



**BEST
Kids**

Outreach Toolkit

A resource to help spread the good news

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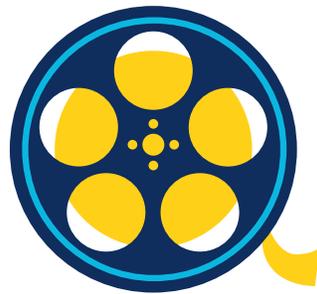
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About BEST Kids

Our Mission

BEST Kids is a nonprofit mentoring organization that empowers youth in foster care to build better futures, one child at a time.

BEST Kids is guided by the belief that all children are talented. Through our one-on-one volunteer mentoring, extensive training, staff support and experiential-learning-based Peer Groups, we encourage our youth to discover and develop their unique skills and abilities. Beginning with children as young as six and continuing, as needed, until adulthood, BEST Kids works to enable youth to develop a positive sense of self, to acquire teamwork.



Watch our Recruitment Video

Why Mentoring?

Foster Care Snapshot



Mentoring Provides:

Individualized Attention

BEST Kids matches each individual youth with one mentor. Our one-on-one model provides mentees with undivided attention, intentional conversations, and sustainable support from their mentor.

Long-Lasting Relationships

Mentors are in it for the long haul. Unlike other adult-youth relationships that may end after a school year or sports season, mentoring continues on a daily, year long basis- if not longer. At BEST Kids, mentors are required to mentor for at least one year; however, the relationships typically last far longer than that, with an average match length of 1.9 years.

Holistic Approach

Because they aren't assigned to one area of a youth's lives, mentors are able to be present in every decision, life event, and experience their mentee goes through. Whether it's applying to college, dealing with peer pressure, or learning a new hobby, mentors have the opportunity to coach a young person through whatever life throw's their way.

Mentor Experience

Set Realistic Goals

Long term and short term

One of the most important parts of our program is setting realistic achievable goals for your mentee to reach. Whether you are matched with a 6-year-old who wants to learn how to make slime or you have an 18-year-old that wants to apply to college, write it down and work toward it together!

Explore the Community

Expand your mentee's worldview

During our matching process, we make sure that our mentors are paired with youth that have similar interests. One-on-one, matches will participate in activities that both parties enjoy, such as ice skating, bowling, visiting local museums, and attending cultural festivals.

Be appreciated

In a number of ways

We recognize that being a volunteer can be a thankless job. So, we make it a point to make sure our mentors are well taken care of. Through our full-time Mentoring Support Specialists, ongoing trainings, happy hours, award ceremonies, and much more, our mentors always know that they will be prepared and greatly appreciated.



Call to Mentors

This is a call for anyone living in the DC metro area that is willing to volunteer some of their free time to a youth in D.C.'s foster care system. Though we are open to volunteers of all genders, we have a deficit of male mentors as a number of our young men are without a match. Below are the requirements.

Who We are looking for caring adults age 21 and older who have access to a reliable car

What We ask that all mentors make a minimum one year commitment, preferably longer, and spend at least 10 hours per month with mentees

When Build your own schedule, as long as you are meeting with your mentee at least 10 hours a month and speaking to them once a week

Where While many of our youth live in DC, a number of youth live in Prince George's County

Why To provide a fun, caring, and consistent adult relationship

How SIGN UP or REFER A FRIEND

For more information about BEST Kids or becoming a mentor, visit bestkids.org or contact us at 202-397-3272.

BK FAQs



Who are our clients?

BEST Kids serves approximately 160 youth in foster care between the ages of 6 and 21 in the D.C. metro area, including several youth living in Prince George's county.



What does a BEST Kids mentor do with their mentee?

Mentors are consistent, positive forces in the lives of their mentees. Matches spend time in the community working on goals, exploring new activities, and engaging over mutual interests. Whether it's a Saturday hike, a trip to the library, or a visit to a Smithsonian, mentors and mentees are simply encouraged to spend quality time together.



How does BEST Kids match mentors and mentees?

BEST Kids staff match pairs based on 4 criteria: Personality/Mutual Interests, Geographical Proximity, Age-Appropriateness, and Scheduling Compatibility.



Why does BEST Kids ask that you have access to a reliable car?

Mentors are responsible for transporting their mentees before and after outings and unfortunately most BEST Kids youth are not living in metro-accessible areas. In addition, there is no way we can guarantee a youth will remain in their placement.



Do you perform background checks on volunteers?

Yes. BEST Kids requires that each mentor complete a variety of background checks as part of our Clearance Process. On average, this takes between 6 and 8 weeks.

Outreach Materials

On the next few pages, you will find BEST Kids official outreach materials. Please share and use these materials to promote the BEST Kids mentoring program.

Downloadable outreach materials can be found here: **BEST Kids Linktree**

What can you find here?

- 01** Recruitment Flyer
- 02** BEST Kids Brochure
- 03** Sample Social Media Posts

Who should you give these materials to?

