

National Service and Mentoring



More than 1 million children and youth are mentored through Senior Corps and AmeriCorps each year.

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) supports mentoring for children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances through several of our programs. We believe that caring and capable adults can make a critical difference in the lives of children and youth in need. Mentoring is a proven method to ensure students complete their education. Youth with a mentor more readily attend and engage in school and are therefore more likely to finish high school and continue their education. Mentors model precisely the attitudes and aptitudes youth need to thrive: intellectual curiosity, compassion for others, and determination to succeed.

National service members serve in two ways: as mentors and by building the capacity of mentoring organizations through mentor recruitment and management, fundraising, and program administration. Each year, more than one million children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances are mentored through CNCS supported programs.

Mentoring at CNCS

Senior Corps

Senior Corps, through its RSVP and Foster Grandparent programs, mentored more than 207,000 children and youth from disadvantaged circumstances across the United States last year. In the Foster Grandparent Program, volunteers age 55 and older provide mentoring and other support services to more than 106,000 children and youth with exceptional needs

in schools, hospitals, drug treatment centers, correctional institutions, and other settings. Foster Grandparents often work one-on-one with children, maintaining an intensive relationship with them for a year or longer. Last year, RSVP volunteers provided mentoring services to more than 100,600 children.

- At the El Paso Foster Grandparent Program in El Paso, TX, 12 Foster Grandparents work with 30 children who attend the Fort Bliss Child Development Center. The children, who range from 2 to 5 years old, exhibit signs of adjustment disorders, detachment disorders, and/or developmental delays due to the absence of one or more parents who serve in the military. The Foster Grandparents provide nurturing and emotional support, engage in play therapy, and model appropriate behavior to help the children reach developmental milestones.
- RSVP School Buddies matches volunteers age 55 and older with elementary school children whom teachers have identified as not meeting current academic standards. Volunteers serve 1-2 hours per day, 1-2 times per week for an entire school year. RSVP School Buddies serve at the school site and are supervised by a classroom teacher. Volunteers assist children with reading, math, spelling, or other academic areas. In the past year, 32 volunteers served 223 children at nine sites providing over 1,700 hours of service. The Program is sponsored by the United Way of Chittenden County in Burlington, VT.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps members, serving through AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA, and the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), provide mentoring to more than 1.1 million disadvantaged children and youth each year. While State and National members mostly serve directly as

mentors, VISTA members focus their efforts on building the capacity of mentoring organizations to increase the number of people they serve by recruiting community volunteers, devising business plans, setting up administrative operations, bringing in donations of goods and services, and raising funds.

- The Mentor Michigan College Coaching Corps is a joint effort between Michigan Campus Compact and Mentor Michigan. The MMCCC places AmeriCorps members within youth mentoring organizations or institutions of higher education. The goal is to increase the number of youth served through mentoring relationships and to develop "college-going" cultures within local communities. Members placed within youth mentoring organizations increase organizational capacity to serve additional youth by engaging in mentor recruitment; matching mentor/mentee pairs; and providing ongoing support to matches. Members placed within institutions of higher education train college students to be volunteers, build community partnerships among K-12 schools, community-based organizations, and their host campus; create college-focused community activities; and develop and disseminate resources related to college access.
- AmeriCorps VISTAs serve with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tucson, AZ, where their efforts support mentoring services for nearly 600 disadvantaged youth. One of the first matches included a boy who was struggling a great deal. The 'Big Brother' who was recruited was a tremendous help to the 'Little Brother,' who had lost both his parents within months of each other and is being raised by his bedridden sister. The youth was occasionally acting out and his grades were slipping. Since being introduced to his Big Brother, the Little Brother has improved his grades and behavior, and shows a positive attitude toward life and new experiences.

Social Innovation Fund

The Social Innovation Fund provides funding for a broad portfolio of evidence-based innovative programs, including mentoring organizations. One of the Social Innovation Fund intermediary grantees, New Profit, provided a \$750,000 subgrant to iMentor, whose mission is to improve the lives of high school students from underserved communities through innovative, technology-enabled mentoring. Since 1999, iMentor has matched and supported more than 7,000 one-to-one mentoring relationships in New York City, and through their technology platform, iMentor Interactive, the organization works with 60 mentoring programs in 20 states enrolling 4,500 mentor-mentee pairs.

National Mentoring Month

National Mentoring Month, held each year in January, draws a spotlight on mentoring and the positive effect it can have on young lives. Spearheaded by the Harvard Mentoring Project of the Harvard School of Public Health, MENTOR, and the Corporation for National and Community Service, the goals of National Mentoring Month are to raise awareness of mentoring, recruit individuals to mentor, especially in programs that have waiting lists of young people, and promote the rapid growth of mentoring by recruiting organizations to engage their constituents in mentoring.

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