



## Requirements and Responsibilities for Mentors

*The following requirements and responsibilities will help you to understand your role as a mentor as it relates to your mentee, BEST Kids, the child's parent/guardian, and the social worker assigned to your child by the District of Columbia's Child & Family Service Agency (CFSA).*

### The Mentoring Commitment

1. **You must commit to mentor for at least one-year.** If the commitment becomes impossible, please allow 60 days + for BEST Kids to find a replacement mentor *before* you exit the program. Please share your knowledge of the child's interests and needs to help BEST Kids make a successful match.
2. **Meet with your mentee at least 10 (ten) hours each month, and maintain weekly contact.** If you cannot meet a particular week, call your mentee and let him/her know. If you are going to be out of town, send him/her a postcard or letter.
3. **It is a requirement to attend at least 9 out of 12 peer groups per year of mentoring.** It is your responsibility to bring your mentee to BEST Kids' Peer Group programs every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday each month. If you cannot attend a Peer Group, please notify your Mentoring Support Specialist with the reason.
4. At 10 months into your commitment, BEST Kids connect with you to see if you would like to mentor beyond your 1-year commitment. If yes, your commitment will be renewed for an additional 6 months and continue on a 6-month basis moving forward.
5. When the time comes after a minimum of a year commitment that you decide you can no longer be mentor, you are required to attend a closure meeting for you and your mentee.
6. **Ensure the majority of the hours each month are one-on-one hours between you and your mentee.** Often, if other children are on an outing, the focus is among the children themselves and not the mentor/child relationship.
7. Know your mentee's short- and long-term goals. Solicit ideas from your mentee so he/she feels his/her ideas and wishes are being heard and acted upon. Discuss age appropriate goals with your Mentoring Support Specialist and BEST Kids' mental health professionals. Ensure that your mentee's guardian is aware of the goals your mentee establishes.
8. If you feel your mentee's basic needs are not being met (such as food, clothing, medical and dental care, recreation, and education), immediately inform BEST Kids. Sometimes we can help identify resources, other times we need to report this information to CFSA for the well-being of the child.
9. On average, do not spend more than three hours a month tutoring or going over homework with your mentee. While education is clearly important, we are not a tutoring program.
10. **Keep all appointments with your mentee and arrive on time for those appointments.** If you must break an appointment, please notify him/her as far in advance as possible, and explain the reason for canceling. Remember, your mentee has had disappointments in life; inconsistency and unreliability on your part could foster distrust. Insist that your mentee reciprocate in this area; this will help him/her develop a sense of responsibility.
11. We believe in order to establish a supportive culture for our mentors, it is important to develop fellowship and a sharing of common problems among mentors. In turn, BEST



# BEST Kids, Inc

*Empowering youth in foster care to build better futures, one child at a time*

Kids hopes to kindle the professional development of each of our mentors. We encourage your active participation in Ongoing Mentor Trainings and Mentor Happy Hours.

## Reporting

1. Innovative Mentoring Software (IMS) is BEST Kids' online reporting system where mentors report the progress, health, and quality of the mentoring relationship. Upon match, BEST Kids will assign each mentor a login and password, as well as instructions on how to report mentoring sessions. Report on IMS shortly after each outing, phone conversation, email or other communication with your mentee. **All forms of communication and interaction must be reported.**
2. If you have any questions, or if you feel uncomfortable about something in your match, immediately inform your Mentoring Support Specialist. The Mentoring Support Specialists can be reached at the main office at (202) 397-3272. You will also be given their email and cell phone number.
3. It is your responsibility to inform BEST Kids of any changes in your telephone number or address, or that of your mentee's that you are aware of.
4. You should maintain at least monthly contact with your Mentoring Support Specialist.

## Reporting Suspicions of Neglect or Abuse to CFSA

1. Mandated Reporter: As a Mandated Reporter, you are required to immediately report to CFSA suspected child abuse and neglect. You must call the CFSA hotline (202) 671-7233 and report any incident suspect of abuse or neglect. If you do not want to call CFSA, you must ensure that your Mentoring Support Specialist calls on your behalf within 12 hours. If you cannot reach your Mentoring Support Specialist within 12-hours, YOU MUST make the report and then inform BEST Kids.
2. Unusual Incident Report: Incidents that are not immediate signs of abuse or neglect are reported to BEST Kids immediately. A Mentoring Support Specialist will submit a report to CFSA for further investigation. You must inform your Mentoring Support Specialist within 24 hours.
3. If you learn your mentee missed school more than three times, was disciplined in school, is involved in Juvenile Court, or causes you any significant concern, please note it in your monthly report and alert BEST KIDS immediately.