



August 2026 Newsletter



August Impact Story: Eastlake HS Mentor Emilio

Mentor

I have been my buddy's mentor for almost a year now, and I could not be more grateful for the relationship we have made. From going on hikes to playing with Nerf guns to creating battles with LEGO minifigures, my buddy and I will always have a blast when we are together. Whenever I have the privilege of spending time with him, the whole world goes quiet. Whatever I am dealing with outside of my mentorship—whether it's sports, school, or college applications—hanging out with my buddy makes those problems disappear for a little bit, and I will

out with my buddy makes those problems disappear for a little bit, and I will always be thankful for that.

The energy and joy my buddy brings into my life and to those around him is contagious. Every time I get reminded of my buddy when I am not with him, a smile instantly fills my face. Hearing others talk about him with such passion is something that I will forever remember; "he is the coolest kid I've met" will never fail to warm my heart.

Being a mentor has impacted my life in ways I would never have imagined. I am forever appreciative for the bond my buddy and I have made over the past year, knowing he has significantly affected the person who I am today. As a mentor, I have learned so much about patience, commitment, empathy, and the ability to speak up for others. I have been given an opportunity to help someone gain more confidence in who they are as a person, not realizing confidence would also be gained in myself.

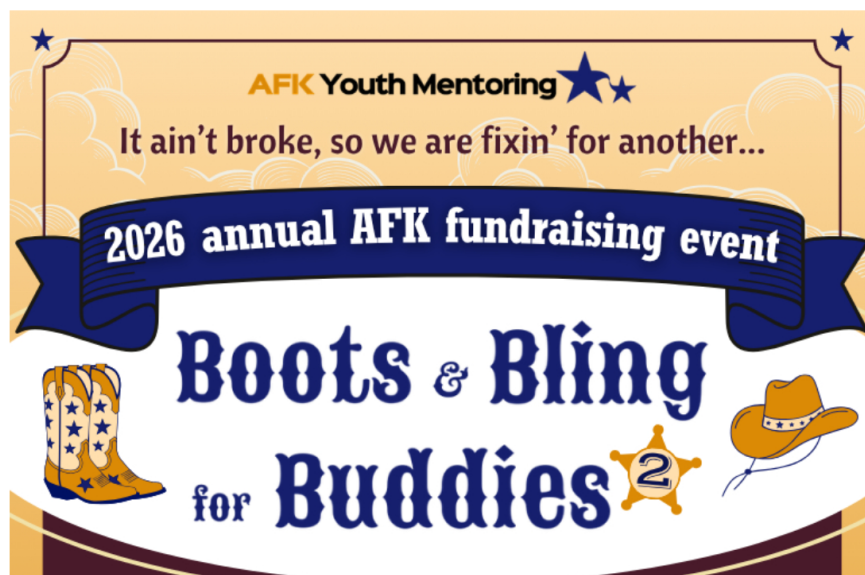
Mentee Parent

From the very beginning, Emilio has been a consistent, caring, and dependable friend to our son. Their time together is something our son eagerly anticipates each week, and it has been wonderful to watch a genuine friendship grow. Emilio has shown our son what it means to be a true friend by sometimes following our son's interests, other times introducing new activities, and always making him feel valued. Even when they unexpectedly see each other in public, Emilio never misses the chance to stop, say hello, and spend a few moments connecting, regardless of who he's with.

Emilio has also been an incredible source of encouragement. When our son has faced challenges or felt anxious, Emilio has met him with patience, compassion, and a listening ear. Recently, during a difficult week at camp, Emilio took the time to listen to our son's worries, encourage him, and help him refocus with a fun activity. As our son prepares for the upcoming transition to middle school, Emilio has continued to build our son's confidence by listening to his fears, offering reassurance, and helping him see the excitement in this next chapter.

We are so grateful to Athletes for Kids for making this friendship possible. Emilio's kindness, reliability, and genuine care have made a lasting difference in our son's life. The time Emilio gives each week is creating an impact that will last far beyond their playdates, and our family will always be thankful.

Boots & Bling for Buddies 2026





Our annual fundraiser, Boots & Bling for Buddies 2, is right around the corner! Join us for a festive evening of warm fellowship and western fun as we celebrate the power of mentorship. Mark your calendars for **Thursday, October 29th**, and stay tuned for details as we gather to support our local youth and champion the AFK values of Acceptance, Friendship, and Kindness.

With Gratitude

Sammamish
Rotary



Thank you to the Sammamish Rotary Club!

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Sammamish Rotary Club for their presenting-level sponsorship for this year's Boots & Bling for Buddies 2 auction! The Rotary's commitment to youth and service directly aligns with the values of AFK. We are grateful for their steadfast support as a community sponsor. Their partnership strengthens our mission and helps make a positive impact in our community.

AFK Moments





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

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