



## TASK FAQ's

### ***What is TASK?***

TASK (Trust, Appreciation and Support with Kindness) is a new mentorship program in Douglas County. We match individual Douglas County youth with an adult mentor within our community. The purpose is to empower our youth to make positive life choices that enable them to maximize their wellbeing and potential. Through guidance, support, and role modeling, the Mentor will foster personal growth, academic achievement, and social development in mentees.

### ***Why TASK?***

In recent surveys of Douglas County Children nearly 50% suffer from symptoms representing high levels of anxiety and depression. Research indicates that one of the most supportive methods for children suffering from anxiety and depression is a close relationship with a trusted adult. This is someone that can listen, understand and provide support and encouragement.

### ***Who is eligible to obtain a mentor?***

This program is available to any child between the ages of 5-18 who resides in Douglas County.

### ***How are the children identified for the mentor program?***

Children can be recommended by parents, teachers or school counselors.

### ***Is parental permission required? What is the process?***

Yes. If the child is referred by the school, parents are contacted by the assigned Mentor who informs them about the program and requests parental permission.

### ***How are mentors selected?***

The physical and emotional safety of the children is paramount to this program. Mentors must apply (Mentor Application) and proceed through a vigorous vetting process including; background check, interview, personal reference checks and approval by the TASK advisory board. They also must complete a comprehensive training course. In addition, ongoing monitoring of the mentor and mentee relationship is performed to ensure the child is benefiting from the relationship. Mentor's must also meet the following qualifications:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Reside in youth mentee's community

- Passion for working with youth and commitment to making a long-term impact on a young person's life
- Dependable and consistent in meeting the time commitments
- No prior felony convictions
- No use of illicit drugs
- Current driver's license

### ***What are the roles of the parents and school staff?***

We hope to create a coordinated support system for the child through regular communication with the mentor, parents and school staff including teachers and counselors. The schools are strong referral source as well.

### ***What are the benefits to the child?***

Academic Achievement:

- Improved grades and test scores
- Increased motivation and engagement in school
- Higher aspirations for higher education

Social and Emotional Development:

- Enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improved social skills and communication abilities
- Stronger problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Increased resilience and ability to cope with stress

Reduced Risk of Negative Behaviors:

- Lower rates of substance abuse
- Decreased likelihood of involvement in criminal activity
- Reduced risk of mental health issues

Positive Life Outcomes:

- Increased likelihood of graduating from high school
- Higher rates of college enrollment and completion
- Greater career success and financial stability

### ***Don't these children already have support from their parents?***

In many cases yes, we have many caring and supportive parents in our community. A TASK mentor can supplement the love and caring they receive from their parents and provide additional support for both the parents and child. In some cases, a child's parents have many professional and family responsibilities that preclude their ability to provide for all their child's needs. This is where a mentor can help both the child and family.

### ***How often do mentors and mentees interact?***

They spend at least one hour per week together or 4-5 hours per month. We require a minimum of weekly contact.

### ***How long does the mentorship relationship last?***

Our mentors are committed to a minimum of one year, however the goal is continue the relationship until the child graduates from high school.

### ***Can I help without becoming a mentor?***

Absolutely, this is a volunteer-based program that requires many hours of volunteer time and we need your help! We need assistance in many areas including administrative work, community

awareness or whatever talents you have wish to share. Even contributing 30 minutes per week is of great use.

### ***Why should I get involved as mentor or volunteer?***

#### Personal Growth and Fulfillment

- **Developing Empathy and Understanding:** Mentoring allows you to connect with young people from different backgrounds, expanding your understanding of their experiences and challenges.
- **Gaining New Perspectives:** Interacting with youth can provide fresh insights and perspectives on the world, keeping you engaged and inspired.
- **Building Strong Relationships:** The bond between a mentor and mentee can be deeply rewarding, fostering trust, respect, and mutual support.

#### Positive Impact on the Community

- **Empowering Young People:** Mentors can provide guidance, encouragement, and support, helping young people reach their full potential.
- **Improving Academic and Social Outcomes:** Research shows that mentoring can positively impact academic performance, social skills, and overall well-being.
- **Contributing to a Brighter Future:** By investing in the next generation, you can help create a more positive and hopeful future for your community.

#### Professional Development

- **Enhancing Communication Skills:** Mentoring requires effective communication, active listening, and the ability to build rapport.
- **Developing Leadership Abilities:** As a mentor, you'll have the opportunity to inspire and lead, honing your leadership skills.

### ***What type of activities do the mentors and mentees undertake?***

#### Community Engagement

- Volunteer together at a local organization like an animal shelter, food bank, or soup kitchen.
- Attend a community event or festival.
- Participate in a local clean-up or beautification project.

#### Educational Activities

- Visit a museum or art gallery.
- Attend a lecture or workshop.
- Visit a college campus.
- Read a book together and discuss it.
- Work on homework or study together.

#### Recreational Activities

- Go for a hike or walk in nature.
- Play a sport or game together.
- Go to a movie or concert.
- Cook or bake together.
- Play board games or video games.

#### Skill-Building Activities

- Practice job interview skills or resume writing.
- Learn a new skill together, like coding, painting, or playing an instrument.
- Set and track goals together.
- Practice public speaking or presentation skills.
- Learn about financial literacy or budgeting.

## Social Activities

- Have lunch or dinner together.
- Go to a coffee shop or ice cream parlor.
- Go shopping or window shopping.
- Attend a sporting event.
- Go to a comedy club or improv show.

### ***How can I sign up as a volunteer or mentor?***

Complete this Mentor/Volunteer Interest Form and you will be contacted to explore how you can best apply your talents to further the program.

### ***How do I refer my child to become a mentee?***

Please email us at [TASK@douglascountyl.gov](mailto:TASK@douglascountyl.gov) with general and contact information and we will contact you to begin the process.

### ***Where can I obtain more information about the program?***

You can visit the Douglas County Health Department Website <https://www.dchealthil.org/task-mentoring-program> to find more information, submit a mentor/volunteer interest form and complete a mentor application. You can find us on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=task%20mentorship%20program> and email us at [TASK@douglascountyl.gov](mailto:TASK@douglascountyl.gov).