



October 2025 Newsletter



Mercer Island Mentor Will and his buddy

Mentor

My freshman year of high school, I was looking for things to do, and a few guys on my lacrosse team participated in AFK. I had no clue what it was at the time, but I signed up intrigued by what it could entail. I was paired up with my buddy about a year ago, and since then, it has been a really great time, we frequently ride bikes and play with RC cars and Hot Wheels. One of my favorite memories is when we were in his backyard and turned the sprinkler on and rode through the water on the bikes. It was refreshing and a great time because we got to relax and were distracted from some troubles that we had that day.

Hanging out with my buddy never feels like a chore. It is always a good time and something I look forward to in my week. Participating in AFK has made a positive impact on my life and really developed me as a person. It will always hold a special place for me as it has been a community that I can fall back on throughout all my years of high school. Everyone is so welcoming and nice, and I have never felt out of place while in AFK. It is truly a special community that has a positive impact on everyone who participates.

Mentee Parent

This past year brought significant transitions for our son—a new school and a summer move that could have easily left him feeling unsettled. Instead, he found stability in an unexpected place: his mentor Will.

What makes Will exceptional isn't just his reliability, though that consistency has been invaluable during a year of change. It's the way he connects with our son on his level, sharing genuine enthusiasm for bikes and cars that transforms their time together from mentoring sessions into adventures between friends. Our son's face lights up whenever Will's name is mentioned, and that excitement speaks volumes about the trust and joy Will has cultivated.

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The impact extends far beyond shared hobbies. Our son has grown noticeably more confident, both socially and emotionally, drawing strength from Will's steady encouragement and example. In a year that could have been defined by upheaval, Will helped our son discover resilience he didn't know he had.

As a parent, witnessing this relationship development has been one of the year's greatest gifts. Will didn't just offer mentorship, he offered friendship, consistency, and belief in our son's potential. We are so grateful for AFK and the connection and friendship our son has found with his mentor, Will.

Upcoming Events



AFK Youth Mentoring

Join us for our 2025 fundraising event

Boots & Bling for Buddies

Food • Auction • Raise the paddle

Pickering Barn - Issaquah

Thursday, November 13th

5:30 - 8:00 PM

Saddle up some fun at our annual Athletes for Kids fundraiser. Kick up your heels and enjoy some hearty appetizers and refreshing drinks while supporting a great cause. With a night packed full of fun, good company, and a sprinkle of western charm, you won't want to miss this hoedown! So dust off those boots and shine up that bling - we're fixin' to have a real good time!

\$75/pp until November 1st, \$100/pp after
Purchase a VIP table for \$600 (8 seats included)

You are invited to our Boots and Bling for Buddies fundraising event! This is an excellent opportunity to connect with fellow AFK supporters and directly invest in the development of our mentees and mentors. Come and enjoy an engaging evening of food and fellowship, and help us continue to impact lives, one mentorship at a time.

[Click Here to Register](#)

We are looking for passionate volunteers for the event! Please click the button below to register for a volunteer position.

[Sign Up to Volunteer](#)



Fall FESTIVAL

Sunday, October 19th

1:00 - 2:30 PM



Join us at our annual Fall Festival for a fun afternoon of games, activities, and AFK friends at Creekside Elementary School in Sammamish. Costumes are encouraged! Mentors, buddies, and siblings are welcome to attend!

Hosted by the National Charity League of Young Women, Lake Sammamish Chapter.

[Click Here to Register](#)

With Gratitude



Thank you to Ready Set Tennis!

During the months of July and August, many families took advantage of the amazing and fun-filled tennis sessions offered by Ready Set Tennis. Founded by ECHS alumna Alyssa Bulai, Ready Set Tennis is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide opportunities for young people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities to learn the sport, without the worry of having to find equipment or coaching. Alyssa and her crew of awesome volunteer coaches provided multiple evenings of tennis instruction for mentors, buddies, and parents as well. There were so many smiles, many laughs, and a lot of new tennis player converts. Alyssa, thank you for your vision, patience, and dedication. We can't wait for next year!

AFK Moments





As we look back on a month of memories, we look forward to more mentorship moments and choosing acceptance, friendship, and kindness every day.

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