- 01** Friends
- 02** Family
- 03** Coworkers
- 04** Employer



Need help? If you need talking points or help crafting a recruitment message, please contact BEST Kids Recruitment and Admissions Coordinator, Keesha Lockette, at keesha@bestkids.org or 202-397-3272 ext. 107.

Become a Mentor Today!

Who We Are

BEST Kids is a nonprofit mentoring organization that empowers youth in foster care to build better futures, one child at a time.

Our Need

BEST Kids provides one-on-one mentoring services to over 160 youth in the DC metro area. We are looking for consistent, caring adults to join our program! While all applicants are welcome, we are currently most in need of male mentors.

Requirements

- Must be 21 years or older
- Commit to at least one year, preferably longer
- Have access to a vehicle
- Provide a clean background check
- Have fun!

For more information visit us at www.bestkids.org or **202-397-3272**



BREAKDOWN OF FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

853

Number of DC children in foster care system in 2016

15.8

Median number of months a child spends in foster care in DC

99%

of children who enter the system because of maltreatment

25%

of foster children that become incarcerated within 2 years of aging out

60%

UP TO of victims of commercial sex exploitation have been in foster care

50%

UP TO of foster youth become homeless within two years of aging out

WHY MENTORING WORKS

Through one-on-one mentoring relationships with caring adults, mentees at BEST Kids consistently show:

- Increased academic achievement
- Improvement in social and/or emotional wellness
- Increased set of independent living skills
- Avoidance of risky behaviors



HOW TO BECOME A BEST KIDS MENTOR

Volunteers are required to do the following:

- Complete an online application, background clearance process, and a pre-service training
- Commit to be a mentor for a minimum of one year
- Spend 10 hours per month with your mentee, including weekly contact and a monthly Peer Group activity
- Have access to a reliable car
- Willingness to invest in a mentee, and build an awesome friendship

If you are interested in becoming a BEST Kids mentor, please visit us at www.bestkids.org



PROUD MEMBER OF



United Way
of the National Capital Area

#8048



#57175



[@BESTKidsDC](https://www.facebook.com/BESTKidsDC)
[@BESTKidsDC](https://www.instagram.com/BESTKidsDC)
[@BESTKidsDC](https://www.linkedin.com/company/BESTKidsDC)
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 (t) 202-397-3272 / (f) 202-397-5437
www.bestkids.org

MISSION

BEST Kids is a nonprofit mentoring organization that empowers youth in foster care to build better futures, one child at a time.

HISTORY OF BEST KIDS

BEST Kids was founded in 2001 by Todd Leibbrand, a local volunteer who saw the tremendous need for a positive adult role model in the lives of DC-area youth in foster care.

Beginning with 10 matches in 2005, BEST Kids has grown to serve over 150 youth each year. This growth has been in cooperation with DC's Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) who supports BEST Kids by referring youth directly to the program and provides funding to support our mentoring matches.



PHILOSOPHY OF BEST KIDS

EARLY INTERVENTION

BEST Kids serves children as young as 6 years old and continues programming through age 21.

LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIPS

BEST Kids commits to sustaining a mentor in each program participant's life for as long as necessary. Long-term relationships allow for matches to establish consistency, trust, and positive outcomes for both the mentor and mentee.

ONGOING MENTOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT

BEST Kids provides each mentor with one-on-one, individualized support, as well as monthly group training opportunities. These trainings assist mentors in building positive and meaningful relationships with their mentees.

COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT

BEST Kid's staff works closely with caregivers, social workers, teachers, and others to ensure that the needs of each child are met. Mentors work collaboratively with staff to create the best experience for their mentees.

INTENSIVE EVALUATION

BEST Kids conducts regular evaluations with all program participants to ensure that every match is achieving positive outcomes. Each match also works toward agreed-upon goals together so that the mentee is able to work towards achieving individually relevant outcomes.

ONE-ON-ONE MENTORING

Community-based mentoring allows for each match to explore the community and new activities in order to broaden their world-views, as well as increase their exposure to new opportunities for growth.

PEER GROUPS

BEST Kids mentors and mentees gather for monthly age-appropriate activities aimed at building social skills and exposing youth to new experiences, and building confidence in the skills and aptitudes of each child.

MATCHING

BEST Kids works to thoughtfully match mentors and mentees based on the following areas: personality and common interests, age-appropriateness, geographical proximity, and scheduling compatibility. BEST Kids values each mentor's input throughout the matching process.

Sample Social Media Posts



We encourage you to share ... with your followers and close community. Here's some ready-made posts that we hope will make it easier to pass on our messaging.

**“A little of your time goes a long way. Be the change you want to see. Become a mentor with @BESTKidsDC. Check out the program today:
<https://www.bestkids.org/>”**

"When you volunteer with @BESTKidsDC , you redirect the path of a youth in foster care. Make a difference. Become a volunteer mentor today!"

"Interested in becoming a volunteer mentor? Visit @BESTKidsDC to learn how you can make a difference in life of a youth in foster care."

"Be the mentor you wish you had. @BESTKidsDC"

Click an icon to share a post:



Follow us on social media at:

@BESTKidsDC

Contact Us

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out. We would love to hear from you!



Program Inquiries

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