

WHY IT WORKS: MENTORING



The Partnership for Student Success focuses on five evidence-based student support roles that can result in gains in reading and math, high school and college graduation rates, reductions in chronic absenteeism, and improved student well-being and mental health. Program implementors can utilize this information to access relevant research, data, and resources to support and, when needed, make the case for implementing these evidence-based supports.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring connects a young person to personal growth and development, and social and economic opportunity. Trained and supported mentors facilitate a variety of youth development and enrichment experiences, helping youth explore and affirm their identity, providing navigational support around school-to-work and school-to-college transitions, and buffering against adversity in school, outside of school, and during the summer.

Why Implement Mentoring?

Mentoring, at its core, guarantees young people that there is someone who cares about them, assures them they are not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges, and supports and affirms their identities and goals. Research confirms that quality mentoring relationships have powerful positive effects on young people in a variety of personal, academic, and professional situations.¹

A 2013 study of the “Success Mentors” mentoring model, which sought to reduce chronic absenteeism in New York City public schools, found that mentored youth gained an average of almost two weeks of additional attendance over the course of the school year and were 52% more likely to remain in school the next year than comparison students.²

Young people who are facing life challenges but have mentors are more likely to aspire to attend, and enroll in, college. They are more likely to report participating in sports and other extracurricular activities, and more likely to report taking on leadership roles in school and extracurricular activities, and to regularly volunteer in their communities. Based on research from 2023, [85% of young people with a mentor say this key relationship has helped them with issues related to school and their education](#). 76% of at-risk young adults who had a mentor aspire to enroll in and graduate from college versus half (56%) of at-risk young adults who had no mentor.³

¹ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2022). [The role of mentoring relationships in supporting the academic achievement of students in the United States](#). MENTOR

² Balfanz, R., & Byrnes, V. (2013). [Meeting the challenge of combating chronic absenteeism: Impact of the NYC Mayor’s Interagency Task Force on Chronic Absenteeism and School Attendance and its implications for other cities](#). Johns Hopkins School of Education.

³ Bruce, M., Bridgeland, J., Civic Enterprises, & Hart Research Associates. (2014). [The mentoring effect: Young people’s perspectives on the outcomes and availability of mentoring](#). A Report for MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership.

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Mentoring Resources

- [Who Mentored You?](#) (a research report on the mentoring movement in the U.S. from MENTOR)
- [The Power of Relationships](#) (a report on how and why adults step up to mentor kids who are not their own from MENTOR)
- [Mentoring & Education Outcomes](#) (a report highlighting the positive impact that mentoring relationships can make in supporting the academic achievement of students from MENTOR)
- [Business Case for Mentoring](#) (a report on how top US businesses collaborate with the public and non-profit sectors to connect youth in their communities to mentoring relationships and the value gained by the business and its employees from EY and MENTOR)
- [Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring](#) (a guide for mentoring program development and Improvement from MENTOR)
- [Becoming a Better Mentor](#) (a resource designed to help teach everyday individuals the basics of being a good mentor to a young person from MENTOR)
- [National Mentoring Resource Center](#) (an online source for trainings, technical assistance, tools, research summaries, and other information for youth mentoring programs from the Official Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention)

This brief was developed by the Partnership for Student Success at the Johns Hopkins University Everyone Graduates Center and MENTOR in July 2025.