the parent/athlete meeting.

Mentorship Coordinator notifies athlete to set up meeting with the child at the child's home. Athlete contacts family.

Athlete and child meet

Athlete notifies Mentorship Coordinator that he/she wishes to continue within 48 HOURS of the athlete/child meeting.

Mentorship Coordinator notifies athlete that match is finalized, defines transportation status (does athlete have parent's consent to drive child?) and instructs athlete to contact parents to set up regular meeting schedule.

Parents Inquire

Submit an application form.

Welcome packet mailed with background forms, consent forms and program information.

Criminal Background checks run on all adults living in child's household.

Approved families are added to waitlist

Mentorship Coordinator sends 1-3 athlete bios to the family.

Parents choose athlete to interview and send selection to Mentorship Coordinator.

Parents notify Mentorship Coordinator that they want to continue within 48 HOURS of meeting athlete.

Parents notify Mentorship Coordinator that they wish to finalize match within 48 HOURS of meeting child and athlete.

Match Complete

Athlete begins regular meetings with child

Staff Directory

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