

## **Ohio Mennonite Conference Reduce Poverty Resource Team**

### **PROCESS: HOW TO CREATE A MENTORING PROGRAM**

**PURPOSE: Create an active Church adult-to-child mentoring structure.**

#### **PHASE I: Identify Our Youth** (Use coordinating group, Sunday School Teachers, etc.)

- a. Identify names of children and young adults who attend (or have attended) your church. Age range of K through college age / beyond.
  1. Gain correct name, address, birthdate, school they attend and a recent photo.
  2. Create a church bulletin board or “youth wall” with photos and names.
  3. Actively try to invite non-church youth to be involved in this to expand the youth participation.

#### **PHASE II: Build Group Relationships** (Adult SS class with Youth SS class)

- a. Make it a group mission to:
  1. Pray for the youth daily.
  2. Meet periodically (bi-weekly , monthly, other).
  3. Discuss any general news about the children that help identify common interests or helpful recommendations.
  4. Create “Care mailings / packages” that are given / sent at regular intervals. (Containing school / other supplies, small gifts, coupons for activities, challenging / motivational messages, etc.).
  5. Coordinate periodic events to bring people together (4 per year).
  6. Create incentives around school performance (monetary / other rewards for good grades and / or “no F’s, C-grades or better, etc.).

### **PHASE III: Build Individual Relationships**

- a. When the group activities are established, plan events to match-up specific mentors with children/young adults for activities and quality time.
- b. Plan regularly scheduled time to be together:
  1. Adults should strive to listen as much as possible, versus our tendency to always teach, wait for teachable moments. Allow the youth to freely express themselves in a safe environment.
  2. Make it a point to verbally praise the youth for all successes and for trying, even when no successful outcome occurs. Be a positive, motivational influence.
  3. Participate in common interests / activities.
  4. Play games / other.
  5. Assist in homework / studying for a school quiz, test.
  6. Create a variety of both physical and intellectual activities that you both enjoy to schedule together.

### **PHASE IV: Evaluation and Monitoring the Process** (at least twice per year)

- a. The adult SS class can complete a self-grading exercise (using this Process Description), to rate their own relationship with the youth.
- b. An adult SS class period can be dedicated to a group discussion of successes and challenges to provide insight for improvements.
- c. There should be no embarrassment or shame for adults who cannot maintain the commitment for whatever reason, but quickly identify a replacement adult-mentor for the youth.
- d. Communication: Define and communicate recommendations for “process improvement” to the Resource Team and track the numbers of involved adults and youth for communications to others.