



COMMUNITY BASED YOUTH MENTORING

SINCE 1999

WHO WE ARE:

Bridges Mentoring Program serves youth ages 5-17 attending Osage, Riceville and St. Ansgar school districts. The mission of Bridges is to strengthen the self-esteem and social skills of youth by providing positive mentoring relationships at no cost.

WHAT WE DO:

We match screened and trained adult volunteer mentors with youth in need of another positive influence in their life. Matches are made based on needs of the youth, personalities and interests, proximity and are typically same gender.

CONTACT US:

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A MENTOR IS:

Bridges mentors are individuals that volunteer their time to be a role model to youth. They provide young people with support, counsel, friendship and reinforcement. Mentors bring out strengths that are already there. They listen without judgement and provide perspective.

WHY MENTORING:

Everyone benefits from a successful mentoring relationship; the mentees, the mentors and family members.

Research shows mentoring helps young people. According to a study by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, young people with mentors are 52% less likely to skip school and 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs. Additionally, mentoring reduces symptoms of depression and increases social acceptance, academic attitudes, grades and self image.

Mentors experience personal fulfillment and satisfaction in helping an individual mature, progress and achieve goals.

THE COMMITMENT:

The program asks that each match commits to spending 1 hour per week together for a minimum of 1 year. It is the hope of the program that matches will remain active until the mentee graduates from high school.

HOW TO APPLY:

Those interested in becoming a **volunteer mentor** must submit a volunteer application, authorize and pass a background check, complete an in person interview and home visit with the Bridges Program Coordinator, provide 3 personal references and complete a 2 hour training session.

Youth referrals can be made by a parent/guardian, school employee, or community member. A Youth Referral form is filled out and submitted to the Bridges Program Coordinator for review. Parents/guardians are then contacted for an intake meeting.

Applications can be found at: www.bridgesmentoringprogram.com. For paper applications, contact the Program Coordinator